

Note: There are ten illustrations that go with this paper, as marked. Because images within documents do not always come out well across computer programs, they are attached separately. Please use the plan (fig. 1) throughout to understand the relationship of parts of the complex to each other.

What Kinds of Meals Did Julia Felix Have?

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In 1755-57, a large complex at Pompeii (2.4.1-12)¹ was excavated at the corner northwest across from the amphitheatre, northeast from the *palestra*. On the front side of the property, it opens onto what is now called Via dell'Abondanza, one of the principal *decumani* of Pompeii. As was typical at the time, the excavators removed whatever mosaics and statuary they wished, then covered it all over again. In 1952-53, the site was re-excavated and partially restored but never published, and is visible today more or less as restored then, with the inevitable deterioration that has happened to the structures in the intervening years.

It is the one of the largest complexes so far discovered at a Vesuvian city (plan, fig. 1, with numbered rooms to consult throughout the description below. The plan is north-oriented). The buildings cover between one third and one half of a double city block along the major street and a side street to the west, while the adjoining open space, probably cultivated then, completes the entire block. At some point, there were twelve different entrances to the various parts of the buildings. While some of the structures may date as early as the second century BCE, the conclusion of Christopher Parslow, the latest scholar to study the complex, is that it was refurbished after the destructive earthquake of 62 CE, and was in full use at the time of the eruption in 79. To my knowledge, no

¹ In *CIL* and some older literature, this block is numbered 2.7. I have not been able to ascertain when or why the change of numbers. A query to Andrew Wallace-Hadrill yielded the answer: "This happens at Pompeii!"

archaeologist who has studied the site has doubted that in the final phase its various parts were functioning together as one unit with several distinct components.

Some want to divide those components into three sections, e.g., Maiuri and Sampaolo, but they do not agree on what those sections are. It seems clearer to speak of six distinct parts to this complex.

First, an original *domus* (atrium 93 with surrounding rooms and entrances 10 and 11). Room 91 (fig. 2), the largest in this section other than the atrium, contains a *biclinium* with large window out to the garden behind. The walls in it and surrounding rooms were colorfully painted and decorated, mostly with garlands, floral arrangements, and candelabras. Room 97 contained a painting of Apollo and the Muses, now in the Louvre. Room 92 is identified as a *tablinum* and rooms 89, 97 and 98 as *cubiculi*. Room 56 is a kitchen, indicating that dining activity was carried on in that living area and perhaps beyond. Predominant colors in the decoration are red in the atrium and *cubiculum* 98, white in *cubiculum* 89, blue in *biclinium* 91, and yellow in *cubiculum* 97. It is possible that the original entrance to most of the complex was at corridor 47, with staircase immediately beside it in room 67 (Sampaolo, 184-85). The use of room 67 is not clear; my own observation based on its size and the nature of door 12 is that it may have been a stable. The original entrance 11 was in the last period closed up in favor of entrance 10, which gives more direct access to the kitchen, room 56. This may give a clue about use of this space at that time. Perhaps it was the kitchen for a wider area, including room 83 and surroundings.

Second, another atrium around the corner on the main street, Via dell'Abondanza, room 24 and adjoining rooms. Room 24 contains a marble *impluvium* that probably held

a fountain. Its walls were decorated with scenes of daily life in the forum, cut into pieces in the eighteenth century and now in the National Museum (Sampaolo pictures 113-34, pp. 252-57; Richardson 295). From it open one large room (43) that is also accessible from the street, one small room (65), and corridor 46-47-49. Rooms 1-2 in the corner of this area are a shop and back room, accessible only from the street. Room 43 gives access to the hypocaust of the caldarium, and thus is a *praefurnium* and service area.

Third, an extensive *viridarium* and reception space behind the second area (space 8, fig. 3, view from south). The east wall of area 8 contains ten niches, alternating circular and rectangular, with a separate niche at the end (55) thought to be an Isiac shrine, though nothing of its adornment survived the earlier excavations. The walls of the whole niche area were plastered with rough finish to imitate a grotto. All around the niche areas on the east and south sides was an arbor supported by masonry columns in green paint. Near the south niche were found an expensive bronze tripod with three ithyphallic satyrs and a small statue of Priapus, along with some pieces of jewelry and household furnishings (Richardson 296). In the center of area 8, a long narrow rectangular pool, often called a *euripus* in the literature (a canal, or long narrow passage for water) was used either as a fish pond or (less likely) a swimming pool. The latter use has been suggested, but the space seems too shallow and narrow; rather, the rectangular area in space 5, adjacent to the bath complex and behind the *caupona*, is wider and deeper and was probably a swimming pool.

The west side of area 8 along the pool contains a series of elegant rooms facing out to the pool and garden area, behind a covered portico supported by sixteen square columns in pseudo-Corinthian style. Rooms 51-52 and 87-88 contain no decoration and

are therefore probably service areas, though room 87 looks from its location more likely to be another reception room. One of the other rooms (room 83, fig. 4) opening directly into the portico contains an elaborate marble fountain and Nilotic frescoes of crocodiles and pigmies engaged in various water activities. In front of the wall is a built-in *biclinium*. On either side wall is a niche for a small piece of statuary. The columns outside supporting the portico are slightly higher outside this room, reinforcing its centrality. Rooms 80 and 86 on either side of the *triclinium* room are beautifully painted but show no signs of permanent structures for meals. They could be reception rooms, or may have been used for meals with portable couches. If the latter is the case, then there were at least three dining rooms in a row, looking out on the pool and garden. The line of rooms 50 through 86 probably held a second floor with similar rooms, accessed through hall 49 and/or by stairs at the end of the hall, destroyed by the first excavators (Maiuri “Due iscrizioni” 295-96). Sampaolo (184) speculates that the original entrance to this part was at entrance 12, and that a later remodeling reoriented it to face the major street at entrances 2-3. But the relationship of atria 24 and 93 to the space between them is not clear, and will be discussed further below.

Fourth is a complete bath complex, smaller than the women’s section of the Forum Baths, but well fitted out (rooms 31, 28, 39, 41, and 42). Entrance 6 opens onto area 31, a decorated peristyle with mosaic pavement and benches along the walls. The walls contain many paintings of peacocks, griffins, garlands, and still lifes. A number of nuisance graffiti were found on the walls, probably left by bored patrons awaiting their turn at the baths. At the southwest corner there were several cubicles partitioned off, and a small *laconicum* (steam bath, room 28). Room 31 leads to *frigidarium* (39), *tepidarium*

(41), another *laconicum*, 29) and *caldarium* (42). In the south niche of the *tepidarium* were found the marble legs of a tripod table. A trench ran around the outside of rooms 41 and 42, the *tepidarium* and *caldarium*, an architectural feature associated with later design (Richardson 294). Room 37 is a latrine, and the rectangular structure in space 5, accessible from the peristyle of the baths (31), deeply indented with a shallow ridge all around, seems to have been a swimming pool. Maiuri speculates (“Due Izcrizioni,” 297-98) that the presence of privately operated baths in an affluent area indicates the degree of financial upheaval after the earthquake of 62. Parts of the larger Forum and Stabian baths were apparently unusable after the earthquake, so the presence of a bathing establishment so near the amphitheatre would be a smart venture likely to draw much business.

The fifth area brings us back to dining but in a different mode. Entrance 7 opens onto a *thermopolium* that is also the entrance to a small *caupona* with several small rooms, a kitchen, and one large room containing both a *triclinium* and permanent tables and benches in masonry for eating sitting upright (room 3, figs. 5, 6). A window in the east wall of bath peristyle 31 (not shown in plan) also opens onto this area. From this room there is access to outdoor space 5 with its swimming pool, also accessible from entrance 8. At the south side of the pool area is a niche that contained a fountain. The rest of the open space 5 is conjectured by Richardson (295) to be a *palestra*, though it certainly would not have been a very large one. It is surrounded by a high wall. Room 4, accessible from space 5, was covered by a light roof of beams that probably served as a trellis, thus an outside dining area almost as large as room 3, though no traces of couches or benches remain. They were probably of wood.

Finally, the fifth area is the very large open space 9, intended for cultivation but also for access from the various building areas, perhaps an orchard.

A painted inscription on the principal façade provides the way into understanding how the various parts of the complex are related (*CIL* 4.1136=*ILS* 5723):

IN· PRAEDIS· IULIAE· SP· F· FELICIS

LOCANTUR

*BALNEUM· VENERIUM· ET· NONGENTUM· TABERNAE· PERGULAE
CENACULA· EX· IDIBUS· AUG· PRIMIS· IN· IDUS· AUG· SEXTAS· ANNOS· CONTINUOS· QUINQUE
S· Q· D· L· E· N· C*

“To let, in the estate of Julia Felix, daughter of Spurius: elegant baths for respectable people, shops with upper rooms, and apartments. From the 13th August next to the 13th August of the sixth year, for five continuous years. The lease will expire at the end of the five years” (trans. Cooley and Cooley, 171).

Praedium: many have called this property a villa, but given the multiple-use nature of it, *praedium* should best be translated “estate” or “manor,” which can be either in the country or an urban context (cf. Cicero *Rosc. Am.* 15.43; Juvenal 9.54; Acts 28:7 Vg translating *chōrion*). Though her name, combining an elite family name with one typical of slaves, would have been thought to be that of a freedwoman, Julia Felix is in fact freeborn but “illegitimate,” that is, probably her mother was technically a “concubine.”² She notes her filiation proudly on the advertisement as a step up from freedwoman status. She is the proprietor who advertises rental possibilities on the wall of

² The ascription *Sp F* (*Sp* for the name Spurius) is a euphemism for birth outside legal Roman *justum matrimonium*. It did not necessarily or even probably carry a social stigma. It simply meant that there was a discrepancy in the social statuses of the parents, one probably a citizen and the other not, so that legal marriage was not possible. Great numbers of persons in Roman cities must have been in the same position. See Rawson, “Roman Concubinage and Other De Facto Marriages”; Osiek and MacDonald, *A Woman’s Place*, 23.

her property. Whether at the time of the destruction of Pompeii the various parts of the property were indeed rented or whether the advertisement was still in force is not known.

The first thing our proprietor has to rent is a *balneum venerium et nongentum*. While earlier interpreters jumped to conclusions either about Julia's religious dedication to Venus or the lascivious nature of her baths, it is now understood that *venerium* means simply "luxurious." *Nongentum*, normally meaning nine hundred, is a bit more of a puzzle until brought into play with Pliny *N.H.* 33.7.31 where the term refers to important citizens who keep the urns containing the ballots in civic elections, hence, "big shots" (see discussion in Maiuri, "Due iscrizioni" 292-94).

Julia Felix also wants to rent out *tabernae, pergulae, cenacula*. It is noteworthy that the list of what she wants to rent does not include a *domus*, as is the case in another rental notice in the *insula* Arriana Polliana in Reg. 6.6.1, by one Gn. Alleius Nigidius Maius, who equally wants to rent out *tabernae, pergulae, cenacula*, and *domus* as well (*CIL* 4.138; Maiuri "Due iscrizioni" 296). This suggests that she may have wanted to continue to live in the *domus* area around atrium 93 in the back, off the side street.

It is not easy to distinguish *tabernae* from *pergulae*, though apparently the readers of the advertisement were expected to know the difference. Both originally refer to a hut, shed, stall, or small shop, notably one that projects from a wall. But both have many other distinct meanings, including market or passage. One meaning for a *taberna* is akin to that of a *caupona* or *popina*, namely an inn or tavern (cf. Horace *Sat.* 1.4.71; Plautus *Men.* 2.3.81; Cicero *De inv.* 2.4.14; Suetonius *Aug.* 4; Acts 28:15 Vg). So the advertisement

may be referring with *tabernae* to shop areas at entrances 1 and 4, but more likely to the eating establishment at entrance 7.³

A *pergula* is also originally some kind of shed or stall, hence a shop or porch, or an open space in which various kinds of activities can take place, including lectures (Suet. *Aug.* 94.12; here it is clearly on an upper level, cf. *cenaculum* below). It can also mean an arbor covered with vines (Columella 4.21; 11.2.). Again, the reference could be to the shop area at entrance 1, but more likely to room 4, accessed from open space 5 in the eating complex, an open area that may have been covered with wooden lattices. It is also possible that the outside décor around the formal dining area around rooms 80, 83, and 86 is the referent.

A *cenaculum* is more clearly a dining room, though usually on an upper level, so that the word comes to mean not only dining room but upper story, upper room. As stated above, Maiuri speculates that there were stairs in space 49 or 53 to an upper story, and that they were destroyed by the original excavators. There may also have been an upper story over the eating establishment around the corner at entrance 7 (rooms 1-4). If these upper areas contained dining facilities, they would be proper *cenacula*. This still leaves us, however, without a clear reference in the advertisement to the dining and social area 80, 83, 86, the most elaborate of the entertainment centers in the complex. Perhaps they are included in the *cenacula* or perhaps *pergulae*, since they are a single row of rooms with wide openings to the peristyle. In sum, the advertisement speaks of three different

³ In spite of numerous efforts, I am unable to find a clear distinction between the terms *taberna*, *caupona*, and *popina* when used of a privately owned public eating and drinking establishment. Classicists use them interchangeably. A *caupona* sometimes includes rental accommodation. *Taberna* sometimes has a more general usage of shop or stall, but it too comes to mean the same as the other two words. Cf. Lewis and Short online at Perseus: *taberna* is a synonym for *caupona*, and *popina* is a synonym for *caupona* and *taberna*.

kinds of rental areas, but it is impossible to know which parts of the property are referenced by which terms.

From the archaeological evidence remaining, we see that there are three distinctively different dining areas in the building complex. The first is the *biclinium* in the *domus* area, (room 91), with view out the window to the large garden area 9. This section seems separable from the rest of the complex, and has a modest entrance on a side street. If we have read the advertisement correctly, it is possible that this space is not to be rented but to remain in private use. The second is the beautiful *triclinium* with fountain and Nilotic decoration (room 83), flanked on either side by decorated rooms to be used for reception or further dining facilities with moveable furniture. The third is the multiple-use area at entrance 7, where, adjacent to a kitchen, both *triclinium* and table and seats are built into the floor. (rooms 1-4). All three dining areas at the time of the eruption seem to have belonged to the same person, Julia Felix, who wants to (or perhaps already did) rent out the second and third area, as well as the bath complex in between areas two and three.

If these are correct conclusions, probably nothing else like it existed among the discovered remains of Pompeii or of any other Roman city, to my knowledge. So let us look for other, more familiar explanations for this property. While originally there may well have been several houses or businesses on the block, as stated above, the few archaeologists who have examined the site agree that in its final form from after 62, it was all one complex. But does the advertisement on the front façade perhaps have no relationship to the use of the buildings?

One possibility is that it was an extensive private dwelling. Other large estates are known in Pompeii, for example, the House of Pansa (House of Gn. Allaeius Nigidius Maius, 6.6.1), which occupies an entire *insula* of regular size. This means the property is half the size of that of Julia Felix, which occupies a double-size *insula*. The original atrium of the House of Pansa, built in classic style, opens to a larger peristyle and an extensive garden. Originally built as a single family residence, it was later divided into smaller units for rental. The same is true of the large and famous Villa of the Mysteries outside the Herculaneum Gate at the northwest corner of the city, named for the small side room in which the murals are thought to illustrate a Dionysiac initiation ceremony.

The House of Loreius Tiburtinus (or D. Octavius Quarto, 2.5.2), only two blocks down from Julia Felix's property, also has shops outside and a nucleus of atrium surrounded by living quarters giving access onto an open terrace and extensive gardens with water channels running through both terrace and gardens. Like the House of Pansa, this property is half the size of that of Julia Felix. A few luxurious houses had private baths, e.g., the House of the Menander (1.10.4). Here the spacious and high-ceilinged atrium gives access to a magnificent peristyle, off which at an angle perpendicular to the entrance is a very large main *triclinium* flanked by reception rooms and service areas. On the opposite side of the peristyle garden is a private bath complex, though considerably smaller than that of Julia Felix, just large enough for two or three persons at one time.

Returning to the *praedium* of Julia Felix, the group of rooms around atrium 93 is by itself a modest-sized *domus* that could be self-contained, with a clearly designated dining room (91) and kitchen (56), or it could have expanded into the garden area 8 and thus have a second dining and entertainment area, rooms 80, 83, and 86, alongside a very

pleasant garden with flowing water and decorative statues in the niches on the opposite side. Luxurious houses with more than one dining area are not unknown. This leaves unresolved the relationship of this large *domus* to the rest of the buildings. It would leave atrium area 24 with entrance 3 very small, with few viable rooms, unless it originally stretched out to the northwest in the area that now contains the baths. Of this we have no evidence.

Alternately, garden area 8 with its accompanying dining and social areas could have been part of the *domus* beginning with atrium 24. In this case, the structure of that house would be something similar to that of Loreius Tiburtinus/D. Octavius Quarto, where from a modest atrium, the rest of the space opens to a garden that stretches longitudinally along the block. But as the evidence stands now, there would be no living space around the atrium. The front part of room 43 could at one time have been part of the living area off atrium 24, but was later incorporated into the service area of the baths, and now gives access to the hypocaust. All rooms meant for habitation would have to be along the row of rooms 80, 83, 86, 87 opening onto the rectangular garden area.

If the baths were originally built for only the private use of a single household, they are much larger than the relative size of the accompanying *domus* would suggest. The large peristyle waiting area with benches would also be difficult to explain. In a private *domus*, why would users need to wait before entering the baths? More likely, they were built for private ownership but public use. Moreover, none of this explains the relationship of these two hypothetical *domus* or the baths to dining area 1-4 with open outside area and pool 5. Arguably, this could originally have been an independently-structured *taberna*, or one intended to be joined to the baths next door.

Thus the possibilities for private residential use are mixed. There could originally have been two distinct living areas, beginning with atrium 91 and atrium 24, with space 8 and its adjoining rooms possibly built as part of, or later connected to, either of those areas. But as the whole complex stood in the final phase of its existence, this does not work, for several reasons. First, entrance 11 was closed and only entrance 10 used to access atrium area 91: the social entrance was closed and the service entrance, closer to the kitchen, was either opened or continued as exclusive access to this *domus* area. This suggests a service function even to atrium area 91. Second, the baths and dining area 1-4 do not fit in such a picture but must be explained some other way.

If we then think about possibilities for more communal use, the most obvious would be that it was the center and meeting place of a *collegium* or some other kind of association.

There are sufficient remains of such buildings that their general forms are known. From Italy to Athens, Delos, and Pergamum, certain types emerge. These associations were characterized by regular business meetings but also regular, usually monthly, feasts together in their meeting place, at which music, dancing, and other forms of entertainment often appeared, along with sacrifice. To accommodate these activities, either there is one large space for congregating and group dining, or a series of dining rooms in which smaller groups can feast simultaneously and in similar fashion. The other important factor is the indication of religious activities that were essential ingredients in the life of the association: an altar or some kind of identifiable religious space.⁴

⁴ Philip Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations* highlights the essential ingredient of religious worship in the life of associations, esp. pp. 59-77.

The headquarters of the fullers' guild (*fullones*) at Pompeii was impressively located at the Forum, proclaiming their importance and even more, that of their patron, Eumachia, one of the leading figures of the city, the same who left an imposing funerary monument for her *familia* outside the city in the Via Nuceria cemetery. Constructed sometime after 22 CE, the building of the fullers was one of the largest in the area, of comparable size to the basilica and the Temple of Apollo on the other side of the Forum. Its façade featured a double order of columns. The open area inside was surrounded by a two-storied portico on three sides with three niches at the far end. The façade dedication (*CIL* 10.813) to Concordia Augusta (a title for Livia) suggests that the central niche contained a statue either of her or Augustus. On the southeast corner of the building, by the back entrance from the Via dell' Abondanza, a more completely preserved inscription (*CIL* 10.810) identifies the patron as Eumachia L F, public priestess, who erected the building in her own name and that of her son, M. Numistrius Fronto, dedicating it to Concordia Augusta. It has been suggested that the building design may have been modeled on the Portico of Livia in Rome, of which today only a few fragments remain.

The building is so large and so imposing in its location that it must have been destined primarily not for meetings of the guild but for public use, as a market of wares sold by the guild members: wool, cloth and dyed fabrics. Yet it clearly held cult statues at the back. The state of the building does not render any information about guild meeting activities. Surely, they must have met—and dined—somewhere in the building, but we do not know where.

At the junction of *Cardo III* and the *Decumanus Maximus* at Herculaneum, the meeting room of the Augustales was nothing the size of the fullers' building at Pompeii,

but probably was not intended for any kind of public use. It is a large rectangular hall, 13.5 by 15.7 m. with roof supported by four columns (plan, fig. 7). The statuary and part of the floor were removed by eighteenth-century excavators. In the middle of one wall, slightly raised on two steps, is an area for religious cult. Fourth-style paintings of Hercules, Juno, Minerva and others adorn the walls of this area, which is set off from the rest of the space by walls on either side that reach from the back wall to two of the supporting columns. An inscription found on another inside wall of the building records the first banquet held at the dedication of the building. There are no indicators of dining arrangements in the open hall. They may have been removed at an earlier date. Otherwise, the dining arrangement was makeshift, set up for each occasion. Neither is there indication of a kitchen on the premises, but that is also true of the builders' association building below, which surely did have meals on the premises.

The meeting place of the grain measurers' guild at Ostia by the second century included a large meeting room, a courtyard with well, and a temple to Ceres Augusta, their patron divinity. The floor of the hall contains a mosaic of the members working in their profession.⁵ In the same city, the well-known meeting place of the builders' association on the main *decumanus* (fig. 8) has two front rooms that were probably shops, flanking a main entrance into a large peristyled area, at the end of which was a dais that would have been a sanctuary with cult statues and altar, though nothing remains there today. On the east side was a succession of four dining rooms with built-in *triclinia*, each large enough for from nine to twelve people.⁶ The rooms across the peristyle against the

⁵ Harland, 63, with photo and plan, p. 64.

⁶ Photos of the best-preserved of these dining room are common, e.g., Harland, fig. 13, p. 67, and Dunbabin, Fig. 51, p. 97.

opposite wall are smaller and were probably for storage. Out the back door perpendicular to it was a good-sized latrine, accessible from the small back street. There was a second story with access by a staircase in the southeast corner. Within the building are at least three staircases, one immediately accessible from the street. This suggests that above the first floor meeting area arose several stories, perhaps of the kind of apartment buildings typical of Ostia in the period.

Here in Ostia, we see the two types of association buildings. That of the grain measurers has a large open space for group dining on movable couches. That of the builders has open space only in the ambulatory around the central peristyle, but contains four separate dining rooms side by side. The next story may have been a large open meeting room, but no evidence remains. In both cases, however, there is some kind of temple or sanctuary for religious use. Both buildings probably date to no earlier than the second century.

At Misenum on the Bay of Naples, the building of a *collegium* of Augustales was discovered in 1968 partially submerged, since it is now about one meter below sea level. The remnants of this association also date to the second century. The site had to be drained before excavation, a challenging engineering task. The excavation yielded a number of statues and statue bases with inscriptions containing important information about the life of the organization. All excavated materials are now in the new Archaeological Museum of the Campi Flegrei housed in the Castello Aragonese in Baiae. The precinct of the organization consisted of a building divided into four spaces: a front entrance area, in which nearly all the dedicatory inscriptions were found, a central hall, and two side halls (fig. 9). The central hall, rectangular in shape, was located on a slightly

higher level, accessed by four steps. At its far end was an apse with semicircular seating and a statue base in the center. The floor mosaic pattern of long narrow strips with nothing on either side suggests a dining area with removable couches. The use of the two side rooms is uncertain. No floor decoration was found in them, and they were perhaps for storage or for informal social gatherings. If the central hall was not used for dining as well as religious activities, dining may have taken place in one or both of the side halls. Again, halls for meeting and dining, along with a cult center, characterize the arrangement of space within the building.⁷

Outside of Italy, a good number of inscriptions but few meeting centers of guilds or associations have been preserved. At the sacred island of Delos in the Cyclades, earlier during the Hellenistic period, the merchants and shippers from Berytus had established a meeting place in a many-roomed building complex with its cult of Poseidon (fig. 10). The building was either constructed or adapted before 152 BCE and remained in the use of the guild until it was destroyed in 69 BCE. The large peristyle courtyard (F) gave access to room E and smaller rooms X and V. The series of small cubicles V 1-4, were cultic in use. By the final period, room V 1 was dedicated to Roma and V 2 to Poseidon, patron god of the guild, the others probably to other homeland gods.⁸ Here again, the pattern is meeting space and prominent worship space.

In the upper city of Pergamon in Asia, a side street in a residential area on the southern slope gives access behind a row of shops to the sanctuary of the association of

⁷ An unusual feature of the life of the association, attested in the inscriptions, is that the leadership was dominated by one Q. Cominius Abascantus whose patronage in the association and the city included his wife, Nymphidia Monime, a freedwoman. Upon his death, his widow Nymphidia was adlected into membership in her own right, in 149 CE, the first known example of a woman admitted into the Augustales.

⁸ Harland, 65-69.

boukoloï, or herdsmen. The hall is rectangular, twenty-four by ten meters. There are built-in couches around all four sides except at the entrance on the south side and a cult niche opposite the entrance. The couches are one meter high and two meters deep, with a small marble shelf on which to place food and drink. The couches can accommodate up to seventy persons reclining with feet to the wall and faces to the front. At intervals under the couches are open places probably intended for storage. Beef, pig, and poultry bones were discovered in the floor, some from feasting and some from sacrifice. The whole room was plastered and painted, the remnants of the paintings indicating Dionysiac scenes. Two altars were found in or near the building.⁹ Here dining and sacrifice come together in one room, as at the centers of the *Augustales* in Herculaneum and Misenum.

Yet another building of an association, this one also apparently dedicated to Dionysos, was found west of the acropolis in Athens, between the Pnyx and the Areopagus. The building consisted of a large hall, eighteen by eleven meters, with two rows of columns and an altar area at the east end within a square apse. The group, the *Iobacchoi*, inscribed their rules on a column (*IG* 2.2.1368). Their new priest at that time, Claudius Herodes, is thought to be identified with the wealthy patron Claudius Herodes Attikos, who died in 178 CE. Their meetings were frequent, on the ninth of the month, the annual feast, and on other Bacchic feast days, “and if there is any occasional feast of the god,” and at the death of member. Gatherings consisted of speeches, sacrifices, libations, and feasting in honor of Dionysos.¹⁰ There is no archaeological evidence of dining or feasting here, but, like the large open room of the *Augustales* at Herculaneum, there is plenty of space for moveable dining facilities.

⁹ Harland, 78-80.

¹⁰ Harland, 81-83.

None of these spatial descriptions seems to match the spaces at the *praedium* of Julia Felix. There is no clear temple area. Seemingly the only space allotted for religious use is the small *sacellum* of Isis in the isolated niche at the south end of the garden, though certainly there must have been libations and sacrifices ubiquitously at meals held in the various dining rooms. That niche (55) at the south end of the garden is off center, under an extended arbor, and with little space in front of it, and so unlikely to be intended as gathering area for any kind of group worship. There is no evidence of any further temple space in the entire complex.

Nor is ownership and use by an association consonant with the advertisement posted on the façade of the *praedium*. Dennis Smith (94; see also Ferguson and Nock) cites a Hellenistic example of the association of *orgeones* of the Hero Egretes, from 307-306 BCE (*SIG* 1097=*IG* 22.2499), where the association leases part of its property to a private user, Diognetus, with the stipulation that on the appropriate feast days certain parts of the property (*oikia*) be available to the association, including *cella* and its accessory room, the kitchen, couches, and two table settings. This property must not be in great shape, for the contract specifies that Diognetus is allowed to bring in his own doors and roof, and to take them away when the lease expires. Here is a Greek association seemingly in control of its own property. (Later, under Roman law, however, corporate ownership of property was a legal conundrum, and it is probable that in the first century CE the property administered and used by an association was really held in the name of the patron or a prominent member.¹¹)

¹¹See the extended discussion on this subject in Waltzing (2.3, pp. 432-441), who finds the following ways in which corporate bodies could hold property: 1) property bequeathed to the state for accomplishment of a civil responsibility (rare); 2) *consecratio et dedicatio*, goods belonging to a god; 3) property held by a *societas*, legally understood as personal property of many individuals; and 4) civil personification in *jus*

Our case appears to be the opposite: a single private owner wants to lease out nearly the whole property, including the various dining areas and the baths. Her leaser might turn out to be a *collegium* or association of some kind. But I do not think that we have any examples of banqueting and religious associations operating *tabernae* or baths for their members.

Where else do we find *triclinium* or *biclinium* in the same room with tables and benches? I have not made a thorough study of the remains of other *tabernae* but do not remember such a configuration. There are several examples in Pompeii of *tabernae* or *cauponae* with *thermopolium* in the front room and *triclinium* in a back room (e.g., 1.2.24; 1.8.8). It is quite likely in such cases that there were also moveable table and bench or chair arrangements in the same establishment. But in the same room? There are also several examples of paintings in such establishments, showing customers sitting at tables, e.g., the *caupona* of Via di Mercurio, 6.10.1 (Bragantini PPM 4.1005, Dunbabin fig. 41, p. 81); the *caupona* of Salvius, 6.14.35-36 (PPM 5.366-71); a late third-century sarcophagus relief from Isola Sacra (Dunbabin fig. 42, p. 83). The only place I have seen archaeological evidence of both together is in burial contexts, notably the catacombs of Malta, where a semi-circular structure for *stibadium* dining inside the catacomb itself is sometimes found with benches built into either side or across the aisle. In these cases, the benches are probably either for children or slaves of the family who partake of the funerary banquet but in less formal pose.

privatum, a more limited form of ownership than that of a real person. Others, e.g., Richard Saller in private conversation, are not so sure about the security of these claims in the first century. By the third century, the question enters into the status of so-called church-owned property, e.g., churches and cemeteries.

There is a mid-first-century sarcophagus panel from Amiternum (Dunbabin fig. 40, p. 80) that shows both types of eating facilities in the same room, much as appears in room 3 of Julia Felix's property. Here six well-dressed men dine reclining on couches around a tripod table, while six others, similarly dressed, sit around a similar tripod table. Two servants between the two groups wait on both groups, one walking toward the recliners with cup in hand, the other looking toward the sitters. If this were a depiction of an informal dining scene such as would be found in a public eating establishment, it would fit exactly the setting in our room 3. Such depictions of eating scenes from inns are not unknown on funerary monuments, e.g. the one from Isola Sacra referred to above. But in the Amiternum example, all diners, whether on couches or at table are attired in togas. While earlier, sitting to eat was a sign of old-fashioned simplicity, reclining was a practice of luxury and often elite status. Thus for Dunbabin (81-82), this depiction is of a formal banquet with two grades of dining arrangements based on social status, conspicuously portrayed on the sarcophagus of the deceased.

It would be worthwhile to pursue this double dining arrangement to see if it can be found in other settings.

The only conclusion that seems possible to draw about this building complex is that an enterprising businesswoman¹² who has come into possession of an entire city block, by what means we do not know, was attempting to lease most of the property for five years, perhaps keeping the *domus* in the south corner for herself. In the words of Christopher Parslow, the most recent scholar to study the complex:

¹² The involvement of elite women in property transactions has been studied, and the presence of women in business at Pompeii is well known, but I know of no extensive studies of such non-elite businesswomen, except two unpublished papers by Roy Bowen Ward and Caroline Dexter.

My working thesis is that what we see today is not a villa (it wasn't called that in the sign on the façade) but was designed to be a semi-public "entertainment complex" with baths, gardens, and dining rooms accessible for a fee. The bath complex certainly was always open to the public, comparable to the small neighborhood bath complexes we read about in Rome, and to others elsewhere in Pompeii.... We don't know when Julia Felix actually lived (the baths are Augustan in date), or how or when she came upon these properties.¹³

Nor do we know why she wanted to rent out these spaces for five years to someone else, nor whether she envisioned different leasers taking on different parts of the property. Perhaps she was growing tired of administering the whole complex herself. Whether the advertisement was new and she had not yet secured a lease, or whether it was old and the leaser(s) were already in place in the building, we shall never know. However, it does seem that the most likely conclusion to draw is that Julia Felix or perhaps a prior owner from whom she purchased or inherited the property, fixed it up for multiple uses, including bathing and several different types of dining, all intended for private service of the public through rental or fee-paying use. If an association of some kind did rent the property from her, they would in turn probably have done the same thing with the baths and *taberna*, namely, operate them for public use, while reserving the rest of the property for their own use. This kind of arrangement though, again, would be unique.

¹³ Electronic correspondence with David Balch, 12/3/2005.

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