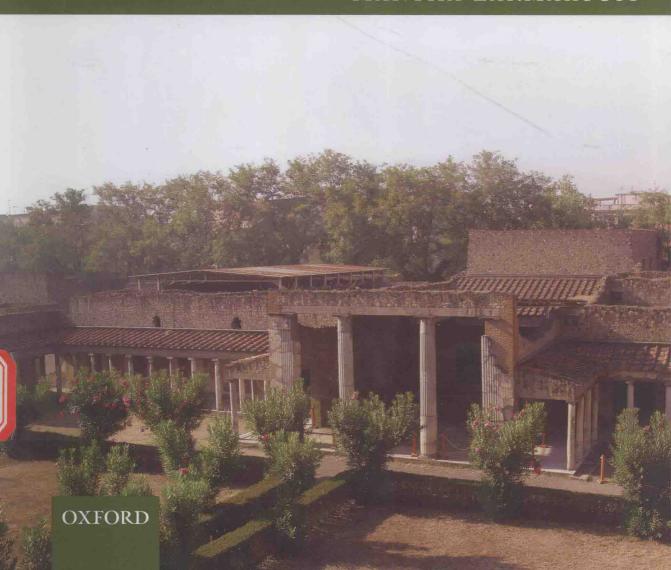
# DESIGNING FOR LUXURY ON THE BAY OF NAPLES

Villas and Landscapes (c.100 BCE-79 CE)

## MANTHA ZARMAKOUPI



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# OXFORD STUDIES IN ANCIENT CULTURE AND REPRESENTATION

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# OXFORD STUDIES IN ANCIENT CULTURE AND REPRESENTATION

Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation publishes significant interdisciplinary research into the visual, social, political, and religious cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world. The series includes work which combines different kinds of representations which are usually treated separately. The overarching programme is to integrate images, monuments, texts, performances, and rituals with the places, participants, and broader historical environment that gave them meaning.

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.

viii PREFACE

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

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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, R. Archäologischer Kommentar zu den Villenbriefen

des jüngeren Plinius, Beiträge zur Erschliessung hellenistischer und kaiserzeitlicher Skulptur und

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Herculaneum: Life and Afterlife of a Sculpture Collection

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Ancient Texts 1 (Berlin and New York 2010).

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