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Iuno Liviae: Raising Women's Spirits in the Age of Augustus

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Abstract

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This work seeks to discover where the *iunones* came from and what their role was in Roman religion especially as it relates to the political & legal climate of the Augustan Era. Supplementary to this main question I'm also interested in what could have created a need for a female guardian spirit to exist, and what the differences between the *genius* and *iuno* can tell us about gender in religion during this time period. There has been some previous scholarship on the origin of the *iunones*, proposing theories of the *iunones* as archaic in the same way as the *genii* or as foreign imports from Celtic territories. I believe there is evidence that the *iunones* came about during the Augustan period either by intentional creation from the state or as a response to social change and new needs in religious ceremonies.

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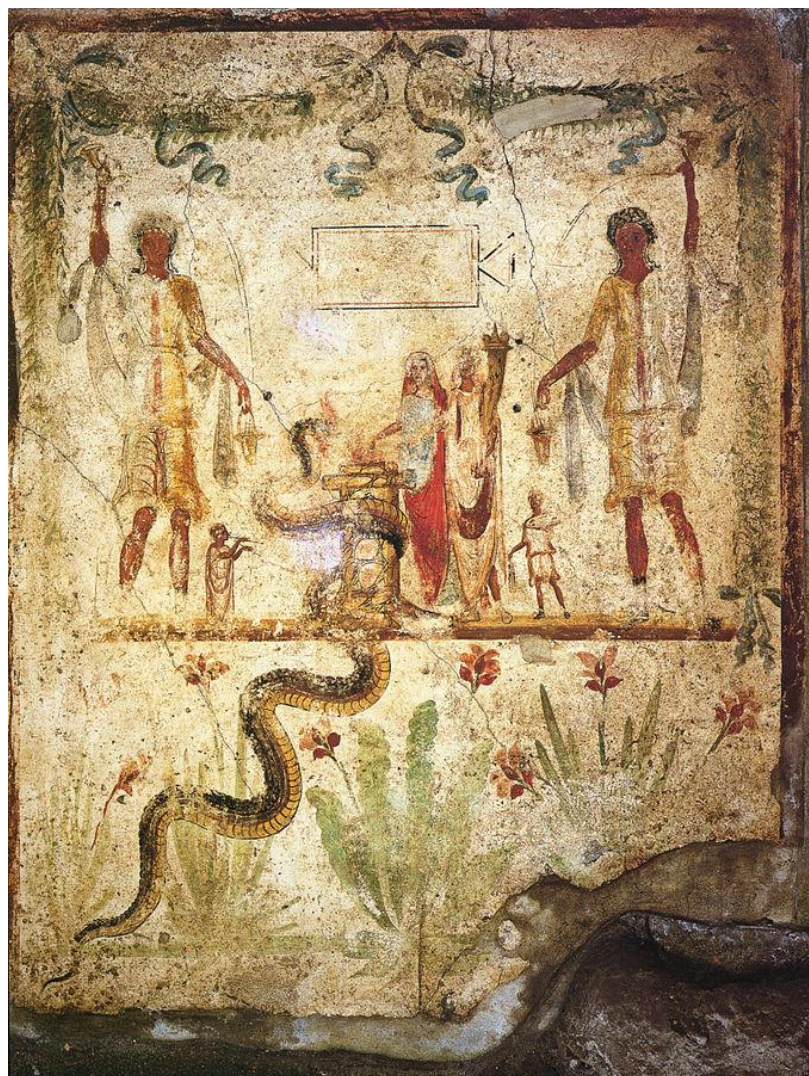
I would also like to thank my mother for always encouraging me to write and for teaching me to seek virtue, your outlook on life is what draws me to the ancient world. Above all else, thank you to my sister, an artist and briefly a Hellenist, for being you. I do not know another person alive who is so entirely herself. You see the world in such excruciating detail, and your years of hard work and talent allow you to share what you see with the rest of us. Thank you for stooping to make me a map, I know it is the least of your skills. Being your sister is the greatest honor I have been granted and I would not be the woman I am today without you.

iunoni sororiculae doctae meae

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Introduction



Lararium in the House of Julius C. Polybius

This *lararium*, in the house of Julius C. Polybius is the only recently acknowledged image of a *iuno*, the female counterpart to the *genius*, in scholarship and it is what started my interest in *iunones*. I encountered this image in Harriet Flower's book, *The Dancing Lares and the Serpent in the Garden*, where she briefly mentioned that the sacrificing female figure was called a *iuno*. I had never heard of this type of deity before and, upon further research, I found

¹Johannes Eber. Fresco IX.13.1 from the *lararium* of the House of Julius C. Polybius in Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R9/9%2013%2003%20p15.htm>

that few other people had heard of them either. The scholarship on *iunones* was contradictory and extremely sparse, with only a few articles centered on them and references to them carrying vastly divergent understandings of what the *iunones* actually were.

The three most notable figures to write on the *iunones*, Georg Wissowa, Francisco Simón, and James Rives,² all focused on the origin of the *iunones*. To me their arguments all seemed to be missing an impetus that would cause the *iunones* to emerge. I wanted to find a *reason* that the *iunones* existed. Their strangely sudden appearance in the first century AD did not seem like a coincidence to me. I doubted Wissowa's now disproven belief that the *iunones* were archaic in the same way as the *genius*. It seems odd that, if that were the case, they wouldn't appear until 3 AD when the *genius* is found thousands of times in the centuries before that, particularly because the *iuno* is most often seen in conjunction with the *genius*. Simón's idea that they came from foreign lands also didn't strike me as credible because of just how Roman the *iunones* feel. They represent uniquely Roman ideals for women and line up perfectly with the *genius*, an integral part of Roman religion native to the culture.

Finally, Rives' suggestion that the *iunones* came about in the final century BC because of the rise in women leading the household, thus requiring a new way for slaves to honor their *materfamilias*, seemed more plausible. This theory lines up fairly well chronologically, and it also provides a cause for the *iunones*' origin. It does not, however, account for the lack of *iuno* inscriptions we would expect to have from this time if this were the case (we see many inscriptions from slaves to the *iunones* of their female masters in the first few centuries AD but none in this last century BC), nor does it fully explain how the practice of making these inscriptions would have started, only when and why.

² Georg Wissowa (1912), Francisco Simón (2017), James Rives (1992)

My proposal, that the *iunones* were a creation of Augustus meant to further his plans for what the *materfamilias* would mean for Rome, answers all three: how, when, and why the *iunones* came to be. I believe that Augustus, in the same way he encouraged people to worship his own *genius*, gave people the idea of worshipping Livia's *iuno*. The fact that the first three references we have to a *iuno* all refer to Livia's as well as Augustus' well-attested interest in reforming female ritual space makes it hard not to see a connection between Augustus and the *iunones*. In my research, I also happened upon what I believe are eight mostly unacknowledged (five of which seem to be entirely unacknowledged) images of the *iuno* in the area around Pompeii, which I believe support the idea that Augustus introduced *iunones* to the Roman people by way of Livia's.

My main research question is focused on where the *iunones* came from and what their role was in Roman religion, particularly as it relates to the political and social climate of the Augustan Era. To explore this question, I will begin with a background on the types of household gods relevant to the *iunones*, before discussing in greater detail the evidence surrounding them and the scholarship done on them up to this point. I will also lay out the unacknowledged images of the *iunones* I've discovered and address how they lead into my conclusion that the *iunones* are an invention of Augustus.

Chapter I: Household & Individual Gods

What is more sacred, what more inviolably hedged about by every kind of sanctity, than the home of every individual citizen? Within its circle are his altars, his hearths, his household gods, his religion, his observances, his ritual; it is a sanctuary so holy in the eyes of all, that it were sacrilege to tear an owner therefrom.- Cic. Dom. 109³

When we think of Roman religion, the first thing that comes to mind is the grand state cult—public rituals and sacrifices, but there was just as much going on at lower levels like in small communities and households, it's just more difficult to appreciate. The domestic sphere of religion should not be considered less important than the state level. While much of the evidence surrounding household religion is fragmentary or hard to interpret, it can still give us an interesting view into the domestic religious practices of the Romans. This chapter will cover the basics of Roman household religion—the general beliefs and the types of gods, in order to define the religious sphere that *iumones* entered into.

The Romans worshiped a variety of household gods and would ask them for things such as health and prosperity. While any god could be worshiped in domestic cult, there are some types of deities specific to household worship. The most common household gods were the *lares*, deities of place, along with *penates* and *genii*.⁴ The *familia* that worshiped these gods included everyone living in the house, not only blood relatives.⁵ The following sections will discuss the functions of and differences between the types of household gods in order to establish a framework for the argument of the subsequent chapters.

³ N.H. Watts (1923)

⁴ Micheal Lipka (2006), 336

⁵ John Bodel and Saul M. Olyan (2008), 248

I. *Penates*

The *penates* were thought to protect the cabinets within the home that store food. Their name comes from the fact that they protect the *penus*– the pantry.⁶ Their shrine was located in the atrium of the Roman house⁷ and their cult practices were performed by the head of the family. The *penates* were most often depicted by small figurines inside shrines shaped like miniature houses, and other deities were sometimes depicted in murals next to or within the shrine to be worshiped alongside the *penates*.⁸ The statues were also sometimes carried around, as can be seen in the Aeneid, with Aeneas carrying his family's *penates* all the way from Troy. In book one of the Aeneid Vergil writes, *sum pius Aeneas, raptos qui ex hoste penates classe veho mecum* (I am the loyal Aeneas, who carry with me in my fleet my household gods).⁹ Transportation is not something we see very often with the other types of household gods, who all seem to be much more tied to the physical place they're in or the body of the person they represent.

II. *Lares*

The *lares* were gods meant to watch over the household and its property. As Ennius writes, addressing the *lares*, in his *Annales*, *vosque lares tectum nostrum qui funditus curant* (and you *lares*, who take care of the dwelling from its foundation)¹⁰. Often depicted as twins, they were meant to be sacrificed to in order to maintain a safe home. Some houses had a room known as a *lararium* designed specifically for worshiping this type of deity, and the *lares* could be

⁶ David G. Orr (1978), 1563

⁷ Harriet Flower (2017), 49

⁸ Micheal Lipka (2006), 327

⁹ H. Rushton Fairclough (1999), 1.378

¹⁰ Sander M. Goldberg (2018), 619

invited to join a family when they were eating.¹¹ *Lares* could function at higher or lower levels of society, some protecting a single household (*lares familiares*)¹² while others could be caring for an entire city (*lares praestites*).¹³

The *lares* were associated with the festival of the *Compitalia*, which Augustus revived in 7 BC.¹⁴ Varro writes in his work *On the Latin Language* that the *Compitalia* was specifically for the *lares* of the roads (*lares compitales*): *Compitalia dies attributus Laribus viaribus: ideo ubi viae competunt tum in competis sacrificatur* (The *Compitalia* is a day assigned to the *Lares* of the highways; therefore where the highways ‘meet,’ sacrifice is then made at the ‘crossroads.’)¹⁵ As Francesca Grigolo points out in her work “*Lares and Lararia*” the *lares compitales* were the deities who bridged the gap between domestic and state religion. While there is influence from public cult in many religious practices of the private sphere it is the *lares compitales* who exist in the space between the home and the state.¹⁶ The most common marriage months were associated with the *lares* and the festival of the *Compitalia*.¹⁷ We will see further in the discussion of *genii* and *iunones* how personal celebrations, like marriage and birthdays, factor closely into the worship of domestic gods.

Household gods were worshiped routinely on certain calendar days, but they could be sought out for specific reasons, such as being asked for help in farming or courtship.¹⁸ The *penates* and the *lares* were often worshiped in tandem, such as at meals when they would both be

¹¹ Alexandra Sofroniew (2015), 44

¹² Alejandra Guzman Almagro (2024), 111

¹³ Alexandra Sofroniew (2015), 33

¹⁴ Amy Russell (2020)

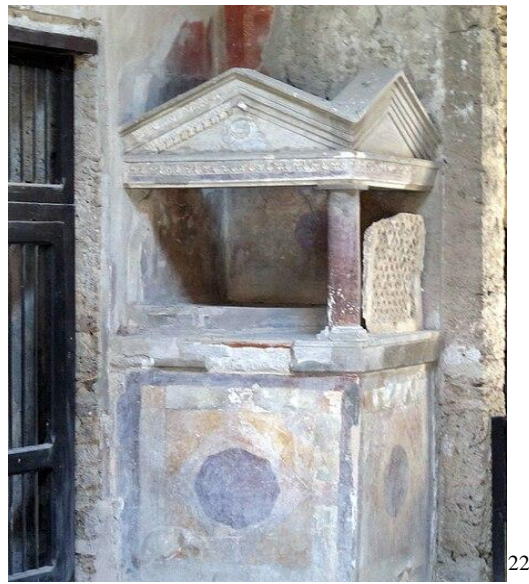
¹⁵ Roland G. Kent (1938)

¹⁶ Francesca Grigolo (2019), 79

¹⁷ Harriet Flower (2017), 79

¹⁸ Alexandra Sofroniew (2015), 44; Alejandra Guzman Almagro (2024), 111

offered a portion.¹⁹ Most of the myths we have that mention *lares* focus on the circumstances of their birth.²⁰ Despite the existence of these myths, the general consensus on where the *lares* came from was a point of contention in the ancient world, with some people believing them to be a type of ghost or underworld spirit while others believed they were deities related to the sky.²¹ Wherever they were believed to have originated from, their most important function in ritual was simply as deities of place.



Example of a *Lararium*

The *lares* were primarily worshiped at the hearth, and there were often small shrines built specifically for them called *lararia*. A *lararium* was typically a painting or little model structure that depicted the *lares* either painted in 2D or as three-dimensional statues. Its presence near the hearth meant that the *lararium* was in a servant area of the home, which led to the cult of the *lares* and the *genius*, who are also depicted in *lararia*, becoming more widely worshiped by the

¹⁹ Alejandra Guzman Almagro (2024), 107

²⁰ Harriet Flower (2017), 18

²¹ Harriet Flower (2017), 8

²² Klaus Heese. Lararium in I.10.4. Pompeii. Photo from <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2010%2004%20main%20p1.htm>

lower classes than the cult of the *penates* despite their similarities.²³ *Lararia* tended to come in three forms: wall paintings, inset niches, and small model temples, like the one seen above.

Niches and model temples could also have wall paintings set into them and would often contain statuettes of the household gods. The shrines that were purely wall paintings with no niches or model temples would sometimes have an altar in front of them where statuettes and offering could be placed.²⁴

A peculiar trait of the *lares* is that they are almost exclusively depicted as a pair, which is especially unusual for male deities.²⁵ Only inside homes is a single *lar* ever depicted, and still in homes there are most often two.²⁶ The *lares* are usually shown side by side in images, either dancing on tiptoe or standing. It is interesting to note here some of the reservations the Romans had with regard to dancing. Dance was generally seen as an undignified thing to do. Cicero himself did not consider dancing to be a respectable activity. In his defense of Murena he states, *Nemo enim fere saltat sobrius, nisi forte insanit, neque in solitudine neque in convivio moderato atque honesto*. (Hardly anyone dances except in his cups, either by himself or at any respectable party, unless of course he is out of his mind).²⁷ Given this negative attitude, it is curious that these well-respected spirits are so often depicted as dancers.²⁸

²³ Harriet Flower (2017), 52

²⁴ David G. Orr (1978), 1577

²⁵ Harriet Flower (2017), 327

²⁶ Harriet Flower (2017), 37

²⁷ C. Macdonald (1976)

²⁸ O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 149



Statuette of a Dancing *Lar* Holding a Goat-Headed *Rhyton* (R) and a *Patera* (L)

The two most common ways we see *lares* depicted is first in *lararium* paintings and then in bronze statuettes such as the one shown above. Statuettes of *lares* have been found across Italy, and carvings depicting these statuettes as part of the Roman home are also in evidence.³⁰ The majority of bronze *lar* statues are dated to the time after Augustus' reform of the cult during the imperial period.³¹ *Lares* are usually depicted carrying things, sometimes with an object in each hand. The most common objects seen with them are *rhyta* (a horn for pouring liquid during rituals), and/or an offering dish in the form of a *patera* (plate-like) or *situla* (bowl-like).³² The rhyton ends with an animal-shaped *protome*, most often a goat, and in paintings of *lares* they are often seen pouring wine out of the *rhyton* into the *patera* to symbolize the *paterfamilias* sacrificing actual wine to the *lar*.³³

²⁹ The Met. Bronze Statuette of a Lar. Photo from <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/250737>

³⁰ Harriet Flower (2017), 49

³¹ John Pollini (2008), 397

³² Alejandra Guzman Almagro (2024), 112

³³ John Pollini (2008), 396



Lararium Painting in the Casa de Vetii, Pompeii VI.15.1

The above painting from the Casa de Vetii is one of the most well known examples of a *lararium* painted on the wall. Inside the frame, which is meant to look like a building, there are two *lares* holding their horns and flanking a *genius* in the center of the painting. Below all of them is a serpent, in this case depicted singularly, though there are often two snakes as well as two *lares*. The ground on which the deities are standing is separated from the ground upon which the snake slithers. The snake also appears to be facing toward its own altar while the *lares* and *genius* have their bodies facing forward and they seem to be glancing to the side at nothing in particular. The ground on which the snake is painted appears to be significantly more lush than the ground on which the *lares* and the *genius* find themselves. This could suggest that the snake

³⁴ Michigan Libraries Digital Collection. Lararium in the House of the Vetii. Photo from <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/aict/x-rm062/rm062>

spirits are tied more closely to the wilder aspect of the land, while the *lares* and *genius* are more closely related to the cultivated version of it.

The *lares* here are larger than the *genius* but not by much. In many paintings depicting *lares* and a *genius* together, the *lares* are much larger and their size indicates the hierarchy of power between the gods with the smaller ones holding less power. Both *lares* are holding a deep, bucket-like version of an offering dish and have fringe or twig details coming off their heads and ankles. They are barefoot and wear togas with a dark red sash that wraps in a thick band around the waist and one shoulder and in a thinner band around the other shoulder. These bands are likely *angusti clavi*, thin dark red stripes that members of the *ordo equestris* wore over short-sleeved tunics. These stripes might symbolize that the family who worshiped the *lar* was of the equestrian class.³⁵ It is interesting to note that the thinner band is on each of their right shoulders while every other detail is mirrored. Their togas are layered up on their abdomens and thighs and fall to just above the knee. They are up on tip-toe and appear to be dancing which is not unusual for the *lares*.

III. *Natales*

The *natalis* is another deity associated with an individual person, though more explicitly in reference to a person's birthday than the *genius*. The difference between the *natalis* and the *genius* in regard to birthdays is somewhat confused. The *natalis* seems to be less attached to the birthday person than a *genius* is and must be summoned to the physical location during a birthday ritual, while a *genius* need not be. The lifelong bond between a man and his *genius* is described by Censorinus in his *De Die Natali*, a book describing birthday traditions and rituals, *genius autem ita nobis adsiduus observator adpositus est, ut ne puncto quidem temporis longius*

³⁵ John Pollini (2008), 396

*abscedat, sed ab utero matris acceptos ad extremum vitae diem comitetur*³⁶ (The Genius, however, has been appointed to us as a constant overseer and it follows that he never even for a moment, goes away from us, but is our companion from when we are taken from the mother's womb to the last day of our life.)³⁷

From this, we know that the idea of the *genius* does not contain the same aspect of distance that the idea of the *natalis* does. We can see the *natalis* being summoned from far away for a birthday ritual in Ovid's *Tristia*, *optime Natalis! quamvis procul absumus, opto candidus huc venias dissimilisque meo*³⁸ (Best Natalis! Although we are far away, I wish that you would come here, bright, unlike me.)³⁹ There are, however, some places where it would be more expected to see a *genius* invoked where instead we see a *natalis* and vice versa, such as in Ovid's *Tristia* 3.13.13-20 when a *natalis* is offered flowers on a person's birthday, an honor usually given to the *genius*.⁴⁰ They overlap in a similar way to what we see with the *penates* and the *lares*, where they both fill some of the same roles, but they do it in slightly different ways.

IV. *Genii*

The *genius* is usually considered to be the divine aspect or life force of an individual man, though occasionally women or groups of people are described as having a *genius* as well.⁴¹

³⁶ Censorinus, *De Die Natali* 3.5

³⁷ John Steenkamp (2024), 45

³⁸ Ov. *Tristia* 5.5.13-14

³⁹ John Steenkamp (2024), 44

⁴⁰ Ovid, *Tristia* 3.13.13-20:

scilicet expectas soliti tibi moris honorem, pendeat ex umeris vestis ut alba meis, fumida cingatur florentibus ara coronis, micaque sollemni turis in igne sonet, libaque dem proprie genitale notantia tempus, concipiamque bonas ore favente preces. non ita sum positus, nec sunt ea tempora nobis, adventu possim laetus ut esse tuo.

John Steenkamp (2024), 46:

[Addressing the Natalis] You expect, evidently, the honours due to you according to custom, that the whites are hanging from my shoulders, that the burning altar is draped with floral garlands, that the little bit of usual incense crackles in the flame, and that I should give the sacrificial cakes appropriate to the birthday and that I should make good prayers by avoiding ill-omened words. I am not in such a place, and for us these times are not such that I can be happy with your arrival.

⁴¹ Marine Miquel (2017), 256

Clients would also sometimes refer to their patron as their *genii*.⁴² The lines between a *genius* and other types of household deities can sometimes be blurry. Censorinus, in his *de Die Natali*, claims that the ancients, specifically Granius Flaccus, believed a *genius* and a *lar* were the same,⁴³ though this is not a common view on the subject.

The levels of *genius* do seem to parallel the *lar* as they are both seen at varying degrees in society— individual, family, crossroads, and such, and it is possible but not definite that they were once the same idea. An example of a *genius* being used to represent a larger group of people (the same way *lares* sometimes are) can be found in Livy XXI 62.7-99 where the *genius* of the entire Roman people is mentioned. The *genius* is also shown fulfilling the role of the *iuno* in some instances by being invoked for women. Most often, however, the *genius* is the divine analog to an individual man. The *genius* was thought to be with a man from his birth until his death, as is depicted in Censorinus' *de Die Natali* 3.5.⁴⁴

One interesting difference between the *lares* and the *genii* is that the *lares* are not depicted as engaging with romance at all,⁴⁵ while the *genii* are closely tied to romance and marriage. Considering how old the cult of the *lares* is and how common it was for ancient deities to engage in romance, it is notable that the *lares* abstain from this. One possible explanation for

⁴² Kathryn Argetsinger (1992), 185

⁴³ Censorinus, *De Die Natali* 3.2:
eundem esse genium et larem multi veteres memoriae prodiderunt, in quis etiam Granius Flaccus in libro, quem Caesarem de indigitamentis scriptum reliquit
 Translation from Harriet Flower (2017), 6:

Many ancients handed on the tradition that the *genius* and a *lar* are the same among whom (is) also Granius Flaccus in a book dedicated to Julius Caesar, which he wrote about the names (and rituals) of the traditional gods (that is, those recognized by the *pontifices* in their technical writings).

⁴⁴ *Cen. De Die Natali: Genius est Deus, cuius in tutela, ut quisque natus est, vivit. Hic, sive quod, ut genamur, curat, sive quod una genitos nobiscum; sive etiam, quod nos genitos suscipit ac tuetur: certe a genendo genius appellatur.* The *genius* is a god, under whose tutelage, as each one is born, lives. This, whether because, as we are born, he cares, or because begotten together as one; or still, who supports and protects us having been born: surely the *genius* calls us to birth.

⁴⁵ Harriet Flower (2017), 21

this is simply that there was evidence of them engaging in romance at some point, but that it has now been lost. Alternatively, it is possible that the *lares* were never depicted in any way to do with romance because they never needed to be.

It does not seem that the child of a *lar*, a spirit of a certain place, would have any different significance than the *lar* himself. When more significant gods procreate, they make gods who represent new things, but the *lares* are so low-level that their children would logically either be effectively the same as them or akin to a human, neither of which has enough symbolic significance to warrant a story about *lares* in love. The *genius*, on the other hand, is all about love—kind of. He is all about being a husband, father, and master of the house. *Genii* are invoked at weddings⁴⁶ and are often referenced in inscriptions about tasks to do with marriage and fatherhood.

Along with his presence at weddings, one of the most well-attested functions of the *genius* was as an object of rituals on birthdays. It was a person's duty to sacrifice to his *genius* on his own birthday as well as his patron's.⁴⁷ On the birthday of his patron, the client would perform a ritual (in honor of the patron) for a deity that saved the person from danger and not the regular birthday ritual seen depicted between friends.⁴⁸

Genii were generally either depicted as looking like a Roman priest with a toga draped over his head or, sometimes, as snakes.⁴⁹ The *genius* of the *paterfamilias* and the *genius Augusti* are sometimes seen holding a cornucopia.⁵⁰ Images of the *genius* commonly depict snakes, and the snakes are sometimes referred to simply as a *genius* of place, such as in lines 5.84-96 of the

⁴⁶ Alexandra Sofroniew (2015), 37

⁴⁷ John Steenkamp (2024), 48

⁴⁸ Kathryn Argetsinger (1992), 190

⁴⁹ Alejandra Guzman Almagro (2024), 107

⁵⁰ John Pollini (2008), 396

Aeneid.⁵¹ This passage depicts a snake coming out of the inside of a temple and crawling around the altars before going back. Aeneas wonders if the snake is a *genius* of place or a spirit meant to serve his father. The fact that Aeneas considers that the snake might be a *genius* tells us that this was a form a *genius* could take, which is interesting because it is more often seen that the snakes and *genius* are depicted together but as their own entities. This passage suggests that the snakes and the *genius* could sometimes be one and the same. A *genius* of place seems like it would be much the same thing as a *lar*, so it is curious that Vergil uses the term *genius* instead of *lar* here. In many paintings, the *lares*, *genius*, and a snake are all depicted, ruling out the possibility that any of these three are exactly the same thing, but the Aeneid passage suggests some degree of overlap.

The snakes share some curious qualities with both the *lares* and the *genius*. They are often depicted in duplicate as the *lares* are, but, while the *lares* are always depicted as male, when two snakes appear in one garden they are usually two different sexes, as the *genius* and *iuno* are. The male snake often has a beard and is larger and darker than the female.⁵² If we are to take the snakes as *genii* of place this would make the female snake something equivalent to a

⁵¹ Vergil, *Aeneid* 5.84-96:

dixerat haec, adytis cum lubricus anguis ab imis septem ingens gyros, septena volumina traxit amplexus placide tumulum lapsusque per aras, caeruleae cui terga notae maculosus et auro squamam incendebat fulgor, ceu nubibus arcus mille iacit varios adverso sole colores. obstipuit visu Aeneas. ille agmine longo tandem inter pateras et levia pocula serpens libavitque dapes rursusque innoxius imo successit tumulo et depasta altaria liquit. hoc magis inceptos genitori instaurat honores, incertus geniumne loci famulumne parentis esse putet.

Translation from H. Rushton Fairclough (1999):

So had he spoken, when from the foot of the shrine a slippery serpent trailed seven huge coils, fold upon fold seven times, peacefully circling the mound and gliding among the altars; his back chequered with blue spots, and his scales ablaze with the sheen of dappled gold, as in the clouds the rainbow darts a thousand shifting tints athwart the sun. Aeneas was awestruck at the sight. At last, sliding with long train amid the bowls and polished cups, the serpent tasted the viands, and again, all harmless, crept beneath the tomb, leaving the altars where he fed. More eagerly, therefore, does he renew his father's interrupted rites, knowing not whether to deem it the genius of the place or the attendant spirit of his sire.

⁵² Harriet Flower (2017), 63

iuno of place, an idea that might have been the precursor to the full-blown humanoid *iunones* that we see in the first century AD.



Statue of the *Genius Augusti*

The *genius Augusti*, Emperor Augustus Caesar's *genius*, is certainly the most famous and well-attested. Augustus encouraged people to worship his *genius*, and many shrines, statues, and writings depict the *genius Augusti*. The image above is an example of a statue of the *genius Augusti* making a sacrifice. His toga is pulled over his head,⁵⁴ as is seen in other images of *genii*. He is holding a *rhyton* in his left hand and a *patera* in his right. Other than being much larger than *genius* statues normally are, usually less than a foot tall so that they are able to fit into a *lararium*, this is quite a typical depiction of a *genius*.

V. *Iunones*

The *iuno* is the female equivalent of the *genius* and, as such, represents the divine counterpart of an individual woman. She is first seen in an inscription to Livia and both her origin and the etymology of her name are topics of scholarly debate. It seems that the

⁵³ Pio-Clementine Museum. Statue of Genius Togatus of Augustus. Marble. 1st Century. Inv. No. 259. Rome, Vatican Museums, [Pio-Clementine Museum](https://www.flickr.com/photos/julio-claudians/3534516411), Round Room. Photo from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/julio-claudians/3534516411>

⁵⁴ This style of wearing a toga with the head covered for a ritual was known as *capitae velato*, (Grigolo 2019), 83

characteristics of the *iunones* overlap quite heavily with the “positive” aspects of the goddess Juno. This could be because the *iunones* came about naturally as goals for women to strive for or perhaps because they were created by Augustus as a set of guidelines for what women should value. They were connected to areas of concern for women, such as childbirth, in the same way that the *genius* was associated with the role of men.⁵⁵

The *genius* and *iuno* together represent the *paterfamilias* and *materfamilias* of the house, respectively, and depict the social ideal of a married couple venerating their household gods and falling in line with societal expectations.⁵⁶ Guardian spirits, including the *lares*, *genius*, and *iuno*, were thought to be benevolent and, as such, likely represented a more idealized version of their human counterparts. The descriptions above have illustrated the unique role filled by each type of household god. The next chapter will go more in-depth into different opinions on the origins of the *iunones* as well as their depictions in ancient sources.

⁵⁵ Ross S. Kraemer (1989), 42

⁵⁶ Harriet Flower (2017), 60

Chapter II: Current Scholarly Beliefs on the Origin of the *Iunones*

The origin of the *iunones* is not agreed upon by scholars. Early theories posited them as being archaic Italic deities like the *genius*, while others attribute them to a variety of times and places based on how the scant evidence referencing them is interpreted. The bulk of references to the *iunones* come in the form of dedicatory inscriptions, most of which contain only a few words. There are a few longer passages and one image acknowledged in contemporary scholarship that depicts a *iuno*. I will describe the major references to *iunones* in chronological order as a way to contextualize the discussion of scholarly arguments that will follow.

I. References to the *Iuno*

Inscription to Livia Augusta: CIL VIII 16456

*Iunoni Liviae Augustae sacrum L. Passieno Rufo
imperatore Africam obtinente Cn. Cornelius Cn. f. Cor. Rufus et Maria C. f.
Galla Cn. [uxor] conservati vota l(ibentes) m(erito) solvont.*

To the *iuno* of Livia Augusta as a sacred rite when Lucius Passienus Rufus was holding the command in Africa Gnaeus Cornelius Rufus, the son of Gnaeus Cornelius, and Maria Galla, daughter of Gaius, wife of Gnaeus, having been saved, willingly fulfill their vows deservedly.

While this inscription, found in El Lehs,⁵⁷ is dated to 3 AD,⁵⁸ it is not usually cited as the first known reference to the *iuno*. That honor goes to another inscription to Livia Augusta, dated from 4 AD to 14 AD that will be listed next.

Inscription to Livia Augusta: CIL XI 3076

*genio Augusti et Ti. Caesaris, iunoni Liviae, Mystes L(ibertus)
To the *genius* of Augustus and Tiberius Caesar, to the *iuno* of Livia, the
freedman Mystes...*

⁵⁷ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 140

⁵⁸ Gertrude Grether (1946), 225

This inscription is dedicated to the *genius* of Augustus and the *iuno* of his wife Livia. It is often referred to as the first known reference to an individual *iuno* and was likely made between 4 and 14 AD and was found in Falerii.⁵⁹ It puts the *genius* and the *iuno* in parallel with one another, which can be seen in subsequent texts, such as Seneca's letter and Pliny's Natural History.

Inscription to Livia Augusta: CIL IX 1098

l(ibertus)Iunoni Augustae / M(arcus) Mummius Marcellin(us)

Marcus Mummius Marcellinus, freedman, to the Iuno of Augusta.

This inscription, found in Aeclanum, was made to Livia's *iuno* by her freedman Marcus Mummius Marcellinus and was likely made after 14 AD.⁶⁰

Tibullus 3.6.48-52

iononemque suam perque suam venerem,

nulla fides inerit: periuria ridet amantum

iuppiter et uentos inrita ferre iubet.

ergo quid totiens fallacis verba puellae conqueror?

Though the beguiler swear by her eyes, by her Juno, by her Venus, there will be
no truth in her words. Jupiter laughs at the false oaths of lovers, and bids the
winds carry them off without fulfilment. Then why do I complain so oft of the
words of a faithless girl?⁶¹

This excerpt from the Tibullan *Corpus* recounts a man disbelieving his wife despite her swearing by her *iuno* (as well as her Venus, a practice not commonly seen that seems to imply a connection between the individual *iuno* and the goddess Juno). The wife's attempts to use her *iuno* to convince her husband of her virtue reveals a function of the *iunones*—signaling a

⁵⁹ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 140

⁶⁰ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 140

⁶¹ F.W. Cornish, J.P. Postgate, and J.W. Mackail (1913)

woman's moral standing. This is the only time in surviving evidence that we see a *iuno* being used maliciously, and it provides an interesting look at the practical uses of a deity so highly associated with female virtue. The standing of the text this reference exists in is intriguing as well. The *Tibullan Corpus* is traditionally attributed to Albius Tibullus (60-19 BC), but only the first two books of the *Corpus* have actually been proven to have been written by him.

In 1923 A.G. Lee attributed the third book to Ovid, a theory that was accepted until he revised his opinion in 1958.⁶² Lee went on to argue instead that the author was Lygdamus, as is outright stated in the text but was previously thought to be fallacious, and that Lygdamus was imitating Ovid which is why the writings seem to share certain stylistic elements.⁶³ This new authorship, which is the one generally accepted by scholars today, would date the third book of the *Corpus* to after 11 AD. There is one other reference to the personal *iuno* in the Tibullan *Corpus* at 3.12.1-2 which can be seen below.

Tibullus 3.12.1-2

*natalis iuno, sanctos cape turis acervos,
quos tibi dat tenera docta puella manu;
tota tibi est hodie, tibi se laetissima compsit,
staret ut ante tuos conspicienda focos*⁶⁴

⁶² R. S. Radford (1923)

⁶³ A.G. Lee (1958)

⁶⁴ Equivalent scene invoking the *genius* can be found in Tibullus, *Corpus* 1.7.49:
huc ades et Genium ludis Geniumque choreis concelebra et multo tempora funde mero. illius et nitido stillent unguenta capillo, et capite et collo mollia sarta gerat. sic uenias, hodiernae: tibi dem turis honores, liba et Mopsopio dulcia melle feram

John Steenkamp (2024), 47: Be present, celebrate the Genius with games and dances; soak his temples with much wine. Let oil drip from the glossy locks and let soft garlands ornament head and neck. May you come in this way, this day: for you I will give incense and bring cake with Attic honey.

Juno of the birthday, receive the holy piles of incense which the accomplished maid's soft hand now offers thee. To-day she has bathed for thee; most joyfully she has decked herself for thee, to stand before thy altar a sight for all to see.⁶⁵

In this excerpt, a *iuno* is invoked the way a *genius* usually is, as a way to celebrate the birthday of a specific person.⁶⁶ The *iuno* is seen here accomplishing her main purpose—to inspire the ideal actions of a Roman woman, which in this case are sacrificing and being a *tenera docta puella* (a delicate skilled girl). This provides an illuminating contrast to the way she's used in 3.6.48 and shows that the *iunones* must have had a wide range of practical applications.

Seneca the Younger, *Epistles* 110.1.6

*ita tamen hoc seponas volo ut memineris maiores nostros qui crediderunt Stoicos
fuisse; singulis enim et genium et iunonem dederunt*

Yet, while laying aside this belief, I would have you remember that our ancestors, who followed such a creed, have become Stoics; for they have assigned a *genius* or a *juno* to every individual.⁶⁷

This excerpt, written around 65 AD, from the letters of Lucius Annaeus Seneca the Younger, 4 BC-65 AD, claims that *genii* and *iunones* were attributed to every individual by the elders (*maiores nostros*). It is unclear just how “elder” these elders are. This could imply that the *genius* and *iuno* are archaic or it could be referring to merely a few generations prior. It seems to suggest that the *genius* and *iuno* came from the same time period as each other and that of the “elders,” but that is not certain. It also draws no distinction between the gender of the person to whom a *genius* or a *iuno* is dedicated, though that was likely implied. The text could possibly suggest that each person had both a *genius* and a *iuno*, though this is out of line with other

⁶⁵ F.W. Cornish, J.P. Postgate, and J.W. Mackail (1913)

⁶⁶ James Rives (1992), 35

⁶⁷ J.C. Rolfe (2016)

sources from the time period which almost exclusively attribute *genii* to men and *iunones* to women. There are a few exceptions to the gendered conventions of these spirits, but they are never seen attributed both to a single person, no matter the gender of the person.

Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 2.16

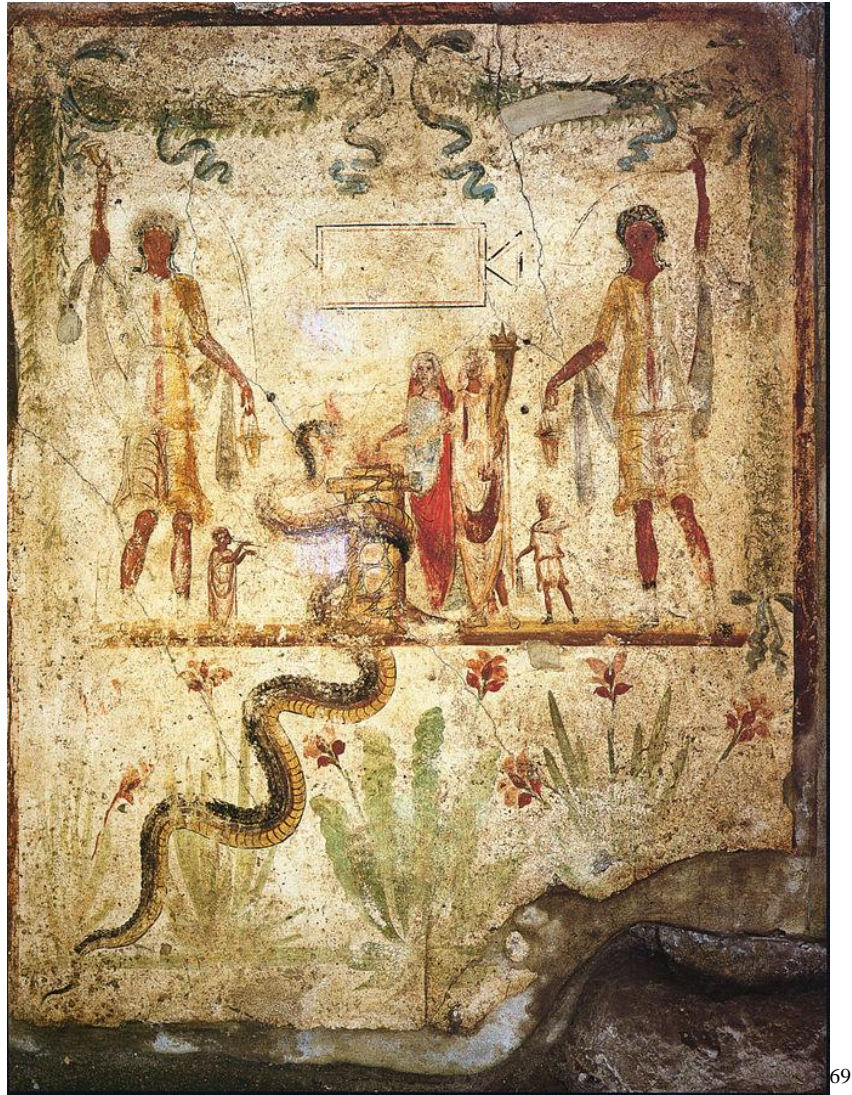
quamobrem maior caelitus populus etiam quam hominum intellegi potest, cum singuli quoque ex semetipsis totidem deos faciant Iunones Geniosque adoptando sibi, gentes vero quaedam animalia et aliqua etiam obscena pro dis habeant ac multa dictu magis pudenda, per fetidos cibos et alia similia iurantes

For this reason, we can infer a larger population of celestials than of human beings, as individuals also make an equal number of gods on their own, by adopting their own private Junos and Genii; while certain nations have animals, even some loathsome ones, for gods, and many things still more disgraceful to tell of—swearing by rotten articles of food and other things of that sort.⁶⁸

This section from the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder 23-79 AD, claims that there must be more divine beings than humans since each human has their own divine being in accordance with themselves. This is one of the longest passages we have in reference to *iunones*, and it seems to imply that they were a fairly accepted idea in religious thought during Pliny's time. The casual reference to them in this text could serve as evidence that the *iuno* was a widespread idea by the time Pliny completed the *Natural History* in 77 AD, or possibly even earlier considering that this reference occurs in the second of 37 books.

⁶⁸ Mary Beagon (2005)

Lararium Painting in the House of C. Julius Polybius at Pompeii



Lararium in the House of Julius C. Polybius

The painting found in C. Julius Polybius' house in Pompeii depicts a genius and a *iuno* together offering a libation. Polybius was important in Claudius' freedmen administration, and Seneca wrote a letter to him upon the death of his brother, connecting C. Julius Polybius to the Julio-Claudian dynasty and to Seneca. This is important because it connects this painting to

⁶⁹ Johannes Eber. Fresco IX.13.1 from the *lararium* of the House of Julius C. Polybius in Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R9/9%2013%2003%20p15.htm>

Augustus through the Julio-Claudian line and Seneca through the letter, both of whom are known to have been familiar with *iunones*.

II. Past Scholarship

While the function of the *iunones* seems relatively clear—representing the divine aspect of a woman, being invoked on birthdays, serving as the feminine equivalent of the *genius*—their origins are a topic of debate among scholars. This section will outline the major theories and test them against the evidence analyzed in the previous section. For a long time, scholars believed the *iunones* were archaic in the same way as the *genii*. This theory is now generally rejected, though, at first, it seems like a logical assumption to make. The argument for *iunones* as ancient deities was the original theory put forward by Georg Wissowa in his work *Religion und Kultus der Römer*. He characterized them as an ancient holdover from Italic religion,⁷⁰ believing that the ancient individual *iunones* came together to form the goddess Juno.

Wissowa's argument that the goddess Juno developed out of many individual *iunones* is no longer accepted because the linguistic analysis that Wissowa's argument was based on has been disproven.⁷¹ He proposed that the word *iuno*, which is believed to have come from the root *iuven-*, a root often found in words related to young people such as *iuvenis*, came from an archaic feminine version of this root word and that this archaic word meant “young, marriageable woman.” This derivation process cannot be proven, and thus the theory that the name of the *iuno* comes from an ancient source has been rejected. At first, the idea that *iunones* are archaic seems to make sense, since the *genius* is archaic and they appear to mirror each other, but there are no texts old enough to confirm that the *iuno* is archaic.⁷² Even if the excerpts from the Tibullan

⁷⁰ Francisco Simón (2017), 220

⁷¹ James Rives (1992), 35-37

⁷² James Rives (1992), 35

Corpus were actually written during his time, they still would not prove the *iuno* to be archaic but instead from the time of the Republic.

There have been some other attempts made to etymologically link the two types of *iuno*, but none have been conclusive. There is, however, evidence that seems to blur the lines a bit between Juno, the major goddess, and the individual *iunones*. For example, there are quite a few times when Plautus makes references to an individual woman representing Juno, such as in line 229 of his *Casina*.

*Lysidamus: ed uxor me excruciat quia uiuit. tristem astare aspicio. blande haec
mi mala res appellanda est. uxor mea meaque amoenitas, quid tu agis?*

Cleostrata: abi atque apstine manum.

*Lysidamus: heia, mea Iuno, non decet ess' te tam tristem tuo Ioui. quo nunc
abis?*⁷³

Lysidamus: But my wife's torturing me by being alive. I can see her standing here, grumpy. I must address this bad bit of stuff coaxingly. (turning to Cleostrata, trying to caress her) My wife and my pleasure, how are you?

Cleostrata: Go away and keep your hand off me.

Lysidamus: Goodness, my Juno, you shouldn't be so unfriendly to your Jupiter.

Where are you off to now?

Here we see a husband referring to his wife as Juno while comparing himself to Jupiter as a way to emphasize their marital relationship while pressuring her to let him touch her. While this is an individual form of Juno, it is clearly not the same as the *iunones* since Plautus mirrors the Juno in this scene with a man representing Jupiter. This does, however, show that there was some sort of tradition of assigning gods, specifically Juno, to individuals during Plautus' time

⁷³ Wolfgang de Melo (2011)

(254-184 BC). This could have been a step toward how the name *iuno* was applied during the Augustan period.

The fact that Plautus had a type of individualized Juno in his work and yet still did not make references to *iunones* makes it even more likely that *iunones* were not in evidence during his time, as it would have been unlikely that he took a known concept in religion and then changed it to something else so similar yet conceptually different while keeping the name the same. This mixing of terms would have been confusing and not conducive to the narrative of his story. While this does not prove that the *iunones* did not exist during the time of Plautus, it does suggest it. If they had existed at this time it would have been more likely that he would acknowledge them so as to eliminate confusion from the narrative.

As James Rives points out in his article “The *Iuno Feminae* in Roman Society,” the personal *iuno* does not appear in the plays of Plautus, which often invoke female characters in oaths, so this suggests that invoking the *iuno* only became common after Plautus, dating them after 184 BC.⁷⁴ In his work “Rites, Cultes, Dieux de Rome,” Robert Schilling proposed that the individual female *iuno* came after a period when the *genius* was used to refer to both men and women.⁷⁵ There is at least one inscription in which a *genius* is invoked for a woman instead of a *iuno*, so it is possible the *genius* was previously gender non-specific and the *iuno* did not need to exist yet because of this.⁷⁶

In his book *Histoire Politique et Psychologique de la Religion Romaine*, Jeanmaire Bayet theorized that the *iuno* developed as a female version of the *genius*, coming later, not

⁷⁴ James Rives (1992), 38

⁷⁵ Robert Schilling (1979), 10

⁷⁶ CIL XI 1820: *Genio Sancte Sancrum IUL Sivanus V E.*
CIL VIII 22770: *D M S Genio Tarquittiae Marcelli Matri Piissimae*

simultaneously with the *genius* in archaic times.⁷⁷ If this is the case, it raises the question of what would make it necessary for a female-specific *iuno* to arise. Rives posited that a possible time period which could have fostered the creation of the female-specific *iuno* is the period between the Second Punic War and Augustus.⁷⁸ During this time the use of the *genius* may have become more specific to the master/slave patron/freedman relationship, which would not include women, thus creating a need for a personal protective spirit that could be applied to women once the *genius* no longer could be.⁷⁹ French and English scholars believe that the *iuno* is a late development.⁸⁰ They believe it is more likely the *iuno* came to be in the last two centuries BC, was modeled after the *genius*, and that the first evidence of her was in the Augustan period.

Somewhat separate from the discourse over the temporal origin of the *iunones* is the idea that they could be an imported deity from elsewhere, mainly either the Cisalpine or Indo-European regions. Plural female guardian divinities are seen in Celtic and Germanic cultures, and they might have supplied that plurality in the creation of the personal *iuno*. The Cisalpine region tended to have cults to female deities,⁸¹ and according to Landucci Gattinoni in his book, *Un Culto Celtico Nella Gallia Cisalpina*, the *iunones* could be a Romanized form of a cult from the Cisalpine related to the Matrona.⁸² Joshua Whatmough agreed with this theory in his book, *The Foundations of Roman Italy*, suggesting that the *iuno* came from the description of the

⁷⁷ Jeanmaire Bayet (1976), 66

⁷⁸ James Rives (1992), 38

⁷⁹ James Rives (1992), 43

⁸⁰ Francisco Simón (2017), 220

⁸¹ Matthew B. Roller (2018), 218-220

⁸² Landucci Gattinoni (1986), 51

Matronae of the Celts.⁸³ This would mean that *iunones* came into Roman religion some time after the settlement of the Cisalpine, around 222 BC.⁸⁴

In his work “Iuno: Matres,” Ihm suggested that the *iuno* went from an individual protective spirit to a protector of communities, which would make her more similar to the Celtic Matres-Matronae.⁸⁵ This transition is possibly supported by an inscription in Bergamo, which invokes the *Iunoni Pagi Fortunensis*⁸⁶ (to the *iuno* of the place pertaining to⁸⁷ prosperity) and might suggest a shift in the role of the *iuno* from a private personal spirit to a protector of a larger community, at least in the area around Bergamo. In his article “Ivnones: An Approach to their Personality and Geography of Cult,” Francisco Simón agrees with Ihm that the inscription suggests that her role may have moved from the individual level to that of the community, but he theorizes that the *iuno* might be of indo-european origin instead of Celtic due to her similarities to other indo-european deities, as Georges Dumézil points out in his work “Juno.”⁸⁸ I, however, believe that the *iunones* are a peculiarly Roman creation. They parallel the *genius* too perfectly to be adapted from a foreign goddess, and the first several references to the *iuno* that we see are at the very highest level of Roman society—the imperial family. It seems that, if the *iunones* were emerging naturally from cultures mingling, they would be seen first at the lower social levels.

This leads us to my theory about the origin of the *iunones*— that they were created in the imperial period by Augustus as a part of the religious reforms he enacted to shape female ritual practices. The inscriptions to the *iuno* of his wife Livia are the earliest evidence we have of an

⁸³ Joshua Whatmough (1937), 159

⁸⁴ James Rives (1992), 35

⁸⁵ Francisco Simón (2017), 220

⁸⁶ CIL V 5112

⁸⁷ The ending “ensis” can mean “pertaining to” or “originating from”

⁸⁸ Francisco Simón (2017), 228

individual *iuno* dating to 3 AD,⁸⁹ and Augustus was known to actively emphasize the importance of women's roles as faithful wives and mothers, especially in reference to the women closest to him, such as his wife and sister. For example, he leveraged the virtue of his own sister, who was married to his rival Antony, in order to shame Antony for being disloyal and therefore a bad man.⁹⁰ The association between Juno and women and their social roles as wives and mothers became more important during the Second Punic War, and this growing connection could have been the inspiration Augustus took to either create the *iuno* or utilize the developing *iuno* for his goals for the state.⁹¹

Family matters became matters of concern to the state under Augustus, and the *iunones* of individual women would have served as representations of their domestic roles.⁹² There was also an increase in women owning slaves during this period, so it is possible that the need for a female *iuno* came from an increase of women directly owning slaves and slaves needing a way to invoke them as the *materfamilias*. It makes sense that Juno would have been a good name for this new type of deity, because Juno the goddess was associated with that particular part of womanhood.⁹³

Rives argues for the rise of the *iuno* before the reign of Augustus on the basis that *iunones* were used as a tool by slaves to please mistresses during this time and that it is a comparison of the *materfamilias* to the goddess Juno.⁹⁴ While I agree that there is an aspect of the *iunones* that is meant to align a *materfamilias* with Juno, I disagree on the reason he gives as

⁸⁹ James Rives (1992), 37

⁹⁰ Matthew B. Roller (2018), 219

⁹¹ James Rives (1992), 45

⁹² Matthew B. Roller (2018), 225

⁹³ James Rives (1992), 45

⁹⁴ James Rives (1992), 46

to why. He claims that the need for this kind of honorific was created by the decline of *manus* marriage and the increase of *sui iuris* women who owned their own slaves.⁹⁵ My argument differs from his in that I believe the implementation of *iunones* was less of a way to honor *materfamilias* but rather a way to guide them, and was likely intentional on Augustus's part. I believe that, even if he did not consciously create them, the reforms Augustus made in reference to women, marriage, and the family caused the political and social changes that led to the production of the *iuno* around the turn of the millennium and their emergence centered around his wife, Livia. We see the *iunones* referenced a fair amount outside of the circumstances of a slave invoking one for the head of the household. In fact, the three inscriptions we have invoking Livia's *iuno* were made by people of significant social standing.⁹⁶

A broad change in social and political goals explains more of the variety of instances in which we see the *iunones* referenced. The fact that dedications from slaves to patrons are the most common evidence of the *iunones* does not in itself prove that this was the only use of *iunones*, especially since dedications to benefactors are one of the most common types of inscriptions from the ancient world.⁹⁷ Slaves, because some of them were trained as scribes, more often knew how to write than people at more intermediate levels of the social order.⁹⁸ This could explain why a disproportionately high number of *iuno* inscriptions were made by slaves to their *materfamilias*, while the *iuno* is not restricted to upper class women in other writings, such as Pliny, Tibullus, and Seneca. There were more uses of the *iunones* apart from these

⁹⁵ James Rives (1992), 44

⁹⁶ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 142

⁹⁷ James Rives (1992), 33

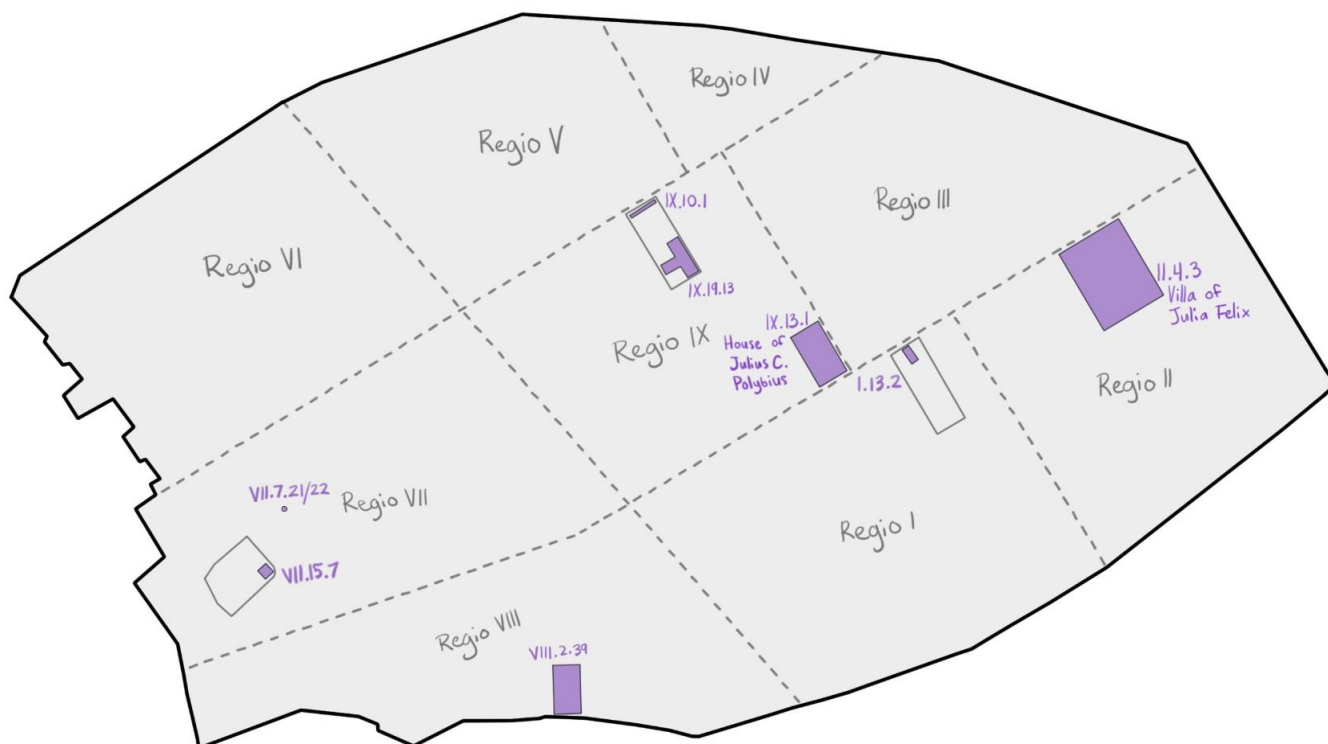
⁹⁸ Pearce (2024), 48

inscriptions, and the numerical lean toward the inscriptions does not necessitate that a *iuno*'s primary function was for slaves to honor a *materfamilias*.

The theory that *iunones* developed in order to allow slaves to honor their *materfamilias* is not justified by many of the uses we see of the *iunones* in evidence. There is too wide a variety of applications for the *iunones* to espouse this singular use. For example, in the inscription to Annia Juda, her family, likely her parents, is invoking her *iuno*—an act that would be strange if *iunones* were culturally thought of as being attributed by slaves to their masters.⁹⁹ If the *iunones* were meant to only be associated with the female head of the household, as Rives claims, this would seem to contradict Pliny's claim that "individuals of their own accord also make an equal number of their own gods by securing *Junos* and *Genii* for themselves." In light of these confounding factors—the lack of inscriptions before 3 AD and the uses for the *iuno* outside of honorary inscriptions—it seems that a different theory on the origin of the *iunones* should be explored. The upcoming chapter will focus on images of the *iunones* that have gone largely unacknowledged by scholars and which I believe support my argument that the *iunones* came to be during Augustus' reign.

⁹⁹ CIJ 77: *Iunonibus. Annia L(ucii) l(iberta) Iuda pro suis v(otum) s(olvit)*

Chapter III: Ignored Images



100

Map of sites in Pompeii with *lararia* depicting *iunones*

The painting found in Julius C. Polybius' house is generally the only image referenced when discussing the *iunones*. In scholarship little to no mention is made of other similar images that appear to depict *iunones*, and textual sources are usually the only ones discussed. This is unusual in light of the fact that *genii* are understood so much through their visual evidence. So little has been written about the *iunones*, however, that it may be understandable that images of them go either unidentified or unacknowledged. Even the literary sources we have regarding the *iunones*—Pliny, Tibullus, Seneca—are often left out or underemphasized in favor of inscriptions. This lean toward inscriptions is understandable, given that we have so few literary sources that

¹⁰⁰ Samantha Marvil, Map of *Iuno* sites in Pompeii

they might seem too few and far between to recognize any patterns from, while we have dozens of inscriptions, a much more substantial body of evidence.¹⁰¹

I fear that the visual evidence pertaining to the *iunones* may have suffered an even more severe version of the fate of the literary evidence. It seems that, though a few images of *iunones* have been identified in the past, scholars are largely unwilling to engage with them as part of their analysis, tending instead toward inscriptions and, occasionally, literary evidence. Significant scholarly engagement with the origin of the *iunones* began in 1912 with Wissowa's etymological argument, which by its very nature did not engage with visuals. The current consensus, given to us by Rives in 1992, is based almost entirely on epigraphic evidence, with only small references made to literary sources and none at all made to visual ones.

This lack of engagement with visual evidence by most scholars writing on the *iunones*, not just Rives, is interesting in light of the fact that in 1937 George Boyce, in his work *Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii*, identified three¹⁰² *lararia* clearly containing *iunones* and two¹⁰³ depicting unidentified female figures that fit the attributes of the *iunones*. In addition to these five, I have identified three¹⁰⁴ more images not mentioned in Boyce's work that I believe depict a *iuno*. All these images come from houses preserved in Pompeii, except one from Boscoreale.

This chapter will discuss these images and what they can tell us about the origins of the *iunones*. I will begin with a background on the characters usually found in *lararium* paintings before moving into a description of the images.

¹⁰¹ As of 2017 almost 70 *iuno* inscriptions had been found, Francisco Simón (2017), 217

¹⁰² 15. Boscoreale, VIII.2.39. Pompeii, VII.15.7. Pompeii

¹⁰³ IX.9.13. Pompeii, Villa of Julia Felix

¹⁰⁴ I.13.2. Pompeii, VII.7.21/22. Pompeii, IX.10.1. Pompeii

I. Background on Pompeian Houses

Before we dive into these images let us take a moment to lay out some significant aspects of Pompeian houses as well as the relevant cultural functions of wall decorations. Scholars are continuously realizing how confused the evidence found in Pompeii has become since its discovery because of a variety of factors, including the inherent difficulty in preserving a physical site once it's been uncovered, early investigation methods that caused damage to artifacts, and Pompeii's standing as a popular tourist attraction. Even without these confounding influences, Pompeii was never a "normal" Roman town to begin with. It was a seaside veteran colony intended for a specific purpose, not a naturally occurring community that grew into a city.

The standard patrician house is described by Vitruvius in great detail in book six of his *De Architectura*.¹⁰⁵ The first room he mentions is the *atrium*, and he treats the proportion of all the other rooms as dependent on the size and shape of the *atrium*. He also points out the importance of having a consistent level of decoration within the home, which he says can be achieved through matching styles throughout rooms and maintaining proper proportions.

in his aedificiorum generibus omnes sunt faciendae earum symmetriarum rationes, quae sine inpeditione loci fieri poterunt, luminaque, parietum altitudinibus si non obscurabuntur, faciliter erunt explicata; sin autem inpedientur ab angustis aut aliis necessitatibus, tunc erit ut ingenio et acumine de symmetriis detractioes aut adiectiones fiant, uti non dissimiles veris symmetriis perficiantur venustates

In buildings of this kind, all the rules of symmetry must be followed, which are allowed by the site, and the windows will be easily arranged unless they are darkened by high walls opposite. But if they are obstructed by the narrowness of the street or by other inconveniences, skill and resource must alter the proportions

¹⁰⁵ Vitruvius, *de architectura* VI.c.III

by decreasing or adding, so that an elegance may be attained in harmony with the proper proportions.¹⁰⁶

Romans used house decoration in general to express their level of social standing, though too much decoration could be seen as an expression of vice, in particular the vice of *luxuria*—excessive indulgence. Despite this seeming contradiction, there was still a social expectation that people, particularly the wealthy and elite, would have well-decorated houses.

*qualem hominis honorati et principis domum placeat esse, cuius finis est usus...
Ornanda enim est dignitas domo, non ex domo tota quaerenda, nec domo dominus, sed domino domus honestanda est, et, ut in ceteris habenda ratio non sua solum, sed etiam aliorum, sic in domo clari hominis, in quam et hospites multi recipiendi et admittenda hominum cuiusque modi multitudo, adhibenda cura est laxitatis*

I must discuss also what sort of house a man of rank and station should, in my opinion, have... The truth is, a man's dignity may be enhanced by the house he lives in, but not wholly secured by it; the owner should bring honour to his house, not the house to its owner. And, as in everything else a man must have regard not for himself alone but for others also, so in the home of a distinguished man, in which numerous guests must be entertained and crowds of every sort of people received, care must be taken to have it spacious.¹⁰⁷

Cicero writes on the importance of striking the proper balance between overdecoration and fulfilling social expectations in section 39 of his *De Officiis: The Proper Home*. He acknowledges that someone's social power could be increased by the tasteful and impressive decoration of their home. Roman houses were not private spaces the way we think of houses today, and they became less and less private the wealthier a person was, as the elite would have

¹⁰⁶ Frank Granger (1931)

¹⁰⁷ Cicero, *De Officiis*, 39

people coming in and out of their homes constantly, whether on the grounds of business, patronage, or friendship.¹⁰⁸ It seems to me that one way of sidestepping judgment around having too ornate a house would be to lean into decorations with religious elements, as it was considered virtuous to uphold state religion. We can see that much, though not all, of the art in Roman houses was religious, and it's impossible not to wonder how many of these motifs were chosen out of genuine piety and how many were selected for the social boost they might be able to lend to the owner of a home by excusing them from judgement on the basis of their house being over decorated.

Andre-Wallace Hadrill puts it succinctly in his book, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* when he describes upper-class homes as “stage(s) deliberately designed for the performance of social rituals.”¹⁰⁹ Increasingly during in the first century AD, the desire for the master to control his public image was expressed through the decoration of the home. During this same time, the atrium dwindled from being the distinct hub of decoration, as other parts of the house began to be more commonly ornamented. Houses also tended to have layers of decorations from many different times as families would redo one room or even just part of a room while leaving the rest of the house as it was. As a result, it can be difficult to date decorations since each one needs to be analyzed individually, and the date of the house or other decorations cannot be assumed to be common among all of them.¹¹⁰

We see frequent turnover in wall decorations, particularly during the last century BC and the first century AD. During this time the lower classes were imitating the higher classes at an accelerated rate, which caused the elite to continuously change what they were doing, including

¹⁰⁸ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 11

¹⁰⁹ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 60

¹¹⁰ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 50-52

what they were doing in their homes, so as to remain distinguished. A more contained example of this same phenomenon can be seen in Arretine pottery,¹¹¹ once a symbol of the very wealthy, being sought after and eventually attained by people of lower social rank, causing the elite to abandon their interest in the pottery.¹¹² Wall decorations, as a prime signifier of social status, were frequently imitated by the lower classes, which led wealthier people to continuously strive to improve upon their own decorations.

Over half¹¹³ of the houses in Pompeii still have some identifiable type of wall decoration. The number was certainly higher in ancient times, but still over half is quite a large number considering the work and materials that would have to be expended in order to create a wall decoration. Less than a quarter¹¹⁴ of the houses still have mythological paintings, that is, paintings depicting scenes of gods or divine events. This number does not include *lararia*, which are considered to be their own sort of decoration not a member of the group of “mythological paintings,” which are characterized by more Hellenistic expressions of the gods and their stories. Roman wall decorations were meant to imitate other things, as much of art does, but they were particularly blatant about it. Wall decorations in Rome often depicted domestic scenes that would play out nearby the depiction or sometimes even right in front of it.

Wall art often also depicted well-known scenes from mythology or places and experiences that would be familiar to the viewer, in many cases going so far as to practically mirror what was going on in the room, such as how taverns would often have images of people eating or drinking up on the wall. The *lararium* painting is one of these sorts of decorations. It

¹¹¹ Originally a very expensive form of fine pottery sought after by the upper classes, lower class people started to acquire or imitate pieces which led the elite interest in the product to wane as it was not a decisive status symbol any longer.

¹¹² Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 147

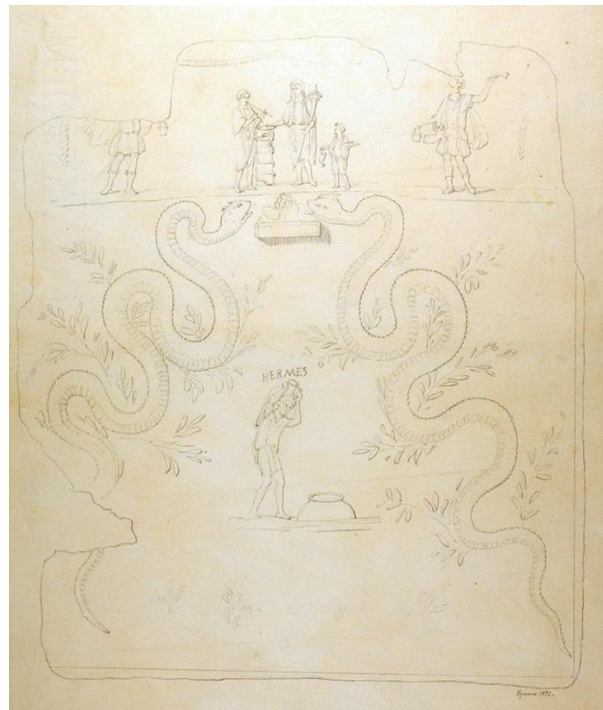
¹¹³ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 151

¹¹⁴ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994), 154

would depict a *genius*, who represented the *paterfamilias*, sacrificing within the painting exactly as a man was meant to sacrifice at the shrine the image was set into, and in this way, the imitation is curiously reversed—the *genius* is doing as the *paterfamilias* does, but, in a way, the image starts to seem more instructional than commemorative as the images in the tavern might.

The drinking scenes are less personal, more of just a topical decoration. The *lararium*, on the other hand, relates directly to a certain viewer. Many people would enter any given home, they would likely even walk past the homeowner's *lararium*, but the instructions laid out in the image would not speak to them because the figure depicted was not their *genius*. Keeping the intended purpose of *lararia* in mind, we will now move on to looking at a variety of these shrines, first a grounding example, and then the more exciting possible depictions of *iunones*.

II. The Standard *Lararium*



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Sketch of a Pompeian *Lararium* I.1.8

¹¹⁵ Geremia Discanno. Sketch of lararium in I.1.8. Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2001%2008.htm>

This is a sketch of a *lararium* from Geremia Discanno's *The Excavations of Pompeii from 1861 to 1872*. The original shrine no longer exists, but this sketch is a perfect example from which to identify the different aspects of a standard *lararium* painting. It depicts the characters most frequently seen in *lararium* paintings— the twin dancing *lares*, the guardian snakes, the flute playing *tibicen*, the assistant *camillus*, the sacrificing *genius*, and a god of importance to the household, in this case Hermes.

It is important to note the discrepancies in size between the figures shown. Hermes and the *lares* are similar in size, Hermes is perhaps slightly taller but he is bent over. The snakes are equal in size as they mirror each other the same way that the *lares* do. The *tibicen* and *camillus* are both smaller than the *genius*, the *camillus* more significantly so, as he is meant to be a young boy. The differences in size are important here because they seem to correspond to rank or level of divinity among the figures, a technique known as hieratic scale.¹¹⁶ In *lararia* the aspects that help us most to identify a figure are what they are doing, what they are holding, and what size they are.

III. Possible *Iunones*

Let us turn now to the images that seem to contain *iunones*. They will be arranged in order from least to most impactful with respect to my argument that *iunones* are a product of Augustan social reform.

¹¹⁶ Asa Simon Mittman (2019)



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XI.4.3. Pompeii, *Lararium* in the Villa of Julia Felix

Of all the images collected here, this is the one most doubtful to contain a *iuno*. Found in the Villa of Julia Felix, which was uncovered between 1755 and 1757,¹¹⁸ this *lararium* depicts, from left to right, Fortuna, Anubis, Isis, the *genius*, and an unidentified woman.¹¹⁹ Julia Felix is an enigmatic character within the lore of Pompeii. Her background is unknown, and there is no evidence of her outside of her own home, which seems to have been quite a social and economic hub.¹²⁰ She rented out access to her villa, which was a beautiful and unique building in its own right. In the garden she had an unusual *nymphaeum*, a shrine to nymphs, that was designed to look like a watery grotto,¹²¹ and in the home at large there is a wide and often intermingled range of styles and genres in her decorations. For example, she had a painted frieze in the atrium that

¹¹⁷ Giovanni Battista. Sketch of lararium in the Villa of Julia Felix. Photo from <https://digital.tcl.sc.edu/digital/collection/piranesi/id/7720>

¹¹⁸ Eve D'Ambra (2021), 85

¹¹⁹ George K. Boyce (1937), 95

¹²⁰ Eve D'Ambra (2021), 89

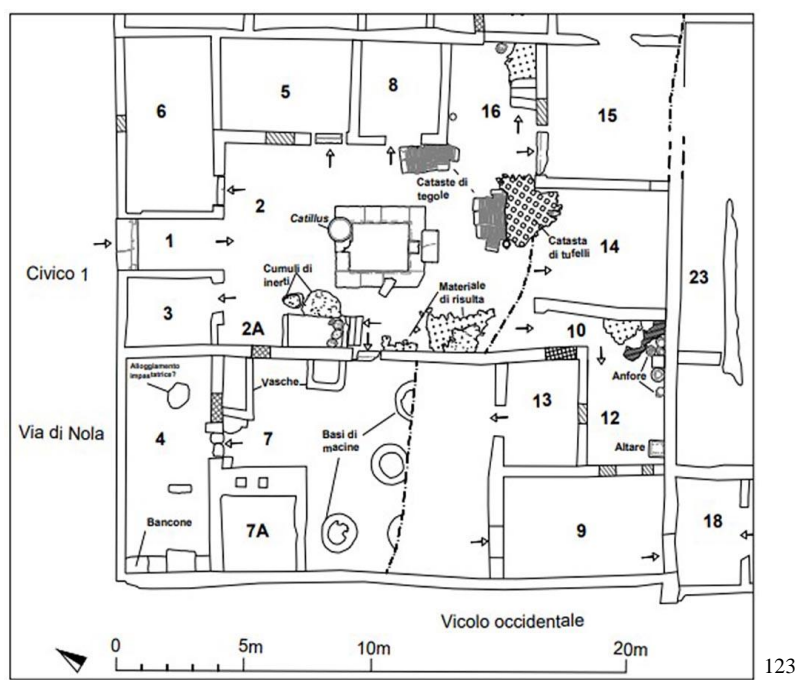
¹²¹ Eve D'Ambra (2021), 92

depicted a market scene, which is rather unusual to see in a home and would be more expected in a restaurant or tavern.¹²²

Returning to the *lararium* image we can see that it, too, is somewhat strange. The presence of Egyptian gods in favor of *lares* is not completely unique but certainly is not common. It is also much more verdant than most *lararia*, with a lush and detailed background. Curiously, there seem to be four snakes, two of which are much smaller and appear to be of a different variety than the two large more standard-looking ones at the bottom of the image. The presence of the two smaller snakes serves to block off the upper right panel into its own *lararium* scene within the larger *lararium*.

Also within the upper right panel is where we find the unidentified female figure. I believe that she may be a *iuno* because she is seen in the usual sacrificial pose and she is interacting with snakes, a symbol of the *genius*. She is also the same size as the *genius* figure, though the size differentiations in this image are not as clear as in some others. It is unclear why this should be separate and why the *genius* is not included in it. Overall, this image is so strange in comparison to other *lararia* that it is hard to determine whether the woman is a *iuno* and, if so, what her presence here would imply for the *iunones* as a whole.

¹²² Eve D'Ambra (2021), 87



Layout of IX.10.1 Pompeii



Pompeian *Lararium* IX.10.1

¹²³ Parco Archeologico di Pompei. Layout of IX.10.1. Pompeii. Photo from <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/Lararia/Pompeii%20Household%20Shrines%20p15.htm>

¹²⁴ Johannes Eber. Lararium in IX.10.1. Pompeii. Photo from <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/Lararia/Pompeii%20Household%20Shrines%20p15.htm>

Another Pompeiian *lararium* appears to have depicted a *iuno* and *genius* sacrificing together. This *lararium* was recently found in room 12 of IX.10.1 Pompeii.¹²⁵ The figure closer to the fire would be the *iuno*, while the faded one behind her would be the *genius*. They are in a matching pose to the one seen in the Julius C. Polybius house, with the two of them next to the altar and the *iuno* doing the sacrifice. The outline of the faded figure (*the genius*) can be seen in the gray paint that would have been the part of his toga covering his back and likely his head. What appears to be the leg of the figure is also visible in the brown paint that touches the bottom border of the image. It makes sense that we would only find one leg because it is a usual pose of the *genius* to be leaning slightly forward, exposing only his back leg while the toga hangs down to cover the front leg.

The composition of the painting is also worth noting. *Lararia* tend to have fairly symmetrical composition, whether that be totally symmetrical with two identical *lares* or more relaxed with the altar in the middle and the *genius* and his attendants clustered around. The placement of the altar and the *iuno* in this image (off to the left side) seems to imply that there was something to the right of the *iuno* to justify the asymmetry we see here. The main struggle with this image is that it is poorly preserved, and it is not possible to compare the features of the two figures beyond their posture and the fact that they seem to be of similar heights.

It would be easier to identify the remaining figure as a *iuno* if we had more remaining of the other figure's skin tone, as this would make the gender of the figures more easily discernible, since men, particularly when painted alongside women, were given darker skin tones. The bit of the faded figure's leg that we can make out seems to be darker than the skin on the female's arm.

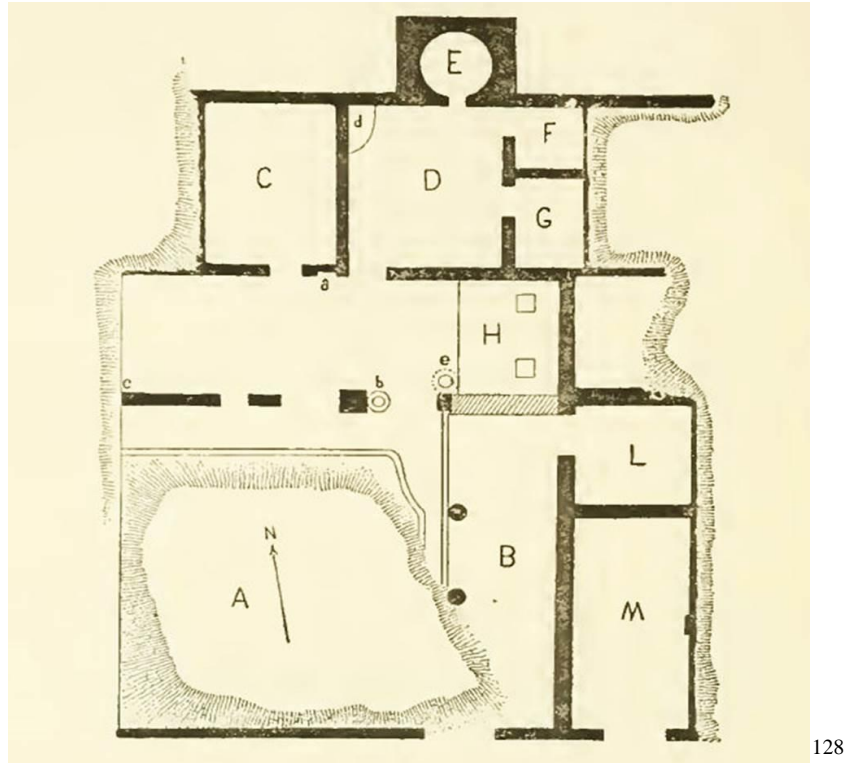
¹²⁵ Excavation of this site began in February of 2023

Taking the hex code¹²⁶ of those two areas gives us #886D60 for the male and #B89C87 for the female, #886D60 being the darker of those two colors. However, these patches of skin are so small, especially the leg, that it is hard to definitively say which would have had darker skin.

Perhaps the most interesting part of this painting is the color of the fabric draped around the remaining figure's head, which seems to rule out the possibility of it being the *genius*, and instead implies that she is the *iuno*. A red sash is not uncommon to find in a depiction of a *genius* and it can sometimes even come up on top of the head, but it would be a thin border around a predominately white toga. The fabric over the head of this figure appears to be predominately or even entirely red, something we would expect not of a toga but a stola, a garment of upper-class women. The stola was a signifier of status for women and was used in ritual in much the same way as the toga was for men, drawn over the head and arranged perfectly.¹²⁷ Stolas, unlike togas, were often made from dyed fabrics, most often in blues, oranges, and red. We can see, for example, the stola of the *iuno* in the Julius C. Polybius painting is blue and orange. The presence of colorful fabric here, as well as the pose of the faded figure and the composition of the scene, suggest that this figure is both female and a *iuno*.

¹²⁶ Hex codes are a system used to mathematically catalog colors based on pigment content and can be used to discern differences in color that are not clear to the eye.

¹²⁷ Nicholas Purcell (1986), 79 The right to wear the stola was considered a high honor among Roman women, being called *stolata* was analogous to being called high class.



Layout of 15. Boscoreale



Lararium in 15. Boscoreale

¹²⁸ A. Casale, A. Bianco. Layout of 15. Boscoreale. Photo from https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_015%20Boscoreale%20Piazza%20Mercato%20Proprieta%20Cirillo.htm

¹²⁹ John Weinstein. Lararium in 15. Boscoreale. Inventory number 24658 Field Museum Chicago. Photo from https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_015%20Boscoreale%20Piazza%20Mercato%20Proprieta%20Cirillo.htm

This *lararium* depicts, from left to right, a *tibicen*, *camillus*, *iuno*, *genius*, and another *camillus*.¹³⁰ It comes from room B of 15. Boscoreale, which was excavated by the De Prisco family in 1897 before being reburied. The word *boscoreale* itself means “royal forest” and the area was home to many large country villas like this one. The *iuno* here is clear—she is the female counterpart to the *genius*, and she mirrors him in both action and size. It is worth noting here that she stands on the opposite side of the altar from the *genius* in this image, whereas typically, she is seen standing next to him and slightly closer to the altar. Both the *genius* and the *iuno* have their heads bare, which is unusual for a depiction of sacrifice.

In her article “The Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale,” Bettina Bergman argues that owners of grand houses like this may not have been all that religious themselves, since the Roman upper classes tended to perform religion more than they actually believed in it.¹³¹ This reasoning could explain why the figure’s heads aren’t covered if the purpose for having this painting was more for people to see it than for the owner to actually use it for proper worship. Whatever the reason for the strange dressing of the figures, it’s clear that the two closest to the altar are the *genius* and *iuno* as they are sacrificing together in the usual way for gods of this sort.

¹³⁰ George K. Boyce (1937), 98

¹³¹ Bettina Bergman (2010), 24



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Lararium in VII.15.7. Pompeii

According to Boyce this *lararium*, excavated in 1859, contains a *iuno*, but available photos are not able to confirm this. In *Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii*, he describes the image, “In the center stands a blazing altar; on the right of it a male figure, clad in long garment and holding in left an acerra, stretches his right over the top of the altar-apparently the Genius; on the left of the altar is a female figure, similarly clad and holding the right over the altar - perhaps the Juno.”¹³³ This description is strikingly similar to what we see in 15. Boscoreale, and I believe Boyce is correct in identifying the female figure as a *iuno* because of that similarity. We do not know the name of the person who owned this house nor when it was constructed.

¹³² George Boyce. Lararium in VII.15.7. Pompeii. Photo from <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2015%2007.htm>

¹³³ George K. Boyce (1937), 72



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Lararium in I.13.2 Pompeii, House of Sutoria Primigenia

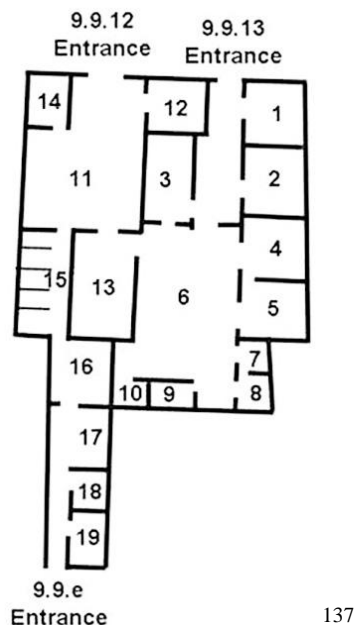
The *iuno* in this image, from a *lararium* on the northeast side of the kitchen in I.13.2 Pompeii, is clearly defined. She is in the usual pose directly to the side of the *genius*, and the image is more well-preserved than the previous few in general. This *iuno* is actually acknowledged, albeit in a speculative manner, a couple of times in recent scholarship on other topics, but not with a focus on the *iuno* or her origin.¹³⁵ The *iuno* here has not been factored into that discussion. There are many figures present in this scene, but the *genius* and *iuno* are distinctly set apart as a matched pair. They have their garments drawn over their heads in the usual manner and are slightly taller than the crowd of people behind them, which is likely made up of family members and clients, as those are the people who would be interested in the worship of the household gods.

¹³⁴ Annette Haug. Lararium in I.13.2.. Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2013%2002%20p4.htm>

¹³⁵ Jane Draycott (2017) 10; Ryan Michelle Tidwell (2024), 36

It is not common to see a crowd of people such as this one in a *lararium*,¹³⁶ and it could be that the presence of the *iuno* made this painting into a more personal one, because, once more than one family member is represented (*genius* + *iuno* instead of just *genius*) it becomes an uncomplicated next step to include even more of them. This house, like the Villa of Julia Felix, was owned by a woman, Sutoria Primigenia. It is notable that, out of the few houses owned by women in Pompeii, two of them seem to have *iunones* in their *lararia*. It makes sense that, if a house was owned by a woman, the spirit in charge of worshiping the gods of that house would be female.

¹³⁶ Harriet Flower (2017), 71



Layout of IX.9.13. Pompeii



Lararium in IX.9.13. Pompeii

The *lararium* in IX.9.13. Pompeii is located on the southwest wall of the garden, which is labeled as room 6 in the diagram. Another victim of poor photography, this *lararium* is described by Boyce as containing two *genii*—very unusual. He explains the presence of the extra *genius* by identifying it as the *genius Augusti*. The *genius Augusti* is also comparatively cruder than the other *genius*, and Boyce believes that the *genius Augusti* was painted first, possibly as a celebration of the *genius Augusti* officially entering into domestic cult, and the other *genius* was a later addition during a redecoration.¹³⁹

Even more interesting, the *lararium* contains two female figures, another unusual sight. The female figures are badly damaged, but I believe the unusual numbers in this case can tell us something. The number of *genii* and women being doubled together would seem to suggest that they're closely related and are probably doubled for the same reason, that one set is an imperial

¹³⁷ Unknown Artist. Layout of IX.9.13. Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2013%2002%20p4.htm>

¹³⁸ George Boyce. *Lararium* in IX.9.13. Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R9/9%2009%2013%20p2.htm>

¹³⁹ George K. Boyce (1937), 93

genius and *iuno* while the other is that of the household. If this is the case, it would make one of the *iunones* Livia's, the significance of which will be discussed in chapter IV.

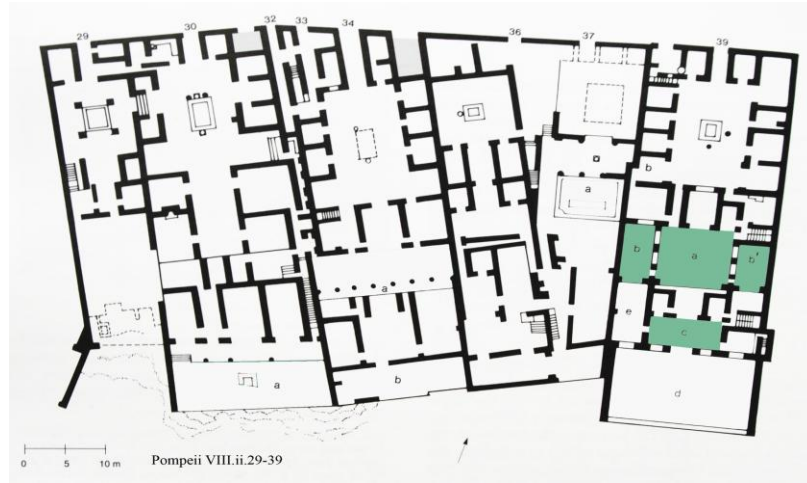


Street Altar at VII.7.21./22. Pompeii

The *iuno* in the street altar between VII.7.21 and VII.7.22 can more confidently be identified as Livia's. In this street sign to Jupiter, there is a clear *genius* and *iuno*. From left to right, we can make out the *lares*, an assistant, the *genius*, the *iuno*, Jupiter, another assistant and the other *lar*. The *genius* and *iuno* are depicted in their usual positions, with the *iuno* slightly closer to the object of sacrifice, in this case Jupiter, and the *genius* standing close behind her, seeming almost to be looking over her shoulder. The fact that this is a street shrine tells us the *genius* is that of Augustus because other people would have their *lararia* confined to their

¹⁴⁰ Mazois. Painting of a street altar at VII.7.21/22. Pompeii. Photo from <https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/Altars/Altar%2070722.htm>

homes. It was only the imperial *genius* that was seen outside. As the *genius* is the spirit of the *paterfamilias* and corresponds with the *iuno* of the *materfamilias*, the *iuno* here can be none other than Livia's. The clear presence of the *iuno Liviae* is significant because it gives us yet more evidence that her *iuno* was widely known by the citizens of Rome.



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Layout of VIII.2.39. Pompeii



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Sketch of *Lararium* in VII.2.39 Pompeii

¹⁴¹ Mau. Layout of VIII.2.29-39. Pompeii. Photo from https://roman-gardens.github.io/province/italia/pompeii/region_viii/insula_ii/viii.2.39/

¹⁴² Geremia Discanno. Sketch of a lararium from VIII.2.39. Pompeii. Photo from <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/Lararia/Pompeii%20Household%20Shrines%20p12.htm>

Here we have a sketch of the *lararium* in VII.2.39 Pompeii, done in the 19th century. Sadly, it is no longer possible to make out the image inside of the physical shrine, which is located in the northeast corner of the atrium, room c on the diagram. The figures here are the *genius* (left) and either the *iuno* or Juno herself (right). Boyce identifies her as the goddess Juno because of her scepter and crown.¹⁴³ Mau suggests that she was likely meant to represent a *iuno* and correspond to the master of the house (*the genius*) the same way Juno corresponds to Jupiter.¹⁴⁴ It is also worth noting that this is quite a unique way for the *genius* and *iuno* to be depicted.

The altar on which they appear to be sacrificing is very small and off to the side, whereas in most depictions of the *genius* and *iuno* or of the *genius* alone the altar is usually the focal point of the image. They are depicted front-on, contrary to the sideways position that we usually see, and they have no attendants around them like the ones we see in almost every other *lararium*. Having the pair appear front-on and looming large in the center of the image instead of the altar, the more traditional focal point suggests that these figures have a significance that we do not see in other depictions of *genii* and *iunones*, namely that these ones seem to correspond explicitly with Jupiter and Juno.

Notable as well is the fact that the female figure is much more explicitly tied to Juno than her male counterpart is to Jupiter. This could be explained as a sort of visual pun that only works for one of the figures—the woman’s *iuno* becomes Juno while the man’s *genius* stays his *genius*—or it could be evidence that the concept of the *iuno* was new at this time and hence not fully formed. It is also worth pointing out here that the idea of representing a *genius* or *iuno* in some

¹⁴³ George K. Boyce (1937), 75

¹⁴⁴ August Mau (1902), 365

other form besides their usual is not unique to this image. In fact, Juno and a *iuno* are closer in appearance than other forms we see, namely that of the *genius* being represented as a snake or, in earlier days, as a phallus.¹⁴⁵

The blurring of the lines here is intriguing as it suggests a more solid connection between Juno and the *iunones* than was previously thought. Though the etymological link that Wissowa proposed, Juno and *iunones* coming from the same root word meaning “young,” has been disproven, there remains a distinct overlap in the names and domains of the two types of deities and, because of this image, we know that some people invoking the *iunones* in the first century AD must have been aware of that link. This painting also returns us, once again, to the connection between Livia and the *iunones*. Livia was frequently depicted either with objects related to Juno or even with their names combined, and this connection could explain how the *iunones* got their name as well as where they originated—both ideas that will be expanded upon in Chapter IV.

¹⁴⁵ David G. Orr (1978), 1570

Chapter IV: Augustan Origins

an melius per te virtutum exempla petemus, quam si Romanae principis edis opus

Our search for models of virtue, certainly, will be better when you take on the role of first lady¹⁴⁶

- Ovid to Livia at the death of her son Drusus

The civil wars that plagued Rome leading up to Augustus's reign were thought to be caused by a disrespect for Roman values, especially those relating to family and marriage.¹⁴⁷ In his *Odes*, Horace claimed that the social unrest in Rome began in the marriage bed because Rome's citizens were not conducting themselves according to traditional familial values. Augustus rose to power and popularity in large part due to his promise to restore the traditional ways of Rome.¹⁴⁸ He did this in many areas of life, for example: bringing back defunct festivals, erecting traditional monuments, and encouraging certain family structures. Solidifying what was the "right" type of family would prove to bolster Augustus' reign, not only because people wanted a return to form after the past decades of unrest, but also because it would create an avenue for him to use the family unit to justify his growing power. He depicted himself as the *paterfamilias* of the Roman people, and the *domus Augusti* became a powerful political tool.

fecunda culpa saecula nuptias

primum inquinavere et genus et domos:

hoc fonte derivata clades

in patriam populumque fluxit

Teeming with sin, our times have sullied first the marriage-bed, our offspring,

and our homes; sprung from this source, disaster's stream has overflowed the

folk and fatherland.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Ovid. *Consolatio ad Liviam*, 355-356, translation from Nicholas Purcell (1986), 78

¹⁴⁷ Beth Severy (2003), 33-44; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 47; Josiah Osgood (2014), 82

¹⁴⁸ Beth Severy (2003), 50; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 45

¹⁴⁹ Horace, *Odes* 3.17

Augustus wanted to be seen as restoring Roman sensibilities and morality to the *res publica*¹⁵⁰ and started his comprehensive program of moral reform in 28 BC.¹⁵¹ This chapter will focus on the reforms he made in reference to women, marriage, and the family as a way to show how the political and social changes Augustus made both led to and were aided by the creation of the *iunones* around the turn of the millennium. I believe that Augustus used the *iuno* of Livia alongside his own *genius* as an avenue to show off the *domus Augusti* as the exemplary Roman family. I will begin this chapter with a brief background on some of Augustus's social reforms before moving into a discussion of how he created and used the *iunones* to serve as an example for Roman women, to justify his and Livia's unprecedented power over the state, and to establish a dynasty at Rome.

As public cult is regarded as the foundation for Roman religious practices, it follows that in a time of great change in the public sphere, there would also be revisions in the religious one.¹⁵² Augustus is well known for the changes he made to Roman religion during his reign. Many of these changes are subtle, but they worked to influence the social and political spheres of Rome for Augustus' benefit. For example, the first evidence we have of someone keeping statuettes of late relatives was Augustus, and we can see the practice spreading quickly throughout Rome in the time after he did it.¹⁵³ These statues were sometimes realistic statues and sometimes, especially in the case of the imperial family, deified versions of ancestors. The practice of keeping these statues, particularly the deified versions, served to communicate the

¹⁵⁰ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 45; *RGDA*. 6

¹⁵¹ Josiah Osgood (2014), 83

¹⁵² O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 239

¹⁵³ O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 83

growing significance of family in the empire. The family became more important as Rome shifted from republic to principate because the imperial family tree determined who would rule.

It is clear that Augustus understood how family could be used to validate his claim to power. He went so far as to claim to be descended from Romulus.¹⁵⁴ This growing significance is one reason that the *iuno*, especially the first *iuno* we have evidence of—Livia’s—would become more important during this time. The *domus Augusti* was important in many aspects of life in the Roman Empire, and it served Augustus’ purposes well for it to be that way.¹⁵⁵ The aspect of the family that was most malleable at the time, the *materfamilias*, became a way for Augustus to control the narrative around his family.¹⁵⁶ He used his power to shape the idea of the ideal Roman woman. Augustus paid special attention when making changes to religion practiced by women as well as to laws that governed women’s behavior. He gave new responsibilities to the Vestals and was the first ruler to include women in official Roman statue art.¹⁵⁷

In the legal sphere, he originated marriage legislation in Rome and enacted a strict new set of laws pertaining to marriage, motherhood, and adultery. The two Augustan marriage laws (Julian laws) most relevant to the topic of the *iunones* are the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* (Julian law on the marrying of the social orders) and the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* (Julian law concerning the repression of adultery). The *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, laid out by Augustus in 18 BC, decreed that men from ages 25-60 and women from ages 20-50 should be actively married and producing children. Up to this point in antiquity, large families were not the

¹⁵⁴ O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 99

¹⁵⁵ O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 84

¹⁵⁶ The concept of the *materfamilias* was ill-defined before the reign of Augustus. After his marriage reforms the term took on a more distinct legal meaning and became more closely associated with the status of being a *matrona* and a virtuous woman in general. Its murky definition made it more susceptible to Augustus’ changes than the other components of the family, such as the *paterfamilias*, which had a more solid understanding in the social and legal spheres at the time.

¹⁵⁷ O. Hekster, Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, and Christian Witschel (2009), 259

norm,¹⁵⁸ both because of the difficulty of raising children to adulthood and sometimes due to the active choice not to have a large number of children.

Marriage and childbearing were encouraged by preventing people who were not doing those things from claiming inheritances, and also by giving rewards to married couples who had three or more children (*ius trium liberorum*).¹⁵⁹ 27 years after its enactment, a confusing reform, the *lex Papia et Poppaea*, was made to the original marriage law because of the outrage it caused among the Roman people, who thought of property, including inheritances, as extremely important to their society. One of the most appealing privileges granted by the *ius trium liberorum*, freedom from *tutela mulierum*, can be seen in the records of a business transaction of a woman named Aurelia Thaisous.

{There have been laws}, most eminent and prefect, which give power to women who have been adorned with the right of three children to have control over their own affairs and to act without a *kyrios* in the transactions that they undertake, and much more so to women who know letters.

- From the business transactions of Aurelia Thaisous, a woman granted the *ius trium liberorum*¹⁶⁰

Tutela was a Roman concept similar to what we might think of as placing someone under a conservatorship, it made a person subject to having many of their actions controlled and influenced by their tutor. It was common for women to be under *tutela*, which would stop them from independently controlling their estates and affairs, and the opportunity to be released from *tutela* through the *ius trium liberorum* was an appealing one.

¹⁵⁸ Emiel Eyben (1981), 5

¹⁵⁹ Judith Evans Grubbs (2019), 107-108

¹⁶⁰ Judith Evans Grubbs (2002), 39

The *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, enacted soon after the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, sought to criminalize adultery and restricted women more heavily than men. If a woman was found guilty of adultery, she could not enter into another legal marriage in the future and was marked as dishonorable. While women could not accuse their husbands or anyone else of adultery, if a husband knew his wife was adulterous and did not divorce her, he could be charged for acting as her pimp. Augustus encouraged matters of adultery to be handled publicly, which was different from how things had previously been done.¹⁶¹ This was the first time in Roman history that adultery was officially outlawed.¹⁶² While he did regulate marriage, it seems that Augustus was more concerned with increasing the number of children born than upholding the ideal of eternal marriage.¹⁶³

The Julian laws were primarily targeted at regulating the activities of higher-class citizens, especially women.¹⁶⁴ In this time, the conduct of a woman was thought to reflect on the quality of her husband, for example, writers were known to flatter Livia's feminine qualities as a way to honor Augustus.¹⁶⁵ These laws served to reinforce traditional Roman ideas about family such as those about the *paterfamilias*, the male head of the household. The *paterfamilias* had nearly unlimited power over the family,¹⁶⁶ and it is clear that Augustus sought to situate himself in a similar position over Rome as *pater patriae*, a title he was given in 2 BC.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ Judith Evans Grubbs (2002), 110

¹⁶² Beth Severy (2003), 50; Josiah Osgood (2014), 84

¹⁶³ Josiah Osgood (2014), 85

¹⁶⁴ Judith Evans Grubbs (2002), 105

¹⁶⁵ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 21

¹⁶⁶ Emiel Eyben (1981), 20

¹⁶⁷ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 59

He was also appointed *pontifex maximus* on March 6, 12 BC, an office associated with the ways in which a *paterfamilias* was the religious head of the family.¹⁶⁸ The power derived from the Roman family structure is easily mapped onto the empire as a whole in this way. The empire, in turn, was thought to gain peace by respecting, revering, and praying for the imperial family. Suetonius recorded Metella as saying that by praying for the fortune and favor of the *domus Augusti* the senate was praying for the good of Rome.¹⁶⁹

“Quod bonum,” inquit, “faustumque sit tibi domuique tuae, Caesar Auguste! Sic enim nos perpetuam felicitatem rei p. et laeta huic precari existimamus: senatus te consentiens cum populo R. consalutat patriae patrem.”

Good fortune and divine favour attend thee and thy house, Caesar Augustus; for thus we feel that we are praying for lasting prosperity for our country and happiness for our city. The senate in accord with the people of Rome hails thee Father of thy Country.¹⁷⁰

Since Augustus seemed to lean into this approach, it makes sense that it would be important to him to show off his family as embodying the ideals of the Roman family. In order to do this more thoroughly, however, he would need to articulate what makes up an ideal family unit. One area that lacked clarity up to this point was the role of the *materfamilias*, the female head of the household. Up to the time of the Julian laws, the *materfamilias* was ill-defined and was often used interchangeably with the word *matrona* or simply to mean “wife”.¹⁷¹

Under the *lex Iulia*, the term came to take on a decidedly moral and legal quality. A *materfamilias* became a respectable woman, usually a wife, who fulfilled her duty in society:

¹⁶⁸ Augustus as pontifex: RGDA 10; Ov. Fast. 3.419-20; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 50

¹⁶⁹ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 59

¹⁷⁰ J.C. Rolfe (2016), 239

¹⁷¹ Thomas A.J. McGinn (1998), 150

marriage, childbearing, and certain kinds of worship.¹⁷² Depicting his wife as the prime example of a *materfamilias* would have in turn served to justify Augustus' rule as the *pater patriae* of Rome. In the *Res Gestae* he acknowledges that he wanted to actively create role models for people to know how to behave: "I myself set precedents in many things for posterity to imitate."¹⁷³ This sounds strikingly close to the purpose of the *iunones* which, like the *genii*, were meant to represent a pious and virtuous figure through which to model one's worship.

With the transition from republic to principate, it would have served to further justify Augustus' claim to power to lend more importance to respecting the family structure since the right to rule was newly heritable in Rome. Augustus was known to value the idea of leading by example and strove to be a role model for citizens in the same way that the *paterfamilias* was the role model of the family.¹⁷⁴ He depicts himself in a decidedly paternal manner on the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, and the importance of family relations is apparent on the altar, as it depicts not only the *domus Augusti* but also their legendary ancestry, Romulus and Aeneas.¹⁷⁵ Consecrated on Livia's Birthday in 9 BC, the *Ara Pacis* depicts the imperial family on its southern frieze.

¹⁷² Thomas A.J. McGinn (1998), 152

¹⁷³ *RGDA*. 8

¹⁷⁴ Diane Favro (1992), 72

¹⁷⁵ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 51-52, There is some debate over the identity of these figures but no matter the exact details it is clear the altar is meant to depict the importance of family to the empire.



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South Processional Frieze of the *Ara Pacis*

The presence of women and children depicted here is striking because it is the first known relief commissioned by the state to depict mortal women and children. For his part, Augustus is depicted here simultaneously as the *pontifex maximus* and the father of his personal *domus*.¹⁷⁷ The entire *domus Augusti* is depicted together, with no family member singled out over the others. Livia and Augustus¹⁷⁸ are also shown here in a strikingly similar pose to that of the *genius* and *iuno* that we see in the *lararia* in Julius C. Polybius' house and in the street altar discussed in chapter III. The date of the altar's consecration is significant in its own right, but it is even more so when you consider that the yearly celebration for the Ara Pacis was not on its foundation day, as is more common for this type of monument, but on its consecration day,

¹⁷⁶ Miguel Hermoso Cuesta. Image of South Processional Frieze on the Ara Pacis. *Ara Pacis Augustae*. Photo from Wikimedia https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ara_Pacis_relieve_Roma_01.JPG

¹⁷⁷ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 51

¹⁷⁸ Livia and Augustus are the couple being looked up at by the child.

making Livia's birthday an annual state holiday, as we can see from the date given at the end of book I of Ovid's *Fasti*.¹⁷⁹

30. *F NP*

31. *G C*

Ipsum nos carmen deduxit Pacis ad aram.

haec erit a mensis fine secunda dies.

frondibus Actiacis comptos redimita capillos,

Pax, ades et toto mitis in orbe mane.

January 30th

The course of my song hath led me to the altar of Peace. The day will be the second from the end of the month. Come, Peace, thy dainty tresses wreathed with Actian laurels, and let thy gentle presence abide in the whole world¹⁸⁰

Livia's birthday was also celebrated by the Arval Brothers starting in 38 AD.¹⁸¹ The importance of her birthday and the association of the *genius* and *iuno* with birthday celebrations is another way in which the *iuno* lines up as the perfect vessel for Augustus to position Livia as the ideal wife and mother.

Livia's role as the *materfamilias* of the imperial *domus* was the most essential aspect of her role as empress. Roman wives took on the role of advisor to their husbands,¹⁸² and Livia did this on a far larger scale than most.¹⁸³ She advised Augustus on important matters of state such as granting clemency. Her influence over Augustus was sometimes characterized as improper, and people accused her of scheming and being immoral. We can see, for example, in Suetonius'

¹⁷⁹ Ov. *Fast.* 1.709-10

¹⁸⁰ James G. Frazer (1931), 1.709-10

¹⁸¹ AFA XXXIII; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 163

¹⁸² Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 100

¹⁸³ Suet. *Aug.* 40 below, see also Suet. *Claud.* 4

Lives of the Caesars: The Deified Augustus he recounts advice that Livia gave to Augustus in a particularly unflattering light.

Tiberio pro cliente Graeco petenti rescripsit, non aliter se daturum, quam si praesens sibi persuasisset, quam iustas petendi causas haberet; et Liviae pro quodam tributario Gallo roganti civitatem negavit, immunitatem optulit affirmans facilius se passurum fisco detrahi aliquid, quam civitatis Romanae vulgari honorem.

When Tiberius requested citizenship for a Greek dependent of his, Augustus wrote in reply that he would not grant it unless the man appeared in person and convinced him that he had reasonable grounds for the request; and when Livia asked it for a Gaul from a tributary province, he refused, offering instead freedom from tribute, and declaring that he would more willingly suffer a loss to his privy purse than the prostitution of the honour of Roman citizenship.¹⁸⁴

The difference in how Suetonius treats Tiberius' and Livia's requests, despite them both being simple requests for citizenship, is striking. Livia's request is made out to be a significant moral threat while Tiberius' is treated logically. Whether this double standard is a product of the general attitude around Livia or Suetonius' own bending of the narrative it shows that there was at least some markedly unfavorable sentiment toward Livia in Rome.

Augustus, perhaps out of care for Livia, and certainly out of interest in safeguarding his claim to rule through moral posturing, went to great lengths both to define what a good *materfamilias* looked like and to characterize Livia with those qualities. Though she never bore Augustus any children, she was consistently publicized with an emphasis on her motherhood,¹⁸⁵ and it was her son Tiberius, from her previous marriage to Tiberius Claudius Nero, who inherited

¹⁸⁴ J.C. Rolfe (2016), 40

¹⁸⁵ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 76

the throne from Augustus in 14 AD. To be clear, Livia did good deeds to back up these claims about her virtue, among other things she exhibited frequent and extensive *liberalitas*, the virtue of giving freely. She helped families raise children and paid their daughter's dowries so they could enter into good marriages.¹⁸⁶ She acted as an example of feminine virtue and supplied others with the means to emulate her.

The senate tried to appoint her as *mater patriae*, but Tiberius did not allow it, though she was still referred to that way on some coins.¹⁸⁷ She was also *genetrix orbis*, mother of the world, on coins and in inscriptions.¹⁸⁸ Augustus is referred to accordingly as *pater orbis* by Ovid in his *Fasti*, *res tamen ante dedit. sero quoque vera tulisti nomina, iam pridem tu pater orbis eras*¹⁸⁹ (But history had already conferred it; yet didst thou also receive, though late, thy title true; long time hadst thou been the Father of the World) and in several inscriptions.



Reverse of a coin minted during the reign of Tiberius found in Leptis Magna.

The legend reads *Augusta Mater Patriae*: Augusta, Mother of the Fatherland.

¹⁸⁶ Cass. Dio 57.16.2

¹⁸⁷ RPC 1 no. 848-850

¹⁸⁸ CIL II 2038; RPC 1 no. 73; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 76, 87 she cites Cassius Dio here

¹⁸⁹ James G. Frazer (1931), 2.130

Livia's standing as a mother was important in upholding the imperial family and the Roman State by extension. She was thought to protect the well-being of Rome the way a mother protects her child.¹⁹⁰ There was, however, tension around the power Livia was being granted as the wife of Augustus. A general suspicion existed around women holding political power in Rome during this time. Women operating politically during the civil wars had raised questions about the division of the sexes and had cast a decidedly negative light on people seen to be overstepping social boundaries associated with gender.¹⁹¹ This anxiety can be seen in Plutarch's *Life of Antony* when he depicts Octavia, sister of Augustus and wife of his rival Mark Antony, as deserving of ridicule when she tries to meddle in her husband's political affairs. Plutarch also makes clear that he thinks women, through their effect on men, caused the civil wars.

As for Octavia, she was thought to have been treated with scorn, and when she came back from Athens Caesar ordered her to dwell in her own house. But she refused to leave the house of her husband, nay, she even entreated Caesar himself, unless on other grounds he had determined to make war upon Antony, to ignore Antony's treatment of her, since it was an infamous thing even to have it said that the two greatest imperators in the world plunged the Romans into civil war, the one out of passion for, and the other out of resentment in behalf of, a woman.¹⁹²

By more clearly defining what was expected of women, Augustus would have been able to control the narrative around what was appropriate for Livia to be doing. He would have been able to do this effectively by aligning the idea of the *iunones* with the ideal of womanhood that suited his aims best. We also see him trying to legitimize her power by likening her to the Vestal Virgins, another example of highly virtuous women in Rome. He positioned Livia as the fertile

¹⁹⁰ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 80-81

¹⁹¹ Josiah Osgood (2014), 47; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 88

¹⁹² Plutarch *Life of Antony*, 54

counterpart to them and their chastity.¹⁹³ Augustus gave to her the honors usually associated with the Vestals: *sacrosanctitas*, removal from *tutela*, and the right to travel in a *carpentum*, among others. She was granted the *ius trium liberorum* in 9 BC, the same year as the Vestals.

Goddesses are not usually depicted as very motherly, even though many of them had children.¹⁹⁴ This would make most major goddesses poor social role models during the time of Augustus, when motherhood was being actively encouraged and could have created a theological need for a type of female deity who fit the ideals of the time better. While no extant images of *iunones* depict children, references to the *iunones* in art and textual sources imply that they serve to encourage things related to motherhood and female duties, like household chores¹⁹⁵ and sacrificing with her male counterpart.¹⁹⁶ Juno, as the goddess of female functions,¹⁹⁷ would make a good jumping-off point for the creation of a role model.

In his writing, Livy closely linked the *matronae* of Rome with Juno in their dedication of a statue to her on the Aventine,¹⁹⁸ *eodem anno aedes Iunonis reginae ab eodem dictatore eodemque bello vota dedicatur, celebratamque dedicationem ingenti matronarum studio tradunt*. (This year saw also the dedication of a temple to Queen Juno, vowed by the same dictator in the same war; and tradition relates that the ceremony was attended by throngs of enthusiastic matrons).¹⁹⁹ Plautus also affiliates her with *materfamilias*, referring to Juno as “*matrem familias*” in his *Amphitryon*.²⁰⁰ Juno was associated with the Matronalia, a festival dedicated to the

¹⁹³ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 88

¹⁹⁴ Patricia A. Johnston (2017), 142

¹⁹⁵ As seen in Tibullus

¹⁹⁶ As seen in Julius C. Polybius Fresco

¹⁹⁷ Robert E. A. Palmer (1974), 3

¹⁹⁸ Livy 21.62.8 etc.; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 142

¹⁹⁹ Livy 5.31.4

²⁰⁰ Plaut. *Amph.* 831-32

matronae that took place on the first of March, by the temple of Juno Lucina being founded on that day.²⁰¹ The identical nature of the name of Juno and the *iunones*, as well as their shared spheres of influence, suggest that the older of the two (the goddess Juno) inspired the naming of the younger (the *iunones*). The association of the *matronae* with Juno and the tradition of referring to a personal version of someone's god ("her Venus" for example) laid the groundwork for the *iunones* to fully adopt the name of Juno.

There was also an extensive tradition of associating Livia in particular with already existing deities.²⁰² While she was not overwhelmingly associated with any one goddess, some of the most popular were Juno, Ceres, and Vesta—all representative of female virtue: Juno in marriage and motherhood, Ceres in fertility, and Vesta in chastity.²⁰³ On coins Livia was most often depicted as holding a scepter, staff, or patera, though she sometimes also held flowers, ears of corn, or a single branch. The staff represented imperial authority, while the scepter represented divine authority.²⁰⁴ In depictions of gods, the scepter is seen with Jupiter, Juno, and Roma, a personified deity of Rome.²⁰⁵

Livia's name is often combined with that of goddesses. For example on a coin from the Thessalian League, she is labeled *Hera Livia*.²⁰⁶ She is also depicted with attributes of goddesses nearby, such as roaming peacocks or a crescent moon. This tradition could explain not only why but also how the name *iuno* came to be the term for a female *genius*. The names of goddesses were already being attributed to Livia, and Juno was the most relevant to what Augustus wanted

²⁰¹ Edward Bispham and Christopher Smith (2000), 142

²⁰² Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 153

²⁰³ Livia as Juno: CIL III. 2904 = ILS 2.3089; Ceres: Gaulos: CIL X.7501; Bartman EpigCat. 50. Leptis Magna: IRT 269; Vesta: Ephesus: Ephesos III no. 859 A. Lampsacus: IGRom 4.180; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 155

²⁰⁴ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 149

²⁰⁵ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 149

²⁰⁶ RPC 1 no. 1427, Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 151

to emphasize about her. Because there was already a practice of conflating Livia with deities, though it cannot be proven with current evidence, it would be logical for Augustus to have chosen the name of the deity that corresponded with the message he was trying to send.

His message would have been that his family represented the ideal *domus* and that, because Rome was set up to respect and adhere to the family structure, therefore they should be revered and followed. He was known to have actively encouraged people to worship his *genius*, one example of how he did this was by opening up his home, in particular his *lararium*, with his own personal *genius* inside of it, for worship in 12 BC, the year that he was elected *pontifex maximus*.²⁰⁷ He also put images of his *genius* on street signs and at crossroads for people to worship.²⁰⁸

While scholars believed for a long time that Augustus was trying to establish a dynasty from the very beginning of his rule, this idea is no longer widely accepted in modern scholarship.²⁰⁹ Situating himself in the role of *pater* and Livia in the role of *mater* would not have gone over well during the incipient days of his reign, as we can see from the writings of Ovid, Plutarch, and Horace among others, there was an air of distrust in Rome for people in power not respecting proper social boundaries like the ones between the state and the family.²¹⁰ This disinclination to start dynasty building right away could be why we don't see the *iuno* until later in Augustus' rule.

Whether or not he was looking to secure a throne for his descendants, it is clear that Augustus was interested in protecting his own position as the ruler of Rome.²¹¹ At this time, the

²⁰⁷ Gertrude Grether (1946), 225

²⁰⁸ Lily Ross Taylor (1931), 185

²⁰⁹ Beth Severy (2003)

²¹⁰ Beth Severy (2003), 44

²¹¹ Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 49

40's and 30's BC, he would not have wanted to make any moves that would put his rule in jeopardy, even if they might set up his descendants to rule. This disinclination towards dynasty building seems to fade, if it was ever genuine to begin with, as Augustus becomes more secure in his position as emperor. Between 28-23 BC he erected the Mausoleum of Augustus, a funerary monument for his descendants. There are two columns connected to the mausoleum on which the *Res Gesta Divi Augusti*, Augustus' autobiographical account of his own greatest accomplishments, is inscribed.

In her book, *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, Penelope Davies argues the monument should be understood as a statement of his intent to create a dynasty in Rome.²¹² She claims that it is a trophy of his victories and character as well as a tomb for his family. Located on the Campus Martius, one of the most sacred places in Rome, and topped with a statue of his *genius*, the Mausoleum of Augustus linked his greatest achievements directly with his bloodline.

By describing himself as “*divi*” in the *Res Gestae*, Augustus further secures his descendants' right to rule by, as Davies puts it, “bequeathing him divine parentage.” Taking the mausoleum as a declaration of Augustus' intent to build a dynasty, we must then look at the next essential step in dynasty building: his wife. We've seen that Augustus seemed to be aware of the importance of honoring Livia to his cause—granting her the privileges of the Vestal Virgins, and the *ius trium liberorum* despite her not having three children, consecrating the *Ara Pacis* on her birthday, etc. Though it cannot be conclusively proven with current evidence, it doesn't seem like a great leap to say that Augustus likely had a hand in creating the *iuno* and that he did so as a way to uplift Livia. The *iuno* serves his purposes so perfectly and the first pieces of evidence for

²¹² Penelope J.E. Davies (2000), 49-74; Lovisa Brännstedt (2006), 47

her are tied so closely with Livia that it would be hard to believe Augustus did not have some hand in designing them.

Even the name of the *iunones*: Juno, lends itself to a connection with Livia. The queen of the gods seems like an appropriately aggrandizing thing to call the first empress of Rome. It seems evident then, that such an outstanding woman as Livia, who was already commonly referred to in terms of existing deities, would be a more believable inspiration for the *iuno* than an average *materfamilias* as Rives argued. As I see it, of all the questions surrounding the *iunones* two stand out: Why do they share their name with Juno, and why are they suddenly being referenced at such a high rate (3x in one decade after seemingly not having existed prior) in the first decade AD? The answer to both of these questions can be found by looking at Augustus's utilization of the family as a political tool. The social unrest of the civil wars gave way to a longing for traditional values under Augustus. His reforms targeted women in particular and wives/mothers most of all. He reassured the Roman people by encouraging them to emulate their ancestors—or at least the version of their ancestors that suited Augustus's political aims.

To position himself as the ultimate *paterfamilias* he needed a matching *materfamilias*, and in order to obtain that he needed to strictly define the *materfamilias*' role, which he did through the role model of the *iunones*. We see the *iuno* first appear late in Augustus's reign after he had revealed his intent to found a dynasty in Rome. The name of the *iunones* was likely a twist on the already well-established practice of attributing the names of goddesses to Livia with a focus on encouraging and uplifting motherhood in relation to Livia and the women of the empire at large. The *iunones*, in name and in origin, are best explained by the political goals of Augustus Caesar and the *domus Augusti*.

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