Art, Identity, and the Home in the Roman World

Holly Edwards

BA (Macquarie University)

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Research

Department of Ancient History, Faculty of Arts

Macquarie University, Sydney

9th of October 2015

Declaration

I, Holly Jade Edwards, certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Date: 9/10/15

Abstract

This thesis looks at the role of the Roman house, including the structure as well as the art and artefacts found in it, in the construction of a public Roman identity. The thesis aims to test the widely held view that the art of the Roman home can reveal the identity of the homeowner. Literary evidence is investigated for Roman attitudes towards their own identity with specific reference to the roles of art and the home in the construction and projection of that identity. In conjunction with this is an examination of the material evidence presented by a number of houses from the Insula of the Menander at Pompeii. By exploring these two bodies of evidence this thesis will attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the role domestic art played in the creation of a public identity in the Roman world.

Contents

List of Illustrations

Introduction

Chapter 1

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Peter Keegan for his invaluable advice and support in the writing of this thesis. I would also like to thank my friends and family: Mum, Dad, Laura, Derek, Kim, Nick, Brooke, Wade, Tom, Charley, Jack, Hayley, Rhi and Jess. I could not have done this without you all, thank-you for all the support, love, understanding, and encouragement you have given me throughout this year.

Introduction

This thesis seeks to test the widely held view that the art and structure of the Roman house, can be 'read' for information about the identity of the homeowner.[1] The role of the art of the home in the construction of a Roman identity has attracted much scholarly interest since the early 1990s. While difficulties involved in drawing out an individual's identity from art choices are acknowledged by modern scholars, the validity of the general theory that the Roman homeowner consciously selected the art of their home in order to present a carefully constructed public image is uncontested. While it seems obvious that the Roman home, just like our own modern homes, would project and preserve the identity of the homeowner, there are some problems with the assumption that we can recover this information from the surviving evidence. These can be broadly understood as stemming from three main issues. Firstly, while identity is something of a 'hot topic' in the discipline it is difficult to establish a consensus on what exactly is meant by the term. Secondly, no Roman house is preserved in its entirety. This has forced scholars to focus upon those elements of the house that do survive: the physical structures and remaining art. While some artefacts have survived, mostly items made of ceramics, metal, glass, and bone, they are rarely taken into account by scholars studying the art of the home. Finally, while scholars have called for the art of the home to be studied in its original context, as a part of the structure, decorative scheme, and artefact assemblage of the house, this is rarely done in practice. This stems at least in part from issues to do with the accessibility of information,

---

[1] See in particular the work of Clarke (1991); Wallace-Hadrill (1994); Hales (2000; 2003); and Hackworth Peterson (2006).

particularly that pertaining to artefact assemblages, but this is beginning to change. More and more publications are beginning to appear that are concerned with recovering and publishing information on artefact assemblages. This thesis will utilise an in-depth examination of the relationship between art, identity and the Roman home in order to gain a better understanding of how art the Roman home worked together in order to project the identity of the homeowner. This will then be tested against the material evidence, including the newly rediscovered information on artefact assemblages, to test the theory that the art of the Roman home can be used to recover the identity of the homeowner.

Literature Review:

In order to clarify the scope and nature of this subject the literature review will look first at how Roman art has been studied historically. It will then cover scholarship on identity in relation to art and the house followed by an analysis of the major contributors to current scholarship on the role of the subject of the house, its art, and social identity. Finally the literature review will consider the potential developments in the study of artefact assemblages from Pompeii has for furthering understanding of the relationship between the art, the house, and social identity.

Roman Art:

The question of what is 'Roman about Roman art?' has plagued the field of Roman art history since its inception. While the study of Roman art in Western scholarship has its roots in the Renaissance it was not until the publication of Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (*History of the Art of Antiquity*) in 1764 that the history of ancient art became a distinct field of academic enquiry. In the *History of the Art of Antiquity* Winckelmann fused his knowledge of

Greek and Roman texts with Renaissance style connoisseurship to establish a meta-history of the rise and decline of art in antiquity. Strange though it may sound Winckelmann's major contribution to the study of Roman art was to deny its existence.[2] He saw nothing unique in the art of Rome, it had no distinct style, and was only notable as the declining phase of the superior Greek art it imitated.[3] Winckelmann's views endured and it was not until the end of the 19th century that scholars began to investigate Roman art in its own right.[4] Like Winckelmann this new generation sought to establish a meta-history of Roman art. Unlike Winckelmann they saw Roman art as having a distinct style, progressing towards the art of Late Antiquity instead of declining from Classical Greece. Nothing much changed over the following half century. In his 1953 report on the state of research into Roman art (*Prolegomena to a Book on Roman Art*) Brendel describes the construction of this meta-history of Roman art as the most pressing task facing scholars of his time.[5] Despite more than sixty years having passed since then a comprehensive history of the development of Roman art has yet to be produced suggesting that such a task may be impossible.

Much has changed in scholarship on Roman art over the past sixty years. While scholars are still concerned with establishing the distinctly Roman elements they are less concerned with stylistic elements and more interested in thematic and contextual elements of an artwork that indicate its Roman origins.[6] Richard Brilliant suggests a definition of

---

[2] For Winckelmann the pinnacle of artistic production was achieved by the art of Classical Greece in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE. All art produced before the 5th century was progressing towards this peak while all art produced after was in decline.

[3] Winckelmann in Irwin (1972: 134).

[4] Key scholars of this period include Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl of the Vienna School.

[5] Brendel (1953: 12).

[6] This is not to say that connoisseurship and stylistic analysis are no longer employed in or relevant to the study of Roman art. They are vital tools for dating and verification among other applications, however,

the Roman element as due to its location in space and time rather than any stylistic similarity.[7] Given the vast size of the Roman Empire with its broad spectrum of cultural and social groups this may be the most practical way of identifying Roman art. Natalie Kampen advocates abandoning the idea of a meta-history of Roman art all together, instead writing what she envisages as a series of interlocking art histories employing both visual and textual sources.[8] She is quick to point out this idea is not new, scholars have been combining textual and visual evidence since Winckelmann. Kampen does however rightly point out that this research is inevitably carried out in isolation with scholars concentrating on individual pieces to the detriment of the bigger picture.[9] It is only by combining approaches from multiple disciplines that the complexity of Roman art can begin to be understood in its entirety.

Identity:

Identity has become a key topic across the field of ancient history in recent decades. It is, quite simply, the way in which an individual or group locates themselves in relation other individuals, groups and the world around them. The study of ancient identities aims to reveal what different individuals and groups thought about their place in the world and how they communicated these ideas with others.[10] The assertion of identity was and remains an essential element of everyday life for any human being and, as such, evidence of identity can be found in the material remains of daily life. Identity is asserted

---

issues such as the context and spatial arrangement of artworks have come to the fore of academic enquiry in recent decades.

[7] Brilliant (2007: 11). In other words any art produced within the spatial bounds of the area under Roman influence between the 7th century BCE and the 5th century CE.

[8] Kampen (1995: 377).

[9] Kampen (1995: 378).

[10] Roselaar (2012: 8).

through adherence to, and divergence from, accepted modes of representation.[11] Language, texts, social and religious customs, and of course material culture all preserve elements of the identity of the people that produced them.

Identity may be studied on a number of scales. The personal identity of the individual, how they conceived of their private, internal self, is all but lost from antiquity. While personal identity is undoubtedly present in the material record, reflected in subtle differences of dress, domestic and monumental decorative schemes, architecture, and even the use of language in texts, we do not possess the first-hand experience or knowledge to understand and interpret these signs. External or projected identity, the way individuals and groups communicated the identity they wanted others to perceive, can be recovered from antiquity. Projected identity may be studied on a number of different scales from broadly defined cultural identities to more narrowly focused concerns such as ethnic, social or gendered identity to name a few. Studies of cultural identity search for the essential elements of a culture that define it as separate from any neighbouring culture.[12] Social identity may then be understood as being communicated through engagement with this resulting system of cultural norms.[13]

As with the study of Roman art, for a long time scholarship on identity in the Roman world was concerned with establishing essentially Roman elements of Roman culture. The main purpose was to identify and track the process of Romanisation, the adoption of a Roman identity by members of Roman provinces and colonies through the use and integration of distinctly Roman cultural elements. The meta-narrative of Romanisation has received some criticism in recent years. The main critique of

---

[11] Dìaz-Andreu and Lucy (2005: 1-2).

[12] Grahame (1997: 156).

[13] Hodos (2010: 4).

Romanisation is that it relies heavily on Western ideas of identity that, as a result of nineteenth century nationalism, encourage a singular model of identity affiliation.[14] This means that the framework of Romanisation compels us to think of Roman identity in terms of a set of absolutes that can be indiscriminately applied across the breadth of the Roman world, but this is clearly not the case.

Art in the Roman Home:

Growing from a series of seminal papers in the 1980's by social historian Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, scholarship on the role of the art of the house in the construction of Roman identity has multiplied rapidly. Culminating in his 1994 book *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* Wallace-Hadrill's work combined techniques from the disciplines of social history, art history, and archaeology, paving the way for future interdisciplinary research in the field. Wallace-Hadrill attempts to decode the language of the Roman house, the way the architectural and decorative elements of the house work together to create meaning, and in particular how they might delineate public and private space within the house.[15] He does this by examining textual sources for evidence of how domestic space was experienced socially, followed by an art historical analysis of decorative schemes based on Mau's Four Styles.[16] He then conducts a statistical survey of a sample of houses analysing the distribution of luxury material culture. While Wallace-Hadrill provides insight into the wealth and status of the inhabitants his study is

---

[14] Mattingly (2010: 288).

[15] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 6).

[16] The four styles of Roman wall painting (discussed further in Chapter 3) were developed by August Mau in the late 19th century to date and classify wall painting excavated at Pompeii. While the stylistic elements and chronology of each style have since been refined Mau's four styles remain the conventional means for classifying Roman wall painting.

ultimately focused on the way space within the house was utilised and experienced ignoring the interpretive possibilities of an iconographical investigation.

While J. R. Clarke's *The Houses of Roman Italy, 100 B.C-A.D 250, Ritual Space and Decoration* was published three years before *Houses and Society* it builds upon interest in the art of the Roman home generated by Wallace-Hadrill's earlier articles. Clarke's work is largely art historical, with the majority dominated by analysis of iconographic programs for a sample of houses. Clarke examines the iconographical scheme of the art in each house of his study in its entirety. Clarke's aim is to place Roman interiors back in their original context in order to gain a better understanding of how the art of the house worked as an assemblage to create meaning.[17]

According to Shelley Hales a "Roman's house … was his *forum*"[18]. By this she means that the house of an individual occupied the centre of his public life just as the *forum* was the centre of public life in any Roman town. The Roman *domus* was much more than a private residence. The *paterfamilias* conducted most of his public business in the large rooms situated along the central axis of the house.[19] Hales argues that the purpose of art within the house was to imitate the country *villas* of the Roman elite.[20] In this way the art of the Roman house can be interpreted as aspirational because it imitates a reality that the owner either does not have (because they are too poor) or cannot access (because they are in the city). Hales connects the aspirational nature of the art of the home to the social and political aspirations of the *paterfamilias* and, particularly when discussing the provinces, the negotiation of Romanness.

---

[17] Clarke (1991: xxi-xxiii).

[18] Hales (2003: 1).

[19] See Chapter three for more detail on the public nature of the Roman house.

[20] Hales (2003: 138).

Artefact Studies:

Scholarship on the role of art in the house fails to take into account the wider artefact distribution of the house, the everyday objects such as cooking implements and pottery. This is due in no small part to the lack of publication of smaller or more mundane finds by archaeologists.[21] That is not to say that these types of artefact have gone completely undocumented. However, documents pertaining to them are often unpublished, held in archives that must be searched manually. Over the past twenty or so years more and more work has been done to recover and contextualise the artefact assemblages of Pompeian houses. Key publications dealing with this research include the *Häuser in Pompeji* series from the Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, and the publication of a series detailing the structures, decorations, finds, and graffiti (forthcoming) of the Insula of Menander by a team of British scholars led by Robert Ling. This thesis will be working closely with the volumes produced on the Insula of Menander.

Methodology:

The Methodology for this project is relatively straight forward. The first chapter will focus on identifying some of the key elements of Roman identity and will look at the way these are generated through art. The second chapter will investigate Roman attitudes towards the role of art, the house, and art in the house, through a close reading and

---

[21] Wallace-Hadrill uses this excuse for omitting artefacts from his discussion of the Roman house (1994: 87-90).

analysis of the surviving literary evidence. The third chapter will look in detail at some of the current methods for analysing and interpreting the roles of space and art within the home. Finally the fourth chapter will apply what has been learnt in the preceding three chapters to an examination of the material remains of three houses from the Insula of the Menander: House I 10, 1, the Casa del Fabbro (I 10, 7), and the House of Menander (I 10, 4). While other scholars have focused upon the structural remains, art, or artefact assemblages in relative isolation this thesis will attempt to combine all three with an understanding of the ideal roles of both art and the house gleaned from analysis of the literary evidence.

Before launching into Chapter 1 it will be useful to have an understanding of some of the key terms used throughout this thesis. Identity has already been described above. However, both art and the home bear further definition.

Art:

When applied to the ancient world art is a term that encompasses a much broader range of artefacts than is first apparent to a modern viewer. Art covers traditional decorative objects, such as painting and sculpture, but also stretches to include items such as serving ware and coins. For the purpose of this project art is taken to include all elements of the Roman home that served a decorative purpose beyond the merely functional.[22] Under this definition the art of the Roman home includes wall painting, mosaic, and sculpture as well as architectural features such as the decorative half-columns that flank the main entrance of many Roman houses. The definition naturally also

---

[22] There is of course some danger in assigning such a broad definition, many items that would be considered decorative features also served a functional purpose for the ancient Romans. For example images of the gods may have had a very real religious function. Even so these objects often fulfil a decorative purpose beyond mere functionality.

includes furniture, textiles, and other portable objects. However, these do not survive so well. Many portable objects were made of organic material that has decomposed over time while others have been removed from their original context. What does survive, the more permanent fixed decorative features of the house, is best considered as the foundation upon which identity in the home was built. As they were more difficult to remove or alter it would have been important for the homeowner to ensure that these features adequately reflected the identity they wished to project. It is because of these fixed art objects that it is possible to examine the art of Roman homes for evidence of their owner's identity.

The Home:

The use of the term home in the title of this project, over the seemingly more appropriate house, was deliberate. It can be easy to see the art preserved in Roman houses as isolated objects divorced of their original purpose and context. This is partly due to the emptiness of the surviving structures. Any organic items, such a wooden furniture and textiles, have long since decomposed while portable objects have been removed. What the visitor sees today is an empty space, sometimes with paintings adorning the walls, although in many cases these have been removed too. In many respects it is not unlike a modern art gallery. But the Roman house was anything but empty. It was a dynamic, lived in, space. A home filled with both people and the activities of daily life. These everyday activities of the home, when, where, and how they were carried out, are just as important as the physical shell of the house for understanding the relationship between art and identity in the Roman world.

This project will focus on the *domus*[23] rather than the *villa*[24]. While both types of house were richly decorated and are attested in both the written and material records the *villa* was a place where the Roman elite could retreat from public life while the *domus*, as a city dwelling, held a much higher public profile. As such the more public *domus* may be expected to play a much more active role on the construction of a social identity, and therefore the more relevant house type for this investigation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis is to better understand how the art of the Roman home could be utilised to project a social identity by the homeowner. This will be achieved by first generating a clear understanding of the key elements Roman identity. The project will then examine the literary sources for evidence of how the Romans conceived of the role of art, the home, and the art of the home before looking at how art was employed within the home to create meaning and identity. Finally by applying what has been learned to the examination of a selection of houses from the Roman town of Pompeii the thesis will establish if, and how, the art of the Roman home might be utilised to produce useful evidence about the identity of the homeowner.

---

[23] Urban townhouse of the elite.

[24] Country estate of the elite.

1

Roman Identity

The Study of Roman identity has been of increasing interest to scholars of the Roman world over the past half century. This is not to say that identity was not of interest before this time, but the previous focus of scholarship had been on the political, military, and economic history of the Roman world rather than on how individuals and communities might have asserted and negotiated their identities in relation to the rest of the Roman world. Despite the ongoing interest of scholars, establishing an essential Roman identity has proven difficult. This is perhaps a sign that the Romans did not possess a cultural identity in the modern sense. Modern conceptions of identity have been heavily influenced by the spread of nationalism, which tend towards a singular identity affiliation, be it on ethnic, religious or cultural grounds.[1] There is little evidence that this was the case in the Roman world. In fact the evidence points towards the opposite: identities were multifaceted and to a certain extent malleable based on a multitude of local and external concerns and were very much unique to the each person or place based on their individual experience.[2] For the majority of scholars the defining feature of Roman identity at any period was the possession of Roman citizenship.[3] This is, however, simultaneously too narrow and too broad for understanding Roman identity. It fails to take into account how people in the Roman world who did not possess Roman citizenship

---

[1] Mattingly (2010: 288).

[2] Gruen (2011: 1-9).

[3] Hingely (2005: 56).

(for example slaves) might have thought about their identity within of Roman society. Nor does it account for the diverse ways in which members of different social orders might have conceived of and asserted their identity. Instead of attempting to construct a precise definition of Roman identity, this chapter will explore some of the ways in which members of society asserted their identity as a Roman. Due to the nature of the evidence the focus of the chapter will be skewed towards the elite perspective, however, the experience of the lower orders will also be considered.

The claim that the Romans were open to the idea of multiplicity within their identity finds support in their beliefs about their own origins. The foundation myths and stories of the early history of Rome all point towards an acceptance by the Romans of multiple origins regarding their ethnic and cultural identity. Among these tales the story of Aeneas stands out as a particularly good example.[4] Retold by a number of ancient authors including Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, but made famous by Virgil in his *Aeneid*, the tale of Aeneas and his Trojan supporters' journey from Troy, their arrival in Italy, and their subsequent merging with the locals led by Latinus shows a willingness to incorporate elements of other cultures in the creation of their identity.[5] The Romans were not alone in this regard, foundation myths involving famous individuals or peoples from other lands were fairly common in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: the Medians claimed descent from Medus son of Medea, Perseus is credited with the founding of Persia, and the Ionains claimed a common heritage with the Athenians.[6] By claiming Trojan heritage the Romans were situating themselves within this Greek tradition. Dionysius of Halicarnassus   takes   the

---

[4] Other examples include the abduction of the Sabine women and the early settlement of Italy and Rome by Arcadians led by Evander.

[5] See Gruen (1992: 6-51) for a discussion of the origins and evolution of the Trojan myth.

[6] Gruen (2013).

Figure 1.1 Aeneas sacrificing, panel on the west facade of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of Augustan Peace), Rome, 13-9 BCE.

Greek connection one step further by having the region around Rome colonised by successive waves of Greek settlers.[7] While the Aeneas myth has early origins (it was circulating in the fourth century at least) it is telling that the major surviving sources for it: Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Virgil, are all from the Augustan period. The Trojan story not only established Rome within the Greek tradition, it also connected the foundation of Rome to Aeneas, mythical ancestor of Augustus himself. Promoting the connection between Augustus and one of Rome's founders was a way of validating his right to power and the importance of this connection is reflected in the art of the period.[8] The western side of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of Augustan Peace), dedicated in 9 BCE, for example includes a relief panel depicting Aeneas' sacrificing a sow upon his

---

[7] Dion. Hal. Book I.

[8] Kleiner (2007: 70).

arrival in Italy (Fig. 1.1).[9] The scene is overlooked by Aeneas' own household gods and is mirrored by a scene depicting Augustus offering a sacrifice to *Pax* (Peace) herself on the southern side of the monument. The combination of these elements on a monument dedicated to the period of peace and prosperity brought about by Augustus' time as sole ruler serves to legitimise his role as guardian of the Roman state.[10]

Despite the willingness of the Romans to incorporate elements of other societies into their beliefs regarding their origins, there are a number of traits and values present in the conception and expression of Roman identity that may be considered to be of distinctly Roman origin. Key among these were moral virtues such as *auctoritas*, *austeritas*, *clementia*, and *pietas*. While these virtues were important to members of all levels of society they were particularly influenced by the public role played by the Roman elite. Entrance to the upper echelons of society was restricted by financial means, members of the Equestrian order needed to possess a minimum of 400, 000 sesterces while those of the Senatorial order were expected to own property in excess of 1, 000, 000 sesterces. Members of these orders were expected to play a prominent public role in Roman society. For the *Equites* this meant active participation in the military sphere. Members of the Senate were expected to do this in addition to holding various magistracies. Both Senators and *Equites* were expected to contribute financially to the public good through activities such as the construction and maintenance of public buildings, monuments, and amenities. More would have been expected in this regard of those in the Senatorial order who, in addition to being wealthier than most *Equites*, would

---

[9] There has been some debate over the identification of Aeneas in this panel with the suggestion that the panel depicts Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome (Rehak 2001), however, the identification of the relief with Aeneas is still the preferred interpretation of most scholars.

[10] D'Ambra (1998: 33-34).

have used their involvement in such endeavours to promote themselves politically.[11] Many prominent Romans took their public duty as an opportunity to advertise their identity, gathering popular support, by having their name inscribed upon the building to serve as a permanent reminder of their dedication to the Roman state.

Portraits of the Roman Republic, especially in the latter period, serve well to illustrate the connection between the role of the elite Roman male and expressions of identity through Roman art. Male portraits in particular tend to employ an ultra-realistic style known as verism during the Republican period. The veristic style required the artist to portray their subject as accurately as possible, reproducing any physical imperfections, wrinkles, receding hairlines or baldness, sagging cheeks, and blemishes, creating an image of the individual rather than adhering to an idealised norm (Fig. 1.2).[12] As can be seen the style serves to highlight the age and experience of the subject. Veristic portraiture has long been associated with the elite Roman practice of making funerary masks (cast from the face of the deceased) to preserve the image of important ancestors. These masks were common throughout the Roman period and were kept in the house to be brought out and worn in funerary processions allowing the ancestors to participate in the event as well as serving to enhance the family's identity by reminding others of particularly important or famous family members.[13] The connection between verism and funerary masks has, however, come under criticism in recent years.[14] While the portrayal of old age in veristic portraiture may reflect funerary masks in some respects these portraits are not as individualistic as they first appear.[15] The close resemblance between

---

[11] D'Ambra (1998: 42-44).

[12] Stewart (2004: 6-10).

[13] Stewart (2004: 7).

[14] Gruen (1992: 152-182).

[15] Gruen (1992: 154-156).

the   features   of   many   portraits   of   the   veristic   type
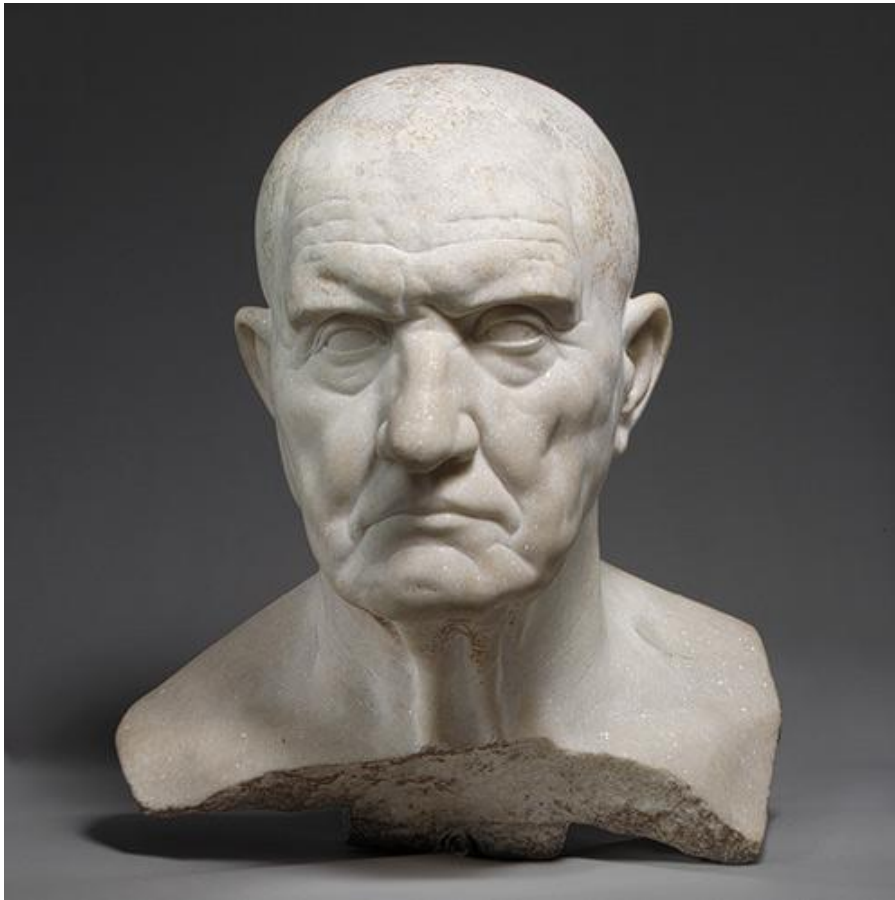
Figure 1. 2 Marble portrait bust of a man, mid-first century BCE.

suggests that, unlike funerary masks which seek to portray the appearance of the individual, veristic portraiture is in fact attempting to conform to an ideal type in order to convey some   fundamental information about the social identity of the individual depicted.[16] The way in which the features are exaggerated gives some indication as to how the identity of the subject is to be interpreted. The serious and sombre expression and the aged features of these portraits are best understood as reflecting the ideal elite Roman: a serious politician and hardened military commander who had spent a lifetime in service

---

[16] D'Ambra (1998: 27-28).

to the Roman state.[17]

As the previous discussion suggests there was a rigid social order in the Roman world defined by a person's heritage, wealth, and status as freeborn, slave, or freedman, which determined a person's access to citizenship, public office, and social and political advancement. During the Republic the pinnacle of the social order was occupied by members of the Senate, underneath this was the equestrian order, followed by the plebs (freeborn Roman citizens), freedmen, and finally slaves. The social order under the Empire was nearly identical to the Republic except that the emperor now occupied the top level followed by his imperial court above the Senatorial order.[18] There were of course numerous further distinctions of rank to be found within each of these social orders. Yet, despite this inherent social rigidity there was some flexibility for members of certain orders to improve their position. For example it was possible for a member of an Equestrian family with no previous Senatorial connections to gain entry to the Senate becoming a *novus homo*.[19] The manumission of a slave, to become a freedman, was another situation where a person could change their position in Roman society. While they may have brought a huge change in social status for the persons involved, a freedman not only enjoyed citizenship but could also amass wealth on the same scale as a member of the equestrian or even Senatorial orders, it is important to note that these changes in position only equate to climbing a single rung on the social ladder. As Petronius' satire of the fictitious freedman Trimalchio reveals, while he may be free and could be equally wealthy, a freedman would never be permitted to gain access to the public and political positions or the power held by those amongst the topmost orders of

---

[17] Gruen (1992: 152).

[18] D'Ambra (1998: 40).

[19] D'Ambra (1998: 40). See also the discussion of Cicero's status as a *novus homo* in Chapter 2 for analysis of how such a change in social status could affect the way identity was conceived of and asserted.

society.[20] Nevertheless it is the people who made these kinds of social leaps that appear to be the most self-conscious about how they negotiated their identity, particularly through art.

While the Roman social order was quite rigid it did undergo one major transformation during the period covered by this project: the rise to power of Augustus. Augustus rise upset the social order in two major ways. Firstly, his initial rise to the Senate and Consular power following the death of Caesar usurped the *cursus honorum* by ignoring both the order in which public offices were to be held and the rules regarding the age at which one could be elected to them. Secondly, by assuming supreme control of the Roman state, and passing it along to his chosen successor upon his death, he ultimately altered the Roman political system from a republic where the leading men competed with each other for public recognition and the highest military and political honours to a principate where men vied for the favour of the Princeps. Augustus' rise to power was meteoric, he was admitted to the Senate and awarded the consulship in 43 BCE at the age of only 19, over twenty years before he was legally old enough to hold the office. As a result of his youth Augustus could not represent himself as an older statesman in the veristic style as leading men of the Republic had done.[21] He solved this problem by making a deliberate break from the veristic style, instead turning to the youthful portrait style of Greek kings from the Hellenistic period such as Alexander the Great.[22] It has been suggested that one of the reasons Augustus chose this style was to associate his identity with that of the Greek intellectual, setting up an opposition with Antony who was accused of adopting Asiatic tendencies.[23] This is likely true, yet, the continued use of

---

[20] Petron. *Sat.*

[21] Stewart (2004: 10-14).

[22] D'Ambra (1998: 30).

[23] Hölscher (2004: 53).

Greek styles throughout the later

Figure 1.3 Augustus as pontefix maximus, Rome, after 12 BCE.

years of Augustus' reign, now employing a more ageless than youthful image through emulation of the classical style of the fifth century BCE, demonstrates the continued usefulness to Augustus of this method of self-representation long after the defeat of Antony (Fig. 1.3). Having an unchanging, standardised, set of images for the representation of the princeps served a number of purposes. Dissemination of constantly updated images of the princeps would have been impracticable due to the length of Augustus' reign and the vastness of the territory he ruled over. In addition to this portraits appear to have been rarely commissioned by their subject in the Roman world, rather they were commissioned by others to honour the subject.[24] This was true for many of the images and monuments of Augustus, especially in the provinces. Even the Ara Pacis, one of the best known Augustan monuments, was commissioned not by Augustus but by the Senate in order to commemorate his achievement in bringing peace to the Roman world.[25] By promoting a standard image Augustus also ensured that his identity was being represented relatively uniformly throughout the Empire. It was useful to have a easily recognisable image of the *princeps* given the generally low level of literacy throughout the ancient

---

[24] Stewart (2008: 102).

[25] Stewart (2008: 113-114).

Roman world. Finally, as stated earlier establishing a connection to the Greek past was a way for Augustus to legitimise his reign.

Augustus' image program undoubtedly provided inspiration for Roman elites to take on more Greek modes of self-representation, while still, of course, maintaining distinctly Roman forms such as the toga as seen on Augustus himself (Fig. 1.3). He was not, however, the first to bring Greek art, and Greek art as a way of expressing Roman identity, to Roman shores. As will be seen in Chapter 2 prominent Romans such as Cicero and Caesar were collecting Greek art to display with an eye toward prompting their own identity before Augustus. However, due to the gradual expansion of the Roman Empire, Romans were put into contact with Greek modes of self-representation and material culture long before Cicero and Caesar began their collections. While the Romans had had contact with Greek modes of self-representation through trade with Greeks, and the conquest of the cities of Magna Graecia from the fourth century BCE onwards, it was the conquest of Syracuse by Marcus Claudius Marcellus in 211 BCE that was seen by the Romans as signalling the beginning of an influx of Greek material culture, especially art.[26] Marcellus seized many art treasures when he sacked the city which he then brought back to Rome to display in the triumphal procession he was awarded for his victory. With this action Marcellus is considered as having begun the practice of looting conquered cities for art treasures to display in their triumphs by victorious generals. That is not to say that cities had not been looted for precious objects to display in general's triumphs prior to Marcellus' sack of Syracuse, but the spoils taken were not so numerous. While it is true that many authors, both modern and ancient view Marcellus' conquest of Syracuse and subsequent triumph as a watershed moment it was in many ways simply a continuation, and an escalation, of a long tradition of one-upmanship amongst members

---

[26] See for example Livy 25.40.1-3, 34.4.3-4; Plut. *Marc.* 21; Polyb. 9.10.1-12.

of the Roman elite. The greater the triumphal display a Roman general could put on the more impressive the victory must have been and therefore the more valid the individual's identity as a military commander was.

With the growth of the Empire not only were foreign material culture and ideas being imported to Rome, Roman cultural material culture and ideas, as well as amalgamations of Roman and foreign material culture and ideas being made at Rome, were exported to the cities and towns that had come under Roman control and influence as the Empire expanded. The process of introduction and integration of this Roman material culture and ideas in the provinces has long be labelled Romanisation by scholars in the field of Roman studies. Romanisation describes the process of becoming Roman.[27] It involves the adoption of elements of Roman culture and social identity such as the Latin language, Roman style of governance, and public architecture (for example baths). These elements would have been first adopted by provincial elites as they attempted to fit into the newly established Roman hierarchy but would have filtered down through society as those further down the social ladder emulated their betters.[28] Romanisation as a concept has its roots in late 19th and early 20th century colonialism and ideas of empire. It presents the role of Rome in a similar light to that of Europe, and in particular Britain, as the centre of cultural superiority, and the relationship between Romans and provincials somewhat similarly to the perceived civilising mission of European settlers.[29] Unsurprisingly this idea of Roman cultural superiority and the unilateral exchange of ideas between the Romans and their inferior provincial subjects has come under increasing scrutiny in recent times, particularly since the 1990's.[30] As the majority of our

---

[27] Grahame (1997: 175).

[28] Mattingly (2004: 6).

[29] Mattingly (2004: 5-6).

[30] For example Mattingly (2004).

literary sources were produced in Rome, or at the very least for an audience of the Roman elite, they have little to say about life as it was experienced in the provinces, revealing far more about the experiences and expectations of those in Rome. For this reason studies of Romanisation have tended to focus on the presence of Roman material culture: the more Roman or Romanised objects present, the more Roman the identity of area under investigation.[31] Recent scholarship on the expressions of identity in provincial settings has demonstrated that Romanisation as a concept is too simple to describe the processes taking place. In particular it has been demonstrated that Roman and Romanised material culture often fills a role that is local rather than Roman in nature highlighting the importance of understanding the local context of material culture when employing it to understand social identity, especially when looking beyond the Roman centre.[32]

This chapter has explored some key themes related to the expression of Roman identity. It has been argued that Romans were far more influenced by the wider Mediterranean world when expressing their identity, than a modern, nationally motivated idea of identity might be. This is most clearly seen in the Roman assimilation of Greek elements in their foundation myths. Despite the incorporation of Greek precedents into their most foundational ideas of their own identity, there are some identity traits, based mostly upon the role of the elite male, which can be identified as distinctly Roman. Despite the inherent rigidity of the Roman social order Roman society underwent significant change during the period under study. Brought on by the rise of Augustus, but also emerging from a long history of Roman military success and the growth of the Empire, this change is reflected in further adaptation of Greek modes of self-representation. Despite this, the Romans made sure to make them their own by

---

[31] Grahame (1998: 175).

[32] See for example the work of Grahame (1998); Hales (2003); Mattingly (2004); Stewart (2008: 159-162);

incorporating distinctly Roman elements, such as the toga into their imagery. As the following chapters will continue to demonstrate this adaptation of Greek modes of self-representation, particularly in the form of art, played a key role in identity construction in the Roman world.

2

Art and Text

This chapter is concerned with the way Romans conceived of the role of art, the home, and art in the home in the construction of social identity. As Wallace-Hadrill has demonstrated, literary sources are uniquely qualified to tackle this issue as they document the social life of those who wrote them.[1] There are of course limitations to the usefulness and applicability of literary texts. As documents written by, and for, the elite of society, literary texts will ultimately reflect the elite experience and perspective, rendering other orders of society virtually invisible.[2] Literary texts, written by prominent Romans, will also present an image of society based almost entirely upon life as it was lived in the city of Rome.[3] This does not mean that these texts are irrelevant for understanding social life as it was experienced outside of Rome; but it does mean that care to account for the local context needs to be taken when using these texts to make generalisations about social life in different parts of the Empire. Finally, literary sources are more likely to reflect social *mores* and norms from the time their author lived, rather than any historical period they may refer to.[4] For this reason, the sources examined in this chapter will be drawn from authors who

---

[1] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 6).

[2] Hackworth-Peterson (2006: 9).

[3] Ellis (2000: 14).

[4] Pollitt (1966: xvii).

lived in the first centuries BCE/CE so as to correspond with the period to which the material remains under examination in Chapter 4 date.

Roman Attitudes towards Art

> Others, I doubt not, shall with softer mould beat out the breathing bronze,
>
> coax from the marble features to the life, plead cases with greater eloquence
>
> and with a pointer trace heaven's motions and predict the risings of the stars:
>
> you, Roman, be sure to rule the world (be these your arts), to crown peace
>
> with justice, to spare the vanquished and to crush the proud.[5]

Virgil's declaration, that the true arts of Rome are those of war and conquest, of politics and law, and his advice that Romans need not concern themselves with the softer arts like painting and sculpture, has shaped understanding of Roman attitudes towards the arts since antiquity. Roman art is often considered to have been imported or copied from Greece with little to no Roman input in its conception or creation.[6] Yet this impression of a society with little concern for the arts is not reflected in the material record which reveals visual art to have permeated all aspects of everyday life. Detailed examination of Roman literary sources only serves to reinforce the importance of visual representation in the Roman world. The major sources for art in the Roman home are Vitruvius' *De architectura*, Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, and Petronius' *Satyricon*, none of which have art as their main focus. Vitruvius, as the title of his work would suggest, is primarily concerned with architecture although there is some debate as to his technical expertise in the field.[7] Regardless of his level of technical knowledge the *De architectura* is as much a

---

[5] Verg. *Aen.* 6.847-853.

[6] See Brendel (1953) for an overview of the impact the theory that Roman art is little more than a poor imitation of Greek art has had on scholarship and the understanding of Roman art.

[7] Ellis cites a tendency for Latin authors to be interested aristocrats rather than specialists (2000: 14), while Hales suggests that De Arch is intended for the enthusiastic amateur (2003: 25).

moralising treatise as it is a handbook on architecture. Written around 30-20 BCE *De architectura* presents an ideal image of art, architecture, and the Roman home as it would have been understood during the Augustan Principate.[8] Pliny's *Natural History* is set up as an encyclopaedia concerned with all aspects of the natural (and human) world. It would be wrong, however, to view Pliny's work as the type of empirical discussion we expect to find in an encyclopaedia today. Pliny was interested in a broad range of subjects, including art, and in particular painting and sculpture (books 34-36), and he was not afraid to express his own personal opinion on any of them. In the *Satyricon* Petronius presents a highly satirical version of a Roman dinner party held in the home of Trimalchio, a freedman. Despite the exaggeration and distortion of reality required by the genre the *Satyricon* provides understanding of how the home, and its art, were to be experienced in the first century CE.[9] These sources are supplemented by a large number of passing references to houses and art in the works of other authors such as Cicero, Martial, Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, Statius, Seneca and Varro. Cicero is perhaps the most important of these sources due to his social status and the sheer number of references to art and housing that survive in his writings, although the latter may be attributed to the simple fact that such a large volume of his work survives in comparison to the majority of writers from antiquity. As Hales has pointed out Cicero's status as a *novus homo* meant that he needed to be extra careful to ensure that he appeared to belong among the older, established senatorial families.[10] This care is reflected in his references to art and his houses where he is always careful to stress the proper way of doing things.

Ancient Rome has traditionally been seen as a society without a strong artistic tradition. Where individual Greek artists are often celebrated by both Greek and Roman

---

[8] Hales (2003: 25).

[9] Hales (2003: 139-143).

[10] Hales (2003: 41).

writers for their popular works, there is little by way of similar evidence for Roman artists.[11] Pliny's discussion of the development of painting contains some rare references to specific Roman artists.[12] In the *Natural History* 35.19-20 Pliny discusses four painters famous for their paintings during the early Roman period. Pliny lists their names, where, and when they painted but makes no mention of the subject or artistic quality of their work. In place of discussion of subject and quality, Pliny gives an account of the social and political status of each artist. All are of the elite class. It appears clear from this passage that Romans were more concerned with the social and political connotations of a work of art than its aesthetic or technical qualities. This is reinforced in Pliny's second (and final) mention of Roman artists.[13] This group of artists is contemporary to Pliny himself; and, while he is somewhat interested in the style and content of these artists' works, Pliny is still primarily interested in the social and political connections of the artist rather than the art itself.[14] These limited reference to Roman artists (the intervening chapters are peppered with discussion of Greek artists and their works) are indicative of a lack of importance allotted to individual Roman artists in the late Republic and early Empire.[15] De Angelis has taken this idea a step further, suggesting that the lack of information on individual Roman artists in Pliny (and the wider literature), combined with the separation of the artists Pliny does discuss in the text (there are 96 chapters separating the discussion), is confirmation that a strong artistic tradition, or a defined group of distinctly Roman painters (and artists

---

[11] Stewart (2008: 10). When making reference to esteemed Greek artists Cicero states that the Romans have none of their own because they do not see painting and sculpture as respectable occupations (Tusc. 1.2.4).

[12] Plin. *HN.* 35.19-20; 35.116-119.

[13] Plin. *HN* 35.116-119.

[14] Famulus is singled out for his wearing of the *toga* when painting and being favoured by Nero as much as he is for the content of his work while Pinus and Priscus are recognised as important solely for their employment by the emperor Vespasian (*HN.* 35.119).

[15] At the very least this reveals a lack of interest in the works of individual Roman artists on Pliny's part.

from other media more generally), did not exist in the Roman literature and therefore did not exist in the Roman world.[16]

The lack of information on individual Roman artists has its roots in the perceived respectability of the artist's profession at the time. Pliny makes it clear that while painting was an acceptable pastime for the elite of early Rome it quickly became an unacceptable pursuit for those of rank, and any who managed to achieve recognition for their art were to be considered an exception to the general rule.[17] Cicero too acknowledges the lack of regard for the work of Roman artists and blames this for the absence of celebrated works by Roman artists suggesting that if they were given the admiration artists of Greece received rather than the disapproval they found at home they too would have produced works worthy of celebration.[18]

While the dearth of literary sources dedicated solely to the discussion of art in the Roman world may suggest a lack of knowledge about, or interest in, art by the Roman elite the incidental evidence shows that this was clearly not the case. The speeches of Cicero, for example, reflect an intimate knowledge, and aesthetic appreciation, of art. In his prosecution of Gaius Verres for extortion and general misconduct during his tenure as governor of Sicily, (the *Verrine Orations*), Cicero makes much of Verres' appropriation of art treasures from Sicily, going into detail on their aesthetic value.[19] Cicero's praise of Greek sculptors and painters, including Polyclitus in his *Brutus*, serves as a further example of the appreciation and intimate knowledge of art among the Roman elite.[20]

---

[16] De Angelis (2008: 84-85).

[17] Plin. *HN* 35.20.

[18] Cic. *Tusc.* 1.2.4.

[19] For example Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.2; 2.4.43.

[20] Cic. *Brut.* 70.

The concept of *luxuria* and its role in society played a fundamental role in shaping Roman attitudes towards art. Cicero states that the Roman people loathed private luxury but that they loved public splendour.[21] The use of rare and expensive materials in both public and private works of art was seen as a form of luxury. Public displays of luxury were acceptable as they contributed to the public good. Private displays of luxury were criticised for providing no public benefit. The rise of private luxury in the houses of Rome was seen as a symptom of the breakdown of traditional Roman mores in the last century of the Republic.[22] As Wallace-Hadrill concludes the reaction against private luxury in the Roman world was connected to the rise of untraditional means of obtaining and displaying social status and therefore undermining the established social hierarchy in the latter period of the Roman Republic.[23]

Roman Attitudes towards the Role of the House

The literary evidence for Roman housing, like Roman art, comprises mainly passing references found in the works of authors who are concerned with other subjects – with one major exception. The *De architectura* of Vitruvius, the only surviving treatise of its kind, is an architectural manual written in the late first century BCE. Vitruvius is concerned with a number of architectural forms including public infrastructure, monuments, military architecture, and both the *domus* and *villa* variations of the Roman house. While the *De Architectura* does not provide specific technical instructions for the physical construction of the majority of structures discussed – it was aimed more at the enthusiastic amateur than the practicing architect – it does provide a wealth of information about the considerations to be taken into account, such as *decor* and *utilitas* (discussed below) when building an urban

---

[21] Cic. *Mur.* 76.

[22] Pliny's (*HN* 36.110) assertion that the house of Lepidus, the most luxurious house in Rome in 78 BCE was not even among the first 100 within 35 years.

[23] Wallace-Hadrill (1990: 92).

domus.[24] Combined with the passing references of other authors, this allows for a deeper understanding of the role of the Roman home in social life and the construction of a social identity.

The Roman *domus* was not the type of private residence we would consider a home today. The elite Roman conducted much of his day to day business from his home while the poorer classes would have lived and worked in the same space more often than not. The social role of a wealthy Roman (particularly a politically minded one) required spaces in the house dedicated to receiving and entertaining guests.[25] These spaces, namely the *atrium* and *tablinum,* were used for the morning *salutatio* and the evening *cena*, when the *paterfamilias* would open the public section of his house to his *clientes* and friends.[26] Because the home of the elite member of Roman society was also essentially his place of business it follows that the house should reflect his social position.

According to Cicero, the elite Roman male was to be considered a public figure, both in the *forum* and in the comfort of his own home.[27] The implication of this statement is that the home of the elite Roman who wished to engage in political life must be accessible to the public at all times. The image of the ideal Roman home being completely open to the public is further illustrated by Plutarch's assertion that Cicero's dedication to the state was shown through his having no doorkeeper.[28] Plutarch's Cicero lived his life entirely in the public sphere, as any good Roman politician should. However, the fact that Cicero's not

---

[24] Hales (2003: 25-29).

[25] See Vitr. *De arch.* 6.5. for the importance of reception rooms in the houses of elite Romans.

[26] See Chapter 3 for an in depth discussion of the rooms of the Roman house.

[27] Cic. *De or.* 3.33.133.

[28] Plut. *Cic.* 36.3.

having a doorkeeper was worthy of note clearly demonstrates that doorkeepers, and therefore restriction of public access, was by far the norm for the Roman home.[29]

The house of the elite Roman can be seen as a direct extension of his identity. A well designed house had the potential to enhance the status and reputation of the homeowner.[30] The direct connection between the public identity of the homeowner and the home could be exploited for advantage by political enemies. Cicero in particular employs verbal attacks upon the houses of his opponents in his speeches, a strategy perhaps best exemplified in the *Philippics* in which he compares Mark Antony's home to a brothel.[31] Cicero was perhaps more sensitive to the unpleasant consequences an attack on the house of a rival could have. Following Cicero's exile in 58BCE his political rival Clodius had his house on the Palatine torn down and replaced with a temple. Hales demonstrates the massive blow having the most important physical reminder of his presence in Rome must have been to his social and political identity.[32]

Roman Attitudes towards the Role of Art in the Home

It is clear from the literary record that the selection and presentation of art in both the urban *domus* and country *villa* was a vital part of the process of establishing the identity of the home and by extension the homeowner. Cicero's *Letters to Atticus*, in which he commissions his friend to seek out works of art during his travels through Greece to adorn different spaces in his *villa* at Tusculum, are perhaps the best known example of a homeowner building an art collection in order to present a specific message about his home and by extension identity: but they are by no means the only examples.[33] From Suetonius

---

[29] Hales (2003: 36-37).

[30] Cic. *Off.* 1.139.

[31] Cic. *Phil.* 2.28; See Cic. *Red. sen.* 5.11 for an almost identical attack on Clodius.

[32] Hales (2003: 41-50).

[33] Cic. *Att.* 1.1; 1.3-11.

we learn that Julius Caesar, for example, was an avid collector of jewels, metalwork, statues, and paintings.[34] While Cicero had a very specific scheme in mind when decorating his *villa*, Caesar seems to have placed no such topical constraints upon his collecting being concerned only with the appearance and age of the items.[35] Interestingly both Caesar and Cicero employed third parties to do the actual collecting for them. Cicero was concerned about what others might think of his art collection but this does not prevent him from taking an active role in collecting.[36] Cicero engaged his friend Atticus to seek out artworks for his *villa* because he was travelling in Greece (where the art would be purchased) and he apparently had impeccably good taste.[37]

Despite the example set by Cicero it is clear that for the purchase of works of art for the home to be considered acceptable their selection had to be guided by an appropriate decorative plan. Cicero, collecting art works associated with philosophers as well as Greek myth and history, had settled upon an acceptable decorative program for the country retreat of a man active in the public life of the city. Failure to establish a program, beyond the simply decorative, could have a disastrous impact upon the image of the homeowner as shown in the case of Lucullus. Lucius Licinius Lucullus had been a successful, respected politician in the Sullan era. Despite this after retiring from public life he was criticised for his luxurious way of life, in particular for his vast expenditure on decoration and altering the landscape at his *villa* near Neapolis. In his extravagance Lucullus overstepped the

---

[34] Suet. *Iul.* 47.

[35] The collecting of antiques in Roman times is attested in other sources e.g. Mart. *Epig.* 9.43.

[36] Cic. *Att.* 1.8.

[37] Cic. *Att.* 1.1; 1.3-11. Cicero clearly trusts Atticus' judgement on what to buy e.g. Cicero is happy to pay for statues selected by Atticus before he has seen them (1.3); urges him to purchase anything he thinks suitable (1.5); and encourages him to keep purchasing on his behalf (1.9).

degree of luxury acceptable for a good Roman leading one visitor to label him Xerxes in a toga.[38]

Attitudes towards decorative programs in the home were greatly influenced by Roman views concerning the concepts of *decor* and *utilitas*. We have already seen through the concept of *luxuria* that Roman opinions on morals and aesthetics were closely linked and the connection between *decor*, *utilitas*, and art in the home further supports this. *Decor* is concerned with the appropriateness of the decoration of the home while *utilitas* refers to its function. In the art of the home *decor* is in many ways dependent on *utilitas* as it is the purpose of the art and its relationship to the space that determines its appropriateness. In discussing the proper way of designing and building a house Vitruvius emphasises the importance of considering the purpose of the space with particular reference to the social status of the owner.[39] In this passage Vitruvius is concerned with the types of room in the house and their size in relation to the occupation, social, and financial status of the owner. People of low social rank and wealth visit the houses of others rather than being visited themselves meaning that they do not need large highly decorated receiving rooms. Those who make their living through country estates should have spaces dedicated to the storage and sale of stock and produce while the houses of bankers must be more imposing and secure than the average house. Highly ranked individuals who hold political office should have large houses with many rooms reminiscent of public architecture as public business was often conducted in their

---

[38] Plut. *Luc.* 39.

[39] Vitr. *De arch.* 6.5.1-3.

homes.[40] For Vitruvius failure to create a house appropriate to the status of the owner would be to invite censure, reflecting badly on the public image of the owner.[41]

Cicero reinforces Vitruvius' view that the decoration and scale of a house ought to reflect the status of the owner.[42] The successful politician must have a suitably decorated home.[43] While Vitruvius makes specific reference to *decor* at both the town house and country villa in his work Cicero is more focused with the appropriateness of decorative choices for is villas. His letters to both Atticus and Gallus reveal Cicero's concern that his purchases should make a good impression of his taste and social standing by being both appropriate for the function of the room they were to be placed in as well as reflecting his personal character and philosophy. Thus the Hermathena purchased in 66 BCE by Atticus for the academy in Cicero's villa at Tusculum is praised for the appropriateness of a Hermes for its function as a class-room while the addition of Minerva is cited as being particularly suitable for Cicero personally.[44] In contrast a later letter of Cicero's censures Gallus' purchase of a group Bacchantes because they have no *utilitas*, there is no position in Cicero's villa where they can be placed with a functional (rather than decorative) purpose.[45] In the same letter a statue of Mars purchased by Gallus is also condemned because it does not fit in with Cicero's public identity as the author of peace following his triumph against the Catiline Conspiracy. From these examples it is clear that *utilitas* is an essential element of *decor* for Cicero. The purpose of enhancing his public image was just

---

[40] Vit. *De arch*. 6.5.2.

[41] Vit. *De arch*. 6.5.3

[42] Cic. *Off*. 1.138.9

[43] Hales (2000: 44).

[44] Cic. *Att*. 1.4.

[45] Cic. *Fam*. 7.23.1-3.

as important as appropriateness for the space to be filled in Cicero's selection of art for his home.[46]

Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with how the Romans conceived of the roles of art and of the home before going on to look at what they understood the role of art in the home to be. Due to the nature of the evidence, written by predominantly elite, Roman males, the views of the lower orders and of non-Romans living in the Roman world are not well represented. The chapter establishes that attitudes towards Roman art as being inferior to that of their Greek neighbours has its roots in the writings and artistic preferences of the Romans themselves. There was little celebration of famous artists in the Roman world. Those who did warrant mention by name were normally of Greek origins reinforcing the idea of the pre-eminence of Greek artistic forms. Yet the Romans could show appreciation of art when it suited them. This is made clear in the works of Cicero, particularly his speeches where he speaks at one moment as though he hasn't a clue about only to turn around and offer informed and detailed analyses where it suits his argument. Cicero looms large in the literature on art in the Roman home. This is likely because as a *novus homo* he would have been especially aware of the possible missteps he could take. More than anything Roman ideas towards art, especially in the home appear to have been tied the concept of *luxuria* which was in turn closely related to the ideas of *decor* and *utilitas*, and to the thoughts about the public and private roles of Roman individuals. As long as the art of the home was open (at least nominally) to the public view and did not stray outside the bounds of *decor* and *utilitas* it was considered an acceptable, and in some cases necessary, luxury.

---

[46] Leen (1991: 239).

3

The Roman House

This chapter examines the public role of the house in the Roman world. Before commencing discussion of the material evidence it will be useful to have an understanding of some of the current and traditional approaches to the art and architecture of the Roman house. The chapter aims to investigate the public role of the house and the ways in which this role affected its architectural and decorative design. This will be done by exploring the layout and function of spaces within the house and by looking the way they relate to the public role and responsibilities of the home owner. Investigation of the role of the art of the house, particularly wall painting, will further demonstrate the importance the public role of the homeowner had on house design.

The Roman House

Scholarship on the Roman house traditionally draws upon ancient texts, particularly Vitruvius and Varro, mining them for information on the house, its rooms, and their functions. This approach has resulted in the traditional nomenclature associated with the various rooms and spaces of the house, as well as an understanding of how Romans made use of them. While it has its uses, the method of raiding ancient texts for, nomenclature and information about the house has come under increasing criticism over

the past twenty years.[1] Allison in particular argues against the use of textual nomenclature for the spaces of the house, even going so far as to develop her own system for labelling the spaces of the house in her study of artefact assemblages at Pompeii.[2] The main problem with the use of textual nomenclature occurs when it is applied to the material evidence. Varro was a linguist and antiquarian, interested in the evolution of the names and functions of the rooms of the Roman house. Vitruvius was interested in developing an ideal architectural model for the house. Neither author wrote about or was specifically concerned with the everyday functions of the rooms of the house in their own time.[3] Despite this scholars tend to apply nomenclature gleaned from these authors, along with its implied meanings indiscriminately. The result is that a literary interpretation of room function tends to dominate the material evidence. Where the material evidence is found to be contrary to the literary expectation it is seen as a deviation from the norm, however, recent studies suggest the rooms of the Roman house were multifunctional spaces which cannot be interpreted so easily.[4] Nevertheless, so long as scholars are careful not to have their interpretations restricted by it, traditional nomenclature provides a useful convention for naming the spaces in the Roman house, and for understanding the way in which Romans thought about the role of the different rooms within their homes.

While Roman houses varied greatly in terms of size and organisation there were a number of key spaces an elite Roman *domus* required in order to fulfil its most basic social functions. These were the spaces used for reception of visitors although this was

---

[1] See for example, Wallace-Hadrill (1994); Leach (1997); Allison (2001).

[2] Allison (2004: 163-175).

[3] Allison (2004: 161). As with the discussion of the literary evidence in Chapter 2 the audience of these texts should also be taken into account. Varro and Vitruvius wrote for the Roman elite and as such their discussion of the Roman house refers to the elite *domus*. The extent to which their evidence can be applied to the more humble homes of the lower classes is unclear.

[4] For example Leach (1997); Riggsby (1997).

rarely their only function. House layouts could and did vary greatly due to available
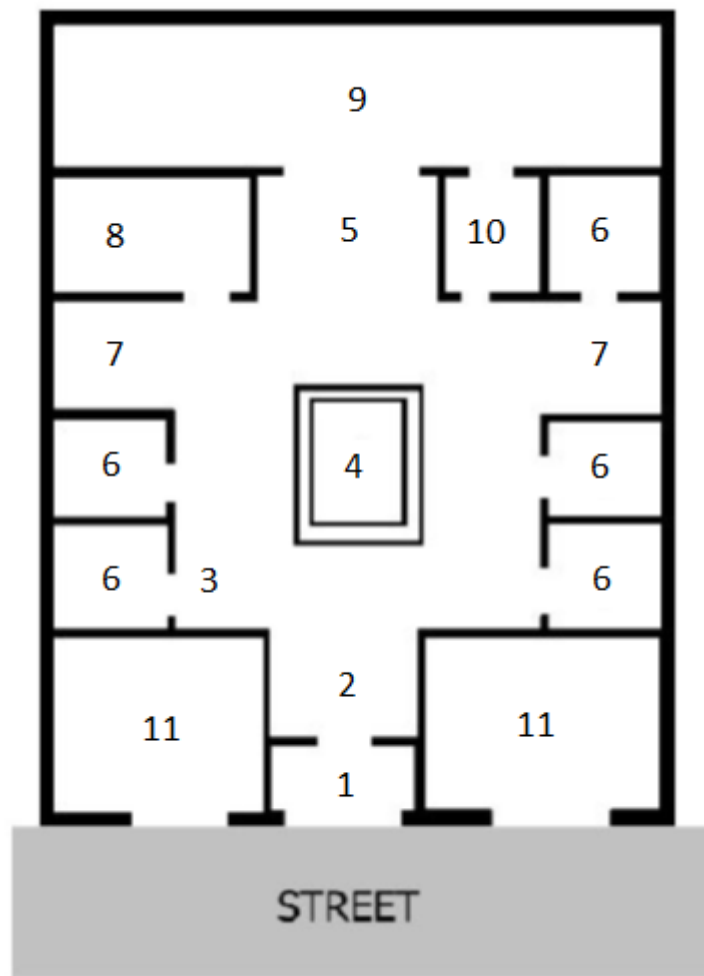
space,

Figure 3.1 Ideal plan for an atrium house.

the size and shape of the plot, and the means and specific needs of the individual owner.

However, the main reception spaces tend to attempt to, or to at least to appear to attempt

to, follow an ideal plan similar to that described in Vitruvius. The conventional term for

this type of house is the atrium house. While the majority of houses at Pompeii were not

atrium houses, the atrium house is still by far the most common type of house found there

(see Fig 3.1).[5] Although the atrium house at Pompeii occurs in a myriad of different

shapes and sizes, the main reception rooms, when they are present, do tend to follow a set

---

[5] George (2004: 8).

plan.[6] Despite this it is important to remember that, as stated above, just because these spaces appear to conform to Vitruvius' requirements does not mean that their function is limited by what he describes.

The atrium house as an ideal type is thought to have developed by the third century BCE. The ideal layout of the atrium house can be seen in Figure 3.1. As can be seen this house was entered through a *vestibulum* (1) which connected to the *atrium* (3) via the *fauces* (2). The *fauces* generally took the form of a high walled, narrow corridor with an upward sloping floor designed to restrict access to the house both visually and physically.[7] The *atrium* was the central room of the house and was characterised by an opening in the central part of the roof (*compluvium*) over a pool, *impluvium* (4), in the centre of the floor.[8] Two of the main functions of the *atrium* were to collect of rainwater, which would usually be stored in a cistern under the *impluvium*, and to provide natural light to the interior of the house as there were generally few windows in the external walls to fulfil this requirement.[9] To either side of the *atrium* were *cubicula* (6). These small, enclosed rooms are often identified as bedrooms. However, as Riggsby has demonstrated they fulfilled a much wider range of functions including storage and operating as small reception rooms.[10] On either side of the far end of the *atrium* was an alcove known as the *ala* (7). At the opposite end of the *atrium* from the entrance was the *tablinum* (5). This room was open at both ends but could be blocked off with curtains or wooden screens if required. The *tablinum* underwent many transformations in function throughout the

---

[6] Compare the plans of House I 10, 1, the Casa del Fabbro, and the House of Menander in Chapter 4 (Figs. 4.4, 4.6, and 4.8) with the ideal house plans discussed in this chapter (Fig. 3.1 and Fig. 3.2).

[7] Hales (2003: 108-109).

[8] Ellis (2000: 26).

[9] Ellis (2000: 26); Masters (2009: 147). Although see Ellis (2000: 27) for other forms of atrium which were designed to direct rainwater away from the *compluvium* (*displuviate atrium*) or did away with the *compluvium* entirely to allow upper floors to be built over the top of the *atrium* (*testudinate atrium*).

[10] Riggsby (1997).

history of the house. Starting out as the master bedroom the room housed the family archives and eventually became the main reception room of the house, where the *paterfamilias* would conduct business and receive guests.[11] To either side of the *tablinum* were a *triclinium* (8) and *andron* (10). The *triclinium*, dining room, was the other main reception room of the house while the *andron* was a corridor by which one could bypass the *tablinum* and access the other end of the house.[12] Beyond the *tablinum* was a small walled garden, *hortus* (9). This space could be decorative but was also often occupied by a small working garden.[13] Many houses also possessed small commercial spaces (11) in their façade which owners could either rent out or operate themselves. Interestingly the majority Roman houses did not possess distinct spaces for cooking or bathing. These types of spaces appear in only the largest of houses. They were an unnecessary luxury for smaller houses whose occupants would have eaten at one of the many street side food stalls and bathed at one of the public baths.

The atrium house appears to have remained the most popular type (at least in Italy) until the second century BCE. At this point a new style of house, the peristyle house, began to develop. This style of house owes its origins to the peristyle houses of the Hellenistic east and its development and increasing popularity in the Roman world may be seen as further evidence of the impact of Greek influences on Roman culture discussed in Chapter 1.[14] While the peristyle house eventually replaced the atrium house this not an immediate development. Instead, as the evidence from Pompeii suggests, the peristyle was first adopted as an addition to the atrium house form.[15] The resulting atrium-peristyle

---

[11] Ellis (2000: 27).

[12] Ellis (2000: 27).

[13] Hales (2003: 89).

[14] Ellis (2000: 31-32).

[15] Ellis (2000: 32-33).

form (Fig. 3.2) remained popular at Pompeii throughout the first centuries BCE/CE. As

can be seen in

Figure 3.2 Ideal plan for an atrium-peristyle house.

Figure 3.2 the ideal form for the front section of the house is mainly unchanged but the

functional *hortus* garden is replaced by the more decorative *peristyle* (12). The *peristyle*

had a larger opening in its roof than the *atrium* which was supported by a colonnaded

portico running around its perimeter.[16] The *peristyle* was surrounded by a suite of rooms of similar form and function to those surrounding the *atrium*.

While the above discussion has made it appear as though there was a stereotypical layout for the Roman house this is far from the reality. House plans varied widely across the Empire.[17] As the houses examined in Chapter 4 reveal, even within a single *insula* of a town such as Pompeii a diverse range of possible layouts may be observed. There are, however, a series of basic architectural forms, for example the *atrium*, *peristyle*, and *tablinum* that appear to be repeated across the range of housing. The repetition of such architectural forms suggests they were among the basic elements a house required to fulfil its purpose.[18] The fact that these repeated forms are closely associated with the public role of the house by the ancient literature is evidence of the importance of the social role of the house.[19]

The modern Western home is a private space where members of the household, more often than not consisting of a small, nuclear family, can retreat from the public eye. This was not the case for the Roman house which played a significant and active role in the household's public life. Poorer Romans lived and worked in the same space, a single room dwelling that could function as both home and workshop.[20] Wealthier Romans conducted business, be it political or economic in nature, and entertained guests and supporters in their homes. Due to this public role the Roman house was seen as a signifier

---

[16] Ellis (2000: 33-35).

[17] See Wallace-Hadrill (1997) for an analysis of the different ways in which a 'typical' Roman atrium house could be set up. See also Hales (2003) for discussion of different house types across the Empire.

[18] Dwyer (1991: 26).

[19] See Chapter 2 for more in depth discussion of the role of the house in the ancient literature.

[20] Ellis (2000: 5).

of the owner's public presence and identity, of their success or failure in the political arena, and by extension their position in society.[21]

Two key daily rituals opened the Roman house up to the outside world: the morning *salutatio* and the evening *cena*. For the *salutatio* a Roman client would visit the house of their patron, gathering in the *atrium* with other clients to await a meeting with their *patronus*.[22] The client would bring problems to the patron for resolution and receive the daily payment of the *sportulae*, a symbol of the relationship between client and patron. In return the client was expected to vote for the patron in any elections and provide support in any other business the patron may have.[23] This meeting normally took place in the *tablinum*, although more important clients may have been received in more private *cubicula*.[24] The *cena* (dinner party) was a less formal affair where the *paterfamilias* dined with selected friends, family members, and political associates.[25] Both of these rituals served to secure the political powerbase of the *paterfamilias*. This is particularly true of the *salutatio* which, because of the expectation of political support placed upon the client, could be taken as an indicator of the patron's status and political prospects. A glimpse through open doors to a large *atrium* full of clients for the morning *salutatio* would have revealed the owner to be a man of significance.[26] Despite this the presence of an *atrium* or *tablinum* in a house does not necessarily indicate that the ritual of *salutatio* took place there, indeed the sheer number of houses with *atria* in Pompeii would suggest otherwise.[27] Yet given the position of the *atrium* in the layout of the house,

---

[21] Hales (2003: 101).

[22] Grahame (1998: 173).

[23] Ellis (2000: 170).

[24] Ellis (2000: 170).

[25] Masters (2009: 155).

[26] Hackworth Peterson (2006).

[27] Grahame (1998: 173).

the visitor must walk through it to gain access to the rest of in the house, its role in the reception of guests does appear to be a given.

The house was also the site of a number of other rituals and traditions in the daily life for a Roman. Rituals associated with birth, death, marriage, and religion all took place within the house. When a Roman child was born wreaths were placed on the door of the house, the wedding ritual involved the transfer of the bride from her father's house to that of her new husband, and for the funeral of a *paterfamilias* members of the family wore wax masks of their ancestors which were normally displayed in the *atrium*.[28] Again, as for the *salutatio*, the *atrium* appears to have been the locus of these rituals.[29] This is not surprising given the highly visible positioning of the *atrium* at the front of the house. This importance of the *atrium* in household ritual is connected to its original role as the location of the hearth, and by extension life, within the house.[30] Because of this the *atrium* was also the traditional location of the *lararium*, the household shrine dedicated to the gods of the family. However, *lararia* could be found in a number of different locations throughout the house by the first century CE, including the kitchen of houses that could afford to maintain one.[31]

Scholars in recent decades have begun to look at the spatial organisation of the house as a means of understanding the function of the spaces within. In particular scholars have been interested in how the layout of the house helps to promote the identity of the homeowner by exploring tensions between the public and private roles of spaces within the

---

[28] Clarke (1991: 10).

[29] Dwyer (1991: 26).

[30] Ellis (2000: 26).

[31] Clarke (1991: 8-9).

Figure 3.3 View into the House of Menander from the *fauces*.

house, and by considering the division of space between members of the household. One

popular model for understanding the tension between public and private is the role of the

view into the house through the main entrance (*fauces*). Introduced to English scholarship

by Wallace-Hadrill and explored in detail by Hales this model looks at the affect the

sequential arrangement of *fauces*, *atrium*, *tablinum*, *hortus*/*peristyle* along a central axis

(as seen in Figs. 3.1 and 3.2) has on an outside viewer's perception of the house.[32] As can

be seen in the House of Menander (Fig. 3.3) this view through the central axis of the

---

[32] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 44-46); Hales (2003: 107-122).

makes it appear that the observer can see all the way through the house, right to the back wall, giving the impression of openness and transparency.[33] This is, however, an illusion. The high narrow walls of the *fauces* frame the view, restricting access to areas of the house that lie off the central axis, essentially keeping them private from the outside viewer.[34] The layout of the house is also rarely as symmetrical as the arrangement of rooms along the central axis would suggest.[35] The fact that Roman architects and homeowners took such care to maintain the appearance of a central axis, despite the varying size and shape of house plots, points to its importance in the way a Roman house was presented. The rooms of the central axis are the major reception rooms of the house. The impression that they are open to inspection from any who pass by reflects the public role of the house as well as the homeowner's participation in public life.[36]

Once the viewer is permitted to enter the house the central axis loses its importance.[37] This is not to say that views within the house is unimportant. However, issues of size and access tend to dominate the way spaces within the house are discussed. As demonstrated by Grahame once inside the house differentiation between public and private can be assessed through the degree of accessibility to a space.[38] Put simply, the more entrances a room has the more public it must be, the more closed off the more private it will be. Accessibility is also assessed by the number of rooms that must be traversed in order to reach a particular space. This approach reveals the large, open rooms set along the central axis, by virtue of their position and the number of rooms that open off of them, to be the most public while the closed off *cubicula* are the most private.

---

[33] Hales (2003: 107).

[34] Hales (2003: 112).

[35] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 44).

[36] Hales (2003: 113).

[37] Hales (2003: 116).

[38] Grahame (1997).

While this certainly holds true for larger rooms with many access points, such as the *atrium*, it does not account for the public nature of some of the more closed off spaces. *Triclinia* set off the *peristyle* for instance, which had only a single entry point would have required more space be traversed to reach them than the similarly closed off *cubicula* set around the *atrium*. Yet these *triclinia* would have been more public than some of the *cubicula,* particularly those used for storage. Further definition is required to understand the relative publicness of space. Wallace-Hadrill employs a scale of grandness and humbleness in architecture and decoration to assess the relative public or private function of rooms.[39] This again singles out the large, highly decorated rooms of the central axis as the most public but, by taking into account the decorativeness and size of the more closed off rooms better accounts for their public or private function.

The division of space between members of the household is more difficult to determine than the division of space between the household and outsiders. There appear to have been no separate rooms or spaces designed to accommodate women or children, suggesting that they were not habitually segregated from other household members or guests. Indeed, the open nature of the central spaces of the house meant members of the household were likely to come into contact with others on a regular basis.[40] It is also nearly impossible to determine what areas, if any, were set aside for servile use and the housing of slaves in all but the largest of houses.[41] Suits of rooms in larger houses, spatially separated from the rest of the house and distinctive for the simpleness of their

---

[39] Wallace-Hadrill (1994).

[40] Zanker (1998: 12).

[41] Hales (2003: 124).

decorative programs, have been identified as service quarters, housing slaves and domestic activities such as cooking, but there is no such separation in smaller houses.[42]

Art in the Roman House

Wall painting is the best preserved of the art forms found in the houses of Pompeii.[43] As stated above the urban *domus* had few external windows meaning interior wall surfaces were not unlike large canvases.[44] This made them particularly well suited for the large scale mural paintings that adorned them. Wall painting was a relatively inexpensive way to update the decorative scheme of the house when compared with the purchase of more expensive panel paintings or sculpture.[45] The method for applying murals to the walls was relatively simple, if somewhat slow. It employed the fresco technique which had been in use by the Minoans as early as the second millennium BCE.[46] The wall was first prepared by applying several layers of wet plaster, then the design was painted on by a small team of craftsmen while the plaster was still wet.[47] The mural was painted in successive vertical sections and a single wall could take weeks to complete as the craftsmen would need to prepare a new section of fresh plaster before they could commence painting each day.[48] Because the pigment was absorbed into the plaster as it dried wall paintings done in the fresco technique are quite durable, and as a

---

[42] Hackworth Peterson (2006: 128).

[43] Although floor mosaics given their durability and long term popularity are by far the most common form of domestic art preserved across the breadth of the Roman world.

[44] Clarke (1991: 32).

[45] Pliny states that Hortensius purchased a picture of the Argonauts painted by Kydias for 144, 000 sesterces, as sum Pollitt estimated to be the equivalent of about $10, 000 in 1966, see Pollitt (1966: 79).

[46] Kleiner (2007: 41).

[47] Stewart (2004: 75).

[48] Kleiner (2007: 41).

result decoration is preserved from the walls of rooms all around the Roman world, albeit none in such good condition as those found in the Campanian region.[49]

As the most common type of art in the houses of Pompeii, wall painting is also the most extensively studied by modern scholars. The Four Styles, first developed by August Mau at the end of the 19th century, dominate all scholarship regarding Roman wall painting. Unlike most scholars up until his time Mau was interested in entire decorative schemes rather than the individual elements that made up different wall paintings.[50] He was particularly interested in the evolution of decorative schemes and sought to classify them and place them into their correct chronological order. Much of the scholarship on Roman wall painting since Mau has been focused on refining his chronology although, as with scholarship on the house, there has been increasing interest in the social role of art in the home over recent decades. Nevertheless an overview of the Four Styles as they are understood today is essential to any study dealing with Roman wall painting.

The First Style ('Incrustation Style') developed from a similar style of Hellenistic wall art towards the end of the second century BCE and continued to be popular down until about 80 BCE (Fig. 3.4).[51] It involved a combination of stucco moulding and painted surfaces to transform the coarse stone walls of the house into the appearance of the ashlar masonry found on public buildings.[52] The First Style was designed to fool the viewer into believing the house was is built of far more luxurious and expensive material than it actually was.[53] Unlike the other three styles the First Style varies little in design between walls of

---

[49] Kleiner (2007: 41); Stewart (2004: 75).

[50] Stewart (2004: 76).

[51] Clarke (1991: 39).

[52] Stewart (2004: 76-77).

[53] Clarke (1991: 39).

Figure 3.4 First Style wall painting, Samnite House, Herculaneum.

Figure 3.5 Second Style Wall Painting, Villa of P. Fannius Synistor, Boscoreale.

different rooms and houses meaning it does little to differentiate the function, status, or purpose of individual spaces within the home.[54]

The Second Style ('Architectural Style') began to appear at Pompeii in around 80 BCE and remained in fashion until about 30 BCE (Fig. 3.5).[55] In this style large scale murals scenes from the world of public architecture dominate the wall surface.[56] As with the First Style, the Second attempts to produce as realistic an illusion as possible by creating a consistent and convincing impression of depth and perspective throughout.[57] While public architecture is the main subject of this style, examples of large scale figured scenes and scenes from the natural world are also found, albeit quite rarely. Large scale figured scenes do not occur in the art of Pompeiian houses, however, the frescoes of the nearby Villa of the Mysteries are among the best preserved and most famous examples of this style. It is the impression of depth and perspective used to create the illusion of reality that truly characterise this style.

The Third Style ('Ornate Style') developed in the later third of the first century BCE and remained popular until the middle of the first century CE (Fig. 3.6).[58] In the Third Style images lost the illusion of depth created by the Second Style, effectively flattening the wall surface into a two dimensional picture frame. Architectural features, which had remained more or less proportionate in the Second Style became increasingly

---

[54] Clarke (1991: 40).

[55] Stewart (2004: 77). It has been suggested that the development of the Second Style at Pompeii was directly connected to its becoming a Roman colony at this time as the Second Style already appears to have been in fashion in Rome at this point.

[56] Stewart (2004: 77-78).

[57] Stewart (2004: 78).

[58] Clarke (1991: 49).

decorative and as a result less realistic.[59] The focus of the Third Style was on panels, normally depicting mythological scenes, placed in the centre of the walls.[60]

Figure 3.6 Third Style Wall Painting, *Tablinum*, House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto, Pompeii.

---

[59] Stewart (2004: 82).

[60] Hales (2003: 130).

Figure 3.7 Fourth Style Wall Painting, House of the Vettii, Pompeii.

The Fourth Style ('Intricate Style') developed in the middle of the first century CE becoming particularly popular at Pompeii after the earthquake of 62 CE (Fig. 3.7).[61] The Fourth Style is the least well understood of the Styles and is perhaps best described as a conflagration of the Second and Third Styles.[62] Architectural features became more solid and architectural vistas and perspective as they were in the Second Style made a reappearance, although no effort was made to ensure they were applied consistently.[63] The stucco modelling of the First Style re-emerged, being used to render parts of the architecture in low relief. Panel style paintings from the Third Style also remained. All in all, the Fourth Style label is used to describe a wide variety of approaches to wall

---

[61] Stewart (2004: 81). For more on the 62 CE earthquake at Pompeii see Chapter 4.

[62] Hales (2003: 130).

[63] Stewart (2004: 82).

decoration that have little in common stylistically but can be dated to the period after the middle of the first century CE.[64]

As with any system of classification the Four Styles place some constraints on the understanding of Roman wall painting by oversimplifying what was a far more disorganised reality.[65] The dating of each style, for example, aligns rather neatly with the major social and political events of the period: the First Style ends and the Second begins with the colonisation of Pompeii, the development of the Third Style roughly corresponds with the fall of the Republic, and the Fourth Style is closely associated with the period of rebuilding and renovation at Pompeii following the 62 CE earthquake. While it is true that these events would have had an impact on the development of domestic tastes, the chronological distinction between styles is not so clear cut as the chronology would make it appear. Roman houses were amalgams of many years of occupation and this is reflected in the fact that decorative schemes from multiple styles are often found in a single home.[66] Given the comparatively low cost of wall painting the decision of the homeowner to update some walls while leaving, restoring, or possibly even painting fresh, others in earlier styles must be regarded as a conscious decorative choice. However, while wall painting may have been a relatively inexpensive means of decoration the difficulty involved in altering decorative schemes must be taken into account. In order to change even a single element of the decoration the entire wall would have needed to be replastered and repainted.[67] Because of the time and expense required to constantly update the wall paintings of the house, not to mention the disruption of day to day activities this would have caused, homeowners would have been sure to consider their

---

[64] Stewart (2004: 82).

[65] Stewart (2004: 82).

[66] As can be seen in the House of Menander, discussed in Chapter 4.

[67] Clarke (1991: 65).

choices carefully before committing to a particular theme, and are likely to have adapted older style schemes to suit their current needs rather than redecorating where possible.

Wall painting may be the most popular form of Roman domestic art at Pompeii but it is by no means the only surviving form, it is not even the most commonly surviving form of domestic art from the Roman world. Floor mosaics are by far the most durable form of art from the house and they survive in great quantities from sites all over the Roman world. Mosaics are often classified chronologically and stylistically in connection to the Four Styles.[68] Sculptural decorations were also common although given their portability they rarely survive in situ as wall paintings and mosaics do. Sculpture is also more difficult to classify, both in terms of theme and chronology, due to the collecting habits of the Romans which saw them acquire sculptures from a range of different time periods and themes.[69]

All art found in the Roman house is illusionistic in one way or another. Its purpose was to reinforce the homeowner's status and identity by providing the viewer with an enhanced impression of their reality. One of the main purposes of this illusion was to imitate public settings. As has been demonstrated previously, the public role of the homeowner was reflected in the design and execution of his house. The illusion of a public settings starts out fairly simple and realistic with the imitation masonry of the First Style. The realistic, large scale scenes of the Second Style acted as views for urban houses which rarely had windows in their external walls. By employing illusionistic styles to allude to the grandeur of luxury decorative features like marble cladding and

---

[68] Clarke (1991: 40-41; 61-63).

[69] Ellis (2000: 134-135). See also the discussion of literary evidence for the art collecting habits of elite Romans in Chapter 2.

external views the Roman homeowner was able to promote his status while avoiding the censure that came with immersing one's self in too much luxury.[70]

The Third Style evokes a public setting just as the First and Second Styles did, although, where the first two styles try to evoke architecture associated with the public role of the homeowner, the Third Style reflects a more culturally defined space, the public picture galleries, *pinacothecae*, which displayed panel paintings from celebrated (usually Greek) artists of the past.[71] It is thought that by evoking this setting the homeowner sought to enhance their image as cultured member of the elite.[72]

While the art of the house certainly imitated reality it is often interpreted as reflecting the social aspirations of the homeowner rather than their immediate reality. The imitation of public settings discussed above could indicate that the homeowner was an important member of the public sphere or could indicate aspiration to such a position. Zanker believes that the art of the house ultimately imitates the elite country estate (*villa*) and by this association mimics the lifestyle of the elite.[73] This assertion is based on the assumption that those who did not possess a *villa* aspired to have one. While actually obtaining a *villa* was unlikely to happen in reality for all but the most wealthy of the population, it was possible for the well-off city dweller to recreate the illusion of *villa* life through the art of their home.

In addition to its illusive and aspirational functions the art of the house could reflect the identity of the homeowner and occupants in a far more direct manner, being almost blatantly self-promotional at times. This is most noticeable in the mosaics of North

[70]Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 25). For Roman attitudes towards luxury see Chapter 2, especially the section on Lucullus.

[71] Van Buren (1938).

[72] Clarke (1991: 64).

[73] Zanker (1998).

Africa which often depict the owner himself.[74] Mosaics placed in the *fauces* at Pompeii may have also reflected the identity of the homeowner, his occupation, interests, or specific motifs associated with the household.[75]

The art of the house could also clearly define boundaries between spaces. As has already been seen in the above discussion of the house, the relative grandness or humbleness of a space, in terms of both architecture and decoration, serves as an indicator of the function of that space, particularly its public or private role within the home. For example the crude decoration of a wall using dark lines painted against a light background, perhaps a rudimentary form of marbling, is believed to have define the boundary of the servile area of a house.[76]

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the significance of the public role of the house, both in its architectural design and the purpose of its decorative scheme. While traditional nomenclature has come under criticism for encouraging a simplistic understanding of the function of spaces within the house, it still provides a useful introduction to the role of different spaces as long as we are careful not to become restricted by it. The same can be said of the ideal layout of the house. While few houses are able to follow the exact plan of the ideal house, the attempt of homeowners to at least appear to adhere to it, demonstrated by the existence of a central axis in the majority of Pompeian houses, establishes the importance of the ideal plan in theory, if not in practice. The discussion of art in the home further supports the connection between the public role of the homeowner and the

---

[74] Ellis (2000: 7).

[75] Hales (2003: 110).

[76] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 39).

articulation of the house. The examination of material evidence from Pompeii in the next

chapter will serve to reinforce this connection.

4

Art in the Roman Home

The relationship between art and identity in the Roman home is a complex one. As the previous chapters have demonstrated Roman attitudes towards their own identity often involved multiple affiliations which are not always apparent or logical to us today. This chapter will look at the material evidence from three houses from Pompeii: House I 10, 1, the Casa del Fabbro (I 10, 7), and the House of Menander (I 10, 4). All three belong to the Insula of Menander in Region I of the town (Fig. 4.1). The discussion will centre on those rooms of the house which have been identified at the main reception rooms in Chapter 3. This decision is partly based on the idea that these rooms, due to their public nature and function are the most likely to have been involved in promoting the identity of the homeowner. It is also a matter of limitation in the word count: the entirety of this thesis could be dedicated to the art of the House of Menander alone and still not cover all aspects of it. Before launching into discussion of the houses it will be useful to gain an understanding of the site, its history and associated issues.

Pompeii

The town of Pompeii lies about 200 km south of Rome, and was founded sometime in the seventh or sixth century BCE and was destroyed in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. Located on the on the Sarnus plain in southern Campania, Pompeii was a busy
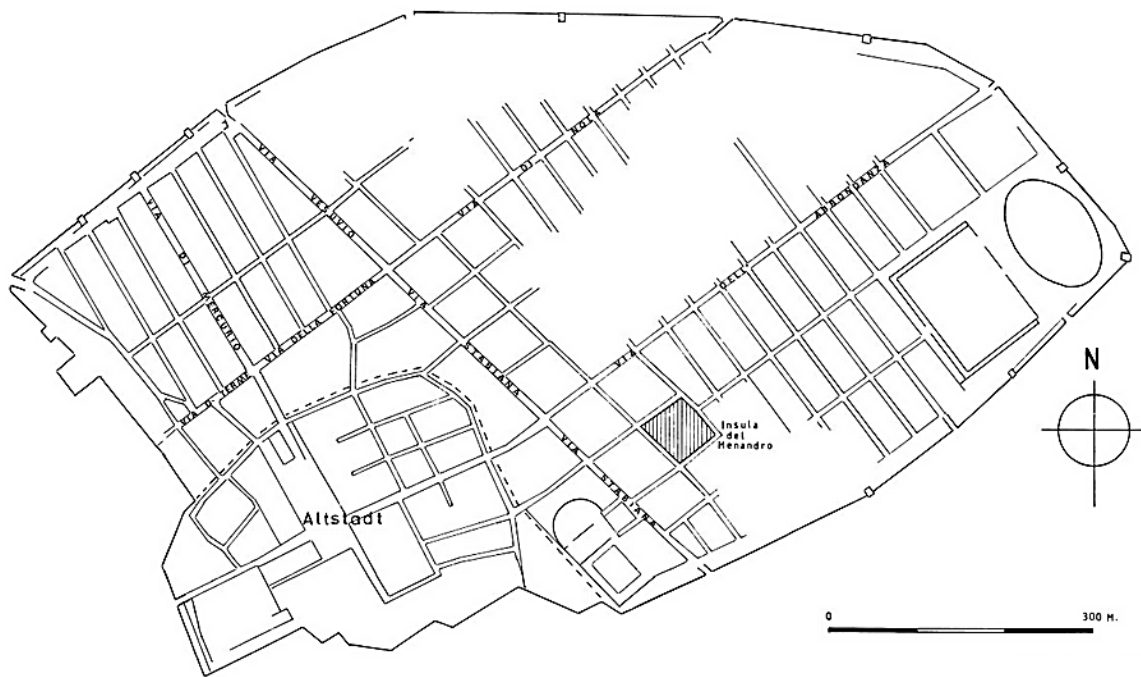
Figure 4.4 Map of Pompeii showing location of the Insula of the Menander.

port at the time of its destruction.[1] Despite the long history of occupation, scholarly interest in the site has largely focused on the Roman period, beginning with the veteran colony imposed upon Pompeii in 80 BCE, following its involvement in the Social War against Rome, and continuing through until the destruction of the city in 79 CE.[2] Yet, the town came under the influence of a number of different peoples throughout its long life, including Oscans, Greeks, Samnites, and Romans, and this is reflected in the town as it survives today.[3] It is true however, that as a result of the Roman colonisation in 80 BCE the town's political status and administrative structure were changed, and accompanied by the 2000 Roman veterans sent to live in the town, this would have drastically changed its social fabric.[4]

---

[1] Descoeudres (1994).

[2] Cooley (2003: 18).

[3] Bon (1997: 11).

[4] Cooley 2003: 19).

In the past Pompeii has been considered an ideal archaeological site, a day in the life of an ancient town frozen in time and preserved without disturbance from antiquity through to modern times. This 'Pompeii premise' has meant that the material evidence of the town has been interpreted as representing everyday life exactly as it was in 79 CE. It has now been decisively demonstrated that this is not the case.[5] The eruption of Vesuvius occurred over the course of two days with the final burial of the town happening only in the last few hours of the event.[6] Given the length of the eruption it is obvious that any remains in the town are unlikely to reflect the activities of everyday life which would have been disrupted during the eruption to say the least. People would have had time, and cause, to cease their everyday activities and either seek shelter or flee from the eruption, taking with them whatever possessions they felt necessary. Other natural processes and human interference, both in the lead up to the eruption and throughout the 2, 000 years since the event, have had a wide ranging impact on the final state of the remains. Pompeii is not a town frozen in time but is rather a site with a complex history of deposition and disturbance.

There is some debate amongst scholars as to the state of the town in the lead up to the eruption. Up until recently it has been common to assume that the town was in a state of general decline, with a large number of domestic properties lying empty or having been converted into warehouses or workshops at the time of the eruption. The earliest modern excavations of the supposedly frozen town yielded a great deal less in the way of portable wealth than had been expected for a site that had lain apparently untouched for over   1500

---

[5] See for example Cooley (2003); Allison (2004).

[6] Cooley (2003: 38).

Figure 4.5 Lararium Relief from the House of Caecilius Iucundus, Pompeii.

years.[7] Scholars have traditionally ascribed this to a decline in Pompeii's population in the years leading up to 79. A major earthquake felt throughout the region in 62 CE is generally cited as the reason for this. That an earthquake occurred, and was of significant magnitude, is attested in the written sources.[8] There is also evidence of earthquake damage, and subsequent repair work, throughout the town lending credence to the literary evidence. Additionally, a relief on the *lararium* if the House of Caecilius Iucundus, depicts Pompeii being shaken by an earthquake (Fig. 4.2).[9] Many of the buildings in Pompeii were in a state of disrepair in 79, a situation that is of concern and would indicate a town in a widespread state of social and economic decline if it were all to be attributed to an earthquake which had occurred 17 years earlier. It is not, however, clear that this earthquake was an isolated event. While the ancient sources mention only one earthquake specifically they also indicate that seismic activity was relatively common in the Campanian region in the years prior to 79 CE.[10] Indeed, earthquakes are quite common in

---

[7] Lazer (1997: 105).

[8] Tac. *ann.* 15.22; Sen. *Natur. Quaest.* 6.1.2.

[9] Cooley (2003: 19-21).

[10] There is some discrepancy in the dating of the 62 CE earth quake in the sources, Tacitus dates it to the consulship of P. Memmius Regulus (62 CE) while Seneca places it a year later in the consulship of C. Memmius Regulus and L. Verginius Rufus (Tac. *Ann.* 15.22; Sen. *QNat.* 6.1.2), which could indicate the occurrence of two major earthquakes or may be attributed to confusion about the date. See Tac. *Ann.* 15.34; Sen. *QNat.* 6.1.2-3; Suet. *Ner.* 20; and Plin. *Ep.* 6.20 for evidence of the regularity of seismic activity in the Campanian region.

the lead up to a major eruption of any volcano.[11] Further the archaeological evidence indicates that buildings constructed after 62, and therefore the earthquake, also suffered from earthquake damage. This can be seen at the central baths where, even though they are generally agreed to have been built in the period after 62 CE, the eastern wall of the *caldarium* (hot room) displays evidence of having needed to be repaired and reinforced prior to the eruption.[12]. This and other evidence of buildings that had suffered earthquake damage and been subsequently repaired only to be damaged again, support Pliny in his assertion that earthquakes were common for the region. While ongoing seismic activity in the period leading up to 79 CE accounts for the state of disrepair in the town, epigraphic evidence suggests that social and political spheres in the town were lively and active right down to the time of the eruption.[13] It is also possible that a lack of bodies found in the town, normally cited as evidence of abandonment, is indicative of attempts made to escape by Pompeians instead of widespread abandonment, particularly by the elite, in the period after 62 CE.[14]

It is clear that Pompeii did not lay entirely untouched in the years between its destruction and rediscovery. There is evidence that the site was disturbed in antiquity. Holes in the walls between rooms and buildings are relatively common. It is possible that some of these were made by inhabitants of the town who had become trapped in their houses during the final stages of the eruption. This appears to have been the case with a group of skeletons found on either side of a hole cut into the wall between corridor L and room 19 of the House of Menander (Fig. 4.8). This group includes the remains of children under the age of five making it far more likely that they were Pompeians trapped by the

---

[11] Lazer (1997: 104).

[12] Cooley (2003: 23).

[13] Allison (2004: 20-21).

[14] Allison (2004: 19-21).

eruption than later intruders.[15] Other holes, tunnelling through not only walls but also through the hardened volcanic deposit, were clearly dug after the eruption. It is possible they were made by survivors returning to the site and digging down into their own homes to retrieve valuables however this need not have been the case. If nothing else, the drastic alterations made to the landscape by the eruption would have made it difficult to locate specific buildings.[16] Despite this the fact that holes were dug through the volcanic deposit makes it obvious that the site was disturbed, perhaps by survivors in the immediate aftermath, certainly by looters in late antiquity. Evidence for this for later looting is demonstrated by a number of late antique lamps that have been found at the site. These could not have been left behind by the Pompeians and therefore show that the site was accessed at a later date. It is clear that post eruption looting of the site must account for at least some of the lack of extraordinary finds at Pompeii.

There are of course other considerations to take into account when discussing the disruption of the site and its artefacts. Early excavation techniques and aims left much to be desired. When modern excavations at the site first began under the sponsorship Charles VII of Naples in 1748, the main aim was to recover artistic treasures to enhance his reputation and expand the royal collection.[17] While control of the site changed hands a number of times over the next hundred years, the recovery of precious objects and ancient works of art remained the main objective of excavators. The impact of this enthusiasm for ancient art can be seen in the number of gaps in the decoration of the walls of Pompeian houses, where particularly good frescoes have been removed and are sold to private collectors and museums.[18] Minor finds and utilitarian artefacts have often gone

---

[15] Allison (2004: 24).

[16] Allison (2004: 23).

[17] Gordon (2007: 38); See also Cooley and Cooley (2004: 192-218).

[18] Stewart (2004: 75).

unpublished, even in the more modern excavations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and this has had lasting consequences for the study of the social function and role of spaces in Pompeii today. Modern scholarship is attempting to rectify this problem by examining the excavation diaries and daily reports of earlier excavators in an effort to recover artefact assemblages at Pompeii.[19]

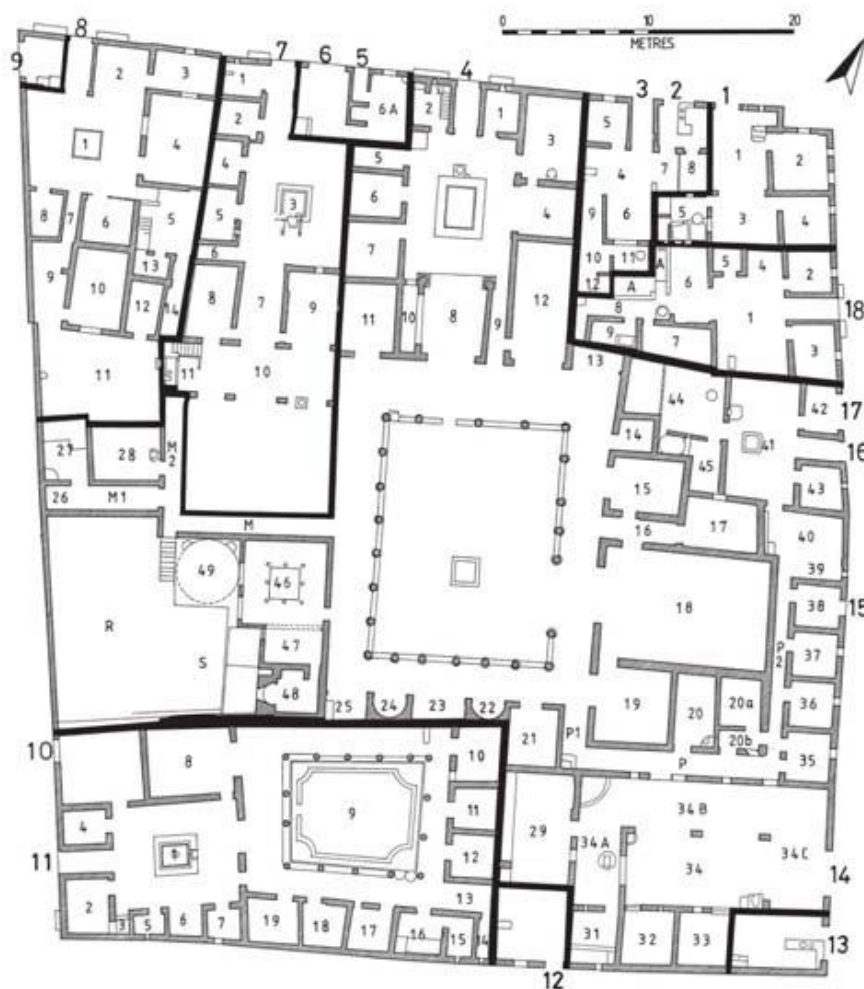## The Insula of the Menander

Figure 4.6 The Insula of the Menander, Plan.

The Insula of the Menander occupies a large, slightly irregular shaped block of Region I (Fig. 4.3). This region of Pompeii is normally considered to be dated earlier than

---

[19] See for example Allison (2004: 29-41).

the regions to the north east but to be of later date than the older part of the town which lies to the west.[20] The origins of the insula are thought to date to the late third to mid second century BCE with the houses related to entrances 1, 4, and 8 being the earliest structures on the site, although their boundaries and layouts changed much over the insula's life.[21] The insula is dominated by the House of Menander (1 10, 4) which, at 1830 m^2, occupies well over half the block. Like many of the houses of Pompeii those of the Insula of the Menander show signs of having been tunnelled into and looted in antiquity. Excavations at the insula began under in 1926 and continued through until the entire insula was uncovered in 1933. Parts of the insula were restored in conjunction with these excavations with further restorations taking place in the 1970s and 1980s.
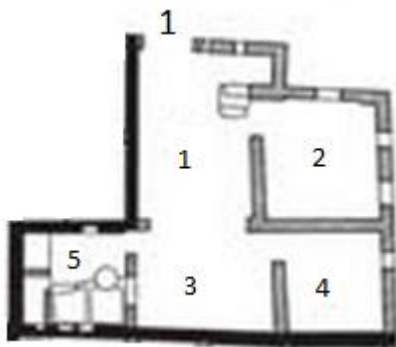
House I 10, 1, Figure 4.4:

Figure 4.7 House I 10, 1, Plan.

Excavated in the 1926 and 1932 seasons and with a floor space of just 80 m^2 House I 10, 1 is by far the smallest house in the present study. The house consisted of five

---

[20] Ling (1997: 7).

[21] Ling (1997: 223).

Figure 4.8 House I 10, 1, Third Style decoration of *atrium* and *tablinum*.

ground floor rooms, including a kitchen courtyard (room 5), and three second story rooms accessed via a stairwell in room 1. There is no *fauces*; instead the house opens directly into a room which has been identified as the *atrium* (1). Ling maintains this identification despite acknowledging its lack of features traditionally associated with the room type. [22] Allison identifies the room as the central hall of the house and, based upon the artefact assemblage of the room, consisting mostly of door and lock fittings, suggests it played a similar role of open reception space, providing access to the more private spaces of the house as the traditional *atrium* had.[23] The room is decorated in a simple rendering of the Third Style on the side walls, and has a *lararium* painting on the front wall to the left of the entryway (*atrium*) (Fig. 4.5). The only figural motifs in the decoration are an eagle, flying with a palm branch, a pair of panthers (both on the west wall), and the *lararium*

---

[22] Ling (1997: 25).

[23] Allison (2006: 289).

image. However, the *lararium* may not have been perceived as an important element in the decoration of the room in 79 CE. Ling's suggestion that it may not have been in use during the final stage of occupation because it had been cut in half by the stairs seems likely.[24] There is also an alcove to the east of the door which may have functioned as a latrine at one time, although access to this had also been cut off by the construction of the stairs.

On the opposite side of room 1 to the entrance, room 3 has been identified as a *tablinum*.[25] This identification is largely due to the positioning of the room which mirrors the location of the *tablinum* in a traditional house plan. The artefact assemblage of this room does not support this identification. The room contained a bone fitting, possibly from a couch, a number of items associated with food preparation, including a *mortarium* (mortar) and pestle, as well as items associated with bathing, including a bronze *strigil*.[26] There were also artefacts associated with other work related activities including a loom weight and a pile of lime in the southeast corner which could have been used to carry out household repairs.[27] The nature of the artefact assemblage of this room has led Allison to suggest that it functioned as a storage room at the time of the eruption.[28] The decoration in this room was a continuation of the Third Style decoration of room 1, in a slightly more elaborate manner. The colour scheme is the same (yellow, black, and red dominate) but the design is elaborated by the presence of small still-life panels and candelabra as well as frieze of plants and small birds running around the bottom portion of the wall. Both

---

[24] Ling (1997: 25).

[25] Ling (1997: 26).

[26] Allison (2006: 42-44).

[27] Allison (2006: 290) The suggestion that the lime was set aside to be used in household repairs gains support from the presence of a number of roof tiles found in room 5.

[28] Allison (2006: 290).

rooms 1 and 3 also had decorative pavements of white and coloured marble although they were not of high quality.

Room 4, accessed via room 3, has been identified as a *cubiculum* although as demonstrated in Chapter 3 this title can indicate a wide variety of different functions. The only find in this room was a set of iron pivot bases which do little to solve the mystery of its function. The walls of this room were decorated simply in the Fourth Style, as can be established by the presence of a basic embroidery border running across the top and bottom of the wall.[29] Ling suggests the room could have been used as a reception or dining room.[30] The same conclusion may be drawn in room 2 where, although the decoration does not survive in enough detail to provide any information about the scheme or iconography, the artefact assemblage is linked to the serving and storage of food.[31]

The original identification of this house as a combination dwelling and artisan's workshop is not supported by the evidence.[32] On the basis of the artefact assemblage Allison concludes that the house was likely uninhabited at the time of the eruption (mostly due to the lack of food preparation equipment) but this need not be the case.[33] Although it is not directly within the parameters of this study, the finds associated with the upper floors suggest that they may have been occupied in 79 CE. The upstairs rooms, particularly the one above room 4, also had much better quality decoration than the ground floor. Done in the Fourth Style, this decoration indicates occupation in the period after 62 CE. It is possible that the house was undergoing renovation or repair work at the

---

[29] Ling and Ling (2005: 157).

[30] Ling (1997: 34).

[31] Allison (2005: 289).

[32] Allison (2005: 292).

[33] Allison (2005: 92).

time of the eruption.[34] If this is the case, the upper floor may have been completed first, allowing the household to retreat to the upstairs rooms while work continued on the ground level. The lack of finds related to food preparation may be attributed to the household eating from a nearby food stall while the kitchen (room 5) was out of commission.

The arrangement of rooms 1 and 2 resembles the central axis discussed in Chapter 3, albeit in a condensed fashion. This combined with the continuity of their decorative schemes suggests that they were intended to work as a reception suite. The fact that the owner of House I 10, 1 had felt the need to create the impression of the traditional reception rooms, set along a central axis, suggests that the public role of the house was important to him. It is unfortunate that not enough survives of the decorative scheme or artefact assemblage to reveal more about the owner's occupation or identity.

Casa del Fabbro, I 10, 7, Figure 4.6:
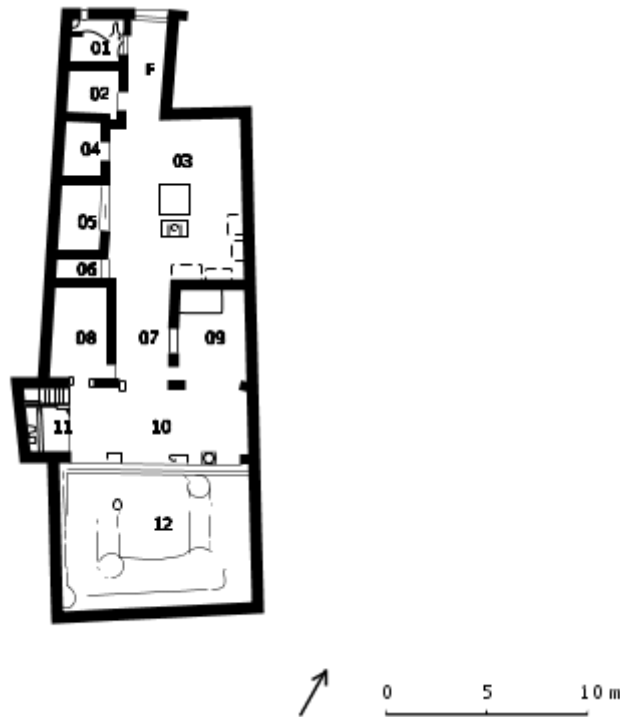
---

[34] Ling (1997: 32).

Figure 4.9 Casa del Fabbro, I 10, 7, Plan.

The Casa del Fabbro (I 10, 7) was excavated by Elia during the 1927, 1928, 1930-31, and 1932-33 seasons. The house has a floor space of 310 m^2 placing it in the mid-size range for houses at Pompeii.[35] The owner of this house was identified as M. Volsius Iuvencus by Della Corte, however, the identification is regarded today as tenuous at best.[36] It is clear that the house was occupied at the time of the eruption, not only is the Casa del Fabbro the second most artefact rich house of the insula (the House of Menander being the most), the discovery of two skeletons in room 9 of the house indicate occupation. The house was entered via the *fauces* (F), although unlike most this one had two rooms (the first of which, room 1, housed a latrine), opening directly onto it before it joined the *atrium*. The layout evokes the traditional *atrium* house, with the *fauces*, *atrium* (3), *tablinum* (7), and *hortus* (12) laid out along a central axis, however the house lacks

---

[35] Ling (1997: 163).

[36] Ling (1997: 163).

75

symmetry as all but one of the other rooms are arranged along the western side of the house. The house also had an upper floor that could be accessed via one of two staircases located in rooms 1 and 11 (the kitchen). Not much can be said about the upper floor, although the finds associated with it are similar in nature to those associated with the ground floor.

Despite appearing to conform to the ideal layout of an *atrium* house the owner of the Casa del Fabbro does not seem to have been overly concerned with the public role of the house. Decoration in both the *fauces* and *atrium* is considerably rough. The *fauces* was rendered in coarse plaster while the *atrium* was plastered in plain white.[37] In addition the Third Style decoration of the *tablinum*, which is now lost, is described as having been very damaged by Elia, indicating that it may have been in a state of disrepair at the time of the eruption.[38] This state of decoration in what amounts to the main reception suite of the house suggests that the role of these spaces as rooms in which to display ones wealth and status was not of great importance to the owner. The decoration of the main areas is contrasted with that of the rest of the house which included well executed frescoes of the Third (rooms 8 and 9) and Fourth Styles (rooms 2, 4 and 5). The iconography of the art in these rooms favours mythological subjects, images of cupids and griffins in the Third Style rooms, and scenes of the Fall of Icarus and of Paris on Mount Ida drawn in the Fourth Style room 9.[39] The contrast between the refined wall paintings in more private areas of the house and the rough decoration of the more public rooms suggests a change

---

[37] Ling and Ling (2005: 133).

[38] Ling and Ling (2005: 132).

[39] Ling and Ling (2005: 138, 141-142).

in purpose of the house, either at the hands of a new owner or possibly a change in circumstances for the owner.[40]

In addition to being roughly decorated the *atrium* appears to have played a slightly different role than was typical. While one of the functions of the *atrium* was to provide storage by housing chests or cabinets, the number of these present in the *atrium* of the Casa del Fabbro (there were at least six, possibly seven) would have left the space feeling quite crowded.[41] The artefacts housed in this storage furniture varied greatly including objects associated with metal working, writing, measurement, and bathing as well as some surgical equipment.[42] Other public spaces of the house show a similar mixture of artefact types. For example, the remains of at least twenty iron chisels (associated with woodworking), four iron files, a bronze surgical spatula and scalpel, along with a variety of other bronze and iron tools and utensils, were found in the *portico* (10)(Fig. 4.7).[43] Both Elia and Della Corte suggested that the owner may have been a cabinet maker. However, many of the objects this identification was based on have since been identified as having equal potential for

---

[40] Ling (1997: 150).

[41] Allison (2006: 338-339).

[42] Allison (2006: 339-340).

[43] See Allison (2006: 180-191) for a full list of objects found in the *portico*.
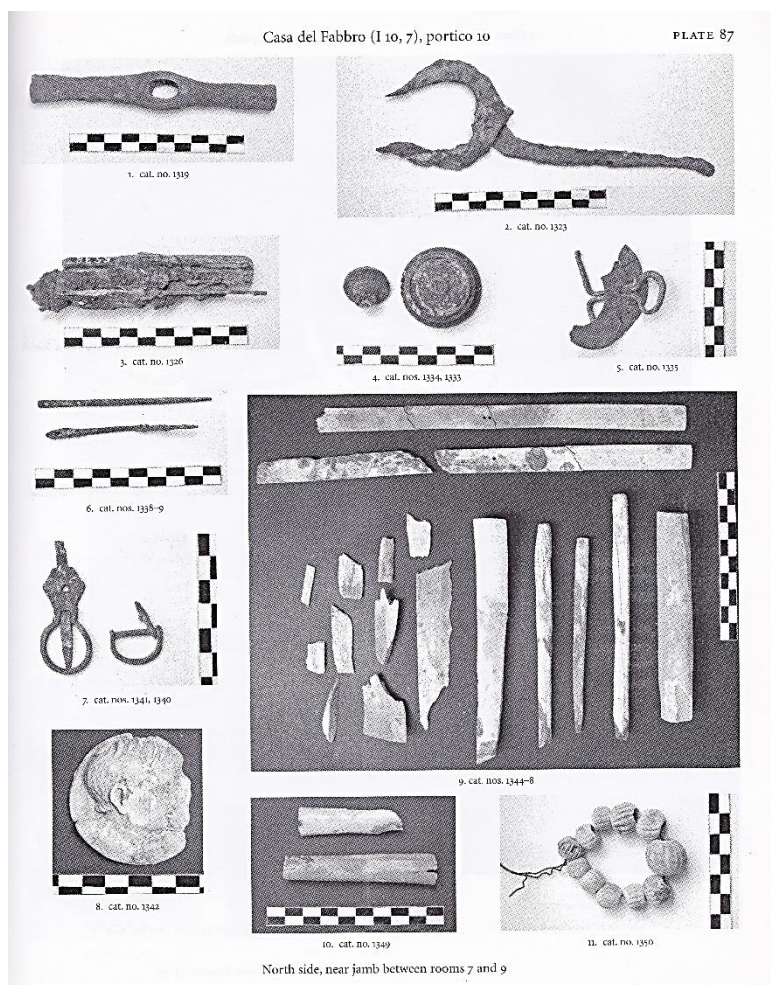
Figure 4.10 Some of the finds from the *portico*, Casa del Fabbro.

alternative functions, for example, providing storage for medicines.[44] The presence of medical equipment in the house may indicate that the owner was a doctor, or perhaps even a doctor and cabinet maker.[45] The high concentration of metal objects from a variety of different trades and professions has led to the identification of the owner as a metalworker (Casa del Fabbro translates as House of the Smith). Wallace-Hadrill suggested the owner had been a scrap merchant as the assemblage includes a number of damaged items, but does not include a hammer and anvil which would have been vital in

---

[44] Ling (1997: 162).

[45] Ling (1997: 162).

a metalworker's workshop.[46] Allison agrees with this assessment. However, Ling believes it may be a little too convenient an answer to the complex question of just who owned this house.[47] It is also possible that this house was occupied by a group of tenants. This would account for the variety of trades represented in the artefact assemblage. If a number of people were living in the ground floor *cubicula* and upstairs rooms it is conceivable that the open spaces such as the *atrium* would have acted as communal areas, which would account for the larger than usual number of storage chests and cupboards found in the *atrium*.

House of Menander, I 10, 4, Figure 4.8:

Figure 4.11 House of the Menander, I 10, 4, Plan.

The House of Menander was excavated by Maiuri between 1926 and 1932. Measuring 1, 830 m^2, it is by far the largest property of the insula. The size of the house

---

[46] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 193).

[47] Allison (2006: 344); Ling (1997: 162).

places it amongst the largest residences in the town. At 90 m^2 the largest room in this house was larger than House I 10, 1 in its entirety.[48] The layout of the property is asymmetrical, a result of the evolution of the house which started as a much smaller atrium house before slowly expanding by absorbing neighbouring properties to become the sprawling atrium-peristyle mansion we see today.[49] Ling suggests the layout of the house is best divided into three distinct sections: the main residential core comprised of the atrium-peristyle complex, a kitchen quarter to the west (rooms 51, 52 and 54, and corridor 53), and a stable-yard and staff quarters to the east (rooms 20-20b, 29, 31-45, and corridor L).[50] There is also evidence of an upper floor, accessed via a staircase in room 2. As stated this study will focus on the main reception rooms of the house, that is, those that make up Ling's residential core.

The residential core of the House of Menander conforms more closely to the layout of the ideal Roman house than any other house of the insula. It is the only house to preserve the *atrium-tablinum* structure in full and is one of only two houses in the insula to possess a *peristyle* (the other being the Casa degli Amanti, I 10, 11). The layout of the *fauces* (a), *atrium* (b), *tablinum* (8), and *peristyle* (c) creates a view into the house that is dominated by the sense of a central axis (see Fig. 3.3). The care that has been taken in constructing this view is evident in the positioning of the columns in the *peristyle* which have been spaced so as to allow an unobstructed the view through to the *exedra* (23). Perspective has also been used to enhance this view. The columns at the entrance to the *tablinum*, as well as those on the north, and the south side of the peristyle get progressively smaller as they move further away from the door, creating a sense of

---

[48] Wallace-Hadrill (1994: 79).

[49] See Ling (1997) for the evolution of the House of Menander.

[50] Ling (1997: 47).

depth.[51] Clearly the view along the central axis was important to the owner of this house. The view from room 18, identified as a dining room, also appears to have been important in the design of the house. As with the view along the central axis columns in the peristyle directly opposite the doorway have been spaced so as to not interfere with the view from this room.[52]

From this layout of rooms in the main residential core of the house it may be assumed that the owner was actively involved in public life. This section of the house has all of the spaces that would normally be associated with receiving and entertaining guests, laid out in a sequence which has been identified as being designed to promote the public role of the house. Furthermore, the major reception rooms, *atrium*, *tablinum*, *peristyle*, and *triclinium*, are all of a size to accommodate a large number of individuals suggesting that the owner may have been a person of some influence.

The House of Menander is the best decorated of the insula, and is the only one of the three houses under discussion here to preserve figured scenes in enough quality and quantity to examine the iconography for information on the personal interests that the owner wished to project. The decorative ensemble of the house can be assigned to one of two styles: the Second Style, dating around 50-25 BCE, and the Fourth Style, around 50-79 CE.[53] Discussion of the entirety of the decorative scheme is not possible in the space available here but a few key points may be made.

---

[51] Ling (1997: 140).

[52] Columns outside room 15 also appear to have been spaced to avoid obstruction of the view into the *peristyle*.

[53] Ling and Ling (2005). There is evidence of First Style decoration in a room which had been built over by room 18 which is not included in the present study as it would not have been accessible to the final owners of the house. The only evidence for Third Style decoration is a fragment of indeterminate origin used to infill a pit in passage L.

Decoration in the Fourth Style is far more prevalent than the Second. It is possible that earthquake damage from 62 CE or throughout subsequent years necessitated widespread redecorating. This appears to have been the case in room 3 which had been decorated in the Fourth style before being damaged and requiring replastering of the walls, done in rough black plaster to match the predominant colour scheme of the surviving frescoes rather than having the frescoes replaced.[54] Due to the widespread adoption of the Fourth Style throughout the house the decision to retain some Second Style features must represent an active choice on the part of the homeowner. Because of this the Second Style decorations, both on the walls and on the floor, must be considered to be as important in the overall decorative scheme for the final owner as they had been to the one who had them installed over half a century earlier.

Decoration in the front section of the house is less extravagant than that of the spaces associated with the peristyle at the rear but this need not imply that the front section was any less important to the owner. According to Ling and Ling *atrium* areas, as well as other more public spaces, tend to be a little more conservative in their decoration than the more private rooms of the house.[55] The continued importance of the front section of the house is reflected in the Fourth Style decorative program of the three main reception rooms, the *atrium* (b), *tablinum* (8) and *ala* (4), which, through a shared colour scheme and repetition of basic features, are clearly tied together as a reception suite (Fig. 3.3). This would suggest that their function, at least at the time of decoration, remained tied to the traditional role associated with the reception of guests. Additionally these three rooms

---

[54] Ling and Ling (2005: 99).

[55] Ling and Ling (2005: 99-100).

Figure 4.12 Menander, Western wall of exedra 23, House of the Menander.

contain a number of figured scenes important to the iconographical scheme of the house.

As stated the House of Menander is the only one of these three houses that has a decorative scheme preserved in enough detail to ask questions about its iconographical scheme. While such schemes are generally difficult to establish in Roman houses a few things can be said about the House of Menander. Firstly, there are a number of frescoes throughout the house that reference literary themes. These include the eponymous Menander on the western wall of room 23 (Fig. 4.9), the figure in the damaged painting on the opposite may have possibly been Euripides.[56] Literary images also include those designed to tell a narrative, such as the images from the Trojan cycle on the walls of

---

[56] This identification is based entirely upon the presence of tragic masks in the painting, mirroring the comic masks that appear with Menander. The rest of the image is badly damaged making it impossible to tell who exactly was pictured, it could as easily have been any writer of tragedy. Clarke (1991: 191).

Figure 4.13 The Sack of Troy, room 4, House of Menander.

room 4: the death of Laocoon on the south wall, the Trojan Horse on the east wall, and

the sack of Troy on the north wall (Fig. 4.10). Secondly, Dionysiac imagery dominates

the decorative scheme. While the image is severely damaged it has been suggested that

the fresco on the south wall of room 23 depicts Dionysos himself.[57] The south wall of

room 23 forms the terminus of the view along the central axis from the door. Because of

its location the image placed on this wall would appear to be particularly important to the

decorative scheme.[58] This being the case it would appear Dionysos was of particular

importance to the owner. It has been suggested that a connection can be made between

the use of Dionysiac imagery (Dionysos was the god of the theatre), the presence of well-

---

[57] Ling and Ling (2005: 86-87).

[58] Clarke (1991: 188).

known literary figures (Menander and possibly Euripides), and the narrative scenes, that reveals the owner to have had an interest in literature, with a particular affection for works of epic and drama.[59] While this attribution is speculative, although given the images of Diana and Venus in the flanking exedra the identification of Dionysos would appear correct, we can say that the prevalence of literary themes reveals an owner who wished to present himself as an intellectual. Clarke suggests that the mythological paintings of this house were meant to recall well-known works by famous Greek artists.[60] The fact that many of the panel scenes throughout the house do not conform to established types, but rather appear to be unique in their choice of subject matter or mode of representation, suggests active participation by the owner in the selection of subjects and compositions.[61] This combined with the literary theme of the art would support the idea that the owner wished to present himself and be seen as a cultured individual.

The image presented by the architecture and the decorative scheme is somewhat at odds with the artefact assemblage of the house. While a wide variety of artefacts were found throughout the house there is a distinct lack of objects associated with domestic activities in the front section, particularly the *atrium* (b), leading Allison to conclude that this area may have been partially abandoned at the time of the eruption.[62] The *impluvium* was damaged and, while it is possible this occurred during the eruption it is equally possible that it was damaged some time prior to 79 CE.[63] In addition to the damage to the *impluvium* there is evidence of damage, and repair work, throughout the house, most notably in room 18 and the bath suite (rooms 46-48). While Ling maintains that the bath

---

[59] Ling and Ling (2005: 86-87).

[60] Clarke (1991: 182).

[61] Ling and Ling (2005: 104-106).

[62] Allison (2006: 333).

[63] Allison (2006: 302) suggests a clamp found in the *tablinum* (8) was used in the repair of the *impluvium*.

suite was being reconstructed at the time of the eruption, Allison believes that the restoration of both it and the large dining room (18) had been abandoned by the time of the eruption.[64] This has interesting implications for the role of the house under the last owner in 79 CE. That the house was occupied at this time is undisputed. There is clear evidence of food preparation and consumption in the peristyle area and coins found with the hoard of silverware placed in the underground room b can be dated to 78-79 CE.[65] In addition to this the *tablinum* contained the remains of two bronze and wood couches, objects which are commonly found in functioning *tablina* throughout Pompeii suggesting that the space was in use despite the state of disrepair in the rest of the house.[66]

On the basis of this lack of repair Maiuri argued that the house had been abandoned by its original, elite owners after the 62 earthquake and had fallen into the hands of a member of the lower orders, possibly a freedman.[67] While this is possible it is based upon modern assumptions about the taste and means of freedmen that may not be true. There is another possibility: that the house had been extensively damaged by seismic activity in the lead up to the eruption. If this were the case it should be expected that short term fixes, such as the rough replastering of room 3, would be made, and that repair of luxury spaces within the home, such as the baths, would be delayed while more essential spaces were restored first.

Conclusion:

This discussion of a selection of houses from the Insula of the Menander has served to illustrate some of the strengths and weaknesses of the employing the art and

---

[64] Ling (1997: 143); Allison (2006: 333).

[65] Allison (2005: 315).

[66] Allison (2005: 302).

[67] Cooley (2003: 27).

architecture of the home to an understanding of the owner's identity. House I 10, 1 was the smallest, and the least informative house in the study. The simplicity of the decorative scheme and paucity of finds at this house indicate that it may not have been inhabited at the time of the eruption. There is, however, evidence of repair work being undertaken which would suggest occupation (at least once the repairs were completed).

The larger and more artefact rich Casa del Fabbro yielded some interesting possibilities regarding the identity of the owner. While the presence of some mythological panels might suggest a culturally aspirational owner its combination with the poorly decorated reception suite of the house may suggest these belonged to the decorative program of an earlier owner. The poor quality of decorations in the reception suite, particularly the *atrium*, combined with the high number of storage furniture items located in this space, suggests a more utilitarian function. It has been suggested that the owner of this house was a craftsman of some description, perhaps even a scrap merchant, and this would match well with the crude decorations as well as the large number of tools from various trades found in the house. Based on the large number of tools from varying professions found in the house it is also possible that it was inhabited by a group of tenants rather than a single owner occupant.

Finally the House of Menander was not only the biggest house of the insula, it is also one of the largest houses in Pompeii. It was expected to deliver a more comprehensive understanding of the homeowner's identity by virtue of having more space to fill with both art and artefacts, and, presumably, a wealthy owner able to adapt its spaces to his needs. The vast, asymmetrical sprawl of the mansion, possessing the luxuries of both a bath suite and servile quarters, speaks to the owner's wealth. As in house I 10, 1 the House of Menander possesses a reception suite that is decoratively connected. The house also contains a strong axial view. These combined present the

image of a homeowner who was very conscious of the public role of his house. The decorative scheme of the house includes a number of panels depicting mythical and narrative scenes, the presence of which suggests an owner who wished to appear cultured in addition to being publically active. The unique composition of a number of these panels suggests direct input on behalf of the homeowner, who, like Cicero, was attempting to reinforce his image as a well-educated, culturally superior individual.[68] This image is however, at odds with the artefact assemblage of the home which suggests the owner may have been experiencing a period of economic decline or even have moved on, selling the house to a new, less affluent owner.

This chapter has demonstrated how the material remains of the Roman home and the art within it can be read to create an understanding of the identity of the homeowner. The discussion has shown that while decorative schemes and architectural elements such as the layout of the house can reveal much about the wealth and aspirations of the homeowner an examination of the artefact assemblage is vital to understanding how spaces within the home were manipulated and used by the owner. The next, and concluding, chapter of this thesis will bring this understanding together with the findings of the previous chapters to look at what our understanding of art and identity in the Roman home can reveal about individuals and identity construction in the Roman world.

---

[68] See discussion of Cicero's decorative program in Chapter 2.

Conclusion

This thesis has tested the theory that the Roman house, and the art within it, can be read for information regarding the identity of the homeowner. This has been done by conducting a thorough examination of the literary and material evidence to gain an understanding of how the Romans conceived of their identity and the role of art and the house which was then tested against a group of three houses from Pompeii.

Scholars have traditionally seen Roman identity as a series of set norms, governed by a rigid social order and defined by the possession of Roman citizenship. Chapter 1 demonstrated that this was not the case. Roman identity was not a fixed concept. It was complex and malleable, and most importantly adaptable. The key elements of Roman identity were based around the public role of the elite male, and were connected to their goal of rising up the social order. The Roman social order was not as rigid as it at first seems, there was opportunity to move both up and down the social ladder, and it is the social climbers such as freedmen who appear to have been the most conscious of the effect visual representations could have upon the perception of their identity. While it may seem odd from a modern perspective, which prioritises singular identity affiliation, Romans were happy to incorporate elements from other peoples, particularly the people of Greece, into the understanding and expression of their own identity. This was most clearly seen in the assimilation of Greek elements into their foundation myths, and in the adaptation of Greek imagery to visually express identity in the early imperial period.

The second chapter focused on how Romans thought about art, the home, and the role of art in the home. By examining references to these three issues in the literary evidence it questioned the widely held view that the Romans did not appreciate art and had no strong artistic tradition. This chapter demonstrated that the Romans had a strong appreciation and understanding of art. Opinions towards art and the home were shaped by the concepts of *luxuria*, *decor*, and *utilitas*, which, as with identity, were based around the role of the elite male. The literary evidence also reinforced the appeal of Greek art among the Roman elite.

Chapter Three looked at the idea of the ideal Roman house, its layout and function, as well as the interpretation of art in the home. The discussion revealed that the layout of the ideal house was closely linked to the public role of the house and, by extension its owner. It was shown that while the ideal house did not exist in reality the idea of it had a profound affect upon the design of real houses. This is most clearly seen in the existence of the central axis, which allowed the homeowner to present the impression of living in the ideal house to the outside viewer. The decorative scheme of the home was shown to have supported the public role of the house by imitating the appearance of public spaces, and by helping to define public and private spaces within the house.

The fourth chapter examined the material evidence from a group of three houses from the Insula of the Menander at Pompeii. The aim of this chapter was to see if the findings of the previous three chapters could be supported by the material evidence, and to see if information about the individual identity of the homeowner could be extracted from the remains of their home. The purpose of this was to find out if the expectations we have developed about the assertion of Roman identity through the home were simply abstract ideals, or, if they actually existed in reality. The discussion of these three houses

showed that the findings of the first three chapters are as relevant to the physical world as they are to theory of the ideal Roman house. All three houses showed signs of at least attempting to employ a central axis, despite the varying shapes of their individual plots. The decoration of the houses also showed signs of attempting to enhance those spaces traditionally associated with the public role of the house. This was particularly true of House I 10, 1 and the House of the Menander which both employed decorative schemes designed to distinguish the major reception rooms as a distinct suite. Evidence of the influence of Greek aesthetics is also strong, particularly in the narrative scenes of the House of Menander. That the house was designed to project the public identity of the homeowner, and that Greek visual culture was an important means of communicating identity, is made clear by this chapter.

The individual identities of the homeowners discussed in Chapter Four were less clear. Due to the small size of the house, its lack of iconography in the decorative scheme, and the low number of finds, the identity of the owner of House I 10, 1 was unsurprisingly the least easy to recover. Nothing can be said with certainty about the owner of this house which may have even been abandoned at the time of the eruption. In the Casa del Fabbro we faced the opposite dilemma. The sheer number of finds in this house, particularly metal tools and implements, makes identifying the owner a confusing and ultimately near impossible task. He could have been employed in any one of the different trades represented or none of them. It is not even clear if this house was occupied by a single owner or by a number of tenants. The iconography of the decoration does little to clarify this. In contrast to the owners of the first two houses, some information about the identity of the owner of the House of Menander can be gleaned from his house. In particular the use of narrative scenes of unique composition, present

this homeowner as a well-educated, culturally inclined individual who may have felt a particular affinity for the world of Greek drama.

This thesis sought to test the idea that the Roman home can be read for information about the owner's identity. It has demonstrated that the house played a significant role in the establishment of identity. The question of whether the identity of the individual can be recovered from the house has been less clearly resolved. The conclusions drawn from Pompeii demonstrate that while it is possible to recover information on identity from some houses, such as the House of Menander, others, like the Casa del Fabbro, provide only conflicting accounts and from many, like House I 10, 1, it may be possible to recover nothing at all.

Illustration Credits:

Chapter 1:

1.1 Barbarism and Civilisation. A New History of the World (2015), The Altar of Peace, (viewed 18 September 2015), <http://www.civilization.org.uk/augustus/ara-pacis-2>.

1.2 Metropolitan Museum of Art (2015), The Collection Online, (viewed 21 September 2015), <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/248722?=&imgno=0&tabname=related-objects>.

1.3 Study Blue (2015), Art History Final, (viewed 21 September 2015), <https://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/29/flashcards/773029/jpg/augusto_di_via_labicana_021317598053241.jpg>.

Chapter 3:

3.1 Masters, S. (2009) 'Light, Space and Affluent Taste: Ancient Pompeian Houses and Their Decoration', Akroterion 54, 145, (of pp. 141-157)

3.2 Masters, S. (2009) 'Light, Space and Affluent Taste: Ancient Pompeian Houses and Their Decoration', Akroterion 54, 145, (of pp. 141-157)

3.3 Hellis, C. (2010), 'House of Menander Pompeii', on Flickr, (viewed 18 September 2015), <
https://www.flickr.com/photos/30099537@N02/6692389255/in/photolist-bcofaD-7f8uSd-7f4B6P-7f8uiq-7f4AWt-7f4yKT-bUTxzv-7f8tkh-7f8rYE-7f8snQ-7f4BiX-7f4AJv-7f4BJD-8qjbE6-sFY63-pXwE9t-jZ78WZ-nXKPxY-biqAE-jZ9SYL-dk8w9r-611uVb-jZ9Utu-hkVkZe-eeUD4q-hkUNaK-hkUA3Z-aMNvTe-dk8xvs-dhdp83-cExzSY-cDBXKU-ziLPxa-dhdoCq-aMNtuc-omyK48-cDC3Sj-cDC6U5-cDBTmq-cDBJRo-dhdqp6-njZb6w-zAiPnt-dHA6m5-biqAw-biqAz-onQYi7-hkUuhj-cb6XsL-aMNy8n>.

3.4 The Ellis School (2011), 'First-style wall painting from a Samite house', on Flickr, (viewed 25 September 2015), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ellisarthistory/5884814198/in/photolist-8qRvuY-9Y2deL-tHJN9h-bfm58H-mwSQgH-8hHePX-aBQ68x-aBQ5TK-aBNCeT-a5vYSf-KFdMe>.

3.5 Metropolitan Museum of Art (2015), Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, (viewed 25 September 2015), <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/03.14.13a-g>.

3.6 Pompeii in Pictures (date unknown), House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto, (viewed 26 September 2015), <http://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R5/5%2004%20a%20house%20 p2.htm>.

3.7 Classics Semester Abroad (2015), Spring 2013, <u>(viewed 26 September 2015),</u> <http://sites.davidson.edu/csa/wall-painting-styles/<u>>.</u>

Chapter 4:

4.1 Ling, R. (1997), *Insula of the Menander*, *Vol. 1*, Oxford, p. 8.

4.2 Geranio, J. (2009), 'Neronian Period - Bas relief panel', on Flickr, (viewed 01 September 2015), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/julio-claudians/6989025235/in/photolist-NEgg-NEf6-NEeJ-NEhc-6Adwf-6Adqh-6Ad8f-6Ad4d-6AcW7-aAyt3X-NEjL-NEi8-NEmm-nzELBk-nzDPLa-nzDW1y-nQ71T1-bDAzH6-nS9Atk-nzEL4M-nTVYVM-nQ71pA-nS9A3k-NEnM-8hpHcw-8hmsbV-8ieLvD-6AcUH-waVmMY-6AdBN-6AdHi-6AdDM-6AdFL-6AdA6-6Adyb-6Adv2-6Adnz-6Ad6R-6AcP1-6AcKr-6AcHd-6Adha-6Acz8-6Ads4-861Ch2-gP1arX-3QUCda-NEkq-NEiU-erV4K>.

4.3 Allison, P. (2008), 'Insula Plan', on Insula of the Menander at Pompeii Vol. III: TheFinds in Context: an On-Line Companion', (viewed 15 August 2015), <http://www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/menander/insulaplan.html>.

4.4 Adapted from: Allison, P. (2008), 'Insula Plan', on Insula of the Menander at Pompeii Vol. III: TheFinds in Context: an On-Line Companion', (viewed 15 August 2015), <http://www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/menander/insulaplan.html>.

4.5 Pompeii in Pictures, (date unknown), 'I. 10. 1. Pompeii', (viewed 20 September 2015), < http://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2010%2001.htm>.

4.6 Allison, P. (2008), 'Casa del Fabbro', on Insula of the Menander at Pompeii Vol. III: TheFinds in Context: an On-Line Companion', (viewed 15 August 2015), <http://www.stoa.org/projects/ph/house?id=10>.

4.7 Allison, P. (2006), The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii. Volume III: The Finds, Oxford, Plate 87.

4. 8 Allison, P. (2004), *Pompeian Households. An Analysis of Material Culture*, Los Angeles, 205.

4.9 Steinhilber, , B. (2011), Archaeology – photographs of archaeological traces, (viewed 8 May 2015), <http://www.bertholdsteinhilber.com/ausgrabung.html>.

4.14 Stewart, P. (2008), 'Cassandra, House of Menander, Pompeii', on Flickr, (viewed 01 October   2015),   < https://www.flickr.com/photos/peterstewart/2430474445/in/photolist-4GLPnP-ebRbrU-5ee4db-4GLPs8-5e9FGR-a1aYSq-m2V1Mn-7f8t83-rXwkL9-mMfbbs-jQpwF5-bUTxzv-bjweJe-cDC82G-rTerik-jWqzUw-611uVb-aMNvTe-aigGQW-zYA2T-9Pcefi-7f8uFN-jZ813t-7f8saY-7f8sSL-7f4yW4-hkVpX7-nHhG4E-

bcofaD-7f8uSd-7f4B6P-7f8uiq-7f4AWt-7f4yKT-7f8tkh-7f8rYE-7f4BiX-7f4AJv-7f8snQ-7f4BJD-nzr8WG-8qjbE6-sFY63-pXwE9t-jZ78WZ-nXKPxY-biqAE-jZ9SYL-dk8w9r-jZ9Utu>.

Bibliography

Allison, P. M.   (2001), 'Using the Material and Written Sources: Turn of the Millennium Approaches to Roman Domestic Space', *American Journal of Archaeology* 105, 181-208.

(2004), *Pompeian Households. An Analysis of Material Culture*, Los Angeles.

(2006), *The Insula of The Menander at Pompeii. Volume III: The Finds, A Contextual Study*, Oxford.

Bon, S. E.   (1997), 'A City Frozen in Time or a Site in Perpetual Motion? Formation Processes at Pompeii', in S. E. Bon and R. Jones (eds.) *Sequence and Space in Pompeii*, Oxford, 7-12.

Brendel, O. J.   (1953), 'Prolegomena to a Book on Roman Art', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 21, 9-73.

Brilliant, R.   (2007), 'Forward and Backwards in the Historiography of Roman Art', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 20, 7-24.

Clarke, J. R.   (1991), *The Houses of Roman Italy, 100 B.C.-A.D. 250. Ritual, Space, and Decoration*, Berkeley.

Cooley, A. E.   (2003), *Pompeii*, London.

Cooley, A. E. and

Cooley M. G. L.   (2004), *Pompeii: a Sourcebook*, London.

D'Ambra, E.   (1998), *Art and Identity in the Roman World*, London.

De Angelis   (2008), 'Pliny the Elder and the Identity of Roman Art', *Anthropology and Aesthetics* 53/54, 79-92.

Descoeudres, J. P.   (1994), *Pompeii Revisited. The Life and Death of a Roman Town*, Sydney.

Dìaz-Andreu, M.

and Lucy, S.   (2005), 'Introduction', in M. Díaz-Andreu, S. Lucy, S. Balbić, and D.N. Edwards, *The Archaeology of Identity: Approaches to Gender, Age, Status, Ethnicity and Religion*, London, 1-12.

Dwyer, E.	(1991), 'The Pompeian Atrium House in Theory and in Practice', in E. K. Gazda (ed.) *Roman Art in the Private Sphere. New Perspectives on the Architecture and Décor of the Domus, Villa, and Insula*, Ann Arbor, 1-24.
Ellis, S. P.	(2000), *Roman Housing*, London.
George, M.	(2004), 'Domestic Architecture and Household Relations: Pompeii and Roman Ephesos', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27, 7-16.
Gordon, A. R.	(2007), 'Subverting the Secret of Herculaneum: Archaeological Espionage in the Kingdom of Naples', in V. C. Gardener Coates and J. L. Seydl (eds.) *Antiquity Recovered. The Legacy of Pompeii and Herculaneum*, Los Angeles, 37-57.
Grahame, M.	(1997), 'Public and Private in the Roman House: The Spatial Order of the *Casa del Fauno*', in R. Laurence and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *Domestic Space in the Roman World*, Portsmouth, 137-164.
Gruen, E. S. York.	(1992), *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*, New
	(2011), 'Introduction', in E. S. Gruen (ed.) *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Los Angeles, 1-9.
	(2013), 'Did Romans Have an Ethnic Identity?', *Antichthon* 47, 1-17.
Hackworth Peterson, L.	(2006), *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, Cambridge.
Hales, S.	(2000),'At Home with Cicero', *Greece and Rome* 47, 44-55.
	(2003), *The Roman House and Social Identity*, Cambridge.
Hingely, R.	(2005), *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, Diversity and Empire*, London.
Hodos, T.	(2010), 'Local and Global Perspectives in the Study of Social and Cultural Identities', in S. Hales and T. Hodos (eds.), *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World*, Cambridge, 3-31.
Hölscher, T.	(2004), *The Language of Images in Roman Art*, Cambridge.
Kampen, N. B.	(1995), 'On Not Writing the History of Roman Art', *Art Bulletin* 77, 375-378.
Kleiner, F. S.	(2007), *A History of Roman Art*, Boston.
Lazer, E.	(1997), 'Pompeii AD 79: A Population in Flux?', in S. E. Bon and R. Jones (eds.) *Sequence and Space in Pompeii*, Oxford, 102-120.

Leach , E. W.	(1997), 'Oecus on Ibycus: Investigating the Vocabulary of the Roman House', , in S. E. Bon and R. Jones (eds.) *Sequence and Space in Pompeii*, Oxford, 50-72.
Leen, A.	(1991), 'Cicero and the Rhetoric of Art', *American Journal of Philology* 112, 229-245.
Ling, R.	(1997), *The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii. Volume I: The Structures*, Oxford.
Ling R., &	
Ling L.	(2005), *The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii. Volume II: The Decorations*, Oxford.
Masters	(2009), 'Light, Space and Affluent Taste: Ancient Pompeian Houses and Their Decoration', *Akroterion* 24, 141-157.
Mattingly, D.	(2010), 'Cultural Crossovers: Global and Local Identities in the Classical World', in S. Hales and T. Hodos (eds.), *Material Culture and Social Identities*, Cambridge, 283-296.
Pollitt, J. J.	(1966), *The Art of Rome c. 753 B.C.-337 A.D.*, Englewood Cliffs.
Rehak, P.	(2001), 'Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Meaning of the Ara Pacis Augustae', *Art Bulletin* 83, 190-208.
Riggsby, A. M.	(1997), ''Public' and 'Private' in Roman Culture: The Case of the *Cubiculum*', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 10, 36-56.
Roselaar, S. T.	(2012), 'Introduction: Integration and Identity in the Roman Republic', in S. T. Roselaar (ed.), *Processes of Integration and Identity Formation in the Roman Republic*, 1-15.
Stewart, P.	(2004), *Roman Art*, Oxford.
	(2008), *The Social History of Roman Art*, Cambridge.
Van Buren, A. W.	(1938), 'Pinacothecae: With Especial Reference to Pompeii', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 15, 70-81.
Wallace-Hadrill, A.	(1990), 'Pliny the Elder and Mans' Unnatural History', *Greece and Rome* 37, 80-96.
	(1994), *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, Princeton.
Winckelmann, J. J.	(1972), 'History of Ancient Art', in Irwin, D. (ed.), *Winckelmann. Writings on Art*, London, 104-144.
Zanker, P.	(1998), *Pompeii: Public and Private Life,* Cambridge.