ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: IDENTITY, IMMORTALITY, INTERACTION: FEMALE FUNERARY MONUMENTS AS SITES OF IDENTITY BUILDING IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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As final markers of identity and memory, the tombs of Roman women carried ritual, ideological, and emotional significance. By surveying the funerary monuments of four distinct Roman women, it is possible to reconstruct, at least in part, the exhibited identities of Eumachia, Naevoleia Tyche, Faustina the Elder, Claudia, Amymone, and Postumia Matronilla. Drawing in the viewer to participate in the creation of identity through narrative and contextual relationships, each of the sepulchers solidifies the memories of the deceased women, thereby granting them an immortality of sorts. Engaging with issues of gender, status, the politics of self, propaganda, and regional variation, this paper seeks to explore the nuances of life, death, and identity in the Roman world, with an emphasis on understanding the monuments in their original contexts.

# IDENTITY, IMMORTALITY, INTERACTION: FEMALE FUNERARY MONUMENTS AS SITES OF IDENTITY BUILDING IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| Cic. Sen. | Cicero, *De Senectute* |
| CIL | Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum |
| EE | Ephemeris Epigraphica |
| LIMC | Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae |
| Ov. Her. | Ovid, *Herodes* |
| Ov. Met. | Ovid, *Metamorphoses* |
| Plin. Ep. | Pliny, *Epistulae* |
| Plin. HN | Pliny, *Natural History* |
| Plut. Vit. Pomp. | Plutarch, *Vitae Pompeianus* |
| Sen. Tro. | Seneca, *Troades* |
| Tac. Ann. | Tacitus, *Annals* |
| Varro, Ling. | Varro, *De Lingua Latina* |
| Verg. Aen. | Virgil, *Aeneid* |

## Introduction

As sites more often left undisturbed by later inhabitants than domestic or even public architecture, tombs can provide a wealth of information about life and death in the Roman Empire. In their function as the final markers of an individual's life and memory, the architectural forms, decoration, and even epitaphs of Roman funerary monuments help to create and display the particular identity the patron of the monument wished to exhibit. As we will see, the existence, or in some cases lack thereof, of a self-determined public persona as broadcast through funerary monuments can inform an understanding of the place and freedoms of women in Roman society, the politics of self-identity, the ideological tenets of Roman funerary practices and monuments, and the importance of agency in constructing memorials to the dead.

Attitudes toward an afterlife were inconsistent in the Roman Empire, or as Valerie Hope has put it, "often sketchy."[1] The multiplicity of religions and belief systems ensured only a tenuous agreement on the survival of the soul after death, and even this was not universal.[2] Whereas popular thought dictated that the soul left the body at the moment of death, many competing theories existed for the final resting place of spirits.[3] Notwithstanding this diversity of beliefs, the perpetuation of one's good memory and the appeasement of the *manes* were fundamental to Roman ideology and culture.[4] Varro describes this concern with memory when he says:

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[1] Valerie Hope, *Roman Death: Death and Dying in Ancient Rome* (London: Continuum, 2009), 18.
[2] Hope, *Roman Death: Death and Dying in Ancient Rome,* 98.
[3] J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World.* Aspects of Greek and Roman Life. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1971), 34.
[4] Sebastien Lepetz and William van Andringa, "Investigations in a Sector of the Porta Nocera Cemetery in Roman Pompeii," in eds. Maureen Carroll and Jane Rempel, *Living Through the Dead: Burial and Commemoration in the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxbow Book, 2007), 110.

> "To remember comes from the word memory, since that which has remained in the mind is recalled…things that are written and done for the sake of memory are called memorials."[5]

The only assured way to immortality was to be remembered by the living.[6] One of the most powerful and permanent ways to accomplish this immortality was to erect a funerary monument for oneself or a loved one. A Roman's character, deeds, and accomplishments in life were understood to have a direct impact on his or her afterlife, and funerary monuments were the perfect vehicles through which to celebrate an individual.[7] By constructing tombs and other monuments, the Romans believed they were creating a structure through which memory could be produced and sustained in perpetuity.[8]

In recent years, excellent scholarship on Roman funerary monuments, death ritual, memory, and social hierarchies along gender and socioeconomic lines has emerged,[9] but few have devoted a dedicated study to the funerary monuments of Roman women. In *Death and the Emperor*, Penelope Davies allocates a chapter to the funerary monuments of the women of the imperial family,[10] and it is both her phenomenological methodology and ideas of women as tools of the official ideology propagated by the

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[5] Varro, *Ling*, 6.49.
[6] Emma Jane-Graham, "From Fragments to Ancestors: Re-defining the Role of *Os Rectum* in Rituals of Purification and Commemoration in Republican Rome," in eds. Maureen Carroll and Jane Rempel, *Living Through the Dead: Burial and Commemoration in the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxbow Book, 2007), 92, and Horace, *Odes*, 3.30.1-9.
[7] Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World,* 36.
[8] Maureen Carroll, Jane Rempel, and University of Sheffield. *Living Through the Dead: Burial and Commemoration in the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011), 92.
[9] See for example Penelope J. E. Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Valerie Hope, *Roman Death: Death and Dying in Ancient Rome* (London: Continuum, 2009), Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Women* Cambridge Introduction to Roman Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007), and Karl Galinsky, *Memoria Romana: Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory. Supplements to the Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome, 10* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014).
[10] Penelope J. E. Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 102-119.

imperial regime, that this paper will use as a jumping-off point. However, by expanding the scope of investigation to women from Pompeii and those outside of the imperial family, a better understanding of the role of women in Roman society and the importance of their funerary monuments across social classes can be explored more extensively.

Although in many cases lost, most Roman funerary monuments were designed with an intended mode of approach and primary viewing angle. Only through the reconstruction of contemporary experiences of Roman imperial era sepulchers can the iconography and architectural significance of such monuments be fully restored as a means through which self-determined displays of identity could be communicated. As case studies, the monuments of four distinct types of Roman women will demonstrate not only different approaches to the afterlife, but also the unique position of women in Roman society and the similarities and incongruities of self-determined monuments and those dedicated by another.

One introductory chapter will focus on women in imperial Rome, as a means of situating the reader within a larger cultural context. While scholars such as Glenys Davies relegate Roman women to subordinate legal and social positions, the issue is perhaps more nuanced.[11] Although legally inferior to Roman men, women enjoyed considerable freedoms such as the right to own and inherit property, conduct business, and even support candidates for public election.[12] Armed with a knowledge of the status of women in the Roman Empire, discussions of their funerary monuments will highlight issues of access and identity in Rome and Pompeii.

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[11] Glenys Davies, "Portrait Statues as Models for Gender Roles in Roman Society," *Memoirs of the American Academy on Rome. Supplementary Volumes* 7 (2008): 207.
[12] Judith P. Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family* (N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 4, 6, 18, 35.

The rest of the study is divided into two sections.

Comprised of the first two case studies, the first segment examines monuments built by women for themselves and their families. By way of comparison, the second section explores the memorials which, unlike those treated in section one, were dedicated by someone other than the woman herself. In juxtaposing these two types of remembrance, I hope to demonstrate how similar commemorative devices were employed to very different ends as determined by the patron of the memorial. Whereas those that were self-celebratory often aimed to differentiate themselves through the use of impressive, attention catching, and often unique, funerary monuments, memorials erected in honor of another tended to reinforce social norms, celebrating the kinds of qualities expected of women in the Roman world. In this way, this thesis attempts to recover the "voice" of Roman women through an engagement with their funerary monuments.

The first case study examines the funerary monument of the prominent Pompeian priestess Eumachia. Of unprecedented form and size in Pompeii, her sepulchral monument poses problems of architectural significance, social hybridity, local prominence in the city of Pompeii, and the construction of memory and identity through a viewer's interaction with the structure.

Naevoleia Tyche's cenotaph on the busy road outside the Porta di Ercolano in Pompeii concerns the third chapter. A freedwoman of relative wealth and status, Tyche's monument to herself, her husband, and their freedmen is curious in many ways, and speaks to issues of slavery and freedom in Rome and Pompeii, self celebration, and taste. By reconstructing the intended narrative of the structure, it is possible not only to

decipher the monument and Tyche's identity as intended, but also finally to settle a modern scholarly debate on iconographical significance that has spanned two centuries.

Moving north geographically to study a monument in the city of Rome, the fourth chapter is concerned with the celebration of the empress Faustina Maior, wife of the emperor Antoninus Pius. Commemorated in a joint memorial with her husband, Faustina does not enjoy her own funerary monument, and is instead buried elsewhere in the mausoleum of Hadrian. As an empress, the control of Faustina's public image was of especial importance to the official image of the imperial family. Paired with a study of the identity created by the monument, an understanding of the memorial's original context, and the political, ritual, and commemorative aspects of her posthumous celebration can be explored.

The fifth chapter will briefly study the epitaphs of three non-imperial Roman women, dedicated by members of their families. In comparing imperial and sub-elite celebrations of women by male family members, the importance of self-agency in the construction of identity will become apparent to highlight the different ways men and women utilized female memorials.

By reconstructing the lived experiences of these monuments, this paper aims to demonstrate how the active engagement of viewers was sought and utilized in the creation of posthumous memory. My phenomenological methodology will allow me to approach the structures in unique ways, to offer original interpretations by addressing the monuments in context, something never before attempted with these particular sepulchers. In studying the funerary monuments of very different types women in Rome and Pompeii, the politics and creation of self-identity, the presentation and mechanisms

of Roman imperial ideology, socioeconomic status, and the significance of self-representation can be explored, expanding the applied scope of this paper beyond these examples, as applicable to Roman society in the first and second centuries CE. Therefore, while this paper will focus on four specific case studies, the issues explored and ideas proposed will be critical to consider when studying death, identity, and monumentality in the Roman world more broadly.

## Chapter One: Women in the Roman World

The delineation of the place of women in Roman society is an immense undertaking. Numerous scholars have dedicated entire books to the subject,[13] and thus this short chapter neither can, nor will, provide a comprehensive study of Roman women. Instead, it will offer an essential overview of the legal and social rights and privileges afforded to women in late Republican and early imperial Rome, and the professions they were allowed to practice. The goal of this chapter, therefore, is to offer a foundation from which to build the arguments of the proceeding case studies, in an effort to emphasize the contrast between the typical Roman matron, if such a thing can be determined, and the women discussed in this study.

Although freer than their counterparts in the Greek East, where women were confined to the domestic sphere, Roman women did not enjoy the same formal legal or social rights as Roman men. Whereas evidence from Rome and Pompeii clearly demonstrate female presence in the political and commercial spheres, women could neither vote nor hold official governmental office. Generally, legally and socially, women were considered inferior to men. They were understood as neither physically nor intellectually equal to males, and contemporary legislation concerning women confirms this notion.[14] Nonetheless, by the second century CE, females of the Roman Empire enjoyed freedoms unprecedented for women elsewhere in the ancient world.

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[13] See for example Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Women.* Cambridge Introduction to Roman Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007), J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1983), Jane F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society (*London: Croom Helm, 1986).

[14] Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), 150.

Regulation of the activities of women, while they may have begun as oppressive, became increasingly lenient as time progressed. Whereas their lives were legally controlled by their fathers and husbands, women were given the freedom to move about the city as they pleased, and dine with their husbands.[15] During the Republic, few women experienced the public visibility or prestige enjoyed by men. Indeed, in this period, very few portrait sculptures were erected in honor of women.[16] Slowly, attitudes began to shift, and by the imperial era, women could be highly visible public figures. Nevertheless, they were still subject to controls not imposed on male citizens. In the Republican and imperial eras alike, women fell under the control of men in many aspects of life. Guardians, a male relative who controlled a woman's property and resources, and whose approval was needed for all major financial transactions, determined the quality of life and welfare of Roman women.[17]

When a woman married, there existed two options for her legal status: *cum manu* or *sine manu*. If married *cum manu*, she came under the control of her husband and became an official member of his family. If she married *sine manu*, the woman's father retained responsibility for and control over his daughter, including ownership of her property.[18] Although adherence to the principals of *cum/sine manus* marriages became less stringent in the Imperial era, they were closely followed in the early and middle Republic. In some instance women could marry without *manus* altogether, which

[15] Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity,* 79-80.
[16] Natalie Kampen, "Gender Theory in Roman Art," in Diana E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, *I, Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 35.
[17] Eve Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 109.
[18] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 71-3.

became common in the 1st century BCE.[19] *Manus* aside, a woman's legal status was, in either case, determined by her male relatives.

While not mandatory, dowries were common and understood as the woman's contribution to the financial burden she placed on her new family.[20] If married with *manus*, everything a woman owned passed into the ownership of her new husband.[21] By the late Republic, additional funds and property were often also surrendered at the time of marriage.[22] The importance of a dowry is attested by the generosity of Pliny the Younger who twice supplied funds for the dowry of a friend's daughter who married above her family's financial station.[23] Without his support, it is implied, the marriages would not have been possible.

A Roman wife's status was directly affected by her role as a mother, and it was not until a woman became a wife and mother that she gained any kind of public presence.[24] If childless, a woman could inherit her husband's property upon his death, but if the couple had children, the property was split equally among them.[25] Under an Augustan law, known as the *Lex Julia et Papia*, in an effort to promote childrearing among aristocratic families, a freeborn woman who had three or more children (four for freedwomen), was not required to have a guardian.[26] If she did not have three children, a woman could also gain legal and financial independence by outliving her guardian.[27]

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[19] Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Women* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2007), 46.
[20] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 97.
[21] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society,* 70.
[22] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 98.
[23] Plin., *Ep,* 2.4, 6.23.
[24] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 10.
[25] J. P. V. D Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits* (New York: John Day Co., 1963), 222.
[26] Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits*, 20.
[27] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 13.

Divorce and remarriage were common in the Roman world,[28] and marriages were arranged with an eye toward creating an alliance mutually beneficial for both families involved. In this way, women were often used as tools through which families could form bonds. Girls were legally eligible for marriage at age twelve, and were typically married between ages thirteen to twenty-one.[29] For a woman, the consent of her father to a marriage was necessary in place of her own. If either party revoked their consent in a marriage *sine manu*, the marriage was dissolved, but in a marriage *cum manu*, only the husband could initiate the divorce.[30]

Although divorce was rare in the early Republic, it became much more common by the age of Augustus.[31] In fact, Augustus, concerned with promoting the Roman family, encouraged remarriage soon after a spouse died, and even imposed penalties on unmarried men.[32] He also orchestrated numerous marriages between the members of the imperial family, at times ordering the divorce of a happy couple such as his stepson Tiberius and his wife Vipsania Agrippina, to cement the power base of the imperial line. Even Augustus himself, hastily divorced his then-wife Scribonia to marry Livia, his third and final spouse.

Financially, although often not allowed free reign of their resources, women could be very independently wealthy. Thus, despite the existence of guardians, some women owned their own property and businesses, often won through inheritance,[33] and could

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[28] Judith Evans Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood* (London: Routledge, 2002), 187.
[29] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 38.
[30] Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family*, 22.
[31] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 83.
[32] Mary R Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece & Rome: A Source Book in Translation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 103.
[33] Joanne Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 113.

even own multiple factories.[34] In addition to inheriting the funds and property of a deceased guardian, women could legally increase the amount of wealth she was eligible to inherit through motherhood.[35] As a result, some women were able to live relatively independent lifestyles, once their fathers and husbands had passed away.

If exercised for the benefit of a son, husband, or father, displays of wealth and power could be widely celebrated.[36] In Pompeii, for example, there is evidence that women used their financial and social resources to support candidates for political office. Numerous examples of electoral notices from around the city of Pompeii attest to the presence and value of female support. In fact, Liisa Savunen has identified fifty-four extant examples of female support of candidates for political office.[37] One such example reads, "I, Taedia Secunda, earnestly entreat you to make Lucius Popidius Secundus aedile. His Grandmother asks this and she made [this],"[38] and another, "Statia asks you to vote for Herennius and Suettius for the aedileship."[39] Such examples demonstrate the freedom allowed to women to display public support for a political candidate.

Women of the imperial family enjoyed both a high degree of public visibility and special privileges not afforded to the typical matron, let alone a woman like Statia. The wife and sister of Augustus, Livia and Octavia were both granted the privileges of

[34] Penelope M. Allison, "Engendering Roman Domestic Space," *British School at Athens Studies* 15 (2007): 347.
[35] Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*, 163.
[36] Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*, 182.
[37] Liisa Savunen, "Women and Elections in Pompeii," in eds. Richard Hawley and Barbara Levick, *Women in Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1995), 195.
[38] CIL IV, 7469.
[39] CIL IV, 3684.

sacrosanctity in 35 BCE.[40] As sacrosanct figures they were allowed to sit with the Vestals in the theater, be accompanied by a lictor, and be free of guardianship.[41]

Wealthy, powerful, and highly influential, imperial women often endowed public structures in tandem with the emperor's public projects. Such displays of generosity and goodwill toward the people gained imperial women public favor and enduring renown. Notwithstanding these freedoms, they were also expected to adhere to the rules and roles assigned to women by the emperor. If not, they were singled out as examples of condemnable behavior. Perhaps the best known case of imperial female misbehavior is that of Julia, the daughter and only child of Augustus. Known for her promiscuity, Julia allegedly conducted a number of illegal extramarital affairs. As a punishment, she was banished to the island of Pandeteria, and she remained in disgrace until her death in circa 15 CE.[42] Julia, it seems, was so severely punished in part because of her crimes, but also because she did not fulfill the role of imperial daughter and model matron that Augustus required. In this way, women of the imperial family had less freedom to construct their own public identities, as their conduct and public personae were expected to reflect the legal and propagandistic values of the emperor. Within these confines, however, empresses were able to hold audiences, make public dedications and appearances, own property, commission works of art and architecture, and were likely trusted advisors, even if informally, to their husbands. Livia, for example, both owned property at

[40] Richard A. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1992), 94.
[41] Richard A. Bauman. "Tribunician Sacrosanctity in 44, 36 AND 35 B. C.," *Rheinisches Museum Für Philologie* 124, 2 (1981): 174.
[42] Tac., *Ann.,* 1.53.

Primaporta, and restored the Temple of Fortuna Muliebris.[43] Among women of the Roman Empire, their powers were unparalleled.

For Roman aristocratic women outside of the imperial family, the best hope for public office and prestige was to serve as a public priestess. For the most part, only elite women with immaculate reputations were granted this privilege, the highest honor awarded to those chosen as Vestal Virgins.[44] The Vestal Virgins, committed between ages six and ten to tend the fire of the sacred hearth, had power, prestige, high public visibility, and did not require guardians.[45] Like women of the imperial family, the Vestals were allowed special privileges including transport around the city in a *carpentum*, or carriage, special seats at games and performances, and sacrosanctity.[46] The Vestals were, however, also subject to strict punishments, including live burial for not upholding their vows of chastity.[47] In addition to serving Vesta, public priestesses were also selected to serve a number of other deities, including Venus, Ceres, and, significantly, the cult of the deified emperors. Priestesses, in occupying the highest formal position a woman could hope to attain, enjoyed more public exposure than their elite peers, and certainly more than sub-elite women.

Sub-elite women were involved in most sectors of daily commercial and economic life except for banking. In the absence of a husband, son, or father, a woman could run, or even own, a business.[48] In fact, evidence from Pompeii indicates that women occasionally acted as (unofficial) creditors. The freedwomen Dicidia Margaris

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[43] Clemente Marconi and Deborah Steiner, *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 194.
[44] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 18.
[45] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 168.
[46] Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family*, 86.
[47] Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980): 24.
[48] Natalie Kampen, *Image and Status: Working Women in Ostia* (Berlin: Mann, 1981), 29.

and Poppaea Prisci, for example, are recorded in wax tablets discovered at Pompeii as having contracted a loan between them.[49] Julia Felix, who lived in Pompeii in the mid 1st century CE, presents an interesting case. Known through a notice posted at the front of the property, Julia Felix, the illegitimate daughter of Spurius, a wealthy descendant of an imperial freedman, owned and operated an impressive, lucrative business.[50] Felix's *praedia*, or landed property, is thought to have been inherited from her father, and was composed of an atrium house, bath suite, garden, shops, and bars. Operating after the devastating earthquake of 64 CE, Felix opened her property up for paid public use, no doubt securing her a sizable income.[51]

Of even lower social status were freedwomen. Whereas some became quite wealthy upon emancipation through marriage or inheritance, many freedwomen worked as nurses, midwives, shopkeepers, secretaries, and domestic help, often continuing the trade they had practiced as a slave.[52] These women frequently stayed close to or in the employ of their patrons, at times even marrying their former owner. The wages earned by these working class women were in many cases necessary to sustain sub-elite families financially. If not formally employed, women were expected to oversee the household and the education of the children.[53]

At the very bottom of free society were those classed as *infamia*. Actresses, prostitutes, and tavern maids were all considered the dregs of society, and strong stigmas were attached to their professions.[54] Although not held in high esteem, prostitution was

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[49] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii,* 68.
[50] Michele D'Avino, *The Women of Pompeii* (Li: Lofredo, 1976), 185-8.
[51] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii,* 56-7.
[52] Diana E.E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, *I, Claudia. Women in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 11.
[53] Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family*, 5.
[54] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii,* 102.

considered the acceptable alternative to adultery among elite members of society, and therefore tolerated. Entertainers were similarly tolerated. Despite their *infamia* status, they could make a good living.[55] Like prostitutes and tavern maids, actresses were seen as sexually available, and often treated as such, frequently subject to sexual violence. Therefore, although they might be financially self-sufficient, female sex workers and entertainers had very little social or political currency.

In sum, unlike their husbands, fathers, and sons, Roman women were not celebrated for their military might or public service, but instead for their virtuousness, obedience, and chastity, as evidenced by numerous female funerary epitaphs.[56] When considering exceptional women, those who did not easily fit within their respective social groups, an exploration of how they navigated their social status, and the ways through which they, or those who wished to utilized their public personae, fashioned and memorialized their identities becomes an interesting course of study. An examination of the women discussed in the following chapters yields an important commonality: each woman was publicly and permanently commemorated upon her death. Funerary monuments, it seems, served as the ideal venue through which each of these women could develop and explore their identities, and it is the very different approaches to their monuments that concerns the ensuing study.

[55] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law & Society*, 246.
[56] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 8.

# Part I: The Politics of Self-Commemoration in the Necropoli at Pompeii

## Chapter Two: Hybridity and Local Prominence in the Tomb of Eumachia

Within the world of Roman and Pompeian studies, Eumachia's is a well-known and oft-cited name. What is novel about this chapter is its focus on her funerary monument. Although Eumachia's building in the Pompeian Forum and her legacy as a wealthy, powerful woman have been comprehensively studied,[57] few scholars have focused on her sepulchral monument, and even fewer on the structure as a self-determined expression of identity. Those who have studied the funerary monument, most notably Virginia Campbell, are concerned with Pompeian tombs more generally, and do not to fully engage with the architecture or decoration of the tomb. Only Antonio D'Ambrosio and Stefano De Caro examine the physical components of the monument in any comprehensive way in their seminal publication on the Porta di Nocera necropolis.[58] In an effort to address this gap, the ensuing study of Eumachia and her tomb aims to explore the architectural and decorative components of the monument in an attempt to understand Eumachia's social status and self-identity as seen through her impressive resting place. In doing so, I am to lay the ground for a comparative study of the societal mechanisms and aesthetic and funerary traditions of Pompeii and Rome.

### *Eumachia: Daughter of Lucius*

[57] See Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon, *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (2012), John Dobbins and William Pedar Foss, *The World of Pompeii* (2007), Liisa Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii* (1997), and Walter Moeller "The Building of Eumachia: A Reconsideration," *American Journal of Archaeology* 76 (1972): 323–27.

[58] See Licia Vlad Borrelli, Antonio D'Ambrosio, Stefano De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei* (Milano: TOTAL, Touring Club Italiano, 1983).

The daughter of Lucius Eumachius, Eumachia was a prominent Pompeian woman, hailing from an old, respected family of Greek origin.[59] The Eumachii, records indicate, were successful amphorae and brick manufacturers, and surviving amphorae with the Eumachii stamp confirm this.[60] Married to Marcus Numistrius Fronto, duvoir and member of another elite Pompeian family wealthy through sheep farming and wool production,[61] Eumachia was perfectly situated to become a public priestess of Venus Pompeiana, the highest honor a Pompeian woman could hope to attain.

One duty of a public priestess was to act as a benefactress of the city, and in fulfillment of this obligation, Eumachia erected a large portico building on the east side of the Pompeian Forum (Fig. 2.1).[62] Located at the corner of the so called Via dell'Abbondanza, the structure consists of a portico surrounding an open courtyard, a statue of *Concordia* or *Pietas Augusta* in the apsidal niche at the far end of the portico, and an open façade porch gallery with statue niches.[63] The Eumachia Building, likely modeled after the *Porticus Liviae* in Rome dedicated by the empress Livia and her son Tiberius to *Concordia* in 7 BCE, espouses a similar message of Augustan peace as its Roman model.[64] Scrolling acanthus relief frames the building's entrance (Fig. 2.2), reminiscent of the lower north and south exterior walls of the Ara Pacis Augustae (Fig. 2.3). In the statue niches once stood statues of Romulus and Aeneas, also suggesting an

[59] Paavo Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii* (Roma: Bardi, 1975), 165.
[60] Liisa Savunen. *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii* (Helsinki: L. Savunen, 1997), 50.
[61] Frances Bernstein, "Pompeian Women," in John Dobbins, and Pedar Foss, The World of Pompeii (London: Routledge, 2007), 530.
[62] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, 55.
[63] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, 54.
[64] Walter Moeller, "The Date and Dedication of the Building of Eumachia," *Cronache Pompeiane* 1 (1975): 233.

Augustan allusion.[65] In referring to a contemporary Augustan (or Tiberian) monument, Eumachia not only aligned herself with the imperial family, but may have also been trying to draw connections between the imperial family and her own as a Pompeian equivalent of the Julio-Claudians.

Like the *Porticus Liviae's* associations with both Livia and her son Tiberius, the Eumachia Building was jointly commissioned by Eumachia and her son, Marcus Numistrius Fronto.[66] Carved into the exterior of the *chalcidicum*, the building's inscription reads:

> "Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess, in her own name and that of her son, Marcus Numistrius Fronto, built at her own expense the colonnade, corridor and portico in honor of Augustan Concord and Piety and also dedicated them".[67]

It is significant, but not unusual,[68] that Eumachia prominently advertised her financial patronage of the structure. The impact of this inclusion is twofold. First, it identifies Eumachia as a very wealthy woman, and second, it established her social and financial independence. Through the dedication of the Eumachia Building, its patron was able to demonstrate her elite status, wealth, and generosity.

Found within the Building of Eumachia, the only known portrait of the priestess can provide further clues about her status in Pompeii (Fig. 2.4). Now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, the full-length statue depicts a woman fully draped in a *palla*, *tunica*, and *stola* (Fig. 2.5). Her attire is priestly and proper, fitting of the

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[65] John Dobbins, "Problems of Chronology, Decoration, and Urban Design in the Forum at Pompeii," *American Journal of Archaeology* 98, 4 (1994): 649.
[66] Lawrence Richardson Jr., "Concordia and Concordia Augusta: Rome and Pompeii," *Parola del Passato* 33 (1978): 268.
[67] CIL X. 810-11.
[68] See, for example, the Temple of the Genius of Augustus also in the Pompeian forum and dedicated by the public priestess Mamia, as well as the tombs of Alleia Decimilla and Aurellia Tertulla, funded by the women themselves, as celebrated by the monuments' inscriptions.

virtuous patron.[69] Although volumous, her drapery clings to her body, at once covering and revealing, and a large gathering of fabric is draped over her outstretched left arm. With her right hand, Eumachia grasps a handful of drapery, pulling it across her chest. Dedicated by the town's fullers, the portrait was originally located at the back of the building, upon a pedestal in a dedicated niche, with the inscription, "Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess, from the fullers".[70] According to Glenys Davies, Eumachia's *pudicita* pose was inspired by Hellenistic depictions of the virtuous and beautiful woman. Eumachia's conservative pose, Davies believes, was engineered to assuage the fears of the men who might be threatened by the self-assured power of a figure of such importance.[71] While Davies may go too far in suggesting such a concern with gender power relations, an effort to depict Eumachia as a good and virtuous matron is evident nonetheless in the statue's clothing and pose.

*Sepulchral Splendor Along the Strada delle Tombe*

Similar ideologies can be observed within Eumachia's funerary monument. No doubt firmly established within Pompeian aristocratic society, Eumachia's important appointment set her apart from other elite Pompeian women. In this way, she can be understood as an exceptional figure, and the ideologies that informed the architectural and decorative programs of her funerary monument reflect her singular status.

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[69] Suzanne Dixon, "Gracious Patrons and Vulgar Success Stories in Roman Public Media," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome, Supplementary Volumes* 7 (2008): 64.
[70] Mary Boatwright, Daniel J. Gargola, and Richard J. Talbert, *A Brief History of the Romans* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 217.
[71] Davies, "Portrait Statues as Models for Gender Roles in Roman Society," 218.

The tomb is dated approximately 1-30 CE, to the early years of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.[72] Constructed of local lava, Nocera tufa, and brick, halfway down the so called Strada delle Tombe outside the Porta di Nocera, the Tomb of Eumachia stands at an impressive 13.9 meters squared and 6.7 meters tall. In fact, it is the largest funerary monument known from Pompeii (Fig. 2.6).[73] Excavated in 1954, the tomb, never fully restored, remains fragmentary, but the basic plan is still discernible.[74] The monument is itself composed of three parts: a large terrace directly in front of the tomb; a monumental *scaenae frons*-like façade atop an imposing exedra bench; and a sepulchral chamber within the exedra.[75]

Approaching the monument from the street, one immediately encounters a low *opus incertum* enclosure wall with stairs leading up to the terrace (Fig. 2.7). Ten *columellae* appear directly in front of the terrace, and three in the southwest corner of the enclosure, together honoring members of the Eumachii and Alleii families (Fig. 2.8). Originally intended for Eumachia and her family, a distant relative, Lucius Eumachius Aprilis was interred later within the tomb, within a few decades of Eumachia's death.[76] Aprilis's precise connection to Eumachia is yet unknown. In the Neronian period, the Eumachii disappear from the Pompeian record, and burials of members of the *gens Alleia* appear within the tomb, beginning with Gnaeus Alleius Nigidius Maius.[77] Although the exact nature of the connection of the Alleii to the Eumachii is unknown, the Alleii were a

[72] Virginia Campbell, *Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 259.
[73] Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organisation, Space and Society*, 115.
[74] Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organisation, Space and Society*, 114.
[75] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.
[76] Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii,* 165.
[77] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.

well-established family with old Campanian roots, through its involvement in commerce.[78]

Atop the terrace, a rounded altar constructed of four drums originally stood before either end of the exedra (Fig. 2.9). These altars, made of Nocera tufa, depict *eroti* with masks, garlands, and various animals on the base, topped with *omphaloi* surrounded by serpents.[79]

One step up from the terrace, a semicircular stone bench with a high back forms the exedra, built of precisely cut blocks of ashlar masonry Nocera tufa (Fig. 2.10).[80] Situated directly above the bench, although no more than a few meters survive, the tall wall of the monumental façade was originally divided into five vignettes by engaged Corinthian columns with Attic bases (Fig. 2.11).[81] Within these niches were placed freestanding marble statues, of which a few fragments have been discovered. Directly above the columned zone were fragments of an Amazonomachy frieze and dentil cornice, pieces of which now reside in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.[82] The funerary chamber can be entered through a small door at the rear of the exedra. Inside the u-shaped interior, the space is divided into two symmetrical rooms.[83] Nine *loculi*, or urn niches, appear in each chamber, which were once presumably filled with remains of the Eumachii and Alleii. The notable sculptural and architectural fragments uncovered on site include a relief fragment depicting a helmeted head, a forearm and hand grasping

[78] Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii*, 133.
[79] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.
[80] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.
[81] Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organisation, Space and Society*, 258.
[82] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.
[83] Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organisation, Space and Society*, 258.

a scepter, a fallen Greek identified through the figure's pose and heroic nudity, and a variety of *columellae*.[84]

Considering the monument's location outside the Porta di Nocera along the Strada delle Tombe, visitors making their way into the city from the southwest would have been confronted with the tomb before passing through the city gate. Approaching the monument from down the Strada delle Tomb, as a visitor entering the city would, the full extent of the monument is not immediately visible. Instead, as one gets closer, the monument slowly comes into view, becoming increasingly large and splendidly decorated until finally, directly in front of the tomb, it can be viewed in all its glory. In fact, if standing in front of the Tomb of Publius Vesonius Phileros, just three sepulchers west of Eumachia's tomb, the monument is barely discernable (Fig. 2.12). Even when passing in front of the Tomb of Marcus Octavius and Verita Philumina, Eumachia's immediate neighbor to the west, only a snippet of the east end of the exedra is visible (Fig. 2.13). The monument, as it slowly reveals itself, quickly transforms from unimpressive to unmistakable. Set back from the street, the impressive exedra would have added to a viewer's astonishment once the tomb was in full view. This element of surprise would no doubt have awed and delighted a passerby, ensuring a memorable experience of the monument.

In addition to the experience of approach, it is also necessary to examine how a viewer would have interacted with the monument once in front of it. For all those who approach the tomb from the street, the sepulcher towers over the viewer, as it is set far back from and above street level (Fig. 2.14). As the only structure of its type along the Strada delle Tombe, Eumachia's tomb stands out from its neighbors. Standing directly in

[84] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.

front of the tomb, one feels an immediate sense of separation from the structure. Not only is the monument set far back from the position of the viewer, the sepulchral gate denies both full visibility of, and access to, the tomb. No doubt this air of exclusivity was intentional, simultaneously reminding the viewer of their comparatively insignificant size and exclusion from the group of a select few allowed access to the tomb. Had a visitor the fortune to catch members of the Eumachii or Alleii families visiting the tomb, leaving offerings or enjoying a banquet in honor of the deceased, the visiting family would almost have seemed as if situated on display. Raised atop the terrace, the *exedra* would have appeared as if on a pedestal, both conspicuous and aloof. Perhaps reminiscent of a *scaenae frons*,[85] a monumental stage setting, the façade functioned as a backdrop to the theatricality of the families' interaction with the tomb, displaying the dutiful descendants' celebration of their ancestors. In this way, the architects of the tomb dictated a viewer's experience of and interaction with the monument, while also proclaiming the importance of those housed within.

Built into the front of the exterior sepulchral gate, the tomb epitaph is the only part of the structure accessible from the street. Simple and short, it stands in stark contrast to the detailed dedicatory inscription associated with Eumachia's building in the Forum. Divided between two small rectangular limestone slabs that flank the east and west sides of the entryway, the inscription is simple (Fig. 2.15 a,b):

"Eumachia, daughter of Lucius/ For herself and hers."[86]

In her epitaph, Eumachia offers only the essentials: her name; her father's name; and the tomb's multiple occupancy. What might have been Eumachia's intention in

[85] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.
[86] CIL X 812.

choosing such a simple, but carefully curated, funerary commemoration? One possibility is that she, a well-known and highly visible figure, required no lengthy epitaph by which to be remembered. Speculation aside, one should note that unlike many other monuments funded by women,[87] Eumachia does not explicitly document that is was she who paid for the tomb. She has, however, implied as much. By recording that the tomb is, "for herself and her family," Eumachia leaves no question that it is she who funded and constructed the monument. With these five short words, Eumachia has also demonstrated her generosity in allowing members of her family to be buried therein. Finally, although by no means uncommon, it is significant that Eumachia chose to identify herself through her father. Lucius, long dead by Eumachia's passing, likely had no part in the construction of the tomb. Judith P. Hallett, in her study of Roman daughters, demonstrates how important daughters were to their fathers and Roman society.[88] Instead of unique names, however, Roman girls were most often given the feminized version of their father's name, and thus, the association of daughters with their fathers was inescapable.[89] Accordingly, the inclusion of a father's name when identifying a female is a common feature of Roman epitaphs. No feature of Eumachia's tomb, it seems, was left to chance, least of all the epitaph.

*Tomb of Eumachia, Architectural Enigma*

Surveying the corpus of Pompeian funerary monuments, the architectural and decorative features of the Tomb of Eumachia present some interesting questions. The

[87] See, for example, the tomb of Gaius Vestorius Priscus dedicated and funded by his mother, Mulvia Prisca. For more see John Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 315* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 187-92.
[88] Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, 33.
[89] Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, 67.

similarity of the tall façade wall of the tomb to a *scaenae frons* or monumental *nymphaeum* has been observed by a handful of scholars, including D'Ambrosio and De Caro.[90] Consulting the *scaenae frons* reconstructions proposed by Frank Sear and others,[91] and archaeological evidence, such as the Theater at Sabratha (Fig. 2.16), the similarities are uncanny. Laura Klar, in her fascinating discussion of the origins of the *scaenae frons* suggests that the monumental, highly ornate architectural and sculptural displays of the Roman *scaenae frons* was born out of a tradition of Roman triumphal display.[92] Although Klar's ideas are convincing, it is unlikely the *scaenae frons* would have carried the same triumphal associations generations later. Furthermore, Eumachia's tomb in its entirety does not fully correspond to all components of a *scaenae frons*. Examining specific examples of *scenarum frontes*, such as that from the Roman theater at Gerasa (Fig. 2.17), it becomes apparent that the exedra had no place in the Roman theater. Finally, while some Roman stages did feature an entablature frieze, no known examples chose an Amazonomachy as its subject.[93]

What of the connection to monumental Roman *nymphaea*? As proposed by D'Ambrosio and De Caro in their publication on the tomb, Eumachia's monument bears a striking resemblance to the Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus at Olympia (Fig. 2.18),[94] and indeed, the basic architectural forms of the structures are eerily similar. The problem

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[90] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS, and Barbara Burrell, "False Fronts: Separating the Aedicular Facade from the Imperial Cult in Roman Asia Minor," *American Journal of Archaeology* 110, No. 3 (2006): 110.

[91] See Frank Sear, "The Scaenae Frons of the Theater of Pompey," American Journal of Archaeology 97, 4 (1993), and Hugh Denard,"Virtuality and Performativity: Recreating Rome's Theatre of Pompey," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 24, No.1 (2002): 35.

[92] Laura Klar, "The Origins of the Roman Scaenae Frons and the Architecture of Triumphal Games in the Second Century B.C." in S. Dillon and K. Welch (eds.), *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 162.

[93] Mary Sturgeon, *Sculpture: The Reliefs from the Theater.* Corinth: Results of excavations conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Volume IX Part II; Corinth, v. 9, pt. 2. (Princeton, New Jersey: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1977), 59.

[94] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS

with this identification, however, is that the nymphaeum from Olympia dates to the Hadrianic era, specifically in the first half of the second century CE.[95] Accordingly, this connection is chronologically impossible, but does not to rule out the possibility that the two may have been inspired by the same archetype. Without a common progenitor, however, this argument can be taken no further, but it is important to note that like Eumachia, Atticus was also of mixed Greek and Roman cultural heritage.[96] While clearly not inspired by the *nymphaeum* at Olympia, numerous examples of *nymphaea* survive throughout the cities on the Bay of Naples, ranging from small, token inclusions, to massive demonstrations of wealth and luxury.[97] But, as with *scaenae frons* connections, Eumachia's tomb does not nicely conform to other known monumental *nymphaea* extant in the first century CE.

The Amazonomachy frieze is similarly puzzling. The only known example of an Amazonomachy frieze from a theater hails from Corinth, and dates to the mid-second century CE, coincidentally also constructed by Herodes Atticus.[98] Clearly not an established "type" or trope of theater decoration, the Amazonomachy frieze does not nicely adhere to the *scaenae frons* form. Further, the frieze is a particularly noteworthy inclusion as mythological scenes rarely figure in the decoration of Pompeian tombs.[99] Of all the 174 funerary monuments uncovered at Pompeii, Eumachia's is the only one to

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[95] R. Bol, A. Hoffmann, and L. Schumacher *Das Statuenprogramm Des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphäums. Olympische Forschungen*, 15 (Berlin: Olympische Forschungen, 1984), 7-8.
[96] Maud Gleason, "Making Space for Bicultural Identity: Herodes Atticus Commemorates Regilla" in T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 127.
[97] For example, the peristyle courtyard of the mid-sized House of Neptune and Amphitrite contains a nymphaeum decorated with beautiful mosaics of deer hunts, garlands, peacocks, and even a faux pearl border. The level of quality suggests that even the inhabitants of the house, although of relatively modest means, aspired to decorate their homes with nymphaea.
[98] Sturgeon, *Sculpture: The Reliefs from the Theater*, 59.
[99] Sarah Cormack, "The Tombs at Pompeii" in eds. Dobbins and Foss, *The World of Pompeii* (London: Routledge, 2007), 597.

depict an Amazonomachy scene.[100] Not an obvious borrowing from either of the architectural models just considered, the Amazonomachy frieze may signal a different motive altogether.

Iconographically, Eumachia's choice of an Amazon frieze is intriguing. While it very well may be the case that the imagery was merely decorative, it also may be understood in terms of the Amazons' liminal status. As powerful women, at times given the attributes of men, the Amazons functioned neither fully as women nor as men.[101] Eumachia may have made a statement about her own status here; a powerful, wealthy and influential woman, the Amazons may mirror her liminal status as a woman who enjoyed the power and privileges of men.

If we revisit the architectural components of the tomb, it becomes apparent that it is actually composed of three different parts: the *exedra*; the colonnaded façade; and the Amazonomachy frieze. These three features, therefore, may be disparate components combined by Eumachia into a single structure. That is, it is not outside the realm of possibility that Eumachia was inspired by a variety of sources to engineer her funerary monument. The *exedra* bench, while a standard Roman architectural form, is actually Greek in origin.[102] Often attached to gymnasia porticoes, Greek *exedrae* were commonly used by philosophers and students as locales at which to contemplate and debate philosophical problems.[103] Examples of Greek *exedrae*, including Exedra Four at

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[100] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, 146.
[101] For a discussions of the status of Amazons in antiquity, see Ov*., Met.,*12. 611, Ov*., Her.,* 21.120, Verg*., Aen.* 1.490, Plin*., HN.,* 7.201, Sen., *Tro.,* 236.
[102] William L. MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire II: An Urban Appraisal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 53.
[103] Eleanor Winsor Leach, *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 38.

Epidauros (Fig. 2.19), appear quite similar to the structure's rounded bench.[104] The Romans, no doubt inspired by Classical Greek architecture, adopted the *exedra,* and it became a common feature of Roman public and private architecture.[105]

Utilized as both a stand alone architectural element, and incorporated into other structures, *exedrae* appear in great numbers throughout the Roman world. In Pompeii, for example, *exedrae* appear as common components of domestic architecture, as can be observed situated before the peristyle garden within the House of the Faun (Fig. 2.20). Neither a bench nor public monument, the exedra from the House of the Faun functions as an open, three sided room that allowed visual or physical access to a garden or courtyard space. Also in Pompeii, an exedra bench backed with a sundial in the Triangular Forum, functioned as both a monument to Lucius Sepunius Sandilianus and Marcus Herrenius Epidianus, whom its inscription commemorate as patrons, and as a public space of momentary repose.[106] Evidently, by the Augustan age, the Roman *exedra* had taken on a form all its own, although not without a self-conscious reference to its Greek archetype. The Roman *schola* tomb is a clear example of these processes, as a uniquely Roman reference to and reinterpretation of Greek memorial *exedrae*, constructed in honor of celebrated persons, but without funerary connotations.[107]

Similarly, the colonnaded façade is highly reminiscent of the Roman *scaenae frons*, or monumental stage backdrop. Although Greek *skene* did not typically contain sculptural decoration, Greek *proskenion* often did, which, along with the *skene*, inspired

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[104] Susanne Freifrau von Thüngen, *Die Frei Stehende Griechische Exedra* (Mainz: Zabern, 1994), 11, 15.
[105] MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire II: An Urban Appraisal*, 151.
[106] The dedicatory inscription reads, "Lucius Sepunius Sandilianus, son of Lucius, and Marcus Herrenius Epidianus, the son of Aulus, dummvirs with judiciary authority, caused the seat and sundial to be made at their own expense." (CIL X 831). Translated by August Mau and Francis W. Kelsey, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art* (New York, Macmillian Co., 1899), 135-36. Interestingly, this exedra is also decorated on each end with winged lion's paws.
[107] Enrica Pozzi, "Exedra Funeraria Pompeiana Fuori Porta di Nola," *Rediconti* 35 (1960), 176.

Roman stage architecture and decoration.[108] Adapted from the Greek *skene* and *proskenion*, the Roman *scaenae frons*, like the Roman *exedra*, had at its core a Greek antecedent, but modified aesthetically and functionally to suit Roman needs. In addition to an adoption of the physical form of the *skene* and *proskenion*, the Romans also embraced the notion of the Greek theater, considering it a form of "high" culture.[109] This is reflected in the architecture and decoration of the Theater of Pompey (Fig. 2.21), dedicated in 55 BCE, which represents the development of Roman theatrical architecture as the first permanent theater. Inspired by Classical Greek models, early Roman theaters took on a similar semicircular form.[110] Indeed, Plutarch tells us that the project was inspired by Pompey's trip to Mytilene.[111] The original *scaenae frons*, composed of two stories of colonnaded niches and rectangular recesses,[112] looks wholly unlike any Greek *skene* or *proskenion*, but would have functioned similarly as a monumental backdrop to block out views of the city beyond the theater, thereby enhancing the illusion of the performance's reality. Thus, like the Roman *exedra*, the Roman stage scene existed as a modified Greek architectural type, emulated and adapted in both function, and form.

While the *exedra* bench and *scaenae frons* components of Eumachia's tomb have Roman precedents as architectural types, the Amazonomachy frieze has no clear Roman model. Instead, most examples of Amazonomachy friezes come from the Greek east. In antiquity, the most famous examples of Amazonomachy friezes were those from the west metopes of the Parthenon and the exterior frieze of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (Fig.

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[108] William L. MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire II: An Urban Appraisal*, 196.
[109] Roger Ling, *Pompeii: History, Life & Afterlife* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2005), 45.
[110] Klar, "The Origins of the Roman Scaenae Frons and the Architecture of Triumphal Games in the Second Century B.C.," 163.
[111] Plut., *Vit. Pomp*., 42.4.
[112] Sear, "The Scaenae Frons of the Theater of Pompey," 690-91.

2.22). Although the Parthenon is, arguably, the more famous example, the Mausoleum, as a funerary monument, is the more likely referent. In either case, the Amazonomachy frieze is reminiscent of Greek architectural monuments that would have been well known in antiquity. When considering the Amazonomachy frieze from this perspective, other possible funerary connections emerge. In Greece, Amazonomachy scenes were typically symbolic of the triumph over an enemy, nature, or chaos.[113] In the Etruscan world, this motif was a favorite of funerary urns and sarcophagi as a signifier of the triumph over death (Fig. 2.23).[114] As a town with Greek and Etruscan predecessors, the symbolism of the frieze may have, for Pompeians at least, been multivalent. Notably, the *exedra, scaenae frons* (or *proskenion*), and Amazonomachy frieze are all components of well-known Greek architectural types or Roman reinterpretations of Greek architectural types. This seems too neat to be mere coincidence.

What motive might Eumachia have had in combining three different architectural features, and why these particular three? Two potential, feasibly interrelated, explanations emerge. First, it is widely known that the Eumachii had Greek roots, perhaps descendants of the Greek colonizers who settled Southern Italy in the 7th century BCE. By recalling Greek-inspired Roman architectural traditions, Eumachia may have been paying homage to her Greek ancestors, while also proclaiming the elite, established status of her family within the Roman Empire. Second, *exedrae, scaenarium frontes*, and Amazonomachy friezes are each forms of Roman-adapted Greek architectural types, associated with a different aspect of "high" Greek culture. As we have seen, *exedrae* were associated with philosophical inquiry and honorific monuments in both Greece and

[113] Page duBois, *Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Prehistory of the Great Chain of Being* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 55.
[114] Sinclair Bell and Alexandra Carpino, *A Companion to the Etruscans* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 245.

Rome. The colonnaded façade, if alluding the Roman *scaenae frons*, refers to the theater, a cherished pastime in the Greek East and Roman West. The frieze, on the other hand, would seem to be associated with Greek religious or sepulchral architecture, both also hallmarks of cultured Greek society and monumental feats of architecture.

How, then, does the frieze function within a monument to cultural hybridization? While the Roman reappropriation of the Amazon motif may not be as obvious as that of the *exedra* or *scaene frons*, it is just as powerful. In one sense, the undeniable Greek influence of the frieze may have been Eumachia's way of celebrating her Greek ancestry, but having been a Roman citizen all her life, it is doubtful her Greek heritage would have been the defining aspect of her social and cultural identity. The key lies in a return to the examination of Eumachia's building in the Forum. As we have seen, scholars have long touted the connection of Eumachia's Building to the *Porticus Liviae*, citing a shared dedicant, Concordia Augusta, similar decoration, and even architectural parallels.[115] Eumachia, eager to emulate Augustan monuments, may similarly have looked to the Mausoleum of Augustus when constructing her own funerary monument (Fig. 2.24). Although the Mausoleum was not itself decorated with an Amazonomachy frieze, its referent, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, or the Tomb of Mausolus, was. Called a mausoleum in explicit reference to the tomb of the Greek ruler, Augustus's tomb was intended to be equally as monumental and propograndistic. Famous in antiquity, the reference would not have been lost on Roman viewers of the Mausoleum of Augustus. Perhaps Eumachia, aware of this connection, elected to decorate her tomb with a feature of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus as a means of further aligning herself with the first family in Rome. Considering the unmistakable allusions to Augustan propaganda within

[115] Dobbins, "Problems of Chronology, Decoration, and Urban Design in the Forum at Pompeii," 661.

the Eumachia Building, it is not surprising that Eumachia would chose to emulate Augustan monuments in the decoration of her tomb, as a means of legitimizing her position among the social elite of Pompeii.

Therefore, three elite realms of the Greek-inspired Roman world are represented within Eumachia's tomb, reinforcing not only her aristocratic status, but also announcing her cultural sophistication through her knowledge of the Greek culture behind the adapted Roman architectural features. There are no shortage of examples of the display and appropriation of Hellenistic culture in Pompeii. One of the most famous discoveries in all of Pompeii, the *Alexander Mosaic*, is a perfect case in point (Fig. 2.25). Found within the immense House of the Faun, the *Alexander Mosaic* reproduces a well-known painting by Philoxenos of Eretria, famous even in antiquity.[116] By decorating their house with a mosaic copy of the painting, the owners of the House of the Faun were demonstrating to their guests not only their knowledge of Greek history, but also their familiarity with elite Greek culture. Similarly, the Romans enthusiastically copied the most famous Greek sculptures, including the well-known *Doryphoros* by Polykleitos, of which many copies have been discovered (Fig. 2.26). At least three of the known copies of the *Doryphoros* were uncovered along the Bay of Naples.[117] Clearly, knowledge of Greek culture was a signifier of refined taste, sophistication, wealth, and elite status in Augustan Pompeii, and this sensibility, combined with her status as a Roman citizen and public priestess, may have been exactly what Eumachia was trying to capitalize on in the design and decoration of her funerary monument.

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[116] Pablo Moreno, *Apelles: The Alexander Mosaic* (Milano, Italy: Skira, 2001), 11-15.
[117] Warren G. Moon, *Polykleitos, the Doryphoros, and Tradition (*Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 74, 173.

If this was indeed Eumachia's intention, it reveals much in the way of how she conceptualized and presented her identity. Clearly lacking in neither status nor resources, Eumachia made a concerted choice in selecting these forms for her tomb. Funerary monuments, as this paper seeks to argue, were important vehicles through which Roman women could manipulate and propagate their public personae. Of course, tombs were not the only opportunity for women to announce their self-determined identities, and indeed not all women did or could take advantage of this tool, but as a permanent monument to one's memory, in a world where they could not attain notoriety through state or military service, funerary monuments could be powerful reflections of the manner in which women hoped to identify and be remembered. If indeed a hybrid of Greek-inspired architectural elements, it is clear that Eumachia's identity as an elite Roman woman familiar with Augustan propaganda and Hellenistic culture were characteristics that she, patron of the monument, valued most. With this in mind, it is not hard to see how the inclusion of elements such as the *scaenae frons* may have functioned as a metaphor for Eumachia's own status in Pompeian society, as a woman of Greek ancestral origin, but shaped by Roman culture. Not only a remarkable comment on Pompeii's multicultural history, it also assigns a kind of currency to Greek culture, whether as a founder of Pompeii, or as a culturally admirable society. Where the tomb is exceptional in its unusual form, size, decoration, and location, Eumachia was unusual as a Roman woman with formal, state sanctioned power and responsibilities. Thus, the architectural components of her funerary monument can be understood as a reflection of Eumachia's multifaceted identity.

*Monument and Identity*

Undoubtedly a woman of no small importance, Eumachia's tomb leaves no question as to her wealth and influence. To have deserved so grand a monument, it might be reasoned, its occupant clearly must have been of high stature. Perhaps motivated by a desire for immortality through the maintenance of her memory, Eumachia ensured she would not be forgotten with the size and grandeur of her tomb. Significantly, no explicit references are made to the achievements or honors she enjoyed in life. Hailing from such a well-known family, and likely because of her commanding building in the Forum, such associations may have been deemed unnecessary to broadcast. Ultimately, then, Eumachia's chief concern can be understood as a reminder and celebration of her Greek heritage and cultural sophistication, aspects of her identity she clearly valued, and which could not have been extrapolated from the Eumachia Building.

Although it is impossible to know for certain, there is good evidence that the tomb was funded and conceptualized by Eumachia herself. Considering the careful, calculated design and message of her building in the Forum, it would be very surprising had Eumachia not been directly involved in the construction of her final resting place. De Caro and D'Ambrosio agree, suggesting that Eumachia chose the tomb type herself.[118] This seems to fit with what we know of Eumachia, as a powerful, well-respected woman, who knew exactly how, when, and where to promote herself and her family in the architectural record. It is hard to image a woman such as Eumachia leaving the marker of her remains to another. As we have seen, the Romans were very concerned with their post-mortem memories, and therefore it is entirely possible that Eumachia initiated the construction of her tomb years before she was laid to rest within. Such a practice was not

[118] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.

uncommon in the Roman world. The emperor Augustus began his massive mausoleum shortly after his return from Actium in 29 BCE, at the age of thirty-five (Fig. 2.27).[119] Completed forty years before Augustus's death, the monument served a dual purpose: as a funerary monument, but also a marker of Augustus' power. Thus, the mausoleum simultaneously demonstrates Roman concerns with legacy and memory, and functions as a marked political statement, standing, for instance, in stark contrast with Marc Antony's plans to be buried in Egypt.[120] A consultation of the epitaph from Eumachia's tomb would seem to support the theory that Eumachia was responsible for the construction of her own tomb. The inscription relays the structure was, "for herself and her family," implying her direct role in its commission and construction.

*Eumachia in Context: Sacerdotes Publicae*

Unlike some elite Pompeian women such as Mamia and Aesquillia Polla, Eumachia was awarded neither public land nor funds for her burial. Why might such a well-known woman have been denied these honors by the city, which all records indicate she served faithfully? Only conjecture is possible, but it seems likely to have been a direct effect of her social and political status at the end of her life. By the time of Eumachia's death, both her husband and father had passed away. If we study the Pompeian women for whom city lands or funds were awarded it becomes apparent that many of these women were given such high honors because of the prestige of their husbands or fathers. This observation is demonstrated unmistakably in the case of

[119] Filippo Coarelli, trans. James Clauss and Daniel Harmon, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 302.
[120] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 50-60.

Aesquillia Polla. The young wife of the *duovir* Numerius Herennius Celsus, Polla was awarded a place of burial and a *schola* tomb by the town councilors upon her death (Fig. 2.28).[121] At just twenty-two years of age, with no record of monumental dedications to the city, and no mention of a priestess-hood, it is clear Polla's tomb was granted to her as an honor to her husband. The epitaph accompanying the tomb corroborates this theory,

> "Numerius Herennius Celsus, son of Numerius, of the Menenian tribe, *duovir* with judicial power twice, staff officer, to Aesquillia Polla, daughter of Gaius, his wife. She lived 22 years. A burial place was given publically by decree of the town councilors."[122]

Thus, with neither her father nor her husband alive, despite her undeniable social prestige, Eumachia may have been ineligible for such privileges. There are, however, a few priestesses granted these honors seemingly of their own merit. Mamia, the first known public priestess, was given public land and funds for her funeral upon her death, as well as a *schola* tomb (Fig. 2.29).[123] Unlike Eumachia, who also served as public priestess, Mamia may have died while still serving the city, as evidenced by her funerary epitaph, which records her status as public priestess and identifies that the monument was built *for* and not *by* Mamia.[124] Mamia's predecessors the priestesses Clodia and Lassia were also awarded places of burial by the city.[125] Similarly, Alleia was granted public money for her funeral.[126] In the service of both Ceres and Venus Pompeiana, she may have been held in particularly high esteem, and given special honors accordingly.[127]

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[121] Alison Cooley and M.G.L. Cooley, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2004), 139.
[122] Cooley and Cooley, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook*, 139.
[123] Lawrence Richardson Jr., *Pompeii: An Architectural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988), 255.
[124] Mamia's epitaph reads: "To Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess, a place for burial was given by decree of the decurions." Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii,* 188.
[125] CIL X 1074a, CIL X 1074b
[126] EE 8.315
[127] Michele D'Avino, *The Women of Pompeii* (Li: Loffredo, 1967), 104.

However, as fewer than half the known priestesses received public honors from the city, it cannot be assumed that all women in the service of Ceres or Venus Pompeiana were granted such privileges, Eumachia being among the unlucky majority who were not.

Eumachia's funerary monument becomes even more intriguing when compared to that of a woman more or less her equal. Mamia, the daughter of Publius Mammius, was a woman from a wealthy, well-established Pompeian family. Like Eumachia, she erected a public structure in the Forum, apparently on her own land, in honor of the Genius Augustii.[128] Her funerary monument, a *schola* tomb, lies roughly thirty meters outside the Porta di Ercolano. Two steps up from the road, the circa 27 BCE-14 CE semi-circular *schola* bench is large enough to accommodate many travellers, and is nestled in between two other funerary monuments along the so-called Via dei Sepolchri. An inscription in large letters stretches across the entire back of the bench, which is constructed of blocks of Nocera tufa and basalt.[129] The carved inscription, once highlighted with red paint, reads, "To Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess, a place for burial was given by decree of the decurions," delineating not only Mamia's aristocratic lineage, but also her role as public priestess.[130] Winged lions' paws cap either end of the bench, the only decorative element (Fig. 2.30). Although simply decorated, the message is clear: Mamia was a great and important woman worthy of public celebration in perpetuity.

According to Liisa Savunen, Mamia appears to have been the first individual, male or female, to be awarded a public funeral in the city.[131] Three elements are

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[128] Richardson, *Pompeii: An Architectural History*, 255. Some scholars, such as Ittai Gradel disagree, believing the temple to have instead been dedicated to the Genius of the city of Pompeii. Ittai Gradel, "Mamia's Dedication: Emperor and Genius. The Imperial Cult in Italy and the Genius coloniae in Pompeii," *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 20 (1992): 50.
[129] Campbell, *The Tombs of Pompeii: Organisation, Space and Society*, 157.
[130] Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii,* 188.
[131] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, 153.

especially valuable to compare between the tombs of Eumachia and Mamia. Although of seemingly similar social stature, the architectural form, decoration, and location of the two tombs vary greatly. Whereas Mamia's tomb is located outside the Porta di Ercolano surrounded by the monuments of Pompeii's elite citizens, Eumachia's monument is situated outside the Porta di Nocera with mostly freedmen as her neighbors, a place of considerably less prestige. It is quite likely that as the city's first public priestess, Mamia was awarded special honors that were not enjoyed by all of her predecessors. Perhaps Eumachia, past her tenure as priestess, could not assume she would be awarded public lands or funds for her funeral. In choosing a slightly less prestigious location, Eumachia may actually have made an extremely strategic choice, as her tomb remains a standout among those outside the Porta di Nocera.

Despite the existence of superficial similarities, the two sepulchral monuments differ widely architecturally. While both the tombs feature an *exedra* bench, only Mamia's can be considered a formal *schola* tomb. In order to be a proper *schola*, a funerary monument needed to be granted by the city council, which Eumachia's was not.[132] Although extant, Eumachia's *exedra* was not intended for pubic enjoyment, due to its location several meters away from the street and partitioned off by a gate. Clearly, Eumachia's *exedra* could not have been easily accessed by the weary traveller, and cannot have been considered a public gift in the same way that Mamia's was. Neither does Eumachia's monument follow the traditional *schola* architectural form. Whereas Mamia's monument is a simple bench with an inscription, Eumachia's incorporates an *exedra*, monumental façade, and frieze. As can be observed through a study of the seven

[132] Michael Scott, *Space and Society in the Greek and Roman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 91.

other *scholae* discovered at Pompeii, the *schola* was an established "type", consisting of a large bench often capped with decorative lions' paws.[133] Although remains were possibly interred within the bench itself, in separate freestanding columns, or in the platform in front, scholars do not know for sure where remains were placed within *schola* tombs, if at all.[134] Unlike Eumachia's *exedra*, *schola* benches contain no interior chamber. This would imply not only a different outward appearance, but also a different function altogether. As Eumachia's monument does not easily fit within the criterion of the *schola* type, it must be considered a form all its own.

A similar discrepancy can be observed between the decorative programs of the two monuments. In the case of Eumachia's tomb, the simple elegance of the traditional *schola* tomb has been supplanted by an abundance of sculpture. Whereas only a simple inscription and lions' paws adorn Mamia's monument, Eumachia's tomb would have been highly ornate, fronted with freestanding and relief sculpture, a multistoried façade, and fictive architecture.[135] A similar incongruity can be observed when comparing Mamia and Eumachia's epitaphs, as the funerary inscriptions differ in both physical form and the information conveyed. An exploration of the information communicated by the inscriptions yield important clues as to how each woman, or in Mamia's case the individuals who constructed the tomb in her honor, wished to portray the interred. Whereas Mamia is identified through her father, her public position, and honors granted by the city council, Eumachia is simply associated with her father, with no mention of her status as public priestess. Clearly, two different strategies of public commemoration and viewer interaction are at play in the tombs of Eumachia and Mamia. Differences aside,

[133] Richardson, *Pompeii: An Architectural History*, 255.
[134] Paul Zanker, *Pompeii: Public and Private Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 123.
[135] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11OS.

both tombs seem to have been constructed with particular modes of approach in mind. As we have seen, Eumachia's tomb surprises the viewer with its sudden magnificence when approaching the city from the southwest. Mamia's *schola*, on the other hand, was undoubtedly aimed at addressing and interacting with travellers on their way into the city through the Porta di Ercolano. This intention is demonstrated through one's experience of the inscription, which slowly becomes legible as one approaches and passes in front of the monument. Cleverly engineered as an active interaction with the viewer, only the first part of the epitaph, "To Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess" can be read when first approaching the tomb from the northwest (Fig. 2.31). Just before passing in front of the *schola* the words, "the place of the tomb given," appear (Fig. 2.32). Finally, once past the bench one can read the words "by decree of the decurions"(Fig. 2.33). This gradual unfolding of the inscription reveals not only the intended mode of approach, but also the sections of the epitaph considered most important. Unsurprisingly, Mamia's name and that of her father come first, as it is she whom the tomb commemorates. Mamia's status as public priestess is celebrated next, and finally the honors awarded to her by the city council are recorded.

With these evaluations in mind, it is evident that Mamia's monument, located prominently outside the Porta di Ercolano, was primarily concerned with the celebration of her elite status and role as public priestess, while Eumachia's visually striking tomb was focused on impressing the viewer through its architectural form and decorative details. As structures commissioned by two very different individuals, Eumachia herself and likely a relative of Mamia's, the two tombs approach posthumous commemoration in very different ways. Eumachia's monument, as one of self-commemoration,

demonstrates an attempt at the manipulation of public self-identity other than what Pompeian society assumed or expected of her, but rather how *she* wanted to be remembered for posterity.

In life, Roman men and women created and adapted their identities through numerous daily choices, proliferating one's worth to the public. In death, no longer an active member of the community, one's identity was left to others to perpetuate and recreate. As a means of ensuring the preservation and good nature of one's posthumous identity, those who could erected funerary monuments to themselves, espousing for posterity a self-determined identity by which they hoped to be remembered, as a means of "trapping" memory.[136] As in life, identity building and memory making were continuous processes that required constant reshaping and recontextualization.

Just as epitaphs required a viewer's participation, traditionally read aloud almost as if in dialogue with the deceased,[137] so too did the form and decoration of funerary monuments, as tools of physical and cognitive manipulation.[138] As Jas Elsner demonstrates, monuments could effect the visual construction of ritual or narrative.[139] Through the construction of active funerary monuments, those that required the participation of the viewer,[140] tombs could be continually reactivated to create and sustain the memories of the deceased in a temporally relevant way, but one that was determined by the patron of the monument.

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[136] Graham, "From Fragments to Ancestors: Re-defining the Role of *Os Rectum* in Rituals of Purification and Commemoration in Republican Rome," 93.
[137] Maureen Carroll, "'Vox Tua Nempe Mea Est' Dialogues with the Dead in Roman Funerary Commemoration," *Accordia Research Papers* 11 (2007/2008): 37.
[138] Penelope J.E. Davies, "The Politics of Perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," *Journal of American Archaeology* 101, No.1 (1997): 52.
[139] Jas Elsner, "Sacrifice and Narrative on the Arch of the Argentarii at Rome," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005): 83.
[140] Davies, "The Politics of Perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," 49.

Such an aim can be observed in the tomb of Eumachia. A multi-tiered, complicated structure, the tomb cannot be understood in its entirety in a single glance. Rather, it must be read, component-by-component, top to bottom. Only then can a viewer fully perceive the identity that Eumachia hoped to exhibit. In this way, the elements build upon one another, each one subtly changing and reinforcing the message of that before it. Beginning with the Amazonomachy frieze, the funerary associations are clear, alerting the viewer at once to the memorial function of the structure, as well as its connections to Greek mausolea and monumental architecture. Next, the *scaenae frons* façade, a markedly Roman architectural innovation with Greek roots, communicates the uniquely Roman associations of the deceased. Finally, the *exedra* bench conveys not only architectural form as a hybridization of Greek and Roman cultural and architectural traditions, but also the hybrid identity of Eumachia herself. In a sense, it is the culmination of the structure as a vehicle of identity; composed of distinct parts, both monument and deceased can be understood as amalgams of elite Greek and Roman traditions and culture, distinct from and superior to either. Thus, through an active engagement of the viewer via a progressive visual language, the funerary monument of Eumachia secures and enacts her self-constructed identity in her stead for eternity.

*Conclusions*

Although exceptional in many ways, a study of the Pompeian public priestess Eumachia nonetheless represents an exploration of the ways in which a particular type of Roman woman, an aristocrat outside the city of Rome, constructed and understood her own public character. Adherent to ideologies and resources only available to the local

elite, Eumachia utilized her funerary monument as a marker of self-determined identity, providing insight into how wealthy, socially elite Pompeian women conceptualized their status within Pompeii and the Roman Empire, itself an exploration of the inner workings of Roman and Pompeian social, economic, and gender hierarchies. Whereas the following chapters will make this division clearer, even a study of Eumachia alone has revealed the power potentialities of female funerary monuments. The architecture, decoration, and form of the tomb, each carefully crafted, offered to Eumachia a very public and lasting venue for demonstrations of the self. Proud of her Greek heritage and elite status in Pompeii, Eumachia devised a tomb that celebrated not only her life, but also her identity as a powerful Pompeian woman in a manner that could only have been accomplished through a funerary monument.

## Chapter Three: The Fortune of a Freedwoman: The Cenotaph of Naevoleia Tyche on the Via dei Sepolchri

Despite her humble origins as a slave, Naevoleia Tyche is among the most famous of Pompeian women, due in large part to the survival of a grand memorial dedicated to her and her husband outside the Porta di Ercolano in Pompeii. Aside from a handful of notable studies,[141] its architecture and decorative program have been afforded only a cursory examination in most texts. Although considerations of Tyche's status as a freedwoman abound, the decoration and significance of the monument are most often condemned as the ostentatiously derivative taste of freedmen and women when addressed. Through a detailed analysis of the monument's architectural features, decoration, and epitaph, together with considerations of 1st century CE viewership and the experience of the structure, this study hopes to recover the public identity Tyche aimed to promote for herself. Thus, this chapter seeks to establish the ways in which the monument was conceptualized as a marker of identity, determined through experiential reconstructions of the memorial, to understand why such a structure was chosen and how it functioned as a multifaceted memorial to both Tyche's husband and the freedwoman herself.

### *A Freedwoman in Pompeii*

Neither a public priestess nor benefactress of the city, it is only through accidents of survival that the memory of Naevoleia Tyche has been preserved. Throughout the city of Pompeii, Tyche's name is recorded just twice, once associated with a grand funerary

[141] See August Mau and Francis W. Kelsey, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1899), Valentin Kockel, *Die Grabbauten Vor Dem Herkulaner Tor in Pompeji,* Beiträge zur Erschliessung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und Architektur (Mainz am Rhein: P. v. Zabern, 1983), and Virginia Campbell, *Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

monument outside the Porta di Ercolano, and once with a second funerary memorial within the Porta di Nocera necropolis. Little is known about the lives of Tyche, her husband, Gaius Munatius Faustus, or the family of her patron Lucius Naevolius. Castrèn, in his work on the *gentes* of Pompeii, records just four individuals from the *gens Naevoleii*.[142] Neither in forced servitude nor afforded the full rights of freeborn citizens, Roman freedwomen occupied a space truly at the precipice of two distinct social groups. Accordingly, it can be presumed that although she was able to gain wealth within her lifetime, enough at least to construct an expensive funerary monument along the Via dei Sepolchri, Tyche was unable to attain the same social prestige as women such as Mamia or Eumachia.

Roman slavery was not necessarily a permanent condition. Of course, some served as slaves for life, but for most, eventual emancipation remained a possibility.[143] Freedom could be won in two predominate ways. If so inclined, a master could free their slaves, often done in their will or on their deathbed.[144] Slaves could also purchase their freedom. While in forced servitude, slaves were allowed to save a *peculium*, a small body of property and monetary savings, and when they had acquired their purchase price, slaves could pay their masters for their freedom.[145] Positioned with a social stratum below less fortunate freeborn Romans, freedmen could be very successful and quite wealthy. Despite their relative success, freedmen were not allowed to hold public office or receive honors.[146] The exception to this prohibition was the College of Augustales, predominately composed of (wealthy) freedmen, who served as priests to the imperial

[142] Castrèn, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii*, 194.
[143] A.M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1958), 12.
[144] Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 18.
[145] Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 16.
[146] Florence Dupont, D*aily Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1993), 65.

cult.[147] Members of the Augustales were often successful freedmen, who were invited to join the prestigious society by the town *decurions*, usually given a place of priority at important public events.[148] Typically, Augustales were obligated to pay an initiation fee and provide some kind of benefaction to the college and the city.[149] For this reason, wealthy freedmen were frequently chosen as Augustales, as individuals desiring social prestige with funds enough to support the organization and town.[150] The opportunities for freedwomen were even more limited, as no equivalent of the Augustales existed for women.

*A Monumental Commission*

Located halfway down the so called Via dei Sepolchri outside the Porta di Ercolano, the circa 60 CE funerary monument of the freedman Gaius Munatius Faustus and freedwoman Naevoleia Tyche stands surrounded by the tombs of the city's wealthiest and most elite citizens (Fig. 3.1).[151] Not to be outdone by its neighboring tombs, the couple's memorial is composed of a raised altar on a high podium enclosed by a wall that completely surrounds the structure, creating a tiny interior courtyard.[152] The only access to the interior of the monument is through a small door in the north side of the enclosure wall. Once through the doorway, the visitor is immediately presented with a second small doorway leading into the sepulchral chamber (Fig. 3.2). Each wall of the interior

[147] Steven E. Ostrow, "'Augustales' Along the Bay of Naples: A Case for Their Early Growth." *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 34, 1 (1985): 64.
[148] Alex Butterworth, Ray Laurence, and Rogers D. Spotswood Collection, *Pompeii: The Living City* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 50.
[149] Lauren Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History (*New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 58.
[150] Ann Christine Woods, *The Funerary Monuments of the Augustales in Italy* (Los Angeles: University of California, Los Angeles, 1991), 18.
[151] Cormack, "The Tombs at Pompeii," 586
[152] Kockel, *Die Grabbauten Vor Dem Herkulaner Tor in Pompeji*, 100.

chamber is lined with three round niches intended to house ash urns. Directly opposite the entryway there is a large rectangular alcove, recessed into the wall above the three rounded niches, also for the accommodation of ash urns.[153] During the initial excavation of the structure in the late 18th century, three glass and four terracotta ash urns were located within the sepulchral chamber, three of which were still housed in their lead encasements (Fig. 3.3).[154]

Atop the base of the structure lies a monumental altar. Constructed of gleaming white marble, the altar is decorated on three sides with relief sculpture, which together form a cohesive decorative program and continuous pictorial narrative. The use of marble gives a sense of the relative wealth of the family, clearly able to afford to build in such an expensive and enduring material.[155] The front north face, that closest to the viewer on the street, was originally the most detailed relief panel (Fig. 3.4). Although the rest of the monument is in a generally very fine state of preservation, the front north face is badly weathered. At the very top of the panel, the bust of a woman with her hair arranged in stylized waves, peers out through a shuttered window. She wears a *chiton* and mantle, along with earrings, but her facial features are severely damaged. Below the female bust is the monument's inscription, which reads,

> "Naevoleia Tyche, freedwoman of Lucius, [erected this monument] for herself and for Gaius Munatius Faustus, augustalis and paganus, to whom the decurions, with the agreement of the citizens, decreed [the honor of] the bisellium for his merits. Naevoleia Tyche constructed this monument while alive for her freedmen and freedwomen and for those of Gaius Munatius Faustus."[156]

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[153] Kockel, *Die Grabbauten Vor Dem Herkulaner Tor in Pompeji.* 103.
[154] Kockel, *Die Grabbauten Vor Dem Herkulaner Tor in Pompeji,* 100-102.
[155] Cormack, "The Tombs at Pompeii", 600.
[156] CIL X 1030, translated John R Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 315*, 184.

A figural relief scene lies in the register directly below the inscription. In the center of the scene stand two small figures, one on each side of a round receptacle. On the right side stand a group of six men dressed in togas, one of whom, slightly larger than the rest, stands at the head of the group. On the left is a gathering of men, women, and children, some of whom hold baskets. Surrounding the central registers, and intersecting with the female bust, is a border of scrolling acanthus vines, a motif that appears on all three of the sculpted panels.

Closest to the Porta di Ercolano, the east relief panel depicts a *bisellium* surrounded by a flowering acanthus border (Fig. 3.5). A *bisellium*, or double width bench, was an honor awarded for outstanding civic service. The legs of this particular *bisellium* are ornately decorated, and a tasseled cushion lies atop the bench. The third and final sculpted relief panel adorns the west side of the altar (Fig. 3.6). Populating the very center is a large ship on the water, with raised sails. Six figures appear on the deck of the vessel. The largest, a man dressed in a tunic, sits in the stern and steers the ship with a rudder. Proportionally, he is nearly twice the size of the other five figures, all of whom attend to the ship's sails. The waves of the sea are clearly delineated by undulating striations, indicating smooth, but active waters. Around this scene is the same scrolling acanthus border. A continuous dentil cornice adorns the top of the relief panels, decorated with acanthus leaves and an egg and dart pattern that wraps all the way around the altar. At the very top of the altar is a pair of decorative sculpted *pulvini* cushions, indicative of wealth and comfort.[157]

*The Language of Commemoration*

[157] Savunen, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, 64.

The inscription that accompanies the monument of Tyche and Faustus is rich with information stated, implied, and absent (Fig. 3.7). First and foremost, the inscription communicates important information about the lives and achievements of the couple. While no formal honors or titles are recorded for Tyche, Faustus's achievements are proudly celebrated. As Lauren Hackworth-Petersen rightly points out, no explicit mention is made of Faustus's status as a freedman.[158] However, the lack of filiation attached to his name in the inscription would seem to indicate former servile status. A member of the College of the Augustales from 56-57 CE, Faustus, also served as *paganus*, an official in charge of a city district.[159] In addition to his civic positions, Faustus's honors are recorded. In recognition for his distinguished service, he was granted a *bisellium* in the theater, a high honor for an Augustalis.[160] What's more, this honor was apparently granted to Faustus by the city council with the approval of the people, indicating not only his exceptional service, but also popularity among the citizens of Pompeii.

Significantly, Tyche identifies herself as the patron of the monument not once, but twice within the inscription. This inclusion may expose Tyche's preoccupation with the advertisement of her involvement in the structure's construction. Not only does she begin the inscription with her own name, designating the monument for herself and her husband, but Tyche also ends the dedication once again identifying herself as patron. In the last sentence of the inscription, we are told that Tyche built the monument within her

[158] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 98.
[159] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 315,* 184.
[160] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 315,* 184.

own lifetime, not only for herself and her husband, but also for their freedmen.[161] With such an emphatic statement of her financial support, no viewer could have mistaken Tyche as anything but the patron of the sepulcher. While it is immediately evident that the inscription demonstrates her wealth, it also can be seen as a celebration of her generosity. It is almost as if to suggest, just as Faustus's service of and munificence towards the city were recognized, Tyche's generosity also merited public acknowledgement.

Much like her identification as patron of the monument, the ordering of the words is telling. Although her husband enjoyed arguably more social prestige than she, Tyche has elected to list her name and associations first. Only in the second line is her husband acknowledged and identified.[162] It is also made clear that Faustus had no hand in the construction of the tomb, as Tyche twice reminds the viewer. Even further, she has made sure to specify that the monument was constructed during her lifetime, indicating that not only did she fund the structure, but also oversaw its design and construction.

*Pictorial Narrative and Contemporary Experience*

The Via dei Sepolchri, so called because of its funerary associations, leads from Naples and Herculaneum to the Porta di Ercolano, one of the busiest gates into the city of Pompeii (Fig. 3.8).[163] Lining the street are over thirty-four tombs and funerary monuments.[164] Among these tombs is the monument of Naevoleia Tyche and Gaius Munatius Faustus. Although not situated on land granted by the city council within the

[161] CIL X 1030.
[162] CIL X 1030.
[163] Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon, *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World,* Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 410.
[164] Campbell, *Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society*, 152.

coveted thirty meters from the Porta di Ercolano, their memorial would have been early among those a visitor entering the city from the north would have encountered. Accordingly, it is important to remember that visitors, especially those traveling to Pompeii for the first time would have approached the structure along a particular route. Similar to Eumachia's tomb, the monument of Tyche and Faustus carefully considers and controls a viewer's experience. Situated on the right hand side of the street, if approaching the city, the monument is visible from far down the road, although its decorative details are hard to discern (Fig. 3.9). Slowly, as one draws nearer to the edifice, the details begin to emerge. Finally, just in front of the Villa di Diomede three lots northwest of the tomb, the ship and sailors can be seen, albeit without context (Fig. 3.10). Then, once directly in front of the monument, the north face of the altar appears, and the portrait bust, inscription, and group scene come into view. Literate or not,[165] the viewer would begin to understand the narrative of the altar, realizing that the north face is the most important. Finally, once just past the monument, the east panel becomes visible, the concluding scene of the pictorial narrative. This intended mode of approach, as we will see, is vital to the interpretation of the monument's decorative program.

If one choses to stop in front of the sepulcher, read the inscription, and ponder its iconography, the impressive height of the altar towers over the viewer. From this position, the enclosure wall impedes any view of the base or interior of the monument, indicating the exclusivity of the interior (Fig. 3.11). Unlike the very public *schola* tomb of Mamia, Tyche and Faustus's monument was clearly meant for private use, the interior of which could only be accessed through a small doorway. Even if members of the

[165] Carroll suggests many Romans would have been literate enough to read simple inscriptions, or at the very least, have heard them read aloud. Carroll, "'Vox Tua Nempe Mea Est' Dialogues with the Dead in Roman Funerary Commemoration," 41-3.

family happened to be visiting the tomb, the enclosure wall would have obstructed any view of the individuals or activities taking place inside. In the case of Tyche and Faustus's tomb, therefore, the decoration of the monument, which boasts the accomplishments of the couple, was emphasized. The enclosure wall, much taller than the average viewer, not only makes the physical separation of the viewer from the structure emphatically clear, but also, if directly in front of the structure, impedes one's view of the altar above. What was very publically emphasized, however, was the decoration of the altar, which could be seen from either direction down the Via dei Sepolchri.

Equipped with an understanding of a viewer's experience of the tomb, we can now begin to decipher the iconography of the monument. Beginning with the east panel, the pictorial motif is rather straightforward. Framed by scrolling acanthus, known in antiquity for its funerary associations,[166] the large *bisellium* bench is the only object depicted, and thus the focus of the east face of the altar. As the highlight of his public, political career, the inclusion and celebration of Faustus's receipt of the *bisellium* on a memorial to him and his family seems appropriate.[167] The south face of the altar, although constructed of marble, is the only one of the four faces left blank. Its position, as the only panel not visible from the Via dei Sepolchri, meant that few, if any, would be able to observe it.

As the largest of the three decorated panels, the north face is the most complex iconographical component of the altar. Consisting of a female portrait bust, inscription,

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[166] Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone a Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City, 2004), 17. The acanthus, in funerary contexts in both Greece and Rome were symbolic of the triumph over life and death.
[167] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 315,* 184-6.

and group scene, the panel conveys many messages at once. Most scholars agree that the portrait bust of the woman at the top of the panel is meant to represent the patron of the monument herself, Naevoleia Tyche.

The inclusion of a portrait of Tyche but not Faustus is significant. Some might argue that Faustus is depicted in the group scene below, but this still does not account for the prominence of her image, both in location and size. Situated at the very top of the panel, Tyche's portrait is emphasized through the prominence of its placement (Fig. 3.12). Her image is featured above the inscription and the important scene below. As Tyche is not included in the group scene below the inscription, one might assume that the inclusion of the bust represents her observation of the scene from afar. However, based on the forward facing position of her head and shoulders, it seems more likely she is looking straight ahead, perhaps out at the observer. In this way, she may appear as a narrator of sorts, not included within the scene, but alerting the viewer to its presence and significance. This portrait bust may also adhere to the Roman tradition of freedmen decorating the front of their tombs with bust length portraits of themselves and their families.[168] The Tomb of the Rabirii on the fifth mile of the Via Appia in Rome, for example, is decorated with the sculpted busts of three individuals, presumably two freedmen parents and their freeborn daughter (Fig. 3.13).[169] Facing the street, the monument celebrates the freedmen of Rabirius Postumous, banker, merchant, and finance minister to King Ptolemy Auletes, in a rectangular panel with the portraits lined up side by side, almost as if framed within a window space.[170] These portraits, scholars have

[168] Jane Fejfer, *Roman Portraits in Context. Image & Context* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 115.
[169] Ivana Della Portella, Giuseppina Pisani Sartorio, and Francesca Ventre, *The Appian Way: From Its Foundation to the Middle Ages* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004), 72-4.
[170] Della Portella, Sartorio, and Ventre, *The Appian Way: From Its Foundation to the Middle Ages,* 72-4.

suggested, were inspired by the public freestanding full-length portraits of elite individuals ubiquitous throughout the city.[171] Although it is likely such ideologies were at play, in this scenario the absence of Faustus remains puzzling. Despite the many interpretations of the portrait bust, what can be said is that Tyche comprehended the monument as one equally to herself as to Faustus.

The inscription lies below the portrait of Tyche and serves to inform the viewer and commemorate Tyche, Faustus, and their freedmen. The final segment of the north panel, the group scene, depicts two small figures with bins or baskets, flanked by a group of togate men on the right, and men, women, and children on the left (Fig. 3.14). In his 1899 publication, August Mau identified the objects at the center as sacrificial altars, believing it be a scene of funerary offering and ritual after the death of Faustus.[172] More recently, the objects have been identified as grain storage bags, following the theory that the scene depicts a grain dole given by Faustus (and Tyche) to the people of Pompeii.[173] Accordingly, the lowest zone illustrates an actual event, an act of munificence by Faustus. Indeed, the iconographic details support this reading. The figure at the front of the group, slightly taller than the rest, is likely Faustus, who directs the two small figures in the middle of the scene. The group on the left are, accordingly, those waiting to receive the distribution of grain, denoted by the bowls and baskets they carry, and their comparatively simple dress of short belted tunics. Considering the iconographic program as a whole, this interpretation becomes even more likely.

*The Enigma of the West Panel: Commerce or Charon?*

[171] Fejfer, *Roman Portraits in Context,* 115.
[172] Mau, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art*, 422.
[173] Kockel, *Die Grabbauten Vor Dem Herkulaner Tor in Pompeji,* 104.

The third and final decorated face of the altar, the west side, although seemingly simple, is actually that most heavily debated by scholars. Generally, there have been two approaches taken to interpreting the ship and sailors on the west panel. The first, most famously proposed by Mau, is that the scene represents the journey of the deceased to the afterlife.[174] The passage across a body of water to reach the afterlife was a commonly held belief throughout the Greek and Roman worlds. Originating in Greek mythological tradition, the myth of Charon, the ferryman who transports the souls of the dead across the Rivers Styx and Acheron to the world of the dead finds representation throughout the ancient Mediterranean, [175] including a vessel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art[176] and cylindrical marble altar in the Vatican[177] (Figs. 3.15, 3.16). Both the white ground lekythos and altar relief depict Charon in his boat, ready to row his passenger to the realm of Hades. In much a similar vein, the notion of the journey across the tumultuous waters between life and death was a popular Roman idea. Toynbee discusses the belief that the soul of the deceased traveled across the ocean to the "blessed isles," frequently depicted as the journey of the "happy" dead on ships.[178] Mau lends support for this argument, quoting Cicero's *On Old Age*,

> "As for myself, I find the ripening of life truly agreeable; the nearer I come to the time of death, the more I feel like the one who begins to see land and know that sometime he will enter the harbor after the long voyage."[179]

Many authors describe the scene as a journey to the afterlife, but not all agree. Emidio de Albentiis in particular supports the voyage theory, suggesting, "a ship with its sail

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[174] Mau, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art*, 423-24.
[175] Ronnie H. Terpening, *Charon and the Crossing: Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Transformations of a Myth* (Bucknell University Press, Cranbury, NJ, 1985), 25.
[176] Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Accession No. 09.221.44, Attic, circa 430 BCE.
[177] Musei Vaticani, Rome, Pio Clementino Galleria della Candelabra, 2649, 1st century BCE.
[178] Toynbee, *Death and Burial in the Roman World,* 38.
[179] Cic., *Sen.*, 19.71.

lowered heading toward port [is] an explicit metaphor for life and its inevitable conclusion." [180] Others, including Butterworth and Lawrence believe both theories are at play simultaneously.[181]

Adherents to the second suggestion believe the scene depicts the industry through which Faustus and Tyche acquired their fortune. The inclusion of an image signifying one's profession upon a funerary monument was not uncommon in the ancient Roman world. Take, for instance, the famous Tomb of Eurysaces, located just outside of the Roman *pomerium*, and constructed in the Late Republic (Fig. 3.17). Built in the form of a monumental bread oven, the trade through which Eurysaces made his wealth, the tomb is conspicuous in both its monumental form and location along a busy Roman road. In this case, the entire tomb takes on a form symbolic of the patron's profession. But, in other cases, scenes of work or tools of the deceased's profession appear on a much smaller scale (Fig. 3.18).[182] A number of scholars support this interpretation, including Eve D'Ambra and Michael Koortbojian.[183] Others, including Campbell, Elizabeth Will, and Frances Bernstein agree.[184] While each suggestion has merit, this paper seeks to definitively demonstrate the latter. In other words, considering the architectural, iconographical, and textual components of the monument of Tyche and Faustus, it seems

[180] Emidio de Albentiis, "Street of Tombs," in Filippo, Coarelli, Alfredo Foglia, and Pio Foglia, *Pompeii* (New York: Riverside Book Co., 2002), 385.
[181] Butterworth, Laurence, and Spotswood Collection, *Pompeii: The Living*, 51.
[182] Fejfer, *Roman Portraits in Context,* 115. See, for example, the funerary relief of a vegetable vendor discovered at Ostia, depicting the deceased at work at her stand. See Jas Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire AD 100-450.* Oxford History of Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 91.
[183] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 27, Michael Koortbojian, "In Commemorationem Mortuorum: Text and Image Along the 'Street of Tombs'," in ed. Jas Elsner, *Art and Text in Roman Culture.* Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 224.
[184] Elizabeth Lyding Will, "Women in Pompeii," *Archaeology* 32 (5) (1979): 42, Frances Bernstein, "Pompeian Women," 530, Campbell, *Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society*, 121.

more likely that the vessel depicted on the west face of the altar was meant to communicate the business in which Faustus (and Tyche) were engaged.

Perhaps the strongest evidence in favor of the industry interpretation comes from our previous discussion of the ways in which a viewer could approach the monument. Considering that most viewers would have encountered the structure from the northwest, the west face of the altar would have been that first observed. Once in front of the structure, as we have seen, the north panel comes into view, and finally the east. Considering this mode of approach, the altar decoration reads, in sequential order, as a continuous narrative of cause and effect. The first panel, that with the cargo ship and crew, informs the viewer how those whom the tomb celebrates made their living. Next, the observer encounters the bust of Tyche, the inscription, and most importantly, the grain dole scene. As the inscription identifies those buried within and informs the viewer of Faustus's service to the city and his generosity, the relief scene below depicts this important event. At last one observes the east panel, depicting the *bisellium*, the culmination of Faustus's accomplishments. Read in this manner, the three relief panels that adorn the altar narrate the highlights of the couple's life, in chronological order. By beginning his career as a freedman in the shipping industry, Faustus was successful enough to become an Augustalis and provide a grain dole to the city. For his generosity, he was awarded a double width bench in the theater. Considering that, by some estimates, only 10-15% of the Roman population was literate,[185] a continuous narrative seems even stronger a possibility. This simple, but powerful device tells the story of Faustus's life

[185] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 106, and William Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 282-4.

and successes, presented in a clear and continuous manner, and supports no interpretation but that of the family's involvement in the cargo industry.

In further support of this theory, a closer look at the vessel on the west panel reveals that the ship looks nothing like the small barge traditionally depicted with Charon. A white-ground lekythos in the British Museum depicts the ferryman in his barge reaching out to a passenger, and is representative of conventional Charon iconography (Fig. 3.19).[186] Here, as with most other images of Charon and his ship, the vessel is small, near the size of a canoe, and advanced with the pole grasped between Charon's hands. Similar iconography appears in both sculpted relief and mosaic form, such as a mosaic from the Isola Sacra cemetery, (Fig. 3.20)[187] and a round marble altar in the Vatican,[188] which also portray small vessels. As a large ship with a sizable crew, the boat depicted on the west panel of the altar is too dissimilar to have been intended as the barge of the ferryman. A close look at the figures within the relief panel makes the identification of Charon even less likely. The large central figure has neither the attributes nor responsibility of Charon, and instead of actively rowing the boat, he merely sits while the others work. The ship hands would be similarly inappropriate in a scene representing Charon and his ferry. When figures do accompany the ferryman in his boat they are never active, but merely wait as they are transported across the river. Thus, no component of the west relief is suggestive of the journey to the gates of Hades.

*Liberty, Femininity, and Identity*

[186] British Museum, London, No. 1814.1110.4, Attic, circa 400 BCE.
[187] Cemetery of Isola Sacra, Ostia, Tomb no. 86, 2nd century CE.
[188] Musei Vaticani, Rome, Pio Clementino Galleria della Candelabra, 2465, 170 CE.

Just as Eumachia's tomb can be read as an extension of the public identity she wished to exhibit, the monument of Tyche and Faustus is equally telling. However, before a thorough investigation of the identities Tyche and Faustus wished to cultivate can be undertaken, we must first briefly consider an important related structure: the couple's second funerary monument outside the Porta di Nocera, discovered in the 1880's (Fig. 3.21).[189] Generally believed to be the first tomb constructed by the pair, the Porta di Nocera tomb is much simpler, in the form of a small house, with a sloping triangular roof and open interior courtyard.[190]

The inscription is simple,[191] relaying the names and titles of those the tomb honors. Unlike the inscription of the Porta di Ercolano monument, the Porta di Nocera inscription lists only Faustus's positions as Augustalis and paganus. However, the inscription does record that the place of burial was given by decree of the *decurions*.[192] This would explain the less prestigious location of the couple's monument outside the Porta di Ercolano relative to the gate; already honored once with public land, the couple's second monument was not eligible for the distinction. This observation has led some scholars to propose that Faustus was awarded the *bisellium* after the first tomb had already been erected, thus prompting the construction of the second tomb outside a more prominent gate.[193] While chronologically sound, the absence of Faustus's remains and the language of the inscription of the later tomb, clearly indicating Tyche's patronage, would suggest otherwise. Furthermore, the addition of an honor to a tomb epitaph,

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[189] de Albentiis, "Street of Tombs," 385.
[190] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11ES.
[191] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 11ES, 9ES. The inscription of the tomb of Tyche and Faustus reads, " C. Munatius Faustus, Augustalis and Paganus, (built this tomb) for himself and his wife, Naevoleia Tyche, by decree of the decurions."
[192] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 74.
[193] Campbell, *Tombs of Pompeii: Organization, Space, and Society*, 131.

although unusual, was not impossible. Indeed, the inscription of the multistory *aedicula* tomb of Publius Vesonius Phileros also along the Strada delle Tombe was edited in antiquity. Sometime after the completion of the sepulcher, Phileros was elected Augustalis, a title added to the tomb's inscription at a later date, as indicated by the rather haphazard placement and rendering of the title on the plaque (Fig. 3.22).[194]

The problem of the two tombs has traditionally been explained as an attempt by Tyche to publically elevate the status of herself and her family after the death of her husband. While I do not suggest this reading is incorrect, I hope to nuance the issue, to demonstrate that the Porta di Ercolano monument was not simply an effort at self-aggrandizement, but also a celebration of the accomplishments of Gaius Munatius Faustus, along traditional lines of monumental commemoration. In other words, while the monument of Tyche and Faustus outside the Porta di Ercolano may at first appear an outlier, aspects of it actually adhere to ideas and traditions common to the 1st centuries BCE and CE. While aspirational in some ways, the monument at its core reflects a desire to be remembered.

Tyche was neither the first, nor the last to utilize the celebratory monument of a loved one as an opportunity to promote herself. However, while the appearance of Tyche's portrait bust is without any parallel for Faustus, and the prominence of her name within the monument's inscription seems at first highly unusual and wholly self-serving, there are in fact precedents for such representations. Marleen Flory, in her discussion of the order of names on Roman epitaphs, demonstrates that when the name of a freedwoman precedes that of her husband, it is almost always the case that she was freed first. While allowing the wife a higher status formally, being free longer, many couples

[194] Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 96.

chose to free the woman first to ensure the freedom of any children they might have, as a child's status was determined by the status of their mother.[195] While it is possible Tyche was freed first, Faustus's status as an Augustalis and recipient of a *bisellium* would suggest that he enjoyed more social prestige than his wife. Indeed, it seems very likely that Faustus's roles as Augustalis and paganus would far outrank her comparatively minor distinction. What's more, the epitaph of the Porta di Nocera tomb lists Faustus's name first. Accordingly, Flory identifies scenarios when a woman's financial contribution to the epitaph allows her precedence over her husband,[196] very likely the case with the epitaph of Faustus and Tyche, and can thus help to illuminate the ways in which Tyche's monument may have been less self-interested than it immediately appears. Of course, it is undeniable that Tyche aimed, at least in part, to celebrate herself with the construction of the sepulcher, but the structure can also be understood as a celebration of Faustus and their freedmen.

Tyche's self assertion can be read in a number of ways. The first, and most fundamental, is simply the veneration of her name and identity. Likely informed by Roman anxieties concerning death and memory, if nothing else, what is entirely lucid here is Tyche's desire to be remembered after her passing. The inclusion and prominence of her name and portrait leave no question as to this aspect of the structure's functionality. In a more self-serving manner, the monument can be understood as statement of Tyche's wealth. By recording that the monument was, "built by Naevoleia Tyche..whilst still alive,"[197] Tyche demonstrates her ability to pay for what can only have been a highly

[195] Marleen Boudreau Flory, "Where Women Precede Men: Factors Influencing the Order of Names in Roman Epitaphs," *The Classical Journal* 79, 3 (1984): 217-18.
[196] Flory, "Where Women Precede Men: Factors Influencing the Order of Names in Roman Epitaphs," 223.
[197] CIL X 1030.

expensive commission. This show of wealth works on two levels: not only does she advertise the fortune of her family and its ability to afford a public grain dole, but also her personal wealth as patron of the tomb. Directly connected to Tyche's show of wealth is her display of generosity, in providing a place of burial and commemoration for both her husband and their freedmen, and also more broadly, the couple's generosity in providing a grain dole for the city. Part historical commemoration, part self-celebratory, the tomb of Tyche and Faustus represents a complex, multifaceted memorial to a couple whose fortunes turned well in their favor.

To put things further into perspective, we must turn once again to the decorated relief panels of the altar. A quick glance will communicate Tyche's prominence within the monument's decorative program, but a closer look reveals that she is not nearly as conspicuous as she may initially appear. Make no mistake, the inclusion of her portrait bust and the prominence of her name within the inscription convey concerted choices, but close observation shows a surprising lack of Tyche anywhere else on the monument. The west panel, for instance depicts a shipping vessel, perhaps with Faustus himself on board at the stern, but no Tyche. Furthermore, as the extent of her involvement in the family business is unknown, we cannot necessarily assume Faustus's success would have been her own. Whereas Tyche's name and image do appear on the north face of the altar, she is physically separated from the grain dole scene below. Perhaps her involvement and presence were prohibited at the actual event as well, as a function of the exclusive Augustales, and as suggested by Sarah Pomeroy.[198] Hence, what may seem to prioritize Tyche, may actually adhere to established patterns of monumental commemoration. Although neither Tyche nor Faustus are pictured in the east panel, it is yet again

[198] Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity,* 202.

Faustus's honors and accomplishments that are celebrated with a depiction of the *bisellium* bench, an honor Faustus would have enjoyed alone. Therefore, while the outward appearance of Tyche's self promotion seems an overt gesture, the inclusion of her bust and name simultaneously allowed Tyche the opportunity to broadcast a self-determined identity, and in this way, the memorial can be understood as a uniquely multivalent monument.

*Nouveau Riche or Normative?*

Scholars are often quick to connect the tomb of Tyche and Faustus to Petronius's fictional, ostentatious freedman, Trimalchio.[199] While Trimalchio as a character is useful as a comedic assessment of Neronian era freedmen, it is wrong to assume that such bold and misguided displays of luxury were necessarily also at play within the monument of Tyche and Faustus. In fact, if observed within its context along the Via dei Sepolchri, the monument is neither the largest nor the most grandiose memorial. Rather, the form and decoration are completely in line with the variety of funerary monuments that line the street. As Hackworth Petersen notes, works of art and architecture commissioned by freedmen were just as diverse as those of their freeborn counterparts.[200]

Echoing earlier scholars, Butterworth and Lawrence record that Faustus (not Tyche) was, "obsessed…with the absurdly grandiose mausoleum in which his remains would be placed after his death."[201] Being that the monument was in all likelihood commissioned by Tyche after Faustus's death, their statement should not be given serious

[199] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 3,* 185-7, and Butterworth, Laurence, and Spotswood Collection, *Pompeii: The Living City*, 51.
[200] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 11.
[201] Butterworth, Laurence, and Spotswood Collection, *Pompeii: The Living City*, 51.

consideration, and further belies the prejudice of many scholars of the "ostentatious" form of the tomb, which this chapter aims to challenge. In a similar mode, referring to freedmen, A. M. Duff suggests that, "with this wealth went a certain amount of the boorish ignorance, vulgar ostentation, and ridiculous lack of taste that are associated with the parvenu of modern times."[202] Florence Dupont adds that freedmen were particularly susceptible to flashy luxury.[203] Against this view, the grave marker of Aninia is simple and unassuming, and would seem to suggest otherwise. A *columella* discovered outside the Porta di Nocera, the small plaque records Aninia's name, her status as a freedwoman of a freedman, and the name of her patron.[204] Too often scholars get lost in the notion of so-called ostentatious and unrefined "freedmen taste." They forget that freedmen and women were also sons, daughters, parents, and spouses who were loved and sorely missed. In many ways, the effort on the part of former slaves to promote themselves and their families was exercised simply because the patrons now had the freedom to do so.

It is worth considering the tomb of the *duovir* L. Caesius outside the Porta di Nocera. Similarly dedicated by his wife, the decoration of the tomb (now lost) depicted *fasces*, symbolic of his public service.[205] A freeborn individual of high social status, Caesius's depiction of the honors connected to his civic service demonstrates that such a device was not a product of the garish tastes of freedmen, but rather a known trope in Pompeii with elite precedents. Indeed, Sarah Cormack observes in her chapter on the tombs at Pompeii that Pompeian funerary art was often biographical.[206]

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[202] Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 126.
[203] Dupont, D*aily Life in Ancient Rome*, 67.
[204] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 8EN.
[205] Borrelli, D'Ambrosio, and De Caro, *Un Impegno Per Pompei*, 29OS.
[206] Cormack, "The Tombs at Pompeii," 597.

Bearing in mind the multifaceted function of the cenotaph as a monument to self, family, and affiliates, what was it that prompted Tyche to commission the monument? Neither wholly selfish, nor selfless a gesture, the desire to celebrate herself and her husband does not seem reason enough to construct a second funerary monument, especially as few indications of the supposed nouveau riche, grossly aspirational tastes of freedmen can actually be located here. Might there have been an anxiety other than that of the oblivion of death? Armed with another important observation, a deeper understanding of Tyche's motives in building a cenotaph begins to unfold. As far as the existing literary record indicates, Faustus and Tyche had no known living heirs, freeborn or otherwise. While at first a seemingly insignificant detail, a brief return to Roman attitudes towards death is illuminating.

By now it should be clear that anxiety over one's posthumous memory existed throughout the Roman world. Oblivion, it was thought, did not come in the form of death itself, but rather in the fading of one's memory after death.[207] Tyche, although she may not have begun her life as a Roman citizen, certainly ended her life as one. As has been the case throughout history, without heirs, a family's identity and status died with the last surviving family member. Without offspring, there would have been no one to carry on the family's newly established *gens*, or sustain and increase the wealth and status Faustus and Tyche worked so hard to inaugurate in their lifetimes. Seen from this perspective, Tyche's grand and very public celebration of herself and husband seems, at least in some sense, justified.

We can even postulate a broad chronology of events, to complete the timeline suggested earlier. There is no question that Faustus built the Porta di Nocera tomb for

[207] Hope, *Roman Death: Death and Dying in the Ancient World*, 98.

himself and Tyche while still alive. Although we do not know when it was begun, it was certainly completed by the time he received the *bisellium*, and likely begun well before. Although childless, while Faustus was alive the possibility of children was ever present for the couple. Upon his death, however, with yet no children, the possibility of sustaining the family line was eliminated. Finding herself without a husband or children, Tyche may have realized the hard truth of her situation: if she did not act, her memory and that of Faustus would perish with her. A second memorial was a one of the few forms of monumental commemoration available to her which, although redundant, offered Tyche the possibility of immortality through the perseverance of her memory in public consciousness. The identity Tyche created for herself through the monument was one of wealth, success, and generosity, all things she would lose with the end of her familial line. The location of the cenotaph outside the busy Porta di Ercolano, the great height and visibility of the monument, and the lavish materials of the structure lend further support to this evaluation.

A similar last stitch attempt at propagating one's memory can be observed in the monument of Gaius Vestorius Priscus (Fig. 3.23).[208] His altar tomb, located outside the Porta di Vesuvio, is comprised of a rectangular altar on a raised base, surrounded by high enclosure walls, and stands on the road outside the Vesuvian Gate.[209] The interior of the tomb is painted in vivid fresco, and on the exterior, the face of the altar closest to the street,[210] the inscription is short but informative, recording,

[208] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 69.
[209] Scott, *Space and Society in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, 89.
[210] Hackworth Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 69.

"To Gaius Vestorius Priscus, Aedile. He lived 22 years. His burial place was granted along with 2,000 sesterces for his funeral by decree of the town councilors. Mulvia Prisca, his mother [set this up] at her own expense."[211]

Important here is not only the fact that the tomb was dedicated by his mother Mulvia Prisca, but that she clearly announces her involvement in its construction. Just like Tyche, Prisca recorded her monetary contribution to the tomb, relating to some degree her independence, but also a show of personal wealth. Here, as with the monument of Tyche and Faustus, the patron used the final resting place of a family member as a vehicle through which to establish her own identity as a caring, generous mother. With Prisca and Tyche alike, it was left to the woman herself to promote the survival of her memory. A further connection between the two tombs can be observed in the iconographical details. Like the monument of Tyche and Faustus, the tomb of Priscus combines scenes of the *aedile's* civic service with biographical scenes.[212] Considering both monuments were constructed and dedicated by women, perhaps this connotes a trope of female dedication in 1st century CE Pompeii.

*The Complicit Participant: The Processes of Identity Construction*

The creation of one's identity was not a static process. Instead, it required constant participation and renegotiation. The monumental funerary altar of Naevoleia Tyche, in its attempt to display the identity of its patron, functioned as a continual performance of identity and memory making, requiring the viewer to move around the monument in order to properly "read" the continuous narrative of the relief decoration. As Davies suggests in her discussion of the Column of Trajan, funerary

[211] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 3,* 189.
[212] Cormack, "The Tombs at Pompeii," 597.

monuments required activation, in a sense a continuous reenactment of funerary rituals (Fig. 2.24).[213] In the case of the Column of Trajan specifically, the spiral frieze encourages the circling of the monument to read the decoration, thereby reconstructing the ritual circling of funerary ceremony, or *decursio*, not unrelated to the performance of the funerary feast as discussed in relation to the Tomb of Eumachia.[214] The creation of Tyche's identity can be understood in a similar light, as a process repeatedly reenacted by visitors who encountered the cenotaph on their way into the city. The process of active engagement inherent within the funerary monument of Tyche and Faustus serves to create and perpetuate the memories and identities of two successful Pompeian freedmen through a manipulation of the viewer.

Through the narrative of the altar, a viewer can read and visually construct the identities and memories of those whom it honored. As Davies suggests, the mental narrative created by this interaction served to perpetuate memory.[215] This activation was necessary, according to Roman thought, to keep one's memory alive. The passive viewer, one observing only a single face or section of the tomb, would not understand the larger function, context, and message of the monument. Whether or not this was a strategic choice by Tyche, the active engagement of the viewer would no doubt have drawn in observers, thereby helping to perpetuate her memory along with that of Faustus. Different from Eumachia's tomb, which required a viewer's lateral reading of the architectural and decorative features of the monument to understand the identity she wished to propagate, Tyche's cenotaph requires active engagement, asking the viewer to

[213] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius,* 123.
[214] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 127.
[215] Davies, "The Politics of Perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," 59.

move around the front and sides of the tomb to understand the message in its entirety. Spurring interest and the activation of memory, the funerary monument serves to assert the identity and importance of its honorees, sustaining the process of self-assertion for the deceased in death.

*Conclusions*

Presumably of unexceptional status in her own time, Naevoleia Tyche offers today's scholars a glimpse into the life and status of a Pompeian freedwoman. Standing at the precipice of the strictly delineated free and enslaved social classes, the funerary monument of Tyche and her husband Gaius Munatius Faustus along the Via dei Sepolchri exhibits a desire for remembrance and public recognition. Challenging the approach taken by many scholars, which condemns the cenotaph as a monument to the lavish and unrefined tastes of freedmen, this chapter has aimed to demonstrate that the many components of the structure have precedents within larger Roman culture and artistic production. Like the priestess Eumachia, discussed at length in the second chapter, Naevoleia Tyche used her self-constructed funerary monument as a signifier of the identity she formulated for herself, but through very different devises, and indicative of diverse concerns. Left with no offspring at the death of her husband, Tyche's disquiet over the preservation of the postmortem memories of her husband and herself manifest visually and textually within the monument. This anxiety is reflected in the form, location, and decoration of the Porta di Ercolano monument, which requires active engagement with the continuous narrative of the cenotaph, and conveys the story of the successes of a freedman and his wife. In this way, we can observe an exploration of what

it means to be not only a woman, but a freedwoman of considerable wealth in Pompeian society through the permanent and very public forum of a funerary monument that requires the engagement of an active participant.

# Part II: Funerary Monuments and the Epitaphs Constructed in Honor of Women

**Chapter Four: Identity, Ascent, and Imperial Ideology**

With the ascension of Trajan in 89 CE, Rome inaugurated a period of relative peace and prosperity known as "The Golden Age." Integral to the success of the emperors were the comportment and public personae of their wives. The carefully constructed public identity of Faustina the Elder, the wife of Antoninus Pius, was no exception. Unlike Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche in Pompeii, the empress was beholden to the official imperial image of the emperor and his family. In this way, her public character was more carefully controlled and less self determined than non-imperial women in Rome or Pompeii, and carried a vastly different message of her posthumous memorial than the monuments erected by women for themselves. Through an exploration of the only extant funerary memorial to Faustina, we can begin to understand the processes through which imperial female identity was created, and the ways in which her public persona was meant to function as a signifier of ideal femininity, at least in the eyes of the emperor. Concentrating on the architecture, decoration, and context of the monument, this study aims to examine the creation of identity as a narrative experience through considerations of form and a reconstruction of experience of the monument.

Annia Valeria Faustina, or Faustina the Elder, was born in circa 100 CE to the consul and prefect Marcus Annius Verus and Rupilia Faustina.[216] She married the future emperor Antoninus Pius around 110 CE, and we are told they enjoyed a very happy marriage.[217] Awarded the title *Augusta* upon her ascension to the throne in 138, Faustina

[216] Jasper Burns, *Great Women of Imperial Rome: Mothers and Wives of the Caesars* (London: Routledge, 2007), 141.
[217] Bettina Ann Bergmann, Wendy M. Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress* (South Hadley, MA: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 1999), 6.

Maior was well respected for her roles as attentive wife and mother.[218] Faustina's projected physical appearance and attributes support this characterization. Her hairstyle, consisting of a central part, wavy side locks, back plating, and a bun atop her head, was unique to her and highly influential, remaining popular until two generations after her death (Fig. 4.1).[219] This combination of beauty and restraint came to characterize Faustina in life and death and symbolize ideal femininity.[220]

In 140 CE Faustina passed away at about the age of forty.[221] Antoninus's grief at her passing can be detected in the many honors he and the Senate bestowed upon Faustina after her death. In addition to her official deification, a temple was erected dedicated to the worship of her cult in the Roman Forum (Fig. 4.2).[222] Even after her death, she remained a vital part of Antonine artistic and political propaganda, appearing in monuments throughout the empire, both commissioned by Pius himself and by others, in unprecedented numbers.[223]

*A Column as Commemoration: The Column Base of Antoninus Pius and Faustina*

Upon the death of their adopted father Antoninus Pius in 161 CE, the co-emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus erected a monument in his honor.[224] Standing among the Ara Pacis Augustae, the *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius, and the Horologium of

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[218] Levick, *Faustina I and II: Imperial Women of the Golden Age,* 58.
[219] Ramage and Ramage, *Roman Art: Romulus to Constantine,* 197.
[220] Bergmann, Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress*, 16.
[221] Barbara Levick, *Faustina I and II: Imperial Women of the Golden Age* (New York: Oxford University Press*,* 2014), 123.
[222] After the death of Antoninus Pius in 161, the temple was converted to the Temple of the Divine Antoninus Pius and Faustina. In the 11th century it was rebuilt as the church of San Lorenzo in Miranda, and was remodeled in the Baroque style in 1602.
[223] Burns, *Great Women of Imperial Rome: Mothers and Wives of the Caesars*, 145.
[224] Diana E. E. Kleiner and Fred Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Rendiconti* 51-52 (1978-80): 389.

Augustus in the northern Campus Martius, the monument consisted of a fifty-foot red granite column capped with a bronze statue of Antoninus Pius, supported by a rectangular marble base eight feet high.[225] Although only the base and fragments of column survive, the monument can be reconstructed through contemporary coins struck bearing the image of the newly erected cenotaph (Fig. 4.3).[226]

Now in the Vatican, all four sides of the column base are decorated, three in relief sculpture, and one with inlaid bronze lettering. The north side, bearing the bronze inscription, contains the monument's epitaph (Fig. 4.4). The inscription is short, consisting of only three lines identifying the dedicators and honoree, it reads,

"Antoninus Augustus and Verus Augustus, his sons, to the
Divine Antoninus Pius Augustus."[227]

On the east and west faces two nearly identical scenes are carved in high relief (Fig. 4.5). In the center of these panels, ten infantrymen stand clad in helmets and armor. Surrounding the central group is an army of seventeen *praetorians*, all mounted on horseback. Traditionally interpreted as depicting the *decursio*, or the ritual circling of the funeral pyre by troops on horseback, the east and west panels depict the ceremony performed t the funerals of deceased rulers.[228] Curiously, the perspective of the image is a composite birds eye view, seen both from the side and above. Many scholars have read this hybrid view as an adaptation of styles favored by freedmen and those in the East,[229] in a sense a reverse trickle down of artistic style.

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[225] Lise Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius* Loeb Classical Monographs (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 1.
[226] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius,* 1.
[227] CIL VI 1004, Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 41.
[228] Kleiner and Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," 390.
[229] Kleiner and Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," 394-400.

Oriented toward the *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius, the structure marking the location of the cremation of the former emperor,[230] the south panel depicts five figures with various attributes (Fig. 4.6). Seated upon a rough cobblestone ground, a youthful reclining male figure on the bottom left is draped from the waist down, his head turned in profile. With his left arm he holds a large obelisk, which rests on his bent left leg. The obelisk held by the youth, recognized as that of Augustus's great Gnomon by the ball at its top, denotes the identification of the figure as the Campus Martius.

On the right side of the panel is a seated woman wearing a long *chiton*, a mantle draped over her waist and left arm, a sword sheath slung across her chest, and army boots. Her right hand is raised, gesturing to the figures above,[231] and her left arm rests on a large shield, decorated with a laurel wreath, large central rosette, and the she-wolf suckling the twins Romulus and Remus. Described by Davies as dressed in "Amazon attire,"[232] she is thought to represent Roma, goddess of the city of Rome. Her raised hand, a gesture of acclimation, confirms the ascension of the man and woman above.[233] In between Roma and the Campus Martius rests a pile of discarded arms and a shield.

Above these two figures are a man and woman seated upon the back of a winged male figure in flight. The pair is visible only from the waist up, intended as a double portrait bust of the emperor Antoninus Pius and his wife, the empress Faustina.[234] Dressed in a heavily restored *paludamentum* cloak, tunic, and cuirass, Antoninus Pius

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[230] Mary Boatwright, "The 'Ara Ditis-Ustrinum of Hadrian' in the Western Campus Martius and Other Problematic Roman Ustrina," *American Journal of Archaeology* 89, No. 3 (1985): 496.
[231] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, 33.
[232] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 42.
[233] Richard Hannah, "Praevolante Nescio Qua Ingenti Humana Specie… A Reassessment of the Winged Genius on the Base of the Antonine Column," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 57 (1989): 91.
[234] This depiction is reminiscent of the tradition of funerary busts. See Susan B. Matheson, "The Divine Claudia: Women as Goddesses in Roman Art," in Diana E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, *I, Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 185.

sports a curly beard and hair. In his right hand he holds a scepter with an eagle, symbolic of his power as emperor and allusive to his identification with Jupiter.[235] Next to him, Faustina wears a belted *stola*, with her head veiled. Like her husband, she holds a scepter, symbolic of her power and prestige.[236] Flanking the couple is a pair of large eagles with outstretched wings. These eagles signal the presence of Jupiter helping to guide the couple up to the heavens, as well as the practice of releasing eagles from an imperial funerary pyre once lit.[237]

The body of the winged figure carrying the imperial couple is fully extended in flight, and nude except for a fig leaf (later added by the Vatican). A piece of cloth is draped over his left shoulder and around his back, which he grasps in his right hand. In his left hand he holds an orb decorated with a crescent moon, five stars, and a zodiac band.[238] Wrapped around the orb and his wrist is a serpent.

Whereas most scholars are in agreement over the identities of the Campus Martius, Antoninus Pius, Faustina, and Roma, the identity of the fifth figure, winged and youthful, has not been universally determined. His place of prominence directly in the center of the composition cannot be denied, and would suggest he is important to the narrative of the scene. Generally, he is described as a Genius, based on his role of propelling the royal couple up to heaven and his wings, but beyond this his identity is hotly debated. For example, whereas Bianchi suggests that he represents the Genius Atlas, Brendel has proposed he is *Ascensus*, Visconti believes he is the Genius of *Aeternitas*, and Deubner

[235] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius,* 39.
[236] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, 39.
[237] Alěs Chalupa, "How Did Roman Emperors Become Gods? Various Concepts of Imperial Apotheosis," *Anodos. Studies of the Ancient World* 6 (2006): 205.
[238] Hannah, "Praevolante Nescio Qua Ingenti Humana Specie… A Reassessment of the Winged Genius on the Base of the Antonine Column," 92.

has proposed that he should be identified as *Aion*, a Mithradic god of time.[239] Lise Vogel, in her monograph on the column, considers each suggestion, but believes the Genius represents a personification of the *Saeculum Aureum*, or the Golden Age.[240] More recently, Robert Hannah has proposed the figure is a symbol of spring and renewal, based on the character of the zodiac band, and in keeping with the theme of apotheosis.[241] Ultimately, however, for the purposes of this study, his identification as a Genius of some sort, and more importantly, the vehicle for the ascension of Faustina and Antoninus Pius, will suffice.

*The Northern Campus Martius: Allusions to Augustus*

Unlike the Pompeian examples, neither the column nor the column base of Antoninus Pius remains in situ. Unsurprisingly, this makes the reconstruction of ancient Roman experience of the monument much more difficult than those of Eumachia or Naevoleia Tyche. Although the ancient topography of the Campus Martius has not survived, it is possible to glean a general understanding of the location of the Column of Antoninus Pius in relation to its ancient neighbors. The Campus Martius, located in the northwest quadrant of the ancient city of Rome, was in the time of the Republic an uninhabited, marshy swampland. Called the Field of Mars, it was used for military training, political gatherings, and religious ritual.[242] Located outside of the *pomerium*, the field was home to many Republican manubial temples as well as the place where

[239] Hannah, "Praevolante Nescio Qua Ingenti Humana Specie… A Reassessment of the Winged Genius on the Base of the Antonine Column," 91-2.
[240] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, 35-8.
[241] Hannah, "Praevolante Nescio Qua Ingenti Humana Specie… A Reassessment of the Winged Genius on the Base of the Antonine Column," 101-4.
[242] Diane Atnally Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1.

triumphal processions gathered.[243] In the late Republic, the nature of the Campus Martius began to change, as it was populated with triumphal monuments, theaters, and baths.[244] By the death of Antoninus Pius in 161 CE, the field would have been an ideal location for a celebration of past emperors, situated among their peers and predecessors (Fig. 4.7).

Dissociated from its original context, the experience of the column base today is wholly unlike that which its patrons intended. Located in the Cortile delle Pinacoteca in the Vatican, the base is on display to modern viewers in and of itself. (Fig. 4.8)[245] Placed in the very center of the courtyard, the platform invites viewers to circle the base, and observe each face, with nothing to impede one's view of the monument, and divorced from all other works in the collection and facets of the surrounding Vatican architecture.

The viewing experience was entirely different in the second century CE. Originally supporting a fifty-foot column and bronze statue, the carved marble base would not necessarily have been the focal point of the initial structure, but rather just one component of it. As the segment closest to the height of the viewer, the four faces of the altar would have come under the closest scrutiny and contemplation. Thus, the iconography of the column base cannot be written off as secondary to the overall meaning and function of the monument, but rather an integral part of a memorial that, together with the column and bronze statue, honored Pius and Faustina.

Just as the base would not have been encountered in isolation, neither would the monument have been experienced in a vacuum. Instead, it interacted directly with the memorials and structures that surrounded the column. Located in the relatively

[243] Atnally Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome*, 2-3.
[244] Atnally Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome*, 2-3.
[245] Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide*, 298-99.

undeveloped northern Campus Martius, the Column of Antoninus Pius had few direct neighbors. Although the area was populated with other Antonine monuments just decades later, including the Column of Marcus Aurelius and various *ustrina*, upon Pius's death in 161 CE, the only other structures that occupied the northwestern Campus Martius were those of the first emperor Augustus. These included the colossal Horologium, the Ara Pacis Augustae, and of course the Mausoleum of Augustus (Fig. 4.9). Located a few hundred meters south of these structures, the Column of Antoninus Pius took them as its neighbors, physically and ideologically. As Davies has observed, from the Column of Antoninus Pius, if facing the front south pabel, a viewer would have had a direct sightline to the Horologium of Augustus (Fig. 4.10).[246] What's more, the obelisk supported by the personification of the Campus Martius in the relief would have mirrored and called attention to the Augustan monument, thereby aligning the two structures.[247] Thus, the memories of Antonius, and by extension Faustina, could draw on the power the former emperor's memory and the legitimacy of his rule.

This declaration of identity through an association with the column's neighboring structures is also important when considering the non-Augustan monuments in the northern Campus Martius. Of particular relevance is the *ustrinum*, or structure marking the spot of the funeral pyre, of Antoninus Pius, located just a few meters south of the column. Clearly in direct conversation with one another, the two monuments to the deceased emperor function in tandem to produce and display the official imperial identities of Pius and Faustina, the exploration of which we will return to shortly.

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[246] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 162-5.
[247] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 162-5.

*Diva Faustina*

Taken as a whole, the identities and attributes of the five figures and the location of the monument suggest that the south panel represents the apotheosis of the imperial couple Antoninus Pius and Faustina the Elder. Unique as the first imperial depiction of a joint apotheosis, the panel emphasizes their unity in life and death. Apotheosis, or the ascension of the spirit to heaven after an individual has been cremated and the ritual *consecratio* oration given,[248] was an integral component of Imperial Roman political and religious practices. Apotheosis was thought to happen at the moment of cremation when the spirit, released from the earthly body, ascended to heaven.[249] A high honor reserved for only the greatest emperors in Augustus's day, by the second century CE, it had become conventional;[250] either an emperor was good and thus deified, or condemned as bad and damned. When deified, newly minted gods and goddesses received a temple and cult in their name, and were worshipped along with the pantheon of existing Roman gods and goddesses.[251]

The decoration of the rest of the column base supports this interpretation. In particular, the iconography of the east and west faces of the altar suggest a ritual and religious motif of the column base, the *decursio*. The coexistence of two *decursio* scenes has been understood as depicting the rituals performed for both Antoninus Pius and Faustina.[252] This would seem to suggest and highlight not only the deification of Pius

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[248] William Smith, *A Dictionary of Roman and Greek Antiquities* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1874), 105-6.
[249] Herodian, *Roman History*, 4.2.1-11.
[250] Chalupa, "How Did Roman Emperors Become Gods? Various Concepts of Imperial Apotheosis," 206.
[251] Susan B. Matheson, "The Divine Claudia: Women as Goddesses in Roman Art," 185.
[252] Kleiner and Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," 390-2.

and Faustina, but also the strength of their bond, waiting to ascend together, despite the twenty years that separated their deaths.

After Gaius's watershed deification of his sister Drusilla at her death in 38 CE, women could be honored and worshipped as deities in their own right upon their deaths. As with emperors, this soon became customary.[253] Faustina the Elder is certainly no exception, and the depiction of her joint apotheosis with her husband Antoninus Pius conveys an important political and iconographic message. Accordingly, it is possible to read meaning in the individual components and figures that make up the composition of the south relief panel.

The details with which they are portrayed present the pair as an ideal imperial couple. Raised on the back of a winged Genius, it is clear they are the focal points of the composition. Undoubtedly, it is their apotheosis that is celebrated, but their deportment and attributes also reveal much about the specific identities assigned to and communicated by this image. In a way analogous to the construction of his wife's identity, to which we will return, Antoninus Pius is presented as an ideal husband and ruler, just the kind of father his two adopted sons and successors would want to memorialize.

Similarly, the inclusion of the personification of the Campus Martius is vital to the interpretation of the relief. As the locale of Pius and Faustina's cremation, albeit on two separate occasions, the Campus Martius also marks the spot of the emperor and empress's apotheoses.[254] This distinction is important not only to anchor the composition to a particular location, but also to create a fictive reality. Although not historically

[253] James H. Oliver, "The Divi of the Hadrianic Period," *Harvard Theological Review* 42, No.1 (1949): 40.
[254] Boatwright, "The 'Ara Ditis-Ustrinum of Hadrian' in the Western Campus Martius and Other Problematic Roman Ustrina," 497.

accurate, as their actual *consecratii* would have happened with a period of twenty years between them, it is was nonetheless necessary to confirm their deification. The depiction of the ascensions as simultaneous serves as a clever way to celebrate Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus's adoptive parents and predecessors, but also creates an image of the pair as unified and wholly committed to one another.

The winged Genius and Roma also serve to aid in celebrating and alerting the viewer to the joint apotheosis of the imperial couple. As the vehicle for their ascension, the Genius, centrally positioned and occupying almost the entire width of the panel, immediately draws the viewer's eye to him and the figures on his back.[255] In addition to the central position of the Genius, both Roma and the Campus Martius gesture toward him from below, thereby emphasizing the importance of the event taking place above. Indeed, it is fitting that Antoninus Pius and Faustina are raised above the Campus Martius and Roma, as they occupy the terrestrial realm, which the imperial pair has left.

Faustina's image, as the particular focus of this chapter, is both multifaceted, and adherent to known conventions of Antonine iconography. Although only pictured from the waist up, Faustina's image is rich with attributes and signifiers of identity. Wearing the traditional *stola* of the Roman woman, her head is veiled by her garment. The depiction of Faustina with her head veiled is neither accidental nor inconsequential. In fact, it signals one of the most important aspects of her identity displayed within the relief. As observed in the discussion of the portrait statue of Eumachia discovered in the Pompeian Forum, a covered head was symbolic of a woman's status as a good, chaste,

[255] Hannah, "Praevolante Nescio Qua Ingenti Humana Specie… A Reassessment of the Winged Genius on the Base of the Antonine Column," 91.

and pious matron, all qualities associated with Faustina in antiquity.[256] Indicative of the idea of *pudicita*, an ideal woman was chaste, modest, and pure, and of course, kept her head covered in public.[257] In the same way, the *stola* was the garment of the virtuous married woman, indicative of the respectability and traditional morals of its wearer.[258] Faustina is also depicted with her characteristic hairstyle, fashionable and restrained, ensuring the recognition of the empress whose name is not included within the inscription.

As astutely observed by Davies, Faustina occupies the center of the upper "celestial" portion of the relief.[259] Clearly an important attribute, Faustina's scepter, pendant to her husband's, serves to communicate her power as empress, which, together with her covered head, likens her to the Capitoline Juno Regina.[260] Aligned with Juno, the goddess of marriage and fertility (as an amalgam with Mother Earth in the Roman pantheon),[261] Faustina is characterized as the ideal wife and mother, both to her adopted sons and the empire. In addition to her role as a dutiful wife, one who is depicted as even waiting to ascend to the heavens until the death of her husband twenty years later, her identity as mother solidifies her position as the perfect Roman woman, and a model of ideal female behavior.

In addition to her role as a model of feminine virtue, the image of Faustina on the column base functioned within a larger program of imperial art and propaganda under the rule of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus that celebrated the reunion of Antoninus Pius

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[256] Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 69-70.
[257] Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome*, 37.
[258] Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome*, 69.
[259] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 117.
[260] Eugenie Sellers Strong, *Apotheosis and Afterlife* (London: Constable, 1915), 89.
[261] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 114.

and Faustina in death.[262] The commemoration of this reunion was not only celebrated in sculpture, but also in text, architecture, and on coins. [263] This broad, and far-reaching campaign of imagery and ideology served not only to celebrate the couple, but also signal the power, legitimacy, and loyalty of the co-emperors.

Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus were not the first to use Faustina's image in such a way. Surviving his wife by twenty years, Antoninus Pius honored the *Diva Augusta* with numerous posthumous portraits on coins, in sculpture, and even painting.[264] Even further, effigies of the empress were created, and placed in her box in the theater, to symbolize the perseverance of her authority and memory.[265] While of course indicating a genuine affection for Faustina, her images were used as symbols of the peace and prosperity of the empire, as well as ideal Roman womanhood.[266] This adhered nicely to Antoninus Pius's fashioning of his own public image, as a pious man, just ruler, and devoted husband, [267] but one who also aligned himself with Jupiter in the fashioning of his hair in portraits.[268] Faustina's image, as the chaste, pious, and attentive Roman woman, signaled the peace enjoyed by the Roman Empire during her husband's reign, and her immortalization ensured the lasting peace of the empire,[269] and, according to Mary Boatwright, is indicative of the Antonine emphasis of family in imperial art and

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[262] Kleiner and Kleiner note that the depiction of the reunion of a husband and wife or parents and children was common in private funerary, but not imperial, art. See for example, the Circus Relief in the Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano, 2nd century CE, no. 9556. For a discussion of this borrowing from plebian monuments, see Kleiner and Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," 393-400.
[263] Bergmann, Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress*, 7.
[264] Levick, *Faustina I and II: Imperial Women of the Golden Age,* 125.
[265] Bergmann, Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress*, 6.
[266] Bergmann, Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress*, 11.
[267] Levick, *Faustina I and II: Imperial Women of the Golden Age,* 60.
[268] Hans Peter L'Orange, *Apotheosis in Ancient Portraiture* (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1947), 66.
[269] Bergmann, Watson, and Mount Holyoke College, *The Moon and the Stars: Afterlife of a Roman Empress*, 7.

architecture.[270] A coin issued between 141-161 CE, for instance, depicts the empress in profile with her head covered (Fig. 4.11).[271] The accompanying inscription identifies her as *Diva Augusta Faustina*. No doubt Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus took cues from their adopted father when utilizing the empress's image on a monument to the legitimization of their imperial power.

This responsibility of the empress and her identity was not an innovation of Faustina or those who perpetuated her memory after her death. Images of Livia, the first empress of Rome, were constructed and functioned in a similar manner. As empress and priestess of the cult of Augustus,[272] she was praised in her own time as an exemplary wife and mother,[273] and was portrayed in official imperial imagery as ever youthful and beautiful, modest, and respectable. A portrait of Livia in the Vatican exemplifies these qualities (Fig. 4.12).[274] Full length with both hands raised in a gesture of prayer, Livia's portrait features are youthful and idealized. Draped from head to toe in a *stola*, she is presented as the essence of imperial femininity.[275] Therefore, she is portrayed as both mother to her own children and as mother to the empire, complementing her husband's role as *Pater Patriae*, or Father of the Fatherland (country). The portrait of Faustina on the base of the Column of Antoninus Pius functions in much the same way. Even and

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[270] Mary Boatwright, "Antonine Rome: Security in the Homeland," in eds. Björn Christian Ewald and Carlos F. Noreña, *The Emperor and Rome: Space, Representation, and Ritual* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 197.
[271] Martin Beckmann, *Diva Faustina: Coinage and Cult in Rome and the Provinces,* Numismatic Studies, 26 (New York: American Numismatic Society, 2012), 42.
[272] Emily A. Hemelrijk, "Local Empresses: Priestesses of the Imperial Cult in the Cities of the Latin West," *Phoenix* 61, 3/4 (2007): 319.
[273] Tac. *Ann*., 12.3, Ov., *Fast.,* 5.157-58, 6.637.
[274] Musei Vaticani, Rome, Sala dei Busti, 637, 1st century CE.
[275] Elizabeth Bartman, *Portraits of Livia: Imagining the Imperial Woman in Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 155-6.

especially in death, the public personae of empresses were used as tools of the imperial regime.[276]

It is interesting to note that even though independently wealthy, Faustina constructed very few monumental public structures during her time as empress.[277] This is very likely due to the fact that she only lived to see the first three years of her husband's principate, but ultimately what it signifies is that she did not have a direct hand in shaping her public image either in life or death. In this way she differs from her Pompeian counterparts who funded and likely dictated the form and iconography of their respective memorials. The creation of Faustina's public image, along with those of other imperial women, was subsumed within the larger body of imperial ideology. In this way, the imperial images of Faustina should be understood not as markers of self determined identity, but as visual manifestations of Faustina's imperially mandated image. That is not to suggest that Faustina had no part in the construction of her public identity, which at the very least required her complicity, but that ultimately it was one approved by the emperor as adherent to the larger scheme of official imperial ideology. If we consider the monuments of Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche in Pompeii, their public personae were seemingly limited only by their resources and the boundaries of public decorum. Ironically, although in a position of higher power, Faustina's freedom was much more limited in this regard. Thus, it is not a self-constructed monument that we use to study Faustina, but instead one erected by her adopted sons. This patronage is essential to keep in mind when considering the display of the empress's identity on the base of the Column of Antoninus Pius.

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[276] D'Ambra, *Roman Women*, 39.
[277] Davies, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, 111.

Finally, we can explore the ways in which the iconography of the panel and its relationship to the *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius served as a locale for the construction and continual activation of the identity of Faustina the Elder, as a female member of the imperial family. Just meters apart, the apotheosis panel would have directly faced the *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius.[278] This observation is vital to the reconstruction of second century experience of the monument. Considering the function of the *ustrinum* as a marker of the funeral pyre on the Campus Martius, and the iconography of the relief panel as the apotheosis of Faustina and Antoninus Pius, the message is clear. Aligned physically and ideologically, the two work in tandem to convey and commemorate the apotheosis of Faustina and Antoninus Pius. As markers of the same event, the *ustrinum* celebrates the location of the couple's ascension, while the south base face illustrates their apotheosis, giving it visible, tangible form. In this way, the *ustrinum* acts as a segment of the narrative progression of the altar base iconography, alerting the observer to what happened and where, legitimizing and historicizing the event. Thus, if facing either the column or the *ustrinum*, it would have been impossible to miss the commemoration of the apotheosis of Pius and Faustina and the reciprocal nature of the two structures.

In fact, this active engagement and re-engagement may have aided in the continual ritual performance of the apotheosis as witnessed by visitors to the monuments, necessary for the confirmation of the deceased's ascension. Suetonius records that even before Augustus's official apotheosis by the senate, a witness claimed he has seen the emperor rise to the heavens during his funeral,[279] a formality apparently still important in

[278] Kleiner and Kleiner, "The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina," 390.
[279] Suetonius, *Augustus*, 100.4.

the second century.[280] As a later spectator to the event, via the relief panel and proximity to the actual location of the apotheosis, an observer's participation in the process would have helped to ensure the deification of the royal pair through a continual reenactment of the ritual.

Considering the ritual, visual, and physical communication between the altar base and the *ustrinum*, how does this interaction inform an understanding of the identity of Faustina the Elder, as communicated by the monument? First and foremost, it describes and legitimizes her apotheosis and deification. Certainly, her hair, clothing, and pose communicate her roles as ideal wife and mother, but it is her status as *diva* that is celebrated most prominently. As an official goddess, Faustina was acknowledged as an archetype of feminine comportment, but also a deified ancestor of the ruling emperors, vital to the legitimization of their power.

*Conclusions*

Dedicated by the joint emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, the Column of Antoninus Pius was a grand commemorative gesture to their adopted parents. Celebrating Pius and his wife, the empress Faustina the Elder, the column can be understood as a monument that not only commemorates the imperial pair, but also legitimizes the rule of the new regime. As the only funerary monument honoring Faustina, as dedicated by her sons, the apotheosis scene that decorates the south face of the column base communicates not a self constructed identity, but one determined for her by those who hoped to use her image and public persona for personal gain and legitimization. Thus, in her funerary monument, Faustina's image and identity are

[280] Vogel, *The Column of Antoninus Pius*, 41.

ultimately used as tools of imperial political rhetoric to promote the legitimacy of the imperial reign. Depicting the joint apotheosis of the couple, the column base communicates the divinity of Antoninus Pius and Faustina visually, ideologically, and ritually through its interaction with the viewer and its surrounding monuments. The dynamism of the south face of the column base, coupled with the structure's direct relationship with the *ustrinum* of Antoninus Pius would have encouraged the observer to "read" and interact with the column and *ustrinum*. In doing so, a viewer would have reactivated the funerary ritual and ritually witnessed the apotheosis of Pius and Faustina, while continually re-creating the identities of the deceased through a repeated engagement with the narrative of their divinity as depicted on the south face of the column base.

## *Chapter Five: Modesty, Chastity, and Wool Working: Sub- elite Epitaphs and the Virtues of the Ideal Roman Woman*

As demonstrated by the tombs of Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche, the epitaphs that accompanied funerary monuments can be extremely helpful in deciphering the messages of the structures as well as reconstructing the identities of the women celebrated. This brief final chapter will examine the epitaphs of three non-elite Roman women, in effect, combining the concerns addressed in each of the preceding chapters. Focusing on the epigraphs of sub-elite women, this chapter explores issues of agency, the nature of funerary commemoration outside the imperial family, and ideal femininity, thereby lending support to the premises proposed in chapters two through four, and further highlighting the divide between funerary memorials patronized by women themselves, and those dedicated by their male relatives.

Recalling the preceding discussion of Faustina Maior as a wife, mother, and empress, her image and public character were utilized by her male relatives after her death to promote official imperial rhetoric. Portrayed as pious, modest, and beautiful on the base of the Column of Antoninus Pius, Faustina embodied the ideal image of the good Roman woman, and her portraits were touted as a portrayal of female behavior worth emulating. While fitting for an empress, as a highly visible public figure in life and death, the celebration of women as good, virtuous matrons was not a phenomenon confined to the imperial house. Rather, it was practiced throughout the empire, perhaps indeed influenced by the presentation of empresses to the Roman public.

Although many of the tombs themselves do not survive, the epitaphs of three non-imperial wives and mothers demonstrate that sub-elite women were also celebrated as

exemplars of female character in funerary monuments constructed by an agent other than the woman herself.[281] These inscriptions, as products of another's perception of a woman, consequently reveal more about the qualities that their husbands and descendants sought in them, than anything of her actual character.

The first epitaph provides a lengthy inscription, relaying information about the woman's life and character, and seems to indicate real affection for the deceased. Discovered near the Bridge of St. Bartholomew in Rome, the first century BCE epitaph of Claudia describes the interred as the very embodiment of ideal femininity. It reads,

> "Stranger, I have little to say: Stop and read. This is the unbeautiful tomb of a beautiful woman. Her parents called her Claudia by name. She loved her husband with her heart. She bore two children: one of these she leaves on the earth, the other she buries under the earth. Her speech was delightful, her gait graceful. She kept house, she made wool. I have finished. Go."[282]

A second inscription celebrates Amymone, wife of Marcus. The epitaph is short but effective, conjuring an image of the deceased as the ideal matron in three short lines.

> "Here lies Marcus' (wife) Amymone, the best and most beautiful, busy at her wool working, devoted, modest, thrifty, chaste, happy to stay at home."[283]

The final epitaph is dedicated to Postumia Matronilla, beloved wife, mother, and grandmother:

> "Sacred to the spirits of the Deceased, Postumia Matronilla was a wife without peer, a good mother, a dutiful grandmother, modest, pious, hardworking, thrifty, active, wakeful, caring, she married one man and slept with one man; she was a matron who worked hard and could be relied upon. She lived for 53 years, 5 months and 3 days."[284]

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[281] See also the epitaphs celebrating Urbana (CIL VI, 29580), Aelia Tryphera (CIL VI 34268), and Octavia Cresentina (CIL IX 1913), which similarly characterize the women honored as respectable, chaste, and hardworking.
[282] CIL VI 15345
[283] CIL VI 11602
[284] CIL VIII 11294

Among these epitaphs, numerous key words appear again and again. Variously celebrated for her beauty, chastity, dutifulness, piety, modesty, hardworking attitude, and interestingly, her capacity to work wool, the posthumous identities created for Claudia, Amymone, and Postumia Matronilla through their epitaphs are those of a dutiful womanhood that in no way challenged the traditional role of women in Roman society.

If we are to explore the characteristics of a "model" matron, wool working seems the most curious. Reaching back to the early formations of the Republic, wool working was understood as the traditional activity of the Roman matron. As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill reminds us, every good housewife worked wool.[285] In fact, in many ways, it was thought that wool working and morality in women were inextricably linked.[286] This invocation of traditional Roman values and female characteristics is telling, indicative of the praise-worthy but normative characteristics their close male relatives celebrated. This is an important distinction to make, especially with the observation that, to the best of my knowledge, no self-constructed female epitaph praises a woman's chastity, beauty, or wool work. Rather, as we saw with women such as Naevoleia Tyche and Mulvia Prisca, they celebrate the woman's generosity and forays into the male realms of patronage and financial independence as a means of creating a memorable, unique identity for themselves. No doubt, something very different is at stake in the epitaphs and monuments constructed by Romans in honor of the important women in their lives.

In the three inscriptions with which we are concerned, the focus is in each case fixed upon a woman's duties as a matron and her physical beauty. With this observation, it becomes clear that, as communicated by the inscriptions, the true value of these women

[285] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Engendering the Roman House," in eds. Diana E.E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, *I Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 111.
[286] Wallace-Hadrill, "Engendering the Roman House," 111.

for those who honored them, was in their capacities as wives and mothers.[287] No mention is made of intellectual pursuits, bravery, or public office, and this absence is not limited to these three examples. Instead, it is indicative of larger trends throughout the Roman empire, and influenced by the rights and freedoms of women in Roman society.

Ironically, in aiming to celebrate and individuate each of these women, those who honored them, by praising each as model wives and mothers, in many ways actually increased their anonymity. While their names are recorded for posterity, we do not know anything of substance about the real character or activities of the deceased. But, perhaps, for those who honored their wives and mothers with epitaphs, communicating the biography of the deceased may not have been the goal. Indeed, it is important to remember that ultimately, these epitaphs were meant to function both to commemorate the deceased, and also to preserve her memory in the minds of the living. To this end, it did not matter so much how her memory was presented, but rather that it at the very least survived the terrible consequences of oblivion. This preoccupation with immortality through memory, which we have seen time and again, is demonstrated nicely by the epitaph of Claudia, which address the viewer directly to take a moment and read the inscription, in doing so reviving her spirit,[288] but is also subtly indicated by those to Amymone and Postumia Matronilla.

Now that we are familiar with examples of funerary commemoration that are neither imperial, nor self-determined, it is possible to further juxtapose them with the monument to Faustina. Although Faustina's name is not mentioned in the inscription that adorns the north face of the column base, the beauty, modesty, and chastity emphasized

[287] Susan Treggiari, "Women in Roman Soceity," in eds. Diana E.E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson, *I Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 116.
[288] Davies, "The Politics of Perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," 50.

by Faustina's portrait are also celebrated in these epitaphs. In this way, these two different types of memorialization characterize women in very similar ways. Whether through iconography or text, both aim to underscore the model femininity of the women honored.

However, an interesting distinction exists between the memorials of Faustina and the three women discussed here. Whereas all four are celebrated for their modesty, piety, and even beauty, only the sub-elite women are remembered as hard working. This is not to suggest that Faustina was not similarly hard working, but it does indicate is that steadfastness in physical work was not a quality celebrated in elite or imperial women.[289] Therefore, while using similar devices, it is apparent that imperial and non-imperial commemorators of women often had different sets of concerns and audiences in mind, and ultimately strove to convey two different, though related, messages.

To this end, the celebration of women as model matrons may also be understood as a comment on the patron himself. Perhaps not as strong a statement of self as those communicated by Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, the epitaphs to non-imperial women could just as effectively complement or aid those who constructed them. That is, a celebration of a good and modest wife was similarly a celebration of her husband as having an honorable mate, perhaps even reflective of the husband's own honor and good character. Thus, unlike the self-constructed monuments of Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche, these funerary commemorations did not function as a platform of self-expression. Rather, it was a means through which patrons could remember the deceased as he wished, and for his own purposes.

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[289] Jane F. Gardner and Thomas Wiedemann, *The Roman Household: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1991), 54.

*Conclusions*

When compared to epitaphs set up by someone other than a woman herself, the importance of self-agency in the construction of identity through funerary monuments comes to the fore. Similar to the posthumous celebrations of Faustina, the women honored in these epitaphs are remembered as exemplary matrons, and not by the characteristics that constituted their real, unique identities. If determined by another, it seems, the preservation of memory promoted through funerary monuments became just that, an effort to celebrate and remember the deceased without making a strong claim about who she was or what she accomplished, but rather what she should be. By celebrating the woman as what they wanted her to be, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and the patrons of the epitaphs to Claudia, Amymone, and Postumia Matronilla, in effect, determined the identity of the deceased for posterity, perhaps in a way different than what she would have desired, but securing her immortality nonetheless.

**Conclusions**

The original premise of this paper began as an interest in the funerary monuments of Pompeian women as markers of socioeconomic class and gender, and has developed into something very different, yet not unrelated. Each of the four chapters were carefully chosen as distinct figures, all representative of women from very different walks of life socially, economically, and geographically. Therefore, I have not sought to examine the unexceptional Roman matron, but rather three extraordinary individuals who left indelible marks on the archaeological and social records, to understand just what made them and their chosen sites of commemoration so unique and worthy of remembrance.

Through a close engagement with the sepulchers of Naevoleia Tyche, Eumachia, and Faustina Maior, and the epitaphs of Claudia, Amymone, and Postumia Matronilla, the scope of study has expanded from its more humble beginnings to notions of identity construction as an active phenomenon, self constructed versus commemorative iconography, the mechanisms of memory in the Roman world, iconographic narrative, and a study of monuments in context. In doing so, this thesis has become less concerned with issues of gender and status and more with the function of memory and experiential narrative as expressed through memorials, self constructed or not. Accordingly, it has offered an examination of distinct funerary markers and three epitaphs to demonstrate three important ideas: the range of posthumous memorials in the Roman world, the function of sepulchers as important devices of memory creation and preservation, and the importance of monuments as vehicles of public interaction.

The finality of death and variety of beliefs concerning death created a great concern for the preservation of one's memory in ancient Rome, often evoked through the

construction of grand funerary monuments. In focusing on memorials to women, it has been possible to not only explore questions of death, memory, and identity, but also how funerary monuments functioned as particularly potent tools, utilized for and by women in imperial Rome and Pompeii.

Whether or not the deceased themselves constructed the messages of their character dictated not only what traits were communicated, but also how this was accomplished. If self determined, the art and architecture of the structure made an important declaration of how the deceased viewed themselves, whereas, if commissioned by another, a memorial portrayed how the patron wished the deceased be perceived and remembered. That is, a comparison of female funerary monuments dedicated by the women themselves with those erected by male family members has proven extremely instructive in delineating the very different ways conceptions of femininity were approached by Roman men and women.

With this observation, this thesis has endeavored to examine the importance of agency in shaping the form and function of a sepulcher. Self-determined, the monuments of Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche present carefully structured representations of the self, reflected in the form, decoration, and experience of the tombs. The memorial to Faustina Maior, on the other hand, represents a very different mechanism of memory creation and commemoration. Constructed in her honor by the imperial regime, the image and identity of Faustina became immersed in official imperial iconography as a marker of ideal behavior.

In this regard, epitaphs are essential in reconstructing the meaning of funerary monuments and the identities of those honored. Of varying length, detail, and

prominence, the existence of an inscription and choice of words is often revealing, and could dramatically alter one's experience of a monument. Both the bold self-promotion of Naevoleia Tyche, and the epitaphs of the three women featured in chapter five, presented as ideal matrons, demonstrate the diverse ways meaning and character can be created through words.

The architectural forms of the monuments studied also aid in the construction of the honoree's identity. Often dictating a viewer's interaction with the structure, the architectural forms of the tombs provided both interpretive associations, and physical engagement as a means of constructing a public persona. The form of Eumachia's tomb, as an amalgam of many different facets of Greek and Roman architecture would not only have struck the viewer as unique, but also symbolic of a deeper significance.

Perhaps even more important than inscription, form, or location, the iconography of the monuments to Eumachia, Naevoleia Tyche, and Faustina Maior communicated the ideas expressed by the memorials in visual form. Constructing the character of the deceased through decorative details or visual narrative, the symbols and signs included told important stories about the honorees, activated by a viewer's dynamic reading of the monuments. In the relief of the apotheosis of Faustina, for example, her dress, comportment, and context all signal important components of her character and alert the observer to her deification. The deconstruction of the iconographical significance of the monument of Naevoleia Tyche has been likewise enlightening, uncovering the iconographical narrative of the tomb and its decoration.

A major methodological tenant of this thesis has been to examine and understand, as much as possible, the monuments in their original contexts to recreate an ancient

Roman's experience, and to use this understanding to extrapolate meaning from their forms, locations, and decorative details. As scholars such as Penelope Davies have demonstrated, contemporary experiences of works of art and architecture are necessary to consider for a complete understanding of a monument, and it is this approach that this paper has employed. Although numerous past studies of the memorials have read meaning based on their architectural and decorative components, I have sought to combine all three aspects- context, architecture, and decoration- in order to approach the structures from an ancient rather than modern perspective. Combined with an examination of a viewer's movement in space and the mechanisms of memory construction, the three case studies have served as ideal points of entry into posthumous identity and interaction in imperial Rome.

The contributions of this paper are twofold. On the one hand, it has aimed to read, and in some cases definitely determine, the meanings of these monuments through a reconstruction of their lived experiences and pictorial or structural narratives. The decorative details of many of these structures have either been in debate for centuries, or have been little studied, and I have hoped to demonstrate why and how they can be read as locales of identity creation and re-creation, in addition to the politics of self-presentation within different social classes. On the other hand, I have aimed to reconstruct the ways in which very different "types" of Roman women and those who constructed monuments in their honor conceived of and presented their identities to the public, keeping in mind the constraints and privileges of their various situations. In this way, it is an exploration of both an experiential approach to important monuments and epitaphs to unpack their iconography, but also a study of the politics of gender, class, and

the self in imperial Rome. By examining the structures in context, I have offered original interpretations of the funerary monuments, both in architecture and iconography, while emphasizing the importance of interaction with the viewer as a potent mode of propagating memory and identity.

Although outside the immediate scope of this study, intra-necropolis interactions, patterns of age and commemoration, and burial practices in the Roman north and east would be worth exploring in further studies on death, gender, and memory in Rome. A comparison to the funerary monuments of Roman men in Rome and Pompeii would further elucidate many of the concepts suggested throughout, especially but not limited to, non-imperial men, and monuments to men funded by women.

Through a close consideration of the physical form and context of their sepulchers, their public personae, and the processes through which memory was created and propagated for each of these women, the memorials of Eumachia, Naevoleia Tyche, Faustina Maior, Claudia, Amymone, and Postumia Matronilla underscore the function of funerary monuments as essential, final markers of identity. As a whole, I suggest the visibility, potency, and permanence of such memorials allowed patrons to make an important statement about who the deceased was, and how they should be remembered. Accordingly, they should be understood as monuments to the deceased's best memory as well as an effort to avoid the oblivion of death. Judging by the number of modern studies devoted to these important memorials, it seems they have succeeded.

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