

ΜΕΛΕΤΗΜΑΤΑ 68

VILLAE RUSTICAE

FAMILY AND MARKET-ORIENTED FARMS IN GREECE UNDER ROMAN RULE

Proceedings of an international congress held at Patrai, 23-24 April 2010

Edited by

A.D. RIZAKIS, I.P. TOURATSOLOU



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ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ | CONTENTS

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ | ABBREVIATIONS

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Athanasios RIZAKIS
FOREWORD |
| 2-3 | Athanasios RIZAKIS, Ioannis TOURATSOGLOU
INTRODUCTION |

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

ΕΓΓΕΙΑ ΙΔΙΟΚΤΗΣΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΙΚΕΣ ΑΓΡΟΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΚΜΕΤΑΛΛΕΥΣΗΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗ ΡΩΜΑΪΚΗ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟ

- 6-19 Annalisa MARZANO
Le *villae rusticae* romane e la loro dimensione economica: uno sguardo alla penisola italiana
- 20-51 Athanasios RIZAKIS
Rural structures and agrarian strategies in Greece under the Roman Empire
- 52-73 Sofia ZOUMBAKI
In Search of the Horn of Plenty: Roman entrepreneurs in the agricultural economy of the province of Achaïa
- 74-86 Francesco CAMIA, Athanasios RIZAKIS
Notes on the imperial estates and valorisation of public lands in the province of Achaïa

ΑΓΡΟΙΚΙΕΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΠΑΡΧΙΑ ΑΧΑΪΑ: ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΑ ΕΥΡΗΜΑΤΑ

- 88-153 Μαρία ΣΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΓΑΤΣΗ, Γεωργία ΑΛΕΞΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
Αγροικίες της Πάτρας και της χώρας της
- 154-175 Μιχάλης ΠΕΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ
Μόνιμες εγκαταστάσεις και κινητά σκεύη για την αγροτική παραγωγή στις ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες της Πάτρας
- 176-185 Ζωή ΑΣΛΑΜΑΤΖΙΔΟΥ-ΚΩΣΤΟΥΡΟΥ
Ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες στην Κορινθία: η περίπτωση του Λουτρακίου
- 186-199 Ζωή ΑΣΛΑΜΑΤΖΙΔΟΥ-ΚΩΣΤΟΥΡΟΥ
Ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες στο νομό Κορινθίας
- 200-211 Ελένη ΣΑΡΡΗ
Λείψανα αγροτικής εγκατάστασης στη θέση «Αγ. Παντελεήμων-Βίλλα» Κρανιδίου
- 212-277 Ελένη ΣΑΡΡΗ
Αγροτικές εγκαταστάσεις της ρωμαϊκής εποχής στην Αργολίδα
- 278-285 Όλγα ΨΥΧΟΓΙΟΥ
Ίχνη ρωμαϊκών αγροικιών στην Ερμιονίδα
- 286-327 Μιχάλης ΠΕΤΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ
Γενική θεώρηση της αγροτικής παραγωγής στην Αρκαδία των ρωμαϊκών χρόνων
- 328-343 Σταμάτης ΦΡΙΤΖΙΛΑΣ
Αγροικία στη θέση Βελιγοστή Αρκαδίας
- 344-361 Λεωνίδας ΣΟΥΧΛΕΡΗΣ
Αγροτικές και βιοτεχνικές εγκαταστάσεις στην Ασφατική Χώρα της νότιας Αρκαδίας και στη Βελμινάτιδα Χώρα της βορειοδυτικής Λακεδαίμονος

ABSTRACTS

LAND HOLDINGS AND RURAL STRATEGIES DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD

- 6 Annalisa MARZANO
Le *villae rusticae* romane e la loro dimensione economica: uno sguardo alla penisola italiana
- 20 Athanasios RIZAKIS
Rural structures and agrarian strategies in Greece under the Roman Empire
- 52 Sofia ZOUMBAKI
In Search of the Horn of Plenty: Roman entrepreneurs in the agricultural economy of the province of Achaïa
- 74 Francesco CAMIA, Athanasios RIZAKIS
Notes on the imperial estates and valorisation of public lands in the province of Achaïa

FARMHOUSES IN THE PROVINCE OF ACHAÏA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

- 88 Maria STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, Georgia ALEXOPOULOU
Farmhouses in Patrai and his territory
- 154 Michalis PETROPOULOS
Immovable installations and movable implements of the agrarian production in the Roman villas of Patras
- 176 Zoe ASLAMATZIDOU-KOSTOUROU
Roman farmhouses in Corinthia: the case of Loutraki
- 186 Zoe ASLAMATZIDOU-KOSTOUROU
Roman farmhouses in Corinthia
- 200 Eleni SARRI
Remains of a rural farmhouse at the site “St. Panteleimon - Villa”, Kranidion
- 212 Eleni SARRI
Rural settlements of the Roman times in Argolid
- 278 Olga PSICHOYOU
Scanty remains of Roman farmhouses in the Hermionid
- 286 Michalis PETROPOULOS
Overview of the rural production in Roman Arcadia
- 328 Stamatis FRITZILAS
Farmhouse at the site Veligosti of Arcadia
- 344 Leonidas SOUCHLERIS
Rural and industrial facilities in Aseatiki in South Arcadia and in Velminatis, Southwest of Laconia

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

- 362-397 Ελένη ΖΑΒΒΟΥ
Αγροικίες και εργαστηριακές εγκαταστάσεις στη Λακωνία των ρωμαϊκών χρόνων (1ος αι. π.Χ. - 6ος αι. μ.Χ.)
- 398-421 Δημοσθένης ΚΟΣΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ
Η Μεσσηνιακή γη και οι αγροτικές εγκαταστάσεις κατά τη ρωμαϊκή περίοδο
- 422-439 Ολυμπία ΒΙΚΑΤΟΥ
Ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες στην Ηλεία
- 440-465 Domenico D'ACO
L'Attica in età romana: le fattorie dal I sec. A.C. al V sec. D.C.
- 466-485 Γεώργιος ΣΤΑΪΝΧΑΟΥΕΡ
Ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες της Αττικής
- 486-509 Έλενα ΒΛΑΧΟΓΙΑΝΝΗ
Αγροικία ρωμαϊκών χρόνων στην αρχαία Ακραιφία (Ακραίφνιο Βοιωτίας)
- 510-541 Έλενα ΒΛΑΧΟΓΙΑΝΝΗ
Βοιωτία. Αγροικίες και εργαστηριακές εγκαταστάσεις στη βοιωτική ύπαιθρο των ρωμαϊκών χρόνων (2ος αι. π.Χ. - 6ος αι. μ.Χ.)
- 542-553 Έλενα ΚΟΥΝΤΟΥΡΗ, Νίκος ΠΕΤΡΟΧΕΙΛΟΣ
Αγροτικές εγκαταστάσεις και εκμετάλλευση της γης στην περιοχή της Χαιρώνειας
- 554-571 Φανουρία ΔΑΚΟΡΩΝΙΑ, Πολυξένη ΜΠΟΥΓΙΑ
Η Οπούντια εκδοχή της αγροικίας κατά την Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα
- 572-581 Αριστέα ΠΑΠΑΣΤΑΘΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
Τρίλοφο Ρεγγινίου Φθιώτιδας: η αποκάλυψη των υπολειμμάτων μιας ρωμαϊκής αγροικίας
- 582-591 Φιλίτσα ΤΙΛΕΛΗ, Κωνσταντίνα ΨΑΡΟΓΙΑΝΝΗ
Αγροικία υστερορωμαϊκών χρόνων στη θέση «Αγ. Τριάδα» του Δ.Δ. Θερμοπυλών, Δήμου Λαμιέων Ν. Φθιώτιδας
- 592-615 Λεωνίδα ΧΑΤΖΗΑΓΓΕΛΑΚΗΣ
Αγροτική εγκατάσταση ρωμαϊκών χρόνων στη «χώρα του αρχαίου Κιερίου» στον Οργόζινο Ματαράγκας Ν. Καρδίτσας
- 616-631 Αργυρούλα ΔΟΥΛΓΕΡΗ-ΙΝΤΖΕΣΙΛΟΓΛΟΥ, Πολυξένη ΑΡΑΧΩΒΙΤΗ
Αγροικία αυτοκρατορικών χρόνων στην περιοχή των αρχαίων Φερών
- 632-637 Αργυρούλα ΔΟΥΛΓΕΡΗ-ΙΝΤΖΕΣΙΛΟΓΛΟΥ
Αγροτικές εγκαταστάσεις ρωμαϊκής εποχής στη Θεσσαλία και στα νησιά των Βόρειων Σποράδων
- 638-649 Αργυρούλα ΔΟΥΛΓΕΡΗ-ΙΝΤΖΕΣΙΛΟΓΛΟΥ, Ελένη ΧΡΥΣΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
Έπαυλις (;) αυτοκρατορικών χρόνων εκτός της πόλεως της Σκιάθου

ABSTRACTS

- 362 Eleni ZAVVOU
Rural and manufacture establishments in Roman Laconia (1st c. BC.-6th c. A.D.)
- 398 Dimosthenis KOSMOPOULOS
Messenian land and rural establishments during the Roman period
- 422 Olympia VICATOU
Roman farmhouses in Elis
- 440 Domenico D'ACO
Attica in the Roman period: the farms from the 1st c. BC to the 5th c. AD
- 466 Georgios STAINCHAUER
Roman farmhouses in Attica
- 486 Elena VLACHOYIANNI
Roman villa at ancient Akraiphia (Akraiphnion in Boeotia)
- 510 Elena VLACHOYIANNI
Villae Rusticae and workshop installations in the Boeotian countryside during Roman times
(2nd c. BC- 6th c. AD)
- 542 Elena KOUNTOURI, Nikos PETROCHEILOS
Rural settlements and the exploitation of land in the plain of Chaeronea
- 554 Phanouria DAKORONIA, Polyxeni BOUGIA
The Opountian version of the *villa rustica* in Late Antiquity
- 572 Aristeia PAPASTATHOPOULOU
Trilofo of Regginion in Fthiotis: the digging up of the remains of a Roman farmhouse
- 582 Philitsa TILELI, Konstantina PSAROYANNI
A Late Roman Farmhouse at the site of Ag. Triada, Thermopylae, Phthiotis
- 592 Leonidas HATZIAGGELAKIS
Rural settlement of Roman times in the land of ancient Kierion in the "Orgozinos" of
Mataranga, Prefecture of Karditsa
- 616 Argiroula DOULGERI-INTZESILOGLOU, Polyxeni ARACHOVITI
A farmhouse of the Imperial period in the area of the Ancient city of Pherae
- 632 Argiroula DOULGERI-INTZESILOGLOU
Rural installations of the Roman period in Thessaly and in the islands of northern Sporades
- 638 Argiroula DOULGERI-INTZESILOGLOU, Eleni CHRYSOPOULOU
A villa (?) of the Imperial period outside the city of Skiathos

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

- 650-655 Γεώργιος ΖΑΧΟΣ
Δωρίδα, Φωκίδα, δυτική Λοκρίδα
- 656-681 Μαρία ΣΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΓΑΤΣΗ, Φωτεινή ΣΑΡΑΝΤΗ
Εγκαταστάσεις στην ύπαιθρο της Αιτωλοακαρνανίας κατά τη ρωμαϊκή περίοδο
- 682-703 Βικτωρία ΓΕΡΟΛΥΜΟΥ
Αγροικία στα Σιταράλωνα Αιτωλοακαρνανίας: αγροτική και εργαστηριακή παραγωγή
- 704-717 Βίβιαν ΣΤΑΪΚΟΥ, Κατερίνα ΛΕΟΝΤΑΡΙΤΗ
Ρωμαϊκές αγροικίες στην ευρύτερη περιοχή του Αγρινίου
- 718-733 Φωτεινή ΣΑΡΑΝΤΗ, Βίβιαν ΣΤΑΪΚΟΥ
Αγροικίες ρωμαϊκών χρόνων στην περιοχή δυτικά της Ναυπάκτου
- 734-749 Γεωργία ΠΛΙΑΚΟΥ, Βαρβάρα ΓΚΙΖΑ
Μία ρωμαϊκή αγροικία στη χώρα της αρχαίας Λευκάδας

ΕΠΙΜΕΤΡΟΝ

- 752-761 Mantha ZARMAKOUPI
The villa culture of Roman Greece
- 762-791 Dimitris GRIGOROPOULOS
Roman Pottery in the Greek Countryside: votes on the evidence from rural sites
- 792-803 Ιωάννης ΤΟΥΡΑΤΣΟΓΛΟΥ
Τα νομισματικά πράγματα στις αγρεπαύλεις (*villae rusticae*) της Επαρχίας Αχαΐα

ABSTRACTS

- 650 Georgios ZACHOS
Doris, Phocis, West Locris
- 656 Maria STAVROPOULOU-GATSI, Photini SARANTI
Installations at the Aetolian and Akarnanian countryside in the Roman period
- 682 Victoria GEROLYMOU
Farmhouse at Sitaralona in the Prefecture of Aitolokarnania: agricultural and workshop production
- 704 Vivian STAIKOU, Katerina LEONTARITI
Roman farmhouses in the wider Agrinion area
- 718 Photini SARANTI, Vivian STAIKOU
Roman farmsteads west of Naupaktos
- 734 Georgia PLIAKOU, Varvara GIZA
A Roman farmhouse at the countryside of ancient Leukas

ADDENDUM

- 752 Mantha ZARMAKOUPI
The villa culture of Roman Greece
- 762 Dimitris GRIGOROPOULOS
Roman Pottery in the Greek Countryside: votes on the evidence from rural sites
- 792 Ioannis TOURATSOGLOU
The numismatic affairs in *villae rusticae* of *provincia Achaïa*

ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ | ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	= Ἀρχαιολογικά Ἀνάλεκτα ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν
ABSA	= The Annual of the British School of Athens
ΑΔ	= Ἀρχαιολογικὸν Δελτίον
AE	= Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς
AEMΘ	= Το Αρχαιολογικὸ Ἔργο στη Μακεδονία καὶ Θράκη
AEΠΕΛ	= Το Αρχαιολογικὸ Ἔργο Πελοποννήσου
ΑΕΣΘΕ	= Το Αρχαιολογικὸ Ἔργο Στερεάς Ελλάδος καὶ Θεσσαλίας
AJA	= American Journal of Archaeology
AJAH	= American Journal of Ancient History
AM	= Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abt.
<i>Ancient World</i>	= Ancient World
<i>AnnPisa</i>	= Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa
ANSMN	= American Numismatic Society Museum Notes
ANSM	= American Numismatic Society Magazine
ANSNM	= American Numismatic Society Numismatic Notes and Monographs
<i>AntAfr</i>	= Antiquités africaines
<i>AntKunst</i>	= Antike Kunst
AW	= Antike Welt
BCH	= Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique
<i>BMC Central Greece</i>	= B.V. HEAD, <i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum. Central Greece (Locris, Phocis, Boeotia and Euboea)</i> , London 1884
BSFN	= Bulletin de la Société française de Numismatique
<i>Bull.Inst.Class.Studies</i>	= Bulletin. Institute of Classical Studies, University of London
CJ	= Classical Journal
CR	= Classical Review
DHA	= Dialogues d'histoire ancienne
ΕλλΚερ	= Ελληνιστική Κεραμική
<i>AnnalesESC</i>	= Annales. Économies, sociétés, civilisations
GRBS	= Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies
<i>Ηπειρ Χρονικά</i>	= Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά
HSCP	= Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
ICS	= Illinois Classical Studies
JdI	= Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts

<i>JGS</i>	= Journal of Glass Studies
<i>JHS</i>	= Journal of Hellenic Studies
<i>JNFA</i>	= Journal of Numismatic, Fine Arts
<i>JNG</i>	= Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte
<i>JRS</i>	= Journal of Roman Studies
<i>JS</i>	= Journal des Savants
<i>MDAI(A)</i>	= Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abt.
<i>MedArch</i>	= Mediterranean Archaeology
<i>NAC</i>	= Numismatica e antichità classiche. Quaderni ticinesi
<i>NC</i>	= Numismatic Chronicle
<i>NIMB</i>	= Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research
<i>Νομισματικά Χρονικά</i>	= Νομισματικά Χρονικά
<i>OlBer</i>	= Olympia Berichte
<i>OxfJA</i>	= Oxford Journal of Archaeology
<i>ΠΑΑ</i>	= Πρακτικά τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν
<i>ΠΑΕ</i>	= Πρακτικά τῆς ἐν Ἀθῆναις Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας
<i>PAPhS</i>	= Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society
<i>PBSR</i>	= Papers of the British School at Rome
<i>PBA</i>	= Papers of the British Academy
<i>Pharos</i>	= Journal of the Netherlands Institute at Athens
<i>RA</i>	= Revue Archéologique
<i>RAN</i>	= Revue archéologique de Narbonaise
<i>RBN</i>	= Revue belge de Numismatique
<i>REA</i>	= Revue des Études Anciennes
<i>RFIC</i>	= Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica
<i>RHA</i>	= Revue d'histoire ancienne
<i>RN</i>	= Revue Numismatique
<i>RPC I</i>	= A. BURNETT, M. AMANDRY, P.P. RIPOLLÈS, <i>Roman Provincial Coinage I: From the Death of Caesar to the Death of Vitellius (44 B.C.-AD 69)</i> , London/Paris 1992
<i>RPC II</i>	= A.M. BURNETT, M. AMANDRY, I.A. CARRADICE, <i>Roman Provincial Coinage II: From Vespasian to Domitian (AD 69-96)</i> , London/Paris 1999
<i>RSN</i>	= Revue suisse de Numismatique
<i>SNR</i>	= Schweizerische numismatische Rundschau



<i>TAPA</i>	= Transactions of the American Philological Association
<i>TARANTO</i>	= Atti Taranto
<i>Topoi</i>	= Topoi. Orient-Occident
<i>Tyche</i>	= Tyche. Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik
<i>ZfN</i>	= Zeitschrift für Numismatik
<i>ZPE</i>	= Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik





THE VILLA CULTURE OF ROMAN GREECE

Mantha Zarmakoupi

THE VILLA CULTURE OF ROMAN GREECE

This paper addresses the specificities of the appearance of villas as well as the significance of villa culture in Roman Greece and tackles the notion of the villa as a ‘Romanisation’ marker in this region. The spread of the villa in the Roman provinces was not the expression of a new social and economic form, as it was in Italy, but the result of the increasing taste for and use of Roman building materials, techniques, and styles. Indeed, the adoption of both the architectural language and lifestyle of the villa in the provinces rendered villas as one of the explicit markers of ‘Romanisation’. The cultural phenomenon of luxurious villas in Roman Greece was variegated both over distinct areas of the region, due to the different political developments, and over time. During the first two centuries of our era, luxurious villas and the life in the villa were not instrumental in the owners’ effort to assume political power and climb the social ladder. Local elites and Roman settlers sought to achieve their socio-political ambitions through their prominent presence in the cities and their *euergesiai*, following Hellenistic practices and internalizing Roman policies. The evidence for luxurious country houses after the second century CE, however, suggests that this changed over time. It is possible that the increased social competition that was brought about by the Diocletianic and Constantinian led elites to seek different venues for their self-promotion and self-display – the spaces of the villa.

Private country houses were one of the most prominent features of the Roman elite life-style, both in Italy and the provinces. In effect, they were central to Romans' construction of identity. In the realm of the villa the economic concerns of the land were combined with an appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of the landscape and luxurious lifestyle, to serve the purposes of self-fashioning. As Nicholas Purcell has pointed out, Romans used both agriculture and elegance as 'alternative forms of display'¹. In this paper, I discuss the villas in Roman Greece as part of the greater cultural phenomenon of the Roman villa. In doing so, I address the extent to which villas served the purposes of self-promotion and self-display of their owners and attempt to delineate the significance of villa culture in this region. Recent studies, including the papers of the present volume, have adjusted our understanding of the agricultural exploitation of the Roman Greek countryside as well as the evidence for villas in it². My aim is to complement these studies by addressing the role that villas played in the cultural negotiations of local elites as well as Roman and Italian 'immigrants'. The adoption of both the architectural language and lifestyle of the villa in the provinces rendered villas as one of the explicit markers of 'Romanisation'³, and in discussing the evidence

1. N. PURCELL, "The Roman villa and the landscape of production", in T.J. CORNELL, K. LOMAS (eds), *Urban society in Roman Italy*, New York 1995, p. 151-179, espec. p. 152.
2. For the agricultural exploitation of Roman Greece see RIZAKIS in this volume. For a discussion of the evidence on the landscapes of Roman Greece, including an assessment of Susan Alcock influential work on this subject (1993), see D. ROUSSET, "The city and its territory in the province of Achaëa and 'Roman Greece'", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 104 (2008), p. 303-337. For villas and houses in Roman Greece see P. BONINI, *La casa nella Grecia romana. Forme e funzioni dello spazio privato fra I e VI secolo*, Rome 2006; M. PAPAIOANNOU, *Domestic architecture of Roman Greece*, PhD, University of British Columbia 2002; *idem*, "The evolution of the atrium-house: A cosmopolitan dwelling in Roman Greece", in S. LADSTÄTTER, V. SCHEIBELREITER (eds), *Städtisches Wohnen im östlichen Mittelmeerraum. 4. Jh. v.-1. Jh. n. Chr. Akten des Kolloquiums von 24-27 oktober 2007 an der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Vienna 2010, p. 81-115 and *idem*, "Roman Villas in Greece and the Islands", in G.P.R. MÉTRAUX, A. MARZANO (eds), *Roman villas in the Mediterranean basin*, Cambridge/New York (forthcoming); H. WURMSER, *Étude d'architecture domestique. La maison en Grèce à l'époque impériale*, PhD, Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV) 2008.
3. A.L.F. RIVET, "Social and Economic Aspects", in A.L.F. RIVET (ed.), *The Roman Villa in Britain*, London 1969, p. 173-216, espec. p. 173-182; Ph. LEVEAU, "La ville antique et l'organisation de l'espace rural: villa, ville, village", *Annales ESC* 38 (1983), p. 920-942, espec. p. 922-927; J. PERCIVAL, "Houses in the country", in I.M. BARTON (ed.), *Roman domestic buildings*, Exeter 1988, p. 65-90, espec. p. 35-40; on assumptions underpinning the concept of Romanisation, A. WALLACE-HADRILL, *Rome's cultural revolution*, Cambridge 2008, p. 9-32.

from Roman Greece, I address the specificities of the appearance of Roman villas in this region and tackle the notion of the villa as a 'Romanisation' marker.

The cultural phenomenon of the Roman villa

The appearance of villas in the countryside of Roman Greece must be understood in regards to the ideology underpinning Roman villa culture. The cultural phenomenon of Roman villas was related to two contrasting but interrelated concepts vis-à-vis the life in the countryside. On the one hand, this phenomenon was embedded in the idea of leading a luxurious life, away from the burdens of the city (*otium* as opposed to *negotium*), appreciating the aesthetic qualities of the landscape. On the other, it was deeply rooted in the belief that the life in the countryside should abide by frugal ancestral values, emphasizing the utility of a productive agricultural unit⁴. Latin authors celebrated the Roman achievement of a man-made nature that was, on the one hand, milked for its agricultural revenue and, on the other, put in the service of a luxurious life in the countryside⁵. Roman villas were the architectural expression of this cultural milieu, and became the contested subject of discussions about the way in which a Roman citizen should behave and live⁶. Prime examples of the ways in which the design of the Roman villa accommodated the dual aspects of villa life are the villa at Settefinestre in Etruria (late second or early first century BCE – second century CE). The design of the agricultural and residential parts unifies productivity and elegance. They were located in the same square-shaped building block and were both accessed through a rectangular forecourt, surrounded

4. Although villas were not the main source of income for their owners they made a considerable contribution to it. See A. MARZANO, *Roman villas in central Italy: a social and economic history*, Columbia studies in the classical tradition, vol. 30. Leiden/Boston 2007, p. 47-81.
5. The evolution of the meaning of the term *villa* from the middle Republican to the early Imperial periods, as attested in the agricultural treatises of Cato (234-149 BCE), Varro (c. 116-27 BCE) and Columella (first century CE), points to the creation of a new building type that could accommodate not only agricultural activities, but also a new lifestyle of leisure and luxury in the countryside. See M. ZARMAKOUPI, *Designing for luxury on the bay of Naples: Villas and landscapes (c. 100 BCE-79 CE)*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture & Representation, Oxford (forthcoming), and M. ZARMAKOUPI, "Private villas: Italy and the provinces", in R.B. ULRICH, C.K. QUENEMOEN (eds), *A companion to Roman architecture*, Malden, Oxford 2013, p. 363-380.
6. PURCELL, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 1); A. WALLACE-HADRILL, "The Villa as a cultural symbol", in A. FRAZER (ed.), *The Roman Villa: Villa Urbana. First Williams Symposium on Classical Architecture held at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, April 21-22, 1990*, Philadelphia 1998, p. 43-53.

by a series of service rooms⁷. Other examples include Villa San Rocco at Francolise (early first century BCE)⁸, Villa of the Volusii Saturnini at Lucus Feroniae (50 BCE – third/fourth century CE)⁹, and Centroni Villa at Boville (first century BCE)¹⁰.

The emergence of the notion of the villa as a symbol not only of agricultural production, but also of luxurious leisure occurred after the second century BCE and was in tune with contemporary constructions of Roman cultural identity¹¹. It occurred in the period of the conquest of the Hellenistic East, when an abundance of resources were brought to both the Roman aristocracy and the equestrian orders. The wish to display this wealth in the private sphere – as opposed to doing so only in the public sphere (*e.g.*, in triumphal processions and public benefactions) – led to the conceptualization of country houses as luxurious retreats. The building of luxurious country houses partook in the social and political games of the period and served to satisfy the owners' bid for political power and their social climbing¹².

The villa in Roman Greece

The spread of the villa in the provinces was surely not the expression of a new social and economic form as it was in Italy. It was the result of the increasing taste for and use of Roman building materials, techniques, and styles¹³. The fragmentary nature of the evidence for most of the excavated sites in Roman Greece does not allow us to discuss the evolution of the typology of the villa in this region. A number of sites that show a combination of agricultural facilities with a comfortable residential unit; for instance, the site at Paliomanna in Veroia (first century BCE – third century CE)¹⁴; the sites around Lake Trichonida (dated after the second century CE)¹⁵, and the site at the location 'Megali Vrysi' on the island of Lefkas (end of first century BCE – mid third century CE)¹⁶.

7. A. CARANDINI, F. ROSSELLA (eds), *Settefinestre: una villa schiavistica nell'Etruria romana*, Modena 1985.
8. M.A. COTTON, G.P.R. MÉTRAUX, *The San Rocco villa at Francolise*, London/New York 1985.
9. M. MORETTI, A.M. SGUBINI MORETTI, *La Villa dei Volusii a Lucus Feroniae*, Roma 1977.
10. T. DI MATTEO, "La villa dei Centroni", *Atti dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti* 13 (2002), p. 243-293. In this case the *pars rustica* and *pars urbana* of the villa were dispersed on the landscape. For a discussion of the distinct design of these villas see ZARMAKOUPI, "Private villas ..., *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5), p. 365-368.
11. WALLACE-HADRILL, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 6).
12. See ZARMAKOUPI, *Designing for luxury ..., op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5), p. 3-8.
13. On the social and economic framework of provincial villas see PERCIVAL, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 3), p. 118-163.
14. The villa also features a fresh-water fishpond similar to the ones we are familiar from Italy. A. KOUKOUVOU, "Η ανασκαφική έρευνα στον άξονα της Εγνατίας οδού. Νομός Ημαθίας", *AEMΘ* 13 (1999), p. 567-578.
15. See GEROLYMOU, in this volume, p. 682-703 and STAIKOU, LEONTARITI, in this volume, p. 704-717.
16. See PLIAKOU, GIZA, in this volume, p. 734-749.

THE VILLA CULTURE OF ROMAN GREECE

M. Zarmakoupi

The appearance of luxurious villas in the provinces points to the adoption of the life-style of leisurely life in the countryside. It seems, however, that in Roman Greece luxurious villas and the life in the villa were not instrumental in the owners' effort to assume political power and climb the social ladder. The development of the villa phenomenon is uneven for each one of the provinces and I do not intend to generalize my conclusions. Even within the area that I examine, the appearance of villas was not uniform – as one would in fact expect due to the different political developments in the distinct regions. For instance, villa estates appeared as early as the second century BCE in northern and north-western Greece, when Romans – the so-called *Synepirotae* – acquired land in Epirus after the battle of Pydna in 168 BCE¹⁷, while the majority of villa sites in Achaia and the Aegean date to the late first and second centuries CE.

Although a number of luxurious villas appeared as early as the first century BCE in Epirus – for instance, the famous villa estates of Cicero's friend, T. Pomponius Atticus¹⁸ – luxurious country houses appeared in northeast Greece and south Greece primarily during the second century CE. The local elites, such as the affluent families of the province of Achaia – for example, the Saethidae¹⁹, the Euryclids from Sparta²⁰, and the Claudii Attici, the lineage of Herodes Atticus²¹ – deemed more important to promote their interests in the public domain, fol-

17. See discussion in PAPAIOANNOU, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2). For literary references to villa sites in this area, S. DAKARIS, *Cassopaia and the Elean colonies*, Athens 1971, p. 93.
18. The *Amalthea* near Bouthrotos (Butrint; Cic. *ad Att.* 1.16) and another one on the Thyamis River (Cic. *ad Att.* 7.2, 3; *de Leg.* 2.3, 7). Çondi (1984, 151-2 and 132, fig. 2) links the first century BCE villa remains at Malathrea, east of Butrint, with Atticus' *Amalthea*. For Atticus' estates in Epirus see also É. DENIAUX 1987, "Atticus et l'Épire", in P. CABANES (ed.), *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité. Actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand, 22-25 octobre 1984*, Clermont-Ferrand 1987, p. 245-254; V. KARATZENI, "Epirus in the Roman Era", in I. ISAGER (ed.), *Foundation and destruction: Nikopolis and Northwestern Greece: the archaeological evidence for the city destructions, the foundation of Nikopolis and the synoecism*, Athens, The Danish Institute at Athens, Aarhus University Press 2001, p. 163-179, espec. p. 171.
19. See discussion in P. THEMELIS, "The Economy and Society of Messenia under Roman Rule", in A.D. RIZAKIS, Cl.E. LEPENIOTI (eds), *Roman Peloponnesos III. Society, economy, and culture under the Roman Empire: continuity and innovation*, MEΛETHMATA 63, Athens 2010, p. 89-110 with earlier bibliography.
20. G.W. BOWERSOCK, "Eurycles of Sparta", *JRS* 51 (1961), p. 112-118; see also discussion in A.J.S. SPAWFORTH, "Families at Roman Sparta and Epidaurus: Some Prosopographical Notes", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 80 (1985), p. 191-258.
21. On Herodes Atticus see P. GRAINDOR, *Un milliardaire antique: Hérode Atticus et sa famille* (Recueil de travaux publiés par la faculté des lettres, Université égyptienne, vol. 5), Cairo 1930; A.J.S. SPAWFORTH, "Sparta and the Family of Herodes Atticus: A reconsideration of the evidence", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 75 (1980), p. 203-220.

lowing the euergetical culture of the Hellenistic *polis*²², on the one hand, and internalizing the ideology of Roman urbanism²³, on the other. C. Iulius Eurycles did not use the booty for the battle of Actium to invest in a luxurious villa. We know about his property the island of Cythera and the porphyry quarries at Krokeai (Strabo 8.5, 7), but nothing about a luxurious villa²⁴. It seems, in fact, that the case of Herodes Atticus, with his luxurious villas at Eva Loukou and at Marathon (second century CE), is quite exceptional. Only a few villa sites may indeed be compared with Herodes' villas; for instance, the large villa at Loutraki (second to sixth century CE)²⁵ and the remains at Lechaion (second to sixth century CE) around the Corinthian Gulf²⁶.

Although a great number of individuals, both Greeks and Romans, owned land in the countryside²⁷, they seemed to lack the interest in investing in the construction of luxurious villas in their countryside estates—at least until the second century CE. Possessing wealth was a necessary condition for enrollment in the highest ranks of the Roman social hierarchy, but luxury villas could not serve the local elites' and Roman settlers' need for self-promotion and bid for political power, as they did for villa owners of the Italian peninsula. Roman settlers, on the one hand, did not possess enough wealth and sought first to be promoted to the ranks of Roman *equites* and senators in order to be elevated to the status of local elites²⁸. Local elites, on the other, deemed more important to cultivate the right connections through their active participation in political and religious offices²⁹, and sought to achieve their goal of climbing up the imperial hierarchy through their prominent presence in the cities and their *euergetisai*³⁰. As Spawforth noted, 'the euergetism which

22. On the euergetical culture see J. MA, *Statues and cities: Honorific portraits and civic identity in the Hellenistic world*, Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture & Representation, Oxford 2013, p. 1-11.
23. A.J.S. SPAWFORTH, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, Cambridge UK/New York 2012, p. 207-232, espec. chapter 5, 'Constructed beauty'.
24. BOWERSOCK, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 20), p. 113, n. 11; E. LANE, "An unpublished inscription from Laconia", *Hesperia* 9 (1962), p. 396-398. See also discussion in G. STEINHAEUER, "C. Iulius Eurycles and the Spartan dynasty of the Euryclids", in RIZAKIS, LEPENIOTI, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 19), p. 75-87, espec. p. 82, 85-86.
25. ASLAMATZIDOU, in this volume, p. 184-192.
26. R.M. ROTHAEUS, "Urban space, agricultural space and villas in late Roman Corinth", in P.N. DOUKELLIS, L.G. MENDONI (επιμ.), *Structures rurales et sociétés antiques, Actes du colloque de Corfou 14-16 mai 1992*, Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne 126, Paris 1994, p. 391-396.
27. For a detailed discussion on land property, see in RIZAKIS, in this volume, p. 22-55.
28. S. ZOUMBAKI, "The colonists of the Roman East and their leading groups: some notes on their entering the equestrian and senatorial ranks in comparison with the native elites", *Tyche* 23 (2008), p. 159-179.
29. F. CAMIA, "Imperial priests in second century Greece: a socio-political analysis", in A.D. RIZAKIS, F. CAMIA (eds), *Pathways to power: civic elites in the eastern part of the Roman Empire: Proceedings of the International Workshop held at Athens, Scuola archeologica italiana di Atene, 19 December 2005*, Athens, 2008, p. 23-41.
30. SPAWFORTH, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 23), p. 207-232, espec. chapter 5, 'Constructed beauty'.

THE VILLA CULTURE OF ROMAN GREECE

M. Zarmakoupi

did so much to pay for the building boom in the eastern provinces during the first and second centuries AD was as competitive as it was because eastern notables came to understand that those who played this costly game were more likely to attract the higher patronage indispensable for promotion to the highest Roman orders³¹. Recognizing the importance of their public presence in the city, elites invested in their urban residences – such as the ones we know from Patras³² – rather than villas for their self-promotion.

The architectural language of luxury villas in Roman Greece³³

Hellenistic influences were inextricably linked to the formation of Roman villa architecture and culture³⁴, as they were in all fields of Italian material culture in the last two centuries BCE. This process of cultural change has been conveniently called ‘Hellenisation’; however the term merely describes the range of processes through which Roman culture came into being. Wallace-Hadrill conceptualizes ‘Hellenisation’ as an aspect of ‘Romanisation’, a process by which Roman identity was formed by absorbing, imitating, appropriating and creating in opposition to Greek culture³⁵. The architecture of luxury villas was indeed formed by the absorption and appropriation of Greek architectural exempla³⁶. Roman designers, however, did not merely reproduce Greek architecture. They appropriated Greek architectural vocabulary in order to ask, and

31. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

32. For the houses in Patras see PAPAIOANNOU, *Domestic architecture...*, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2), p. 160-227; for the ways in which urban space was shaped to serve the construction of the citizens of Patras see A.D. RIZAKIS, “Colonia Augusta Achaica Patrensis: Réaménagements urbains, constructions édilitaires et la nouvelle identité patréenne”, in RIZAKIS, LEPENIOTI, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 19), p. 129-154.

33. For the use of the term ‘architectural language’ see ZARMAKOUPI, *Designing for luxury ...*, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5), p. 15-17.

34. H.J. D’ARMS, *Romans on the Bay of Naples: a social and cultural study of the villas and their owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 400*. Cambridge 1970, p. 161-63; F. RAKOB, “Hellenismus in Mittelitalien. Bautypen und Bautechnik”, in P. ZANKER (ed.), *Hellenismus in Mittelitalien: Kolloquium in Göttingen vom 5. bis 9. Juni 1974*, Göttingen 1976, p. 366-386; K. FITTSCHEN, “Zur Herkunft und Entstehung des 2.Stils - Probleme und Argumente”, in ZANKER, *op. cit.* (*supra*), p. 539-563, espec. p. 549-556.

35. WALLACE-HADRILL, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 3), p. 14-28.

36. The verbal vocabulary used to designate various spaces of the villa – for example, *gymnasium*, *palaestra*, and *xystus* – points to what was almost an obsession with ‘Greek things’, which the architectural vocabulary reiterates.

answer, different kinds of design questions and concerns. In doing so, Roman designers transformed it and created a novel architectural language³⁷.

In Roman Greece – as elsewhere in the provinces – the architectural language of the villas (e.g., the peristyle garden, nymphaea and water canals) was adopted together with the lifestyle of the villa (e.g., dining practices). Notable examples of villas with sumptuous peristyle gardens, featuring nymphaea and water canals, are the Villa of Herodes Atticus at Eva Loukou and the Villa of Manius Antoninus at Nicopolis. The ‘import’ of the Greek-informed villa to Greece formed part of the process of ‘re-Hellenisation’ of Greece under Roman influence – itself part of the Romanisation of Greece³⁸. Following up on Wallace-Hadrill’s concept of ‘Hellenisation’ described above, Spawforth has proposed that aspects of the forms of Greek cultural expression that were controlled by the stratum of eastern provincial notables, including civic identity, were ‘re-hellenised’ under Roman influence through a process of ‘acculturative discourse’ – a dialogue between Roman and Greek, taking place at elite level³⁹. The architectural language of the luxury villas of the elite articulated this process of acculturative discourse⁴⁰.

Instrumental in the development of the architectural language of Roman villas was the technique of *opus caementicium* that enabled designers to build on a monumental scale and with unprecedented rapidity. No longer limited by the restrictions of polygonal masonry, designers constructed large terracing structures for the villas (*bases villae*)⁴¹, and began to use landscaping in the layout of the villas⁴². In addition, the construction of aqueducts and the development of water management techniques allowed villa owners to bring salt water into *piscinae* (Varro *Rust.* 3.17, 1-9; Col.

37. For further discussion on this architectural language see ZARMAKOUPI, *Designing for luxury...*, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5), p. 17-23, 213-243.

38. SPAWFORTH, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 23), p. 2-3.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 1-58 (chapter 1, ‘Introduction: Greece and the Augustan age’). For a discussion of ‘acculturative discourse’ see WALLACE-HADRILL, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 3), p. 79.

40. See PAPAIOANNOU, “The evolution...”, *loc. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2) for the appropriation of the atrium house.

41. Z. MARI, *Forma Italiae. Regio I: Tibur, pars quarta*, Florence 1991, p. 31-39; M. TOMBRÄGEL, “Überlegungen zum Luxus in der hellenistischen Wohnarchitektur: das Bild der römischen Otiumvillen”, in LADSTÄTTER, SCHEIBELREITER, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2), p. 605-620.

42. Such technological achievements were praised in Pliny’s villa letters and Statius’ *Silvae*. For instance, in *Silv.* 2.2 Statius described the ways in which ‘architecture imposes order on the land and nature is shaped into perfect views’ in Pollius’ estate in Surrentum. ‘Nature provides space’ (*dat natura locum*, *Silv.* 2.2, 15) for the villas’ spaces, which enjoyed commanding views over the bay of Naples (*Silv.* 2.2, 72-83). And while in some cases nature was already sufficiently beautiful, in others she had to be cultivated. See discussion in B. BERGMANN, “Painted perspectives of a villa visit: landscape as status and metaphor”, in E.K. GAZDA, A.E. HAECKL (ed.), *Roman art in the private sphere: new perspectives on the architecture and decor of the domus, villa, and insula*, Ann Arbor 1991, p. 49-70, espec. p. 66.

THE VILLA CULTURE OF ROMAN GREECE

M. Zarmakoupi

Rust. 8.17, 1-11) and facilitated the ornamental use of water in this new design language⁴³. The design of luxury villas with their use of the new material and techniques epitomized for Roman architects and patrons the 'new era' of the Roman empire⁴⁴. In adopting Roman villa culture, Greek notables appropriated the powerful associations that came with it⁴⁵.

Although luxury villas were not instrumental for the self-promotion of the local elites during the first and second centuries CE, the evidence for luxurious country houses after the second century CE suggests that this changed over time. The increased social competition that was brought about by the Diocletianic and Constantinian social and economic reforms may be the reason for this⁴⁶. The sumptuous dining and bathing facilities attested in the limited excavations that have been conducted support this argument. Examples include the villa at Loutraki (second to sixth century CE)⁴⁷, the villa at the location 'Vasilias' on Skiathos (third to fourth century CE)⁴⁸, and the villa at Petalidi in Messenia (second to sixth century CE)⁴⁹. The increased social competition of the later empire led to the intensification of the entertainment practices, including bathing, for the dinner parties that took places in villas⁵⁰. It seems that over time, the luxurious country-house became one of the markers of elite status and a vehicle of self-promotion and self-display in Roman Greece as well.

The cultural phenomenon of luxurious villas in Roman Greece was variegated both over distinct areas of the region and over time. During the first and second centuries CE, luxurious villas and the life in the villa were not instrumental in the owners' effort to assume political power and climb the social ladder. The

43. In *Silo.* 1.3, Statius praises the ability of Roman workers to build Manilius Vopiscus' twin mansion over Anio (1.3, 1-6) and to tame his 'swollen rage'. See discussion in C.E. NEWLANDS, *Statius' Silvae and the poetics of Empire*, Cambridge/New York 2002, p. 134.

44. ZARMAKOUPI, *Designing for luxury.... op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 5).

45. PAPAIOANNOU, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 2).

46. K. BOWES, *Houses and society in the later Roman empire*, London 2010.

47. See ASLAMATZIDOU, in this volume, p. 184-193.

48. See DOULGERI-INTZESILOGLOU, CHRYSOPOULOU in this volume, p. 658-669.

49. See KOSMOPOULOS, in this volume, p. 416-439.

50. On dining practices K.M.D. DUNBABIN, "Convivial spaces: dining and entertainment in the Roman villa", *JRA* 9 (1996), p. 66-80; J. ROSSITER, "Convivium and villa in late antiquity", in W.J. SLATER (ed.), *Dining in a classical context*, Ann Arbor 1991, p. 199-214; BOWES, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 46), p. 54-60. The social practice of dining included inviting guests for a bath before the dinner, even more so in the countryside where the alternative of using the nearby public baths was not always an option (e.g., Mart. 11.52, 1-5, Petron. *Sat.* 26.20-27, 1, cf. Plin. *Ep.* 2.17, 25, 9.36, 1-3. See MARZANO, *op. cit.* (*supra*, n. 4), p. 190-193.

fairly limited number of luxurious country houses supports this view. Local elites and Roman settlers sought to achieve their sociopolitical ambitions through their prominent presence in the cities and their *euergesiai*, following Hellenistic practices and internalizing Roman policies. It is possible that the increased social competition that was brought about by the Diocletianic and Constantinian led elites to seek different venues for their self-promotion and self-display – the spaces of the villa – after the third century CE. As this brief discussion has suggested the villa culture of Roman Greece remains to be understood in its entirety, but overviews of the material record, such as the ones presented in this volume, are extremely valuable for further studies of the phenomenon.



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ΣΗΜΑΕΚΔΟΤΙΚΗ





As that of other provinces of the Empire, the rural economy of Greece underwent many changes as well, with important implications for the strategies and organization of the production, as well as for the distribution and consumption of goods. Thanks to the extraordinary mass of archaeological data collected in Greece in the last decades, and to the possibility of applying both more sophisticated research instruments and more profitable methods of approach and analysis of these data, a re-examination of a regional case study such as Roman Greece is now more feasible. The publication in this volume of material remains –remarkable both for number and quality, from various in size productive complexes– and the synthetic studies on the other hand will provide students of the ancient world with an invaluable material which will greatly contribute to a better understanding of the economic organization of this part of the Roman Empire. It will also represent a point of reference for the study of both the rural world and more specific the economy of the cities of a small but not insignificant Roman administrative unit.

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