

DOMESTIC SPACE IN THE ROMAN WORLD

**Module Booklet
CX 254/CX354**

Thursdays 9-11am

**Convenor: Helen Ackers (h.ackers@warwick.ac.uk;
Room H0. 58)**

Domestic Space in the Roman World

Academic Aims:

This module looks at the layout and decoration of houses, villas, and palaces in the Roman world over a period of some 600 years (from the Late Republic to the Late Empire). While concentrating on the material from Italy, it will also look at comparative material from other provinces around the Roman Empire and at the reception of this material in post-classical times. The subject will be approached from a variety of angles. Looking at ancient literature, modern theories of space and the archaeological remains of domestic buildings, we will consider the ways in which Romans shaped domestic space to accommodate important social rituals at different levels of society. The decoration of these spaces with mosaics, sculptures and wall-paintings will also be an important focus of the course. The material will thus be examined both from an art-historical perspective, and within its broader social and cultural contexts.

Learning Objectives:

During this module, students should gain a thorough understanding of the development of domestic architecture and decoration (including floor mosaics, wall-painting and sculpture) and their application in a variety of different domestic contexts. They will be asked to evaluate literary texts, archaeological plans and material remains from a number of different perspectives, and to set them within their historical and cultural contexts. The informal presentations in seminars are designed to give students experience and confidence in discussing examples of particular buildings or art-works as well as more general presentational and audio-visual skills. Students will also be encouraged to consider the ways in which Roman domestic space and decoration has been studied or received in post-classical times, considering issues of reception, methodology and historiography.

Organisation:

There will be two hours of teaching per week, Thursdays 9-11 in H0.58. Most weeks this will consist of a 2-hour lecture. However, on seminar weeks this will break down into a 1-hour lecture and a 1-hour seminar. Seminars will take place in terms one and two on weeks 3, 7 & 10. For seminars you will be divided into two groups, the first group will attend their seminar directly after the lecture (10-11am) in the same room as the lecture, the second will have their seminar between 1-2pm in room R0.03/4. There will also be a fieldtrip to a Roman villa at some point in term two, details tbc.

Course Requirements:

All students are required to attend both hours each week. If you have to miss a class because of illness please ensure that you notify Josie by phone (02476 523023) or email me (h.ackers@warwick.ac.uk) if possible before the class takes place.

Seminars:

During the course of the year each student will be required to give a presentation of about 10 minutes on a topic which will be set for you. These presentations should introduce the topic to the other students, using PowerPoint presentations. You should include details such as the dating and location of the art-works or houses discussed, and how they relate to the issues discussed in this module. However, you are also free to focus your discussion on the areas you find of most interest. While you may write out your presentation (about 1,500 words for 10 minutes), the aim of the exercise is not simply to read out a previously written essay, but

rather to present the material to your audience through direct explanation of and reference to the visual material you are using. These presentations are an essential part of the course and must not be missed without very good reason. Those students not presenting topics at the seminar are expected to read at least one item on the relevant seminar bibliography so that they can respond to the presentations and take a full part in discussion.

Assessment:

Assessment of the module is 50% for work submitted during the module and 50% for a 2-hour exam in the May/June session of examinations.

Exam: The exam will be divided into two parts: students will be required

- i. to identify and comment on two pieces of primary evidence which you will have met during the course of the module (out of a choice of six, which may include texts, plans or photographs). You must choose **one picture and one text gobbet**.
and
- ii. to write two essays. Between them, assessed essay and examination essay questions will reflect the full coverage of the module and students should not expect there to be a close overlap between the titles of assessed essays and those in the exam.

Assessed Essays (length: 2,500 words).

Two assessed essays must be produced, to be uploaded to *tabula* by 12 noon on the day of the deadline:

Essay 1: Wednesday 6th December 2017 (Term 1, week 10)

Essay 2: Thursday 1st March 2018 (Term 2, week 8)

All essays should be word-processed. They should be provided with proper bibliography and spelling and grammar must be of an acceptable standard. Please do use illustrations to strengthen your arguments: choose them with care and refer to them in the text of your essay, making sure that the details you are discussing are visible in the illustrations. Illustrations can be scanned or downloaded from the internet and should either be inserted into the text or appended at the end. You should ensure you include the sources of your illustrations, either in the captions or in a separate list of illustrations at the end.

For more general advice on essays and assessment criteria see the Departmental Handbook.

PLAGIARISM

On submission of all assessed work, students are required to sign a statement to the effect that the submission represents their own work, with no unacknowledged or disguised quotations, passages, or opinions taken from secondary sources. This represents a promise that the essay does not contain plagiarism, which is a serious offence that will be heavily penalised, usually by a mark of zero. As a result, a student penalized for plagiarism will find it difficult to achieve more than a third-class mark for the module as a whole. For a fuller definition see the Departmental regulations concerning the presentation of assessed work; if in any doubt, seek advice from Personal Tutors or the module co-ordinator. Note, however, that plagiarism can refer to both text and web resources and you should make sure to footnote any information

which you have gained from either resource, whether or not you quote it directly.

Outline

Term 1: Roman Domestic Architecture and Decoration

- Week 1 Introduction: theories, methods and approaches
- Week 2 The Atrium house and its development
- Week 3 Roman villas and villa culture + Seminar: Landscapes and gardens
- Week 4 Wall-painting: Mau's four Pompeian styles
- Week 5 Sculpture - acquisition, copies and display
- Week 6 Reading Week - no lecture
- Week 7 Reading Myth in Roman domestic contexts + Seminar: Approaches to wall-painting
- Week 8 Status and space
- Week 9 Portraiture in the Roman domestic context
- Week 10 Gendered spheres in the Roman *domus*?+ Seminar: 'The gaze': objectification and sexual themes in Roman wall paintings.

Term 2: Housing in Rome and the Provinces

- Week 1 Where did everyone else live? Non-elite housing in Campania, Rome & Ostia
- Week 2 The Emperor's 'stage': the palace in Rome
- Week 3 Imperial villas and display across empire + Seminar: Ostia
- Week 4 Mosaics
- Week 5 Houses and decoration in the Eastern Mediterranean
- Week 6 Reading Week - no lecture
- Week 7 Houses and decoration in the Western provinces + Seminar: Villas in Britain (fieldtrip? Tbc)
- Week 8 Houses and decoration in North Africa
- Week 9 'Flight' to the villas: Housing in Late Antiquity
- Week 10 Receptions of Roman Domestic Art from the Renaissance to the 19th century + seminar: the Townley collection.

Term 3: Production & Revision

- Week 1 Production: decorating the Roman house
- Week 2 Revision
- Week 3 Revision

Bibliography and other resources

For good overviews, see the books by Barton, Ellis, McKay, and Nevett.
For crucial interpretations, see Clarke, Wallace-Hadrill & Zanker and the papers collected in Lawrence & Wallace-Hadrill.

- Allison, P. M., *Pompeian households : an analysis of material culture* (2004)
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 Beard, M. and Henderson, J., *Classical Art, from Greece to Rome* (2001)
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 Bergmann, B. 'Exploring the Grove: Pastoral Space on Roman Walls', in Hunt, *The Pastoral Landscape* (Washington 1992), 21-48
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 Cleary, S. E. *Chedworth. Life in the Roman Villa*. (The History Press 2013)
 Cohen, A., *The Alexander Mosaic* (Cambridge, 1997)
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 D'Ambra, E., *Art and Identity in the Roman World* (1998)
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 Farrar, L., *Ancient Roman Gardens* (1998)
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Web resources

<http://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R0/search%20page.htm> is a good collection of images of Pompeii.

<http://www.ostia-antica.org/> is a scholarly website on Ostia

<http://www.stoa.org/projects/ph/home> is a database of houses and artefacts in Pompeii, linked to P. M. Allison's research on Pompeian Households