

Defining Neighborhoods—A Case Study in Pompeii

Introduction

Roman society, as we understand it, existed in numerous factions, from the broader divisions of social classes to the small groups supporting each individual candidate. This social construct could be examined through a variety of lenses, but this paper looks to the questions of how these divisions were reflected spatially, how the Romans understood the places around them, and in what ways the physical structures themselves reflect those who built them.

The question of spatial understanding is too large for a single paper, so instead this investigates a smaller aspect of space, both conceptual and physical: the neighborhood. The city of Pompeii is a (comparatively) well-preserved and expansive site in which the archaeological evidence can sustain thematic questions requiring general survey with the site-specific data necessary to support conclusions. Fountains, street shrines, and bars define the neighborhoods of Pompeii through both their geographical locations and their social connotations. Recent research on Pompeian neighborhoods has focused on these individual features, using each as a lens to examine the idea of the neighborhood, without combining all the elements. This paper will examine those structures independently, and then overlay them on a map of the city to investigate whether the features can be correlated, how they interact with one another, the visible trends, and the nature of neighborhood boundaries in 79 CE when the city was destroyed.

Through examining the features together, the study of Pompeii can expand beyond specific foci to consider the role of neighborhoods in the urban fabric.

Defining Neighborhoods

In studying the structure of Pompeian neighborhoods, it is first necessary to define and examine the concept of the neighborhood in its ancient and modern contexts. The ideas and terms are part of everyday modern life, but what follows is how they will be specifically applied in this paper. The neighborhood has defining features present across history; however, it is worth noting the elements that have changed over time to reflect the development of urban areas, particularly as a result of the Industrial Revolution.

A neighborhood is an aspect of urban life that can be defined both spatially and psychologically¹. Geographically, it occupies an area of the city, and the landscape shapes the character of the space. A community oriented around a riverbank interacts with the space differently than one on a hilltop, just as living high on a mountain is dramatically different from the plains. The features of the landscape serve not only as a distinction for the neighborhood conceptually, but changes in the topography are one way of demarking the boundaries for an area. Unless boundaries are understood, if not perfectly defined, a neighborhood could not exist within a city, for it is contingent upon the idea that a city can be divided into individual districts.

Within the specific geographic space, physical elements and structures provide distinguishing points for the occupants of each neighborhood. These can fall into two categories: those that are present within every neighborhood to form a focus point for the

¹ John Bert Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 13

community, and those that are unique to the area and distinguish it from all others. The physical aspect of the neighborhood, its built features and topography, provide a concrete way of identifying and differentiating the area within the city.

While a city can be divided solely by physical space, the human element is essential to fully understanding the neighborhood. Without inhabitants, a city is only buildings, which give some indication of spatial division, but its occupants embody the social and societal elements that are key to defining neighborhoods. On any city block, from any time period, people who live near to one another are known as neighbors. These neighbors form larger groups, communities, brought together by commonalities ranging from profession, heritage, and income to the space they inhabit². The community is the psychological neighborhood, joined by history, beliefs, and politics, and maintained by the sharing of space.

The elements that comprise a neighborhood continue thematically from the ancient world to the modern one, although the method of expression varies across the centuries³. In the physical definition of the neighborhood, the central places of food and drink, the design of structures, and the spatial dividers (either topographical or man-made) all contribute to the understanding of what makes a neighborhood. The community-neighborhood incorporates the seemingly intangible aspects of society—religion, politics, employment, and social class—which form the human character of the space and often are also represented by a physical structure.

² Ray Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society* 2nd ed (London: Routledge, 2007), 39

³ Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 21

As civilizations have come and gone, the ways in which these elements have appeared and the importance of individual ones has changed with the times. In the ancient world, physical features (both topographical and built), acquisition of water, orthopraxic worship of the local gods, and political organization essentially defined a neighborhood⁴, through their physical manifestations and their effect on the collective conscience. Social class, ethnicity, and orthodox religious belief play the greatest role in determining a modern neighborhood⁵, yet in the ancient world these would have been some of the least influential factors. In Pompeii, the primary structures and their corresponding social implications that define neighborhoods are fountains, street shrines, and bars.

Fountains, Shrines, and Bars

Water has been one of the most contested resources over the course of human history, given its integral role in survival and its ability to facilitate development of civilizations. Within the city of Pompeii, the combination of the necessity of access to water and the premium on proximity means that the development of street-side fountains is one that dramatically influences the urban texture. Fountains were not constructed in Pompeii until the principate began with Augustus in the late first century BCE, when the Serino aqueduct was completed⁶; this aqueduct primarily served the naval base at Misenum but Pompeii received a branch. The aqueduct and corresponding underground pipe system within the city drove the installation of fountains to replace the deep wells,

⁴ Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 21

⁵ Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 12

⁶ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 45-48

which had previously served as the primary public water supply⁷. Although many wealthy inhabitants connected their private dwellings to the city water pipes, it appears that much of their water allotment went to decorative features and that many still utilized the public fountains for drinking both because the water quality was consistently high and the fountains were a point of social contact within the community⁸.

The design and structure of the fountains had a fairly consistent base plan, however, the material, decoration, and sometimes the plan itself varied with each one. They were primarily rectangular boxes, approximately one meter by 0.7 m, although some were square and one is semicircular, all held together with iron strips over the corners, then tiled and sealed on the inside to prevent leaks⁹. At the outer corners there were blocks of stone that doubled as protective bollards and steps for the smaller members of the community to reach the water (Figure 1). The material used depended partly on what was available, along with the level of financial support for the project within each district. As a result, they are made from all kinds of stone: mainly local volcanic rock, but three are travertine, two are marble, and two are tuff¹⁰. The use of different materials and designs suggests that the city of Pompeii, while facilitating the larger water project, was not overseeing the individual construction of fountains¹¹. Rather, that task fell to local politicians and elites who could support their place in the community by funding both a beautiful and necessary fountain. The neighborhood

⁷ Gemma Jansen, "The Water System: Supply and Drainage." *The World of Pompeii*. Ed. John J. Dobbins and Pedar W. Foss (London: Routledge, 2007) 257-8

⁸ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 48

⁹ Lawrence Richardson, *Pompeii: an Architectural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1988), 58

¹⁰ Jeremy Hartnett, "Fountains at Herculaneum: Sacred History, Topography, and Civic Identity" *Rivista di Studi Pompeiani* 19 (2008): 84

¹¹ Hartnett, "Fountains at Herculaneum," 84

distinctions by fountain structure appeared most noticeably through the wide range of images and image quality surrounding the spigots. Some major themes are deities, masks, animal heads, floral motifs, jugs, shields, concentric circles, and simple disks¹² (Figure 2). Certain devices, like shields, repeat over a specific portion of the city; however, the images are not identical each time they appear¹³. This unity of a theme with individual differences highlights the distinctions between districts that the fountains helped signify and the specific image chosen out of the larger corpus reflects the neighborhood it served. Through an understanding of the design of the fountains, it is possible to draw connections and conclusions about their place in the neighborhood structure.

The fountains had a social and societal importance beyond their role in providing a life essential. The fountains functioned as a geographic identifier, with so many distributed across the city they could reliably be used as reference points or when giving directions¹⁴ (Figure 3). This is especially true because their design and imagery was unique to their neighborhood location, giving each space in the city a feature distinct from its neighbors. They also affected, to some extent, the neighborhood divisions in the city because they were constructed later in the city's lifetime, during the principate, with more of an eye to functional placement along the pipelines and off of private property than to preexisting partitions¹⁵. The locations of the fountains mostly kept them along the curb and out of the way, however, in a few places the structures extended into the road, narrowing or blocking the street entirely. The loss of traffic movement would have

¹² Hartnett, "Fountains at Herculaneum," 84

¹³ Richardson, *Pompeii: An Architectural History*, 58

¹⁴ Richardson, *Pompeii: An Architectural History*, 59, Roger Ling, "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City." *Greece & Rome* 2nd ser. 37.2 (1990): 210

¹⁵ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 49

changed the nature of the area, and thus the construction of fountains somewhat restructured the organization of the city.

While the fountains served as geographic landmarks, they also were social identifiers since the imagery on the fountains reflected the microcosm of religious beliefs and political structure. The fountain reliefs could depict the patron god of the area, evoking any associated attributes of prosperity or protection, as well as bringing to mind what the god patronized, which may have been a key part of the neighborhood's economic or social life¹⁶. Furthermore, the symbols could tie the fountain to the local elite by embodying aspects of their personal religious connections. This would subtly reinforce the elite role in the structure of the neighborhood and would interweave their political place with the broader religious context of the neighborhood. While the imagery highlighted local religious and political affiliations, it also incorporated the greater themes of Roman society. By choosing deities and imagery that alluded to the principate and Roman values, they mimicked the decoration of political architecture at the capitol¹⁷. The mixture of micro and macro themes tied the local civic and religious experience to the Roman identity, emphasizing the ongoing struggle for connection between the colonies and the center.

Across the city, the fountains fit into the neighborhood identity primarily through their geographic distribution. Very few houses were more than 80 m from a fountain, and there are 39 total excavated in the city¹⁸. While the southeast quadrant of the city appears to have fewer fountains than the rest of the city, it can be ascribed to the lower density

¹⁶ Hartnett, "Fountains at Herculaneum," 85

¹⁷ Hartnett, "Fountains at Herculaneum," 77

¹⁸ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 51

settlement of the area with larger houses that would have relied more on their private connection to the water system than public access¹⁹. The frequency of fountains emphasizes their importance in daily life and in the community. The inhabitants of the city would have a daily routine for water tying them to a specific and nearby fountain, and the regular contact with one another forms the community²⁰. Thus the patterns of local division are indicated by the locations of the fountains and their distance from one another. However, as the fountains were built later in the city's history, their addition would have changed the earlier routines involving water and encouraged a reorganization of spatial boundaries within the city²¹. It would not be a total transformation, for the street shrines provide a solid anchor for each neighborhood.

Of the physical features that can be used to define a neighborhood in Pompeii, the shrines for the *Lares Compitales* are the most conspicuous, both conceptually and spatially. After it was colonized, Pompeii was divided into *vici*, neighborhoods, and at the primary crossroads, *compita*, for each neighborhood, there was a shrine to the crossroads gods, the *Lares Compitales*²². These shrines were overseen by the annually elected *vicomagistri*, who oversaw the major religious festival, the *Compitalia*, along with the regular maintenance of the shrine. Participation in rituals at the shrine would have been a symbol of presence in the neighborhood for members of the community, which was especially important for the elite seeking to make positive impressions on the voters they courted from their district. Shrine maintenance along with participation in and sponsorship of rituals also would have been a way to enhance status for the local

¹⁹ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 50

²⁰ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 52

²¹ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 52

²² Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 42

freedmen, who made up the majority of the *vicomagistri*. By assuming religious office they lend themselves the credibility of a citizen and establish a foundation in public service for their children²³. The shrines, more than just being a means to further a political career, were also the roots of the community, binding the inhabitants by trust in a specific protective force and giving them a shared identity.

Shrines and religious observance were part of everyday life in the Roman world, as is attested by their presence in literature, both history and poetry. Livy references sacrifices at the crossroad shrines in two different times of peril. During a plague in the Second Punic War, “prayers were offered at crossroads”²⁴ and later in the second century as new commanders prepared to move out to their provinces under ill omens, “a three day period of prayer was proclaimed in the name of the college of decemvirs at all the street-corner shrines because in the day-time, between about the third and fourth hours, darkness had covered everything.”²⁵ The use of the street shrines in times of trial highlights the seriousness of their role in Roman religion; however, Propertius utilizes them in a different way²⁶. He sees the street corners, with their individual protective spirits and shrines, as a place where he can “go outside for a walk and see/beauty on every side, at every corner,/to die for.”²⁷ Not only does he see the corners as a place to pick up women, but also as a nighttime rendezvous, where “no intersection can keep

²³ Joanne Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), 198

²⁴ Livy, *Hannibal's War: Books 21-30*, Trans. J.C. Yardley, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), 27.23.7

²⁵ Evan T. Sage, "Titus Livius (Livy), The History of Rome, Book 38, Chapter 36." *Perseus Digital Library*.

²⁶ Alan Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks*, (New York: Routledge, 2011), 43

²⁷ Propertius, *Propertius in Love: The Elegies*, Trans. David R. Slavitt, (Berkeley: University of California, 2002), 2.22A.3

silent.”²⁸ The crossroads in Propertius become places for womanizing rather than the sacred spaces of Livy, and the difference between the two authors emphasizes the multifaceted nature of space in the Roman world.

The crossroads and their shrines were a point of focus for each neighborhood within the city, and a way of identifying one area from another. While all the shrines shared similar characteristics, the specific design and quantity of ornamentation for each one depended on the generosity of the magistrates overseeing them. At the very least each shrine had a fresco on the wall of a building at the crossroads, often depicting the *Lares* themselves, a serpent representing the *genius locus*, or spirit of the place, and the *vicomagistri* carrying out the religious observances. In addition to the paintings, the shrine might also include a masonry altar, as a place to leave sacrifices, just as the shrine at the corner of Insula I.9 was discovered with the burnt remains of sacrifices still on the altar²⁹ (Figure 4). The local differences in design made each neighborhood shrine unique, reflecting the specific religion of the area, as well as making the neighborhood identifiable to an outsider.

The shrines appear all over the city, although their placement is unexpected, given their role as a focus-point for the neighborhood. Rather than being set in the center of the neighborhood, deep amid blocks of residential buildings, they are located at what seems to be the boundary between districts³⁰. Looking at the map of shrine locations (Figure 5), they are more concentrated at the center of the city, along main roads on which a traveler traverse the city and could enter a neighborhood, instead of at the geographic center of

²⁸ Sextus Propertius, *The Complete Elegies of Sextus Propertius*, Trans. Vincent Katz (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004), 2.20.2

²⁹ Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 198

³⁰ Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks*, 43

each district³¹. While drawing the exact boundary lines is next to impossible, the distribution suggests that the city was split into sections of two or three blocks, not necessarily square, that would have been entered by passing by the shrine.

Historically, Pompeii was not always divided into districts by these altars. They were built after the colonization in 80 BCE, representing the overlay of Roman culture on the city³². The focus on the main routes reflects the Roman influence on the city plan, which had so far been significantly less “planned” than many other colonies. One way of providing a clearer structure was to better define the neighborhoods, which the shrines facilitated, especially when accompanied by religious ritual that encouraged Romanization. Although they were established before the principate, under Augustus’ reforms of Rome the *Lares Compitales* at Rome received a resurgence of interest as he included the *genius Augustus*. While none of the altars at Pompeii display the imagery of *genius Augustus* he was cultivating in Rome, Augustus’ efforts would have permeated through Italy and may encouraged interest in the maintenance of the shrines³³. The possible subsequent decline in interest could help explain the uneven distribution of shrines across the city, as some were discovered in disrepair³⁴. The map (Figure 5) as it appears now is unlikely to be a complete picture of the worship of the *Lares Compitales* at its height; yet the geographic distribution still gives a solid indication of how the shrines divided the city into neighborhoods. The neighborhoods can be seen as groups of several blocks with shrines, along with both fountains and *tabernae*, defining the boundaries and creating a central focus point within each area. This pattern is visible in

³¹ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 43

³² Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 42

³³ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 44

³⁴ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 44

Region VI where the shrines mark the entry to a neighborhood from the central road (Via Del Terme which becomes Via Della Fortuna) and the distinction between neighborhoods appearing every few blocks. Fountains and *tabernae* are set along the edges of the neighborhoods, on the main road, as well as in the middle of the two blocks between the Via Del Terme/Via Della Fortuna and the city walls, where they mark the nucleus of the neighborhood.

The *taberna*, or small bar and eatery, is the last major category through which this paper examines neighborhoods. While *tabernae* are all over the city and a major part of the economy, they also represent an essential feature of daily life—a space for social interaction. Many recent studies by prominent scholars on Roman eateries focus on their negative aspects³⁵. They discuss the interactions between the lower class, frequenting the *tabernae*, and the elite, who want them nowhere nearby, as fraught with tension reflected both in the literature about walking the streets at night and in their distribution across the city. The majority of this interpretation comes from the role of the *tabernae* in Latin literature, as a place associated with drunkenness, singing, fighting, gambling, and disgusting smells³⁶. Petronius in his *Satyricon* details a fight between a drunken guest and the innkeeper ending with blows exchanged by a candlestick and the guest locked out for the night³⁷. Both the questionable nature of the place and its detrimental effect on social standing are described by Propertius, “when the neighboring crowd came running from the new gardens,/when an ugly brawl echoed in a dark tavern,/if without my presence,

³⁵ See both Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, “Public honour and private shame: the urban texture of Pompeii,” in T. Cornell and K. Lomas (eds.), *Urban Society in Roman Italy*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995) 39-62, and Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 92-101

³⁶ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 93

³⁷ Michael Heseltine, "Petronius, Satyricon, Section 95." *Perseus Digital Library*.

not without the ruin of my reputation.”³⁸ While this impression is echoed elsewhere, in Horace, Plautus, Juvinal, and Martial, it does not, as Steven Ellis argues in his recent, archaeologically focused survey of inns and bars, provide a complete picture³⁹. While they were places of questionable repute, *tabernae* also were places for socializing and celebrating, a defining feature of Roman social life⁴⁰. At the *tabernae* friends could meet to drink, discuss, and play dice, as the archaeological evidence has show with finds of wine amphorae, inscribed quotes, and forgotten knucklebones⁴¹. With a comfortable space for socializing, along with additional incentives, the prevalence of *tabernae* in Pompeii is unsurprising and they play an essential role in the neighborhood structure.

Defining which structures are *tabernae*, or their larger cousins, *cauponae*, which had facilities for overnight guests, has been contested since the beginning of the excavations. The Latin labels themselves have been part of the problem, because ancient authors refer to bars and inns in a variety of ways without a consistent regard for the physical structures themselves⁴². Furthermore, at the initial excavations, the Latin terms were applied indiscriminately to the structures; over the years it has been necessary to systematically reassign the archaeological structure associated with each term. Ellis’ most recent work takes *tabernae*, in their most basic form, as buildings with a masonry service counter that could have held *dolia*, or large jars⁴³ (Figure 6). Using those criteria, he found 158 structures in Pompeii that could be defined as some type of eating

³⁸ Propertius, Katz (Trans), *The Complete Elegies of Sextus Propertius*, 4.8

³⁹ Ellis, Steven, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004): 372

⁴⁰ Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii," 383

⁴¹ Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 199

⁴² Packer, Jim, "Inns at Pompeii: A Short Survey," *Cronache Pompeiane* 4 (1978): 5-7

⁴³ Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii," 373-4

establishment. When narrowing the focus for more specific evidence, looking for cooking materials, nearby fixtures, storerooms, and epigraphic evidence and small finds related to tavern life, he found 128 structures⁴⁴. Many of these buildings had simple whitewashed interiors, sometimes with frescos advertising their wares or graffiti praising or disparaging the service. Hanging above the front door was often a lamp, which would burn into the night, showing potential customers that the shop was still open for business. The interior plan varied in complexity depending on the size and intention of the establishment; some were simply a single room with a counter facing the street, others had private dining rooms, outdoor *triclinia*, and rooms to rent overnight⁴⁵. The different types of establishments would serve a variety of customers, from the locals looking for a place to eat, drink, and gather to the visitors wishing to stay the night.

The distribution pattern of the bars reflects primarily their attempts to entice customs as they moved through the city. There seems to be a preference for locations along the through-routes connecting the gates, 56% of the structures Ellis definitively calls bars are along the main roads, a figure that increases to 67% if other major routes are included (Figure 7). This is best exemplified in Region VI, where the bars appear almost exclusively along the major thoroughfares, rather than in the core of the neighborhood⁴⁶. Along with a focus on the main routes, if possible the establishment was located at an intersection. This was a conscious choice by the proprietor for multiple reasons: it increased the quantity of traffic by enticing those passing from two directions and it allowed them easy access to a water supply with the corner fountains. The presence

⁴⁴ Ellis, “The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii” 374

⁴⁵ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 93

⁴⁶ Ellis, “The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii” 378

of a bar on a corner was a fact of life in Pompeii, not less than 63 of the 96 intersections had one⁴⁷. Bars appeared all over the city, as they were a major component of the economic and social life of the town.

There are districts and sections of main road, however, in which bars are conspicuously absent. This is particularly true of the area around the Forum and along the western end of the Via Dell' Abbondanza, where much of the formal civic life of the city occurred. Their absence is frequently attributed to the immorality associated with bars and the desire to maintain a level of dignity around public spaces by the same authors who argue that the areas with bars are districts for deviant behavior⁴⁸. Ellis has another interpretation: that the lack of bars in civic areas stems more from the use of the space as a processional way for festivals and ceremonies⁴⁹. A combination of the two arguments seems most plausible, that the presence of bars lowers the respectability of an area, and keeping the spaces around the civic district clear make it easier to use them for governmental functions. Another possible reason for the lack of bars is that the emperors, beginning with Tiberius, regularly passed edicts that attempted to restrict the sale of hot foods and drinks⁵⁰. The threat of oversight by the imperial powers may be another reason that curtailed the number of bars in civic areas. Despite a few areas notably lacking them, the large number of bars distributed over the entire city of Pompeii demonstrates their strength of presence in daily life and their role in shaping the neighborhood community.

⁴⁷ Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii" 379

⁴⁸ See again Wallace-Hadrill, Andrew, "Public honour and private shame: the urban texture of Pompeii," 39-62, and Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 92-101

⁴⁹ Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii" 376-8

⁵⁰ Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii" 377

Analysis of Neighborhood Components in Pompeii

While each of the discussed features of neighborhoods—fountains, shrines, and bars—have been studied independently to define the districts of Pompeii, this paper aims to bring the three together through comparing their geographic and social contexts. An examination of the way that the features interact with one another provides a clearer sense of how each one can be used to delineate neighborhoods (see the author’s map for comparative discussion). It also provides a more comprehensive picture of the neighborhoods because Roman spatial understanding would have cross-referenced the different landmarks, features, and images to create their definitions of space.

Fountains and shrines interact with one another on spatial levels to form neighborhoods. The fountains were often constructed near the shrines because of the desired street corner location that was convenient both as a place for a communal water source and for the markers of boundaries between districts. While they both represent central elements of the neighborhood, their locations do not always correlate perfectly. Shrines appear most regularly on the street corners of large streets, while fountains appear further from the core of the city in the center of neighborhood areas. Looking at this comparison, the shrines can then be used to find the edges of the neighborhood, while the fountains indicate the central focal point.

Although the fountains were built significantly after the shrines and their some placements narrowing or blocking streets might appear to disregard preexisting patterns, shrines’ close correspondence with the fountains suggests their distribution was not entirely thoughtless. The number of fountains and shrines in close proximity to one another, either on the same corner or across the street, is high, suggesting that the

locations chosen for their installation took into consideration the already existing communities. This conclusion is also supported by the evidence of deep wells as the earlier mechanism for division of the city by water almost directly underneath some of the fountains⁵¹.

While the shrines established Pompeian neighborhoods early on, the addition of the fountains at the same time as Augustus' neighborhood reform in Rome is notable in terms of the neighborhood structure. While the shrines do not reflect the imagery of Augustus' program, the addition of the fountains would have brought local focus back to the neighborhoods as Augustus had intended. Fountains and shrines together provide compelling evidence for how each one structured the city, and together they can define both the boundaries and the central points of neighborhoods.

The connection between fountains and bars is both spatial and practical. The street corner was the chosen location for both fountains and bars, because it would serve a large number of passersby. This is reflected in the statistics that all but two of the fountains were less than 10m from an intersection and 56% of the bars were built on corners⁵². The fountains utilized the corner out of convenience for the community it served; whether the bars were catering to visitors or intentionally targeting local business because of their location is debatable. Either way, the intersection was an area highly trafficked by community members and visitors alike and the shared space between fountains and bars brought clientele to both parties. Furthermore, the practicality of locating a bar at an intersection with a public fountain is unquestionable beyond simply the advantage of traffic. The bars could rely on the water for their business needs and

⁵¹ Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, 46

⁵² Ellis, "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii" 379

take advantage of the drop-in clientele generated by locals stopping by the fountain⁵³. The neighborhood culture revolved around the necessities of life—water and human contact, both of which the street corners with fountains and bars provided. In terms of defining neighborhoods, fountains do so more effectively than bars because of the high number of bars across the most of the districts. However, using the bars as supporting evidence for the manner in which the fountains structure the neighborhoods strengthens the argument because the bars are another major aspect of daily life that relate spatially to the fountains.

The bars also shared the street corners with the shrines to the *Lares Compitales*. While the bars benefited economically from being located on a corner, the specific location of the street corner was required by the nature of the religion. These particular *Lares* were dedicated to protecting the crossroads, which dictated the location of the shrine, often overlapping it with a bar. The shrines and the bars together could have been used as reference point when giving directions, the bar as an obvious signpost and the shrine an indicator of the crossing of boundaries. As this relationship exemplifies, neighborhoods were structured by religious and economic life. The economic connection is further evident in the possibility that the *tabernae* would have sold items that could be sacrificed at the adjacent shrine⁵⁴. Shops were regularly present around large temples to take advantage of the market for sacrifices; the localized version could capitalize on the clients familiar both with the shop and the shrine as members of the neighborhood community.

⁵³ Ellis, “The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii” 379

⁵⁴ Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 198

After considering pairs of relationships between fountains, shrines, and bars, the effect one has on another and on the greater structure of the neighborhood is clear. Using the three together, the map of Pompeii can be broken down into districts more effectively through an understanding of the culture and community. While fountains and shrines could be used individually to define neighborhoods, supported both by one another and the evidence of local bars the argument becomes far stronger. With all three it is possible to look at the map and see how the city breaks down into groups of two or three blocks (with no consistency of shape) and can be examined through its divisions. This new way of understanding the space in the city builds a key bridge between the narrow case studies of individual houses and the larger area and thematic questions that traditionally make up the study of Pompeii. With this intermediate step, Pompeii develops into a multidimensional city, a community comprised of smaller groups that shape to the urban fabric. In this way, the culture of Pompeii becomes more realistic because it draws out the microcosms within the city and facilitates their inclusion in the understanding of the city's culture, rather than attempting to define the city without recognizing its individual elements.

A neighborhood can be thought of like a village, self-sufficient and contained, and a city as the combination of many villages. Yet in a city, the definition of village, or neighborhood, moves away from the hard and fast boundaries that the self-contained village unit implies⁵⁵. Instead of the clear edge of something isolated, the nature of people interacting across larger spaces makes it more difficult to define the limits of city districts. The greater space and community of the entire city shapes the boundaries of the

⁵⁵ Teitz, Michael, Telephone Interview, November 4, 2011.

neighborhoods, and for each individual perspective and crossing of multiple boundaries the definitions of the districts shift.

Opportunities for Further Research

To gain a better understanding of the neighborhoods—both in Pompeii and in Roman society more broadly—and how individual perspectives impact their division, further research could involve a wider variety of media. Some possibilities are epigraphic and literary evidence, street networks, and built structures.

The epigraphic evidence carved and painted onto the walls of Pompeii provides a military and political lens for the examination of the neighborhoods. A series of messages painted on the wall in Oscan, known as the *eituns* inscriptions⁵⁶, gives the marshaling point for the men of each neighborhood (Figure 8). Their distribution around the city and their textual references to specific individuals indicated that even before the city was partitioned by the *Lares Compitales* shrines, there were socio-spatial divisions⁵⁷. Further work on epigraphic evidence could include a study of the electoral programmata and an analysis of the location and frequency of names mentioned⁵⁸. Ling has outlined and mapped the distribution of references to four major families in campaign posts and uses them to conclude that the city was broken down into at least four districts, *Vicus*

⁵⁶ An example from Carl Buck, “Greek ἀμφοδον, Oscan Amvianud, and the Eituns-Inscriptions.” *Classical Philology* 17 No. 2 (1922): 111, translation K. Lougheed, “By this route, there are paths where the public temple may be seen, as well as the middle road and the towers, which are to the left of the Urblana(?) gate. On that road, to the left, Lucius Pudidius, son of Lucius and Marcus Purilius, son of Marcus, have the Urblana(?) gate and the Mefirian(?) tower, the outpost.

⁵⁷ Ling, “A Stranger in Town,” 209

⁵⁸ James L Franklin, *Pompeii: the Electoral Programmata, Campaigns and Politics, A.D. 71-79*, (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1980) 92-94

Saliniensis, Vicus Campaniensis, Vicus Forensis, and Vicus Urbulanensis⁵⁹ (Figure 9). These names correspond with some that also appear in the *éituns* inscriptions and their physical location mirrors Westfall's division of Pompeii into four regions based on function: the amphitheatre, the nice residential near the central baths, the theatre and entertainment district, and the forum area⁶⁰ (Figure 10). Work on electoral inscription distribution would shape the political boundaries of neighborhoods as well as developing the "human" side of Pompeii by connecting the neighborhoods of the city to specific individuals.

Literary sources describing neighborhood life would further shape the personal aspect of neighborhoods and fill the void of social norms that archaeology cannot preserve. Descriptions of neighborhood life would color the character of the spaces and facilitate the partition of neighborhoods by identifying new methods and highlighting how accepted structures define space function in the Roman mind. Through tracking mention of words like "*vicus*" through the Latin corpus it would be possible to build an understanding of how they were perceived at specific times along with examining trends over the course of Roman history.

Employing street networks expands the study of neighborhoods by removing them from the isolation of being considered individually and connecting one area to another. Patterns of use and the direction of traffic flow as established by the wheel ruts and wear of curbstones could be an indicator of neighborhood boundaries, or at the very

⁵⁹ Ling, "A Stranger in Town," 204-5

⁶⁰ Carroll W Westfall, "Urban Planning, Roads, Streets, and Neighborhoods," *The World of Pompeii*, Ed. John J. Dobbins and Pedar W. Foss, (London: Routledge, 2007) 129-30

least indicate organization and use of urban space⁶¹. This would be further informed by information on whether the street was accessible to wheeled vehicles and if the area was isolated because of a faulty connection with the rest of the city. Accessibility plays a significant role in determining both the way an area develops and the quantity in which it interacts with the city around it, which both affect the division of neighborhoods⁶².

Finally, the frequency and type of doorways can speak to the urban landscape of the street, whether it is commercial or residential, and the relationship between inhabitants and visitors⁶³.

A high frequency and similarity in type of built structures within an area could reflect the development of a space over a short period of time and indicate that it was intended to be a cohesive unit. The development of the western side of the city along the walls is certainly after the Social War and may be an example of a colonists' district, as the houses encroached over the city wall (which was no longer necessary) and represented some of the most luxurious, modern, and clearly Roman designs from that time⁶⁴. Another possible area developed as a unit is the southeastern quadrant of the city, which was likely middle class housing⁶⁵. Building type can define neighborhoods in the city and provide indicator of an area's social texture.

Although there are a variety of ways to approach spatial understandings of ancient neighborhoods, yet archaeological and textual evidence can facilitate a discussion and

⁶¹ Eric Poehler, "Circulation of Traffic in Pompeii's Regio VI," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 53-74

⁶² Laurence, *Pompeii: Space and Society*, 54

⁶³ Ray Laurence, "The organization of space in Pompeii," in T. Cornell and K. Lomas (eds.), *Urban Society in Roman Italy*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995) 63-78.

⁶⁴ Mary Beard, *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard UP, 2008), 40

⁶⁵ Beard, *The Fires of Vesuvius*, 106

shed some light on the matter. As the case study of Pompeii illustrates, structures like fountains, shrines, and bars individually can identify potential neighborhoods, and when correlated, they provide a convincing body of evidence for the existence of neighborhoods as spaces both geographic and psychological.

Defining Neighborhoods: Figures

Figure 1



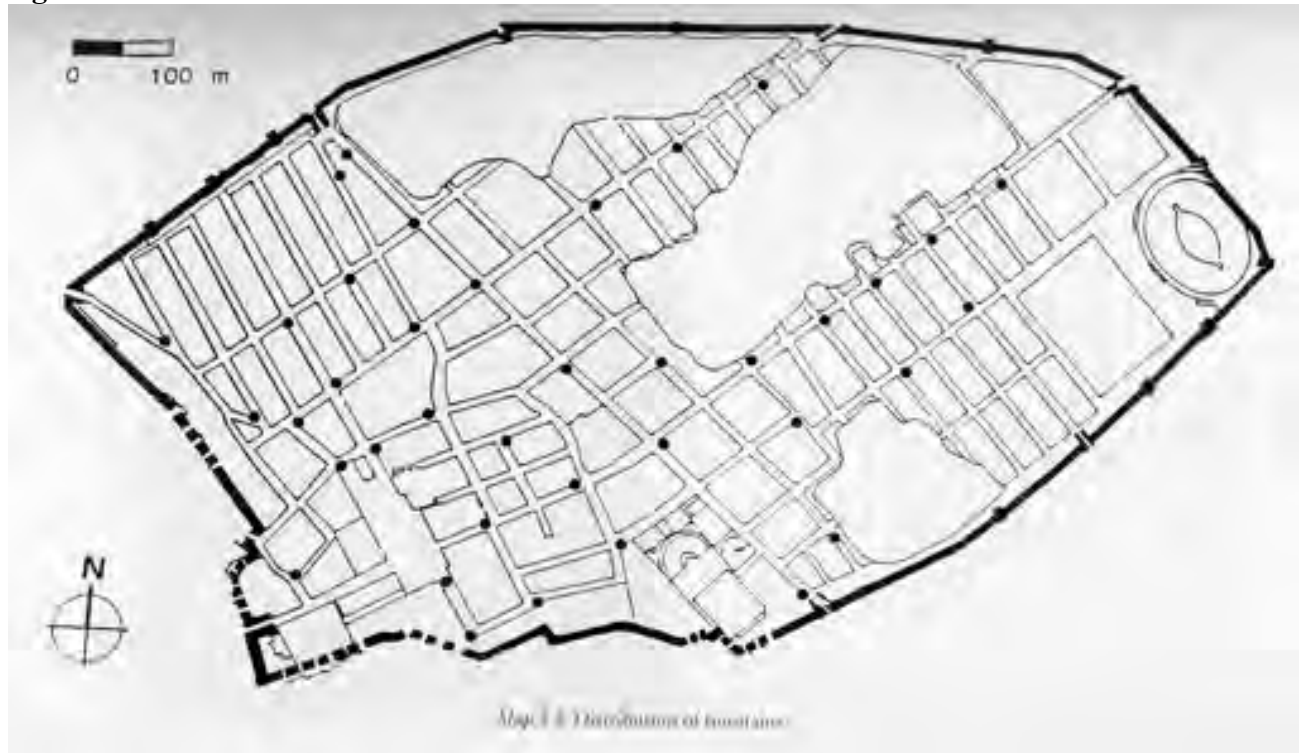
“Water tower and public fountain,” near the Stabian Baths, constructed late 1st C BCE
Berry, Joanne. *The Complete Pompeii*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2007. 240.

Figure 2



“A fountain in Via della Fortuna,” Via della Fortuna, built late 1st C BCE
Laurence, Ray. *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2007. 45.

Figure 3



“Distribution of fountains”

Laurence, Ray. *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2007. 47.

Figure 4



“Neighborhood Shrine to the 12 Di Consentes,” outside IX.11.1, built mid 1st C BE
Berry, Joanne. *The Complete Pompeii*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2007. 198.

Figure 5



“Location of Street Shrines”

Laurence, Ray. *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2007. 43.

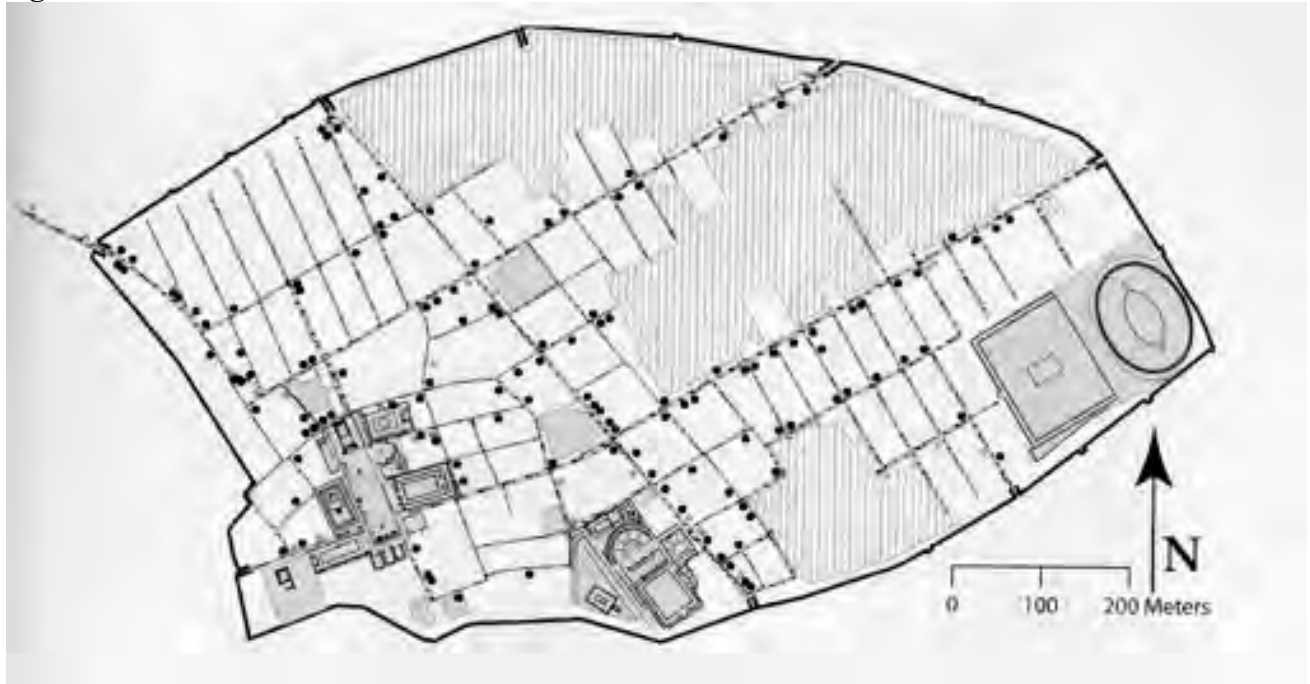
Figure 6



“Bar of Lucius Vetutius Placidus,” I.8.9, built unknown

Berry, Joanne. *The Complete Pompeii*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2007. 220.

Figure 7



“Distribution of the 158 food and drink outlets at Pompeii”

Ellis, Steven. "The Distribution of Bars at Pompeii." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004): 375

Figure 8

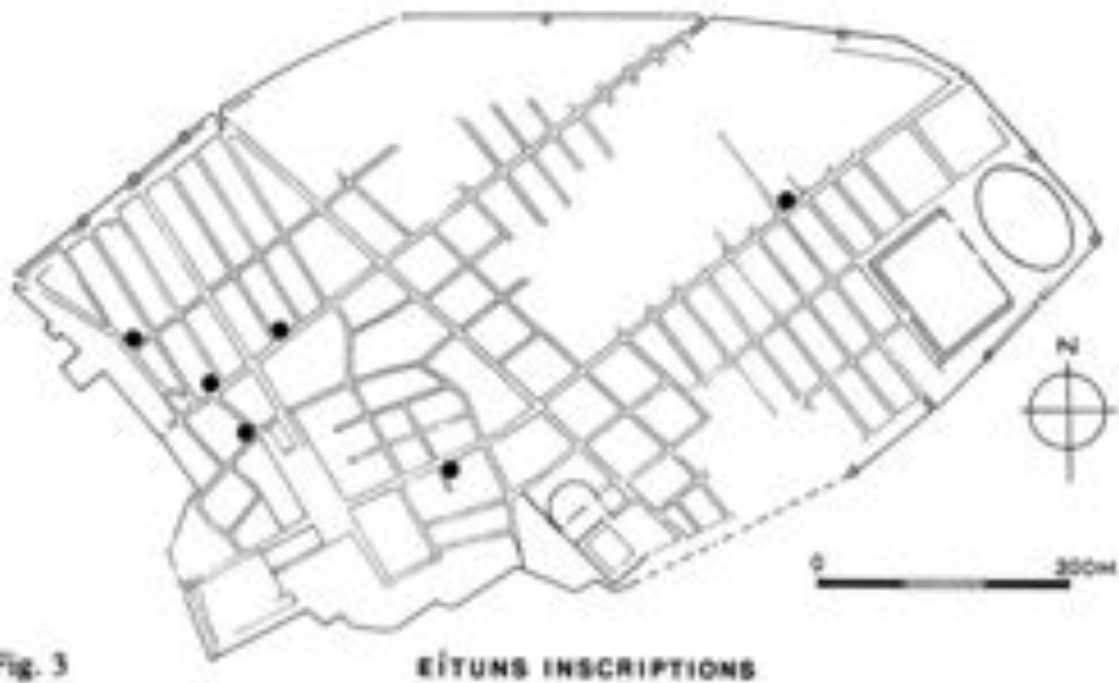


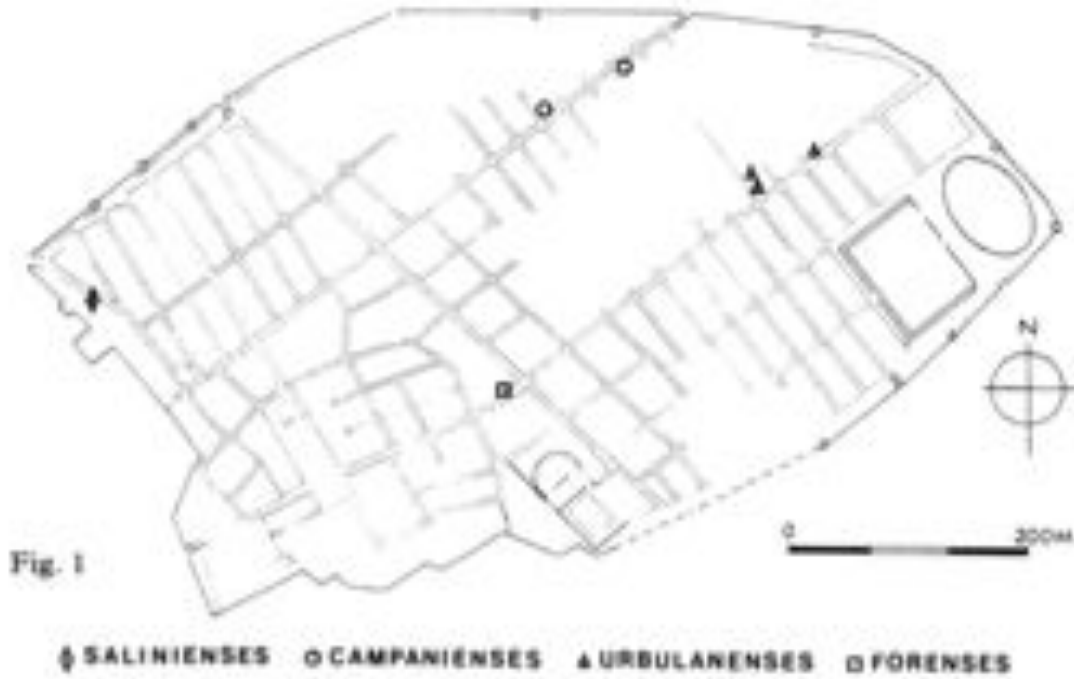
Fig. 3

EITUNS INSCRIPTIONS

“Eituns Inscriptions”

Ling, Roger. "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City." *Greece & Rome* 2nd ser. 37.2 (1990): 209

Figure 9



“Distribution of names in electoral programmes”

Ling, Roger. "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City." *Greece & Rome* 2nd ser. 37.2 (1990): 205

Figure 10



“Pompeii’s Districts”

Westfall, Carroll W. "Urban Planning, Roads, Streets, and Neighborhoods." *The World of Pompeii*. Ed. John J. Dobbins and Pedar W. Foss. London: Routledge, 2007. 130.

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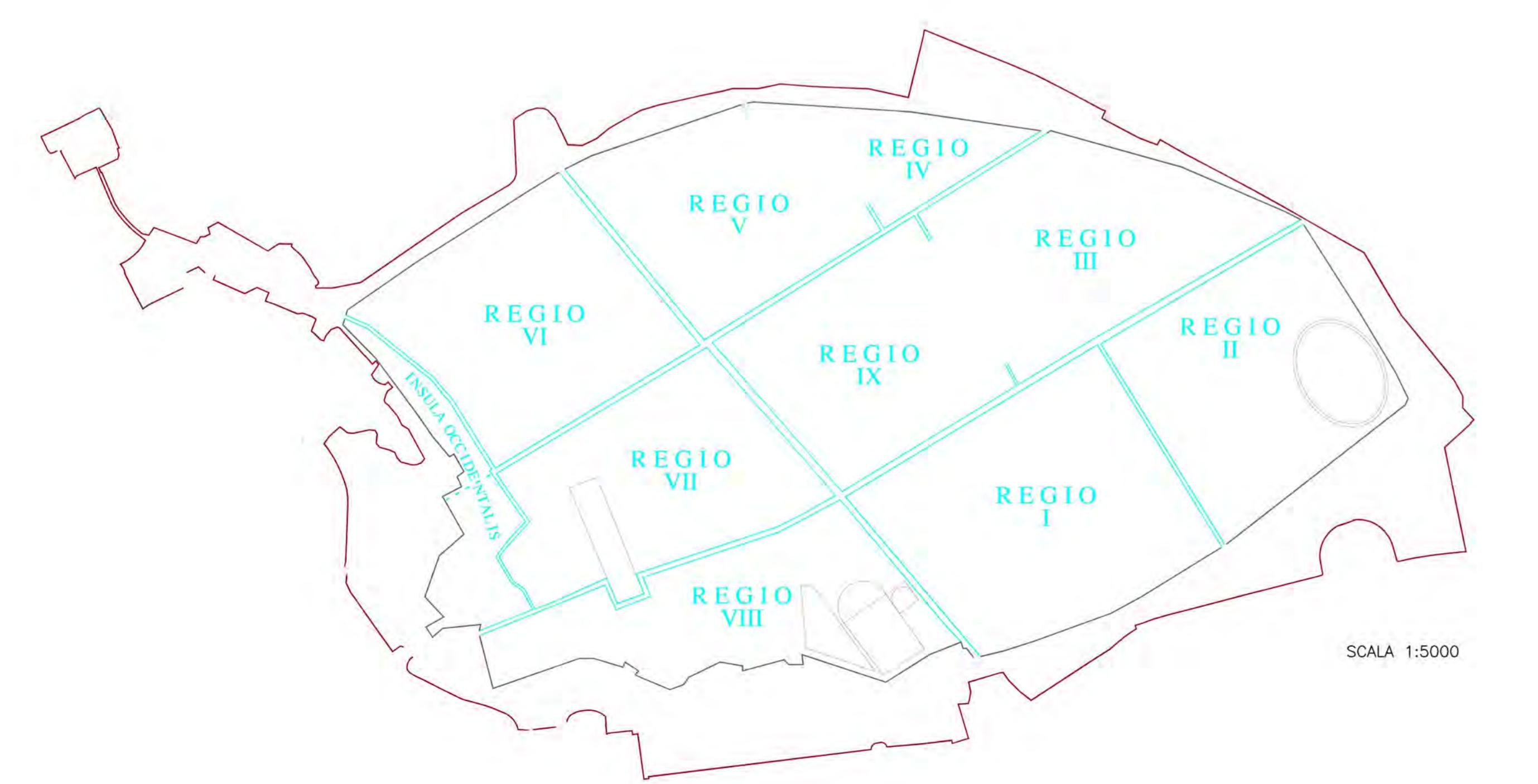
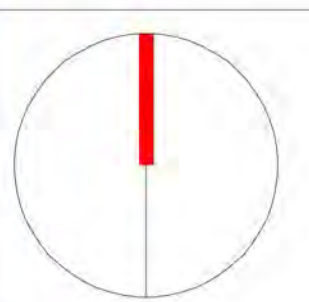
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Map:

- "Plan of Pompeii. Regions, Insulae, Detailed Building Plans, Tombs and Street Addresses (after a Map Provided by the Soprintendza Archeologica Di Pompeii)." *The World of Pompeii*. Ed. John J. Dobbins and Pedar W. Foss. New York: Routledge, 2007.



- FOUNTAINS
- STREET SHRINES
- TABERNAE

Map 3. Plan of Pompeii. Regions, insulae, detailed building plans, tombs and street addresses (after a map provided by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei).
 Il progetto è finanziato dall'American Express attraverso il World Monuments Watch, un programma del World Monuments Fund.
 Base cartografica: The Best Maps of Pompeii, 1984. Digitalizzazione a cura dello STUDIO DI ARCHITETTURA.
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