OXFORD STUDIES IN ANCIENT CULTURE AND REPRESENTATION

DESIGNING FOR LUXURY ON THE BAY OF NAPLES

Villas and Landscapes (*c.*100 BCE–79 CE)

MANTHA ZARMAKOUPI

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This book is dedicated to the memory of my sister, Alexia (14 March 1970–27 June 2004), and my father, Andreas (13 January 1929–28 January 2006)

PREFACE

This study combines a design analysis of Roman luxury villa architecture with a cultural analysis of the Roman luxury villa lifestyle to shed light on the villas' design as a dynamic process related to cultural, social, as well as environmental factors. Roman villas articulated a novel architectural language that designers developed by appropriating the existing stylistic and thematic vocabularies of Hellenistic and Roman architecture. The present analysis seeks to describe and explain the ways in which architecture accommodated the lifestyle of educated leisure, the lifestyle *à la grecque*, and an appreciation of landscape; and how, in doing so, it became a cultural phenomenon and a crucial element in the construction of Roman cultural identity.

Five villas from around the bay of Naples (*c.* 100 BCE–79 CE) are the focus of this study, but examples are drawn from a wider corpus of evidence. The first chapter outlines the cultural phenomenon of the luxury villa, assesses previous scholarship, and addresses the study's scope. Chapter two introduces five case studies. Chapters three to six focus on four architectural structures and/or features within the villas, discussing them as generating spaces for the lives led in them, lives that were intertwined and became identified with the luxury villa trend: porticus and cryptoporticus (chapter three), porticoed gardens (chapter four), water features (chapter five), and dining facilities (chapter six). The final chapter analyses the architectural design concerns to which these architectural structures or features relate, and explicates the ways in which designers responded to them.

Earlier studies have identified the cultural phenomenon of Roman luxury villas, singled out their architectural traits, studied their distinguishing architectural elements, structures, or features, addressed their symbolism and cultural and intellectual affiliations, and examined their sculptures, décor, wall paintings, and pavements as parts of the villa environment. But architecture is much more than a matter of elements and their symbolism; and the spaces it creates are more than just a physical environment. Architecture is a culturally informed process, which forms living spaces.

This book moves beyond a formal analysis of architecture to expose the cultural factors that informed and shaped the architectural expression of the luxury villa trend, and address the ways in which contemporary ideas about landscape were integrated into the architectural design of Roman luxury villas.

In their effort to accommodate the Greek style, Romans created something completely unprecedented in the history of architecture. In designing for luxury, Romans shaped a sophisticated interplay of architecture and landscape, an interplay that Renaissance architects discovered and reinvented, and that persists to this day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book began life as a DPhil thesis at St John's College, Oxford between 2003 and 2007, made possible by the Onassis Foundation, Leventis Foundation, and Michelis Foundation. My foremost debt is to Bert Smith, my supervisor, for his guidance and support at every stage of the project. Research fellowships at the Freie Universität (TOPOI Excellence Cluster), at the NYU Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, and the University of Cologne (Institute of Archaeology)—supported by the Humboldt Foundation—enabled me to turn the DPhil into the book in hand, while working on my project on Delos.

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Cologne
August 2012

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Barbet and Miniero	Barbet, A., and Miniero, P. (eds) *La Villa San Marco a Stabia* (Naples, Rome, and Pompei 1999).
CDP	Comparetti, D. P. A., and de Petra, G. *La villa ercolanese dei Pisoni i suoi monumenti e la sua biblioteca* (Turin 1883; reprint Naples 1972).
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
Förtsch	Förtsch, R. *Archäologischer Kommentar zu den Villenbriefen des jüngeren Plinius*, Beiträge zur Erschliessung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und Architektur 13 (Mainz am Rhein 1993).
Mattusch	Mattusch, C. C., with Lie, H. *The Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum: Life and Afterlife of a Sculpture Collection* (Los Angeles 2005).
Neudecker	Neudecker, R. *Die Skulpturenausstattung römischer Villen in Italien*, Beiträge zur Erschliessung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und Architektur 9 (Mainz am Rhein 1988).
Stabiae: Storia e architettura	Bonifacio, G., and Sodo, A. M. (eds) *Stabiae: Storia e architettura: 2500 anniversario degli scavi di Stabiae 1749–1999: Convegno internazionale, Castellammare di Stabia, 25–27 marzo 2000*, Studi della Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei 7 (Rome 2002).
Wojcik	Wojcik, M. R. *La Villa dei Papiri ad Ercolano: Contributo alla ricostruzione dell'ideologia della nobilitas tardorepubblicana* (Rome 1986).
Zarmakoupi	Zarmakoupi, M. (ed.) *The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum: Archaeology, Reception, and Digital Reconstruction*, Sozomena: Studies in the Recovery of Ancient Texts 1 (Berlin and New York 2010).

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