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The interiors of ancient Rome: ethnocultural specifics

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Abstract

Rome in the era of the Early Republic was filled with very modest houses that continued the traditions of ancient Italian rural houses. The smallest Italian houses of the imperial period consisted only of an atrium and a chamber that was opposite to the entrance. Large houses, despite the variety of chambers, were built according to one principle: the atrium (the ancient site of the hearth) was surrounded by adjoining chambers. When a peristyle began to be attached to the house, an atrium gradually began to lose its “family” functions and became a more public place, and family life moved to a more spacious and remote peristyle. The Romans had bathrooms in their houses almost everywhere. Walls were made of brick or hewn stone; columns or pilasters could be placed on the sides of the lobby. The interior of the Romans developed due to the historical development of the Roman state as a conqueror. Smaller houses, represented by multi-story insulae, also multiplied during the imperial period. Apartment buildings were often of poor quality. Insulae were different in their purpose—for the poor and for the richer. The Roman atrium-peristyle house is an example of the principle of functional zoning, which modern people are used to.

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Ancient Roman architecture, Italian interior, Etruscan interior, residential architecture, history of ancient Rome, history of everyday life.

Introduction

The geographical location of Rome, a city and the capital of the powerful Roman Empire, had certain advantages from the very beginning. It was situated on a peninsula surrounded by seas on all sides, which gave it protection. The Italian peninsula, with its mountains, rivers, and plains, represented a great variety of natural conditions, and Strabo in his *Geography* wrote: "...it is situated so as to possess many advantages of atmosphere and temperature of climate, in which both animals and plants, and in fact all things available for sustaining life, may be accommodated with every variety... This advantage is still secured to it in another way, for the chain of the Apennines extending through its whole length, and leaving on each side plains and fruitful hills, there is no district which does not participate in the advantages of the best productions both of hill and plain. We must also enumerate the magnitude and number of its rivers and lakes, and the springs of hot and cold waters supplied by nature in various localities for the restoration of health; and in addition to these, its great wealth in mines of all the metals, abundance of timber, and excellent food both for man and for beasts of all kinds" [Winniczuk, 1988, 17-18].

The advantages given by nature were important for all countries and nations. However, unlike the Greeks, as Strabo notes, the Romans cared not only about the beauty and unassailability of the city, but also about what the Greeks did not pay attention to—the convenience of building roads, water pipes, and sewers [Ibidem, 18]. Thus, the Italian rulers cared about urban communications, the social prosperity of the city. All this affected the structure of the Roman house.

Dwellings in ancient Rome

The dwelling of the Italian tribes, like all primitive houses, was a room with a door in the wall and a smoke hole. Round or quadrangular buildings were made of rough brick or wood and covered with straw or boards. The Etruscans had a hearth in the middle chamber; the smoke-blackened room was called smoky (ater, hence atrium). A lararium, a table, and a marriage bed were also placed here [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 656].

G.I. Sokolov points out that it is possible to reconstruct the interior of ancient Italian dwellings on the basis of Etruscan burial places: "Some idea of the interior of the Etruscan residential buildings of the 6th century BC can be given by the picturesque design of the Tomb of the Lionesses. Chequerwork on top resembles tiling, and the central beam is marked by a wide brown strip along the axial part of the ceiling. Tuscan columns supporting longitudinal and transverse beams in real houses are painted in the corners, as well as on the walls. The abacus is dark brown, the echinus is pinkish, the cavetto above the echinus is green, and the lintel below is black, and the brown shaft of the column begins under it. It is possible that the niches in the walls of such tombs imitate windows" [Sokolov, 1990, 113]. Atriums, like columns, embodied such a fundamental idea of the philosophy of ancient architecture as a light pillar [Puchkov, 2008, 683-704].

This internal layout was borrowed by the Romans from the Etruscans. Rome in the era of the Early Republic was filled with very modest houses that continued the traditions of ancient Italian rural houses. A tablinum—a plank-floored wooden terrace with a plank floor, which originally served as a bedroom—was adjacent to an atrium [Kumaniecki, 1990, 196]. It was initially used for having meals with the closest relatives. Therefore, it was revered as a place of family unity. Later, the tablinum began to serve as a study for business activities of the head of the family (*pater familias*)" [Polyakov, 2015, 299]. The tablinum, which gave a view of the peristyle from the atrium, emphasized the axial

composition of the Italian house [Polyakov, Krasovskii, 2017, 13].

The layout of southern rural estates influenced the formation of Roman residential buildings. The rural estate was a rectangular courtyard surrounded on all sides by buildings; this courtyard was the progenitor of the atrium. There was a canopy resting on pillars, a primitive forerunner of the portico, over all buildings—houses, barns, and sheds [Warden, 1981].

The city developed very quickly; even after the Gallic fire in 390 BC, there were poor buildings in Rome, and the Romans began to cover houses with tiles instead of shingles only during the consulship of Appius Claudius Pulcher, and a hundred years later, under Cato the Censor, they commenced dividing them into rooms according to the Greek standard. Lucius Licinius Crassus was the first to decorate his house with marble columns in 91 BC; then the Romans began to face walls with marble: luxury came into fashion. The remains of enormous houses have been preserved in Rome. Thus, in the so-called House of Pansa there were at least 50 rooms [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 656-657].

Republican Rome was a city with narrow streets, from four to seven meters, with brick houses and the old Forum. It was inferior to the luxurious cities of Alexandria and Antioch that the Romans saw during their campaigns. Like Caesar, Augustus sought to turn Rome into a luxurious, dignified city, the world capital [Suetonius, 1991].

Under Augustus, there were orders concerning Roman buildings, especially their strength. Then apartment buildings, obviously unstable, began to be constructed: one could see jerry-built four-story apartment buildings for the poor, in narrow streets in the city center [Kumaniecki, 1990, 207], and it was forbidden to build houses higher than 70 ft (three or four floors), however, this applied only to houses facing streets: houses in courtyards could be higher [Sergeenko, 2017, 85]. Staircases were outdoor, went around houses and descended directly to sidewalks. In addition, Augustus significantly decorated Rome with new buildings. The Forum of Augustus was added to the Forum built by Caesar. The Forum of Augustus, together with the Temple of Mars Ultor, formed a new integral architectural complex, which was not found in Hellenistic cities. In front of the temple there were statues of ancient Roman heroes, designed, like Agrippa's map in the Porticus Vipsania, to remind of the greatness of the Roman state [Kumaniecki, 1990, 276-277].

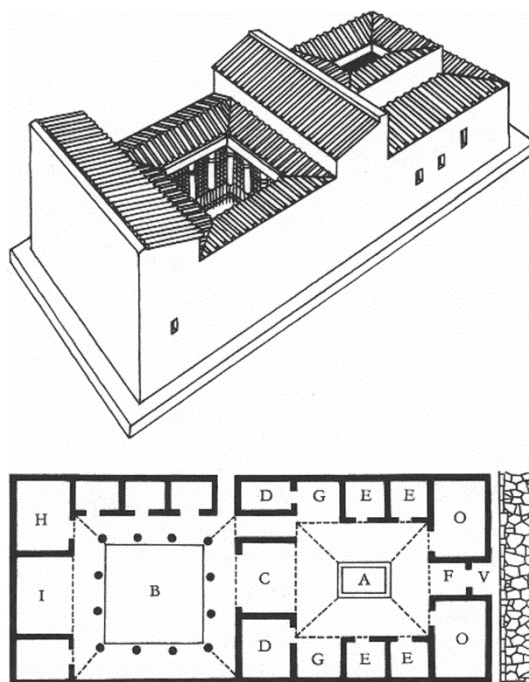
The residential areas of the ancient Roman state can be judged to a greater extent by the preserved houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum [Krivchenko, 1985], as reconstructions, fires and other disasters left few residential buildings there, in particular, the House of Livia is located on the Palatine Hill.

The smallest Italian houses of the imperial period consisted only of an atrium and a chamber that was opposite to the entrance. Large houses, despite the variety of chambers, were built according to one principle: the atrium (the ancient site of the hearth) was surrounded by adjoining chambers. These rooms are divided into two groups: frontrooms (near the atrium) and backrooms located around the courtyard surrounded by columns (the peristyle). Manor-type town houses and country villas, providing shelter not only to the owners, but also to their servants, clients and slaves, began to be built everywhere. Such residential complexes occupied significant territories. They still had an atrium, but the Etruscan tablinum became a pass-through room leading to the Greek peristyle (a courtyard surrounded by columns) (Figure 1).

The town house was a vast oblong quadrangle, with a narrow side facing the street. The Roman house, or *domus*, was turned inward, around a colonnaded courtyard. The street facade often had shops on both sides of the entrance, with third-floor residential premises for shopkeepers. One could see the glowing inner atrium, which served as a meeting place for a large family and its clients, through the front door [Ingersoll, 2019, 164].

There could be a hammer or a bell hanging at the front door. The mosaic *salve* (welcome) was laid

out on the threshold. The same greeting was often said by a trained bird in a cage by the door. On the side there was a gatekeeper's room, guarding the entrance with the help of a watchdog, whose presence was notified to visitors by a board with the inscription *save canem* (beware of the dog). A live dog was sometimes replaced by the mosaic one laid out with the same inscription [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 658-659] (Figure 2).



**Figure 1 - The plan and layout of the Roman house:
A—atrium, B—peristyle [Polyakov, 2015, 300]**



**Figure 2 - The mosaic *Cave Canem* (Beware of the dog!).
Pompeii [Polyakov, Krasovskii, 2017, 19]**

"At times, a frontroom and a lobby were decorated with weapons hung on the walls. Sometimes statues were placed there. If the owner gained a high position, the walls were decorated with bundles of rods (fasces). Customers also waited here to be received by their patron. There was no lobby or anteroom in poor houses" [Makhlina, 2011, 120]. The Roman name of the vestibule—*vestibul*—reflects the ancient dedication of the entrance to Vesta, the guardian of the sacred hearth [Bondarenko, 2016].

A door at the back of the entrance led to an atrium. The atrium served as a dining room and reception room. The atrium in newer Roman houses consisted of two chambers connected by doors; the front one was called the atrium, and the second had an opening in the roof and a pool and was called the *cavaedium*. Air and light entered the atrium through an opening in the ceiling. In the atrium, according to custom, there was a marriage bed, an altar, and a spinning wheel belonging to the mistress of the house. During the imperial period, wax masks of ancestors no longer hung on the walls, but were placed in wall cabinets: "On special days, cabinets were opened, images of ancestors were decorated with wreaths, and they seemed to be present with their family during celebrations—birthdays, weddings, etc. If there was no such pedigree, the rich hung silver and bronze medallions or round shields with images of famous men in relief on the walls of the atrium" [Makhlina, 2011, 120].

The development of the Roman house from a rural estate followed the line of reducing the courtyard to one small room—the atrium: "A roof was erected over the courtyard, in which a large opening was left: the newly created room (atrium) was supposed to remain for the rest of the house the same as the courtyard was for the rural estate—a lightwell. The old master's room turned out to be a kind of deep niche facing the atrium: there remained the master's bed—*lectus adversus* (a bed facing a door), named so after the place where it stood, and the loom, which was soon moved further into the atrium due to the lack of light in this room. On both sides there were open-air rooms—the former side rooms, which received, or perhaps retained the old name "wings" (*alae*), and behind them; on the other three sides of the atrium there were, as before, rooms for different purposes" [Sergeenko, 2017, 65].

The atrium, succeeding to the Roman courtyard, retained all its important functions for a long time: food was cooked here on the hearth, rainwater was collected in a special cistern, there was a drain, as well as a table for the whole family. The atrium remained the largest room: the whole family dined here, did housework, made sacrifices to their Lares, kept a chest with money [Gardner, 2010]. Women were engaged in needlework here: the image of the mistress of the house, who was "busy with wool" by the hearth, remained for Italians a symbol of comfort and home [Saller, 1984].

In ancient times, the Romans dined in the front hall of the house (atrium), later, when the Roman house adopted some features of Greek architecture, food was served in the dining room—*triclinium*. Three dining couches were placed here around the table; access to one side of the table remained free so that servants could serve dishes. At most nine people could sit down at one table [Winniczuk, 1988, 262]. "There were several (up to four) triclinia in rich houses. They were used depending on the season, the weather, and the number of guests. In the ancient Roman house there were more than three dining sofas in the dining room" [Makhlina, 2011, 121].

The Roman house was an important object, which had not only domestic, but also ritual significance. So, the second solemn part of the wedding ritual—*deductio*—involved the young wife's departure to her husband's house. Before entering, a bride greased the doors of the house with the fat of a pig (an animal of Ceres) or a wolf (an animal of Mars) and decorated the door aperture with colored ribbons. She was carried over the threshold, and her husband met her inside. An ornate bed was waiting for them in the atrium; the next morning, the young wife had to make a sacrifice at the home altar, receive guests, and sit down at the spinning wheel to take up the role of the mistress of the

house [Winniczuk, 1988, 167-169].

The atrium changed significantly during Roman history, eventually giving some part of its functions to the peristyle. The kitchen was used for cooking; the hearth was moved there and utensils were used for heating [Khomchik, 2001]; a niche for Lares was often placed there. The loom also eventually "left" the atrium, and by the 1st century BC it had turned into a ceremonial and official visiting room (Figure 3).

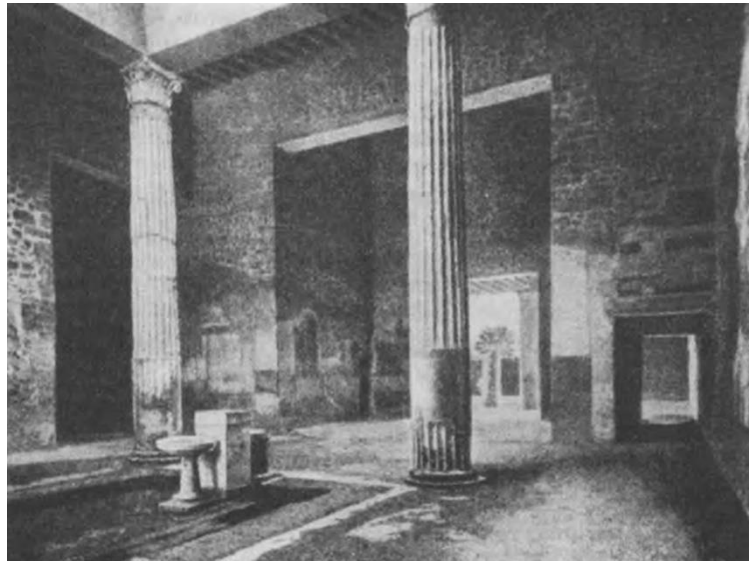


Figure 3 - A four-column atrium. Pompeii, the House of the Silver Wedding [Sergeenko, 2017, 68]

Visitors who were not introduced into the family circle were received here; business negotiations were conducted, clients were received. The atrium was called proud and arrogant. A cash drawer and a table called *cartibulum* remained of the old furniture [Ibidem, 67].

The second part of the atrium, the *cavaedium*, was surrounded by narrow covered passages, pantries adjoined them, and the patron gods of the house—*penates*—stood there. These "wings", open-air rooms on the sides of the atrium, were carefully preserved, although they lost their functionality in town houses: cabinets and pantries were sometimes placed there, shrines were arranged for Lares. A fountain was built in or near the pool (Figure 4).

Behind the *cavaedium* there was the owner's study—*tablinum*; in the *tablinum*, as a rule, there were no doors, it was separated from the atrium by either a curtain or a parapet. Two surrounding corridors led to the back of the house. In the rear of the house there was a peristyle and chambers around it; the life of the family passed in the peristyle, among flower beds and fountains, while the atrium was used for receiving guests [Kumaniecki, 1990, 208]. When a peristyle began to be attached to the house according to the Greek standard, an atrium gradually began to lose its "family" functions and became a more public place, and family life moved to a more spacious and remote peristyle.

The peristyle became a favorite place to spend time among the Romans. Around the courtyard there were columns on two or three sides; in the middle there was a garden and flower beds. "Marble painted or plastered columns; fountains and niches inlaid with mosaics or shells; marble, bronze, and terracotta statuettes—all this decorated a small fragrant garden, where the indiscreet gaze of an uninvited visitor did not penetrate and where the owner felt truly at home; it was not for nothing that Lares were so often placed in the peristyle" [Sergeenko, 2017, 69]. Flowers were grown in flower beds, boxes, and pots;

the plants included aloe, ivy, tamarisk, myrtle, reed and papyrus; the flowers were represented by daisies and poppies, lilies and daffodils, irises and roses [Ibidem, 69-70]. Water—fountains, small canals, and artificial waterfalls—was necessarily present in the peristyle (Figure 5).

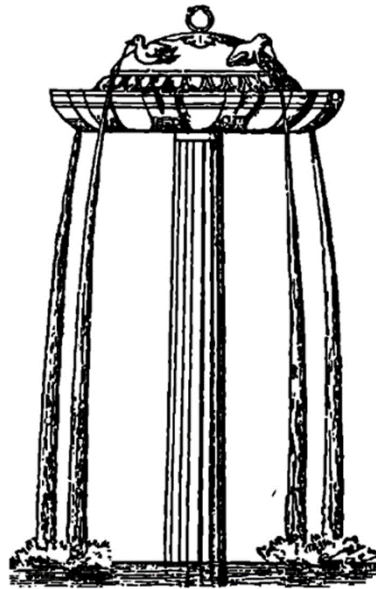


Figure 4 - A fountain in the cavaedium of the Roman house (reconstruction) [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 657]

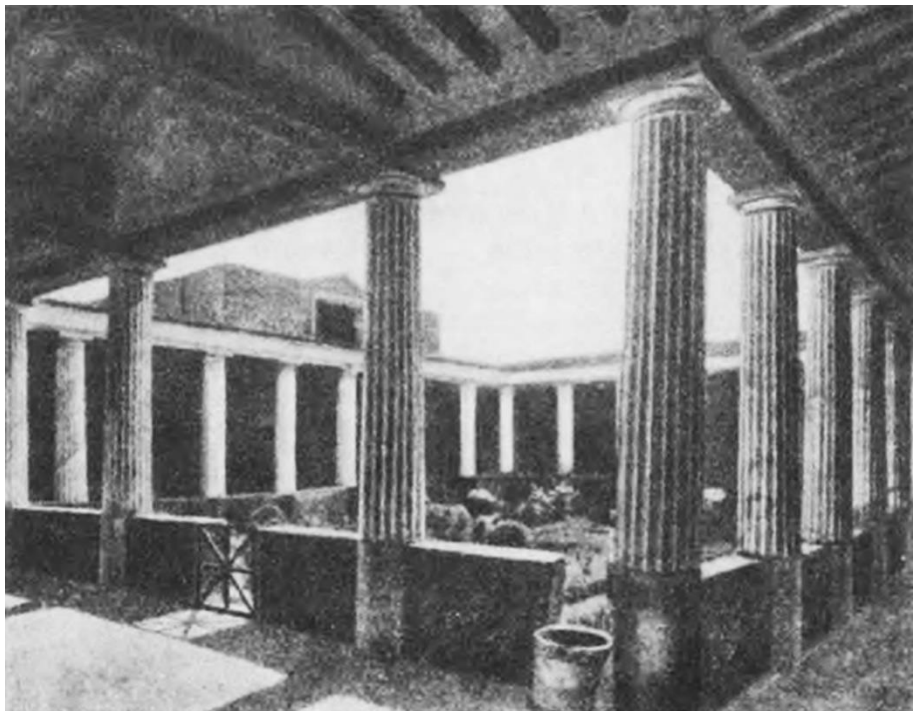


Figure 5 - A peristyle. Pompeii, the House of Menander [Ibidem, 69]

If some additional rooms were attached to the house, they were placed arbitrarily: rooms from 14×10 to 20×15 ft could be bedrooms and rooms for family members and slaves, baths, kitchens, pantries, dining rooms, living rooms (*exedrae*), in later times—art galleries, pinakotheques on the north

side of the house, libraries, and baths. "The bedrooms of the Roman domus—*cubicula*—were often so small that only a bed and a long-stemmed oil lamp (the ancestor of the floor lamp) could fit there. In order to visually expand the space, perspective landscapes were depicted on dead walls, as if taking viewers outside the room" [Makhlina, 2011, 121].

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans had bathrooms in their houses almost everywhere. They were small, modestly furnished and were used mainly for washing hands and feet because, according to Seneca, the Romans washed their whole bodies every eight days, on *nundines* [Winniczuk, 1988, 290].

Houses seldom had two stories: the first floor was divided into several rooms that did not correspond in plan to the lower rooms. A sloped roof could be covered with tiles, and a flat one could be faced with stone or planted with flowers, turning into another courtyard atop the house. The orientation to the cardinal directions was an important feature of the Roman house. Vitruvius noted: "Winter dining rooms and bathrooms should have a southwestern exposure, for the reason that they need the evening light, and also because the setting sun, facing them in all its splendour but with abated heat, lends a gentler warmth to that quarter in the evening. Bedrooms and libraries ought to have an eastern exposure, because their purposes require the morning light and also because books in such libraries will not decay. In libraries with southern exposures the books are ruined by worms and dampness... Summer dining rooms to the north, because that quarter is not, like the others, burning with heat during the solstice, for the reason that it is unexposed to the sun's course, and hence it always keeps cool, and makes the use of the rooms both healthy and agreeable" [Polyakov, Afanas'eva, Tkachenko, 2012, 17-18].

Roman houses remained very simple from the outside. Their walls were faced with brick or hewn stone; columns or pilasters could be placed on the sides of the lobby. There could be balconies on the first floor. Walls were most often plastered and whitewashed; on the ground floor, as a rule, there were no windows, and light penetrated through an opening in the ceiling of an atrium; the doors of chambers next to it were not closed, but curtained, and therefore let in enough light (Figure 6).

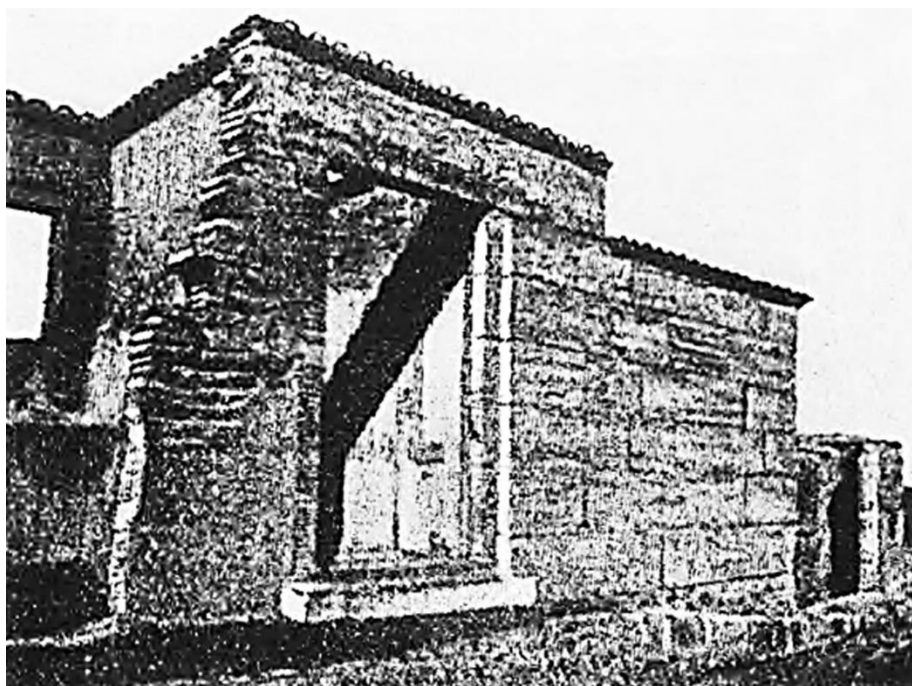


Figure 6 - The front of the House of the Surgeon. Pompeii [Sergeenko, 2017, 72]

Small windows were made only on the first floor or in baths. At first they had shutters or bars, then mica and glass were set there. Like the doors, the windows were folding.

The doors of the main house—in rich houses decorated with carvings, metal and bone ornaments—opened inward; they were double-locked from the inside with a double latch; real locks appeared much later. There were also no chimneys on Roman houses, since rooms were heated by portable stoves or clay pipes with hot air.

The development of Roman interiors

Roman interiors developed due to the historical development of the Roman state as a conqueror, as the center of the growing empire. Coming back from victorious wars, the Romans brought not only trophies, but also the idea of overseas luxury and monuments of art: e. g., Marcus Fulvius Nobilior brought no less than 280 bronze and 230 marble statues from the Aetolian campaign in 187 BC [Kumaniecki, 1990, 208].

The remains of Roman houses allow researchers to draw conclusions about how their interior looked. The House of Livia—a typical atrium house, of which only the ground floor has been preserved—was located at the southern end of the Neronian Cryptoporticus. This monument is known for its painted tablinum, primarily its right wall: "Two white Corinthian columns are painted here on a red background; they stand on plinths and support a coffered ceiling, redone in a perspective reduction. Images are placed in the openings between the columns and on their sides, two lateral ones representing architectural perspectives with human figures, and the middle one—a mythological scene, which was probably copied from a painting done by Nicias... Sphinxes and other winged deities are depicted on the beams supported by the columns, and there are also some episodes from everyday life" [Taruashvili, 2010, 97]. The walls of the bedroom (cubiculum) in this house are also painted, to the right of the tablinum there are columns decorated with garlands and a frieze painted with scenes from Egyptian life. These paintings date back to about 30 BC (the first and second Pompeian styles) [Ibidem, 97-98]. There are similar paintings in neighboring houses. The picturesque decor of walls became even more diverse, adopting the features of the "fantastic" style: frescoes were supposed to artificially expand the space of small rooms, creating the impression of huge palace halls. The surface of walls was broken up into many fragments with the help of picturesque images of architectural elements: the artists who decorated villas in Pompeii and Herculaneum painted open windows or landscapes supposedly visible from the windows [Kumaniecki, 1990, 278].

"Stucco reliefs, which framed wall paintings, were widespread in ancient Roman interiors. The central axial composition was used in the location of all rooms: a lobby, a hall with a swimming pool, and a green courtyard. This gave a house some solemnity. The richest houses used marble for facing and details" [Makhlina, 2011, 120]. "Roman atrium-peristyle houses are distinguished by their enfilade and somewhat dramatic palace grandeur, alien to Greek peristyle houses" [Polyakov, 2015, 301].

Floors, which were initially made of clay, began to be covered with porphyry or marble tiles, sometimes with mosaics. "Reddish paving, including cement and a conglomerate of crushed terracotta, which is known in Italy as Signian plaster (from the name of the city of Signia)... served as a practical and affordable form of decorating rooms, especially refectories and kitchens, for middle-class people. Even the owners of luxury mansions and villas did not disdain this form of decoration" [Makhlina, 2011, 121]. Walls could be faced with marble, covered with stucco decorations and decorated with frescoes, e. g., many houses in Pompeii were decorated with frescoes (Figure 7).



Figure 7 - A fresco from House of the Tragic Poet depicting a choregos and actors [Polyakov, Krasovskii, 2017, 18]

Ceilings were decorated with gold and ivory coffers. Curtains covered not only doors, but also openings in the ceiling (Figure 8).

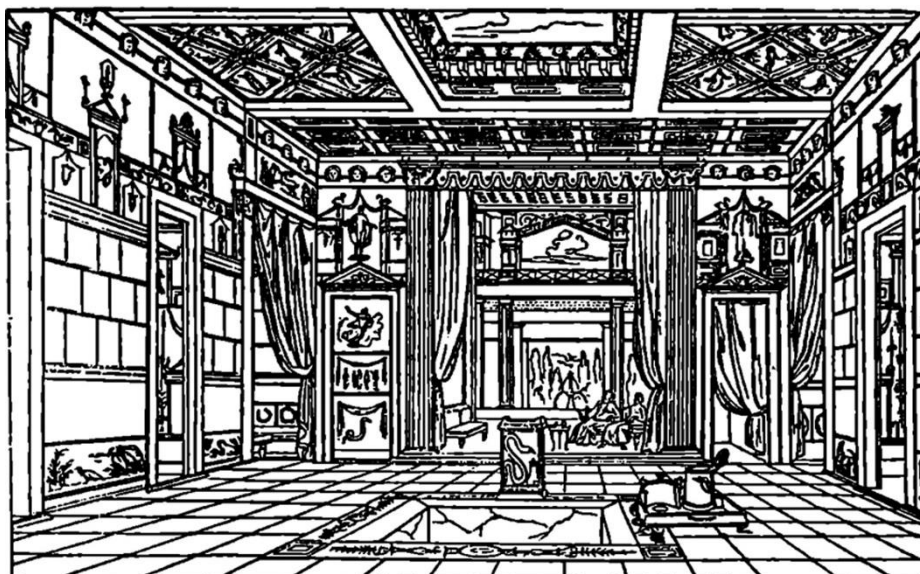


Figure 8 - Interior decoration of the atrium of a rich Roman house (reconstruction) [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 661]

Large rooms could be divided by columns, which helped to increase the size of important rooms and diversify their shape. Vitruvius wrote about the existence of five types of the Roman atrium, depending on the size and number of columns and the shape of a roof. All these types of the atrium

were basically similar to one another, their differences consisted in the fact that the ceiling was supported by four columns in the corners of a pool in the four-column atrium, and one end of a ceiling beam in the Corinthian atrium rested on the wall, and the other end leaned on columns surrounding the pool in one or two rows. The other three types had no columns at all. Since there was no opening in the ceiling of the covered atrium, it must be assumed that it was replaced by a window, otherwise it would have been completely dark [Ibidem, 662].

The furniture of the Roman house, initially made of oak, gave way to more expensive wood and exquisite forms imported from the East. The Roman rich feasted on elegant couches decorated with bronze [Kumaniecki, 1990, 208]. Furniture could be wicker or wooden; backless chairs with concave seats were common. Armchairs with high backs and armrests were intended, as a rule, for the head of the family. Tables were low. "Roman furniture differed from Greek one in more luxurious decoration" [Makhlina, 2011, 121].

Along with town houses, the Romans also used country houses since the noble Romans began to build town villas for themselves, where they went to have some rest. It is necessary to distinguish between rural estates, which occupied two courtyards located one behind the other, and country villas, which could be so large that they resembled small towns. In addition to the most diverse buildings, parks, vineyards, gardens, etc. could be located there. In the house of the owner of the villa, as a rule, there were rooms for gymnastics, cool galleries, and turrets. Thus, Hadrian's Villa in Tibur was seven Roman miles in diameter. Hadrian forced to reproduce everything that he met during his travels and found interesting, so his villa included not only various Greek and Egyptian buildings—a lyceum, an academy, a prytaneum, and a labyrinth, etc., but also some kind of the Vale of Tempe known for its beauty [Weiss, 2000, vol. 1, 664].

Along with houses for the nobility, for the rich, accommodation for the poor, represented by multi-story apartment buildings, also multiplied, during the imperial period [Storey, 2004]. "The urban poor in ancient Rome lived in multi-story apartment buildings called *insulae* (*insula* is Latin for "island"), the ground floors of which were occupied by *tabernae*—shops and workshops" [Makhlina, 2011, 120]. So, under Constantine the Great, there were only 1,790 mansions and 46,602 *insulae*, i. e., multi-story apartment buildings, in all 14 districts of Rome [Sergeenko, 2017, 74]. They are the immediate predecessors of modern multi-story buildings, succeeding to the houses of the rural poor—without atriums, small and multifunctional (Figure 9).



Figure 9 - The layout of the insula in Ostia [Ibidem, 77]

Insulae could have been borrowed from the East, Syria [Andreev, 1979]. However, it is important that insulae, with its shops located on the ground floor and independent floors, not only opposed atrium houses, but succeeded to its architecture; sometimes atrium domus were rebuilt into insulae [Grimal, 2008, 349-350].

The Romans constructed 4-5-story insulae. The upper floors are included in the house plan (and are not its accidental addition, as in mansions). Staircases with steps made of brick or travertine led to each floor from the street. In each room, unlike mansions, there were windows, balconies were often made; walls were not plastered, brickwork was visible. The entrance of an insula with more expensive apartments was framed by columns or pilasters, also made of brick. "The role of the atrium in insulae (multi-story buildings) was performed by a light courtyard" [Bausheva, 2011, 18].

Apartment buildings were often of poor quality: "Building owners tried to economize on everything: foundations were shallow, walls were thin and made of the cheapest material, and rooms were low-ceilinged, small, and dark. Since glass was expensive, windows were not glazed, but had wooden shutters; it was very uncomfortable in bad weather [Sergeenko, 2017, 87]. It was best to live on the ground floor, where water came from water pipes and where there was a sewer; upper floor residents—there were sometimes five or six of them—had to go to public wells for water. Overcrowding, overpopulation, and the high cost of housing forced the poor to settle in attics, basements, and even in squalid, dark rooms under stairs [Kumaniecki, 1990, 291-292]. Hypocaust systems of hot air circulating beneath floors and in walls were used to heat basements. They were available only to ground floor residents; upper floor residents used braziers or small stoves, which was a fire hazard.

These jerry-built houses sometimes collapsed, as authors from Cicero to Seneca wrote in their letters. In addition, the city often suffered from fires: big fires broke out in Rome almost every year during the imperial period. Strabo wrote about the death of the Peripatetic Athenaeus because of the collapse of the house at night as something completely natural; Plutarch called fires and landslides "Rome's cohabitants" [Sergeenko, 2017, 82-83].

"The walls of insulae in Ostia were made of strong material; they were thick enough to sustain the weight of both the fourth and fifth floors; excavations discovered almost no traces of such repairs that should have been done to strengthen the walls" [Ibidem, 78]. Insulae differed in their purpose—for the poor and for the rich; apartments were of different sizes; e. g., in the House of the Muses in Ostia there were 12-room apartments on the ground floor, they were perfectly decorated with frescoes and mosaics. The House of the Triclinium located there included a large courtyard surrounded by a portico that resembled a peristyle; the House of the Dioscuri had its own bath [Ibidem, 78-79]. Each apartment had one or two large state rooms; they were often higher than the others, bright, decorated with beautiful frescoes and mosaics.

Problems with the quality of insulae were related to the quality of construction. The construction technique of the Romans assumed the use of rubble and cement, i. e., the "Puteolan dust", and thus constructed buildings could stand for centuries [Zubov, Petrovskii, 1940]. However, not all the rules were observed in Rome, with its hectic construction:

- the foundations of 5-6-story houses were shallow;
- less strong and cheaper dark gray pozzolana was used instead of strong red one;
- wooden posts were used between rubble and cement blocks instead of stone ones;
- internal partitions were made of brushwood [Sergeenko, 2017, 85].

All this could make houses more unstable and more fire hazardous. Realizing this, the emperors issued edicts on construction; e. g., Nero, after the Great Fire of Rome, made a number of reasonable

orders: he forbade the use of wood in walls, limited the height of buildings, and ordered to make spacious courtyards and widen the streets. However, these reasonable advices were not always followed [Hannah, Magli, Palmieri, 2016].

The vertical expansion of houses in crowded Rome was a pressing need of the time. During the imperial period, Rome was a huge city for that time, with a population of more than one million people; there were crowds and noise on its central streets.

The reasons for the overpopulation of Rome were economic and logistical [Bickerman, 1975]. Workers and tradespeople could not live outside the city, as there was no transport network. Only the noble and rich Romans, not employed in public service or trade, could settle in the more spacious and greener suburbs [Frank, 2004]. Palaces, forums, circuses, theaters, and thermal baths also occupied a lot of space in the center of Rome [Thomas, 2007].

The spaces of the Roman house continued in history. Thus, the atrium building became one of the most important buildings in the public architecture of the 20th and 21st centuries [Bausheva, 2011; Saxon, 1987]. The atrium is an architectural and interior form that reflects humanistic and ecological content: "the atrium is not only and not so much a formal architectural element as a space used in various epochs; it is a symbol of a comfortable and multifunctional environment, which is especially important in modern architecture in which the problem of humanization of the human environment is so acute" [Bausheva, 2011, 16]. Moreover, it is the Roman atrium-peristyle house that is an example of the principle of functional zoning, which modern people are used to [Musatov, 2011, 26].

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Интерьеры Древнего Рима: этнокультурная специфика

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена истории жилой архитектуры и интерьера древнеримского государства. Рим в эпоху ранней республики был застроен домами очень скромными, продолжавшими традиции древнеиталийского сельского дома. Самые маленькие дома итальянцев имперского периода состояли только из атриума и противоположного входу покоя. Большие дома, несмотря на разнообразие покоев, были построены по одному принципу: атриум (древнее место очага) был окружен примыкающими к нему покоем. Когда к дому стали пристраивать перистиль, то атриум постепенно потерял свои «семейные» функции и стал более присутственным местом, а жизнь семьи переместилась в более просторный и удаленный от входа перистиль. Римляне почти повсеместно имели в домах ваннные комнаты. Стены

выкладывались из кирпича или обтесанного камня; по бокам vestibюля могли ставить колонны или пилястры. Развитие интерьера римлян было обусловлено историческим развитием римского государства как завоевателя. В имперский период множилось и более тесное жилье, представленное многоэтажными инсулами. Доходные дома были часто невысокого качества. Инсулы бывали различными по своему назначению. Римский атриумно-перистильный дом является образцом принципа функционального зонирования, к которому привыкли современные люди.

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Ключевые слова

Древнеримская архитектура, италийский интерьер, этрусский интерьер, архитектура жилых помещений, история Древнего Рима, история повседневности.

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