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# SPACE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

*edited by* ELIZABETH C. ROBERTSON,  
JEFFREY D. SEIBERT, DEEPIKA C. FERNANDEZ,  
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# SPACE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS IN ARCHAEOLOGY



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface ix  
*Kathryn V. Reese-Taylor*

Acknowledgements xi  
*Elizabeth C. Robertson, Jeffrey D. Seibert, Deepika C. Fernandes, and Marc H. Zender*

1. Introduction xiii  
*Jeffrey Seibert*

Part I: Theoretical and Conceptual Approaches

2. Beyond Geochronology: Pragmatist Explorations of Alternative Viewscapes in the British Bronze Age and Beyond 3  
*Mary Ann Owen*

3. Perceptions of Landscapes in Uncertain Times: Chunchucmil, Yucatán, Mexico and the Volcán Barú, Panama 15  
*Karen G. Holmberg, Travis W. Stanton, and Scott R. Hudson*

4. Specialization, Social Complexity and Vernacular Architecture: A Cross-Cultural Study of Space Construction 29  
*Elizabeth A. Biggwell*

5. Maya Mortuary Spaces as Cosmological Metaphors 37  
*Pamela L. Geller*

Part II: Intrasite Spatial Analysis

6. The Behavioural Ecology of Early Pleistocene Hominids in the Koobi Fora Region, East Turkana Basin, Northern Kenya 49  
*S. M. Gaither and J. W. K. Harris*

7. Spatial Models of Intra-settlement Spatial Organization in the FIA of Southern Africa: A View from Ndondondwane on the Central Cattle Pattern 61  
*Haskel Greenfield and Len O. van Schaik*

8. The Intra-settlement Spatial Structure of Early Neolithic Settlements in Temperate Southeastern Europe: A View from Blagočin, Serbia 69  
*Haskel Greenfield and Tina Jongman*

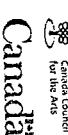
Part III: Architectural Complexes

9. The Inhabitation of Rio Viejo's Acropolis 83  
*Arthur A. Joyce*

10. Who Put the "Harani" in the Mahram Bilqis? 97  
*William D. Glanzman*

11. The Form, Style and Function of Structure 12A, Minaná, Belize 107  
*Jeffrey Seibert*

12. The Machine in the Ceremonial Centre 115  
*H. Stanley Lofzen*



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13. Messages in Stone: Constructing Sociopolitical Inequality in Late Bronze Age Cyprus 123  
*Kevin D. Fisher*

14. Individual, Household, and Community Space in Early Bronze Age Western Anatolia and the Nearby Islands 133  
*Carolyn Aslan*

**Part IV: Urban Spaces and Cityscapes**

15. Body, Boundaries, and "Lived" Urban Space: A Research Model for the Eighth Century City at Copán, Honduras 143  
*Allan J. Marra*

16. The Symbolic Space of the Ancient Maya Sweatbath 157  
*Mark B. Child*

17. Space, Place, and the Rise of "Urbanism" in the Canadian Arctic 169  
*Peter G. Dackson*

18. Architectural Variability in the Maya Lowlands of the Late Classic Period: A Recent Perspective on Ancient Maya Cultural Diversity 177  
*Martin Lomón*

19. Maya Readings of Settlement Space 189  
*Denise Freya Brasseur*

20. Spatial Alignments in Maya Architecture 199  
*Anneke Huhmann-Vogrin*

21. Archaeological Approaches to Ancient Maya Geopolitical Borders 205  
*Cyber Jamison*

**Part V: Landscape and Natural Environment**

22. Reconstructing Ritual: Some Thoughts on the Location of Petroglyph Groups in the Nasca Valley, Peru 217  
*Ayla Nieves*

23. "What You See is Where You Are": An Examination of Native North American Place Names 227  
*Christine Schreyer*

24. Burials and the Landscapes of Gournia, Crete, in the Bronze Age 233  
*Georgios Vlachoumakis*

25. The Origins of Transhumant Pastoralism in Temperate Southeastern Europe 243  
*Elizabeth R. Arnold and Hazel J. Greenfield*

26. Clovis Progenitors: From Swan Point, Alaska to Anzick Site, Montana in Less than a Decade? 253  
*G. Vance Haynes, Jr.*

27. Impacts of Imperialism: Nabataean, Roman, and Byzantine Landscapes in the Wadi Faynan, Southern Jordan 269  
*Gráinne Barker, Patrick Daff, and Paul Neson*

**Part VI: In Transit: The Archaeology of Transportation**

28. Comparing Landscapes of Transportation: Riverine-Oriented and Land-Oriented Systems in the Indus Civilization and the Mughal Empire 281  
*Heather M.-L. Miller*

29. The Life and Times of a British Logging Road in Belize 293  
*Olivier Ng and Paul R. Gardner*

30. Moving Mountains: The Trade and Transport of Rocks and Minerals within the Greater Indus Valley Region 301  
*Randall Lae*

31. Hidden Passage: Graeco-Roman Roads in Egypt's Eastern Desert 315  
*Jennifer E. Gates*

32. Boats, Bitumen and Bartering: The Use of a Utilitarian Good to Track Movement and Transport in Ancient Exchange Systems 323  
*Mark Schwartz and David Hollander*

33. Weaving Space: Textile Imagery and Landscape in the Mixtec Codices 333  
*Sharisse D. McCafferty and Geoffrey G. McCafferty*

34. Engendering Roman Spaces 343  
*Pénélope M. Allison*

35. A Star of Nazca: The Celestial Presence of God I. 355  
*Michelle Man Bernatz*

36. Performing Coatepec: The Raising of the Banners Festival among the Mexica 371  
*Rev Konetz*

**Part VIII: Framework for the Future**

37. Archaeology in the New World Order: What We Can Offer the Planet 383  
*Carole L. Grumley*

Index 397

## ENGENDERING ROMAN SPACES

Penelope M. Allison

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### ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a research project which is contributing to a more gendered understanding of Roman space. Two types of sites – Roman houses and Roman military forts – provide the archaeological contexts for two different case studies. The project engages with feminist theory to provide frameworks for contextualizing gender roles within Roman spaces. The main theoretical perspective is that the material conditions (i.e., architectural and other forms of material culture) facilitate the negotiation of gender, age and status distinctions. The archaeological record provides the spatial signatures of these processes, recognized in the organization and characteristics of the material remains. This paper samples some of the results from Pompeian houses and from the military fort of Vetera I on the Lower Rhine.

This paper addresses the theoretical and methodological frameworks for a research project entitled "Engendering Roman Spaces." The objective of the project is to contribute to a gendered history of the Roman world through the analysis of its material-cultural remains. This means using archaeological approaches to Roman material culture for a more holistic understanding of the nature and functioning of Roman society in its relationship to space. It also means a closer engagement with feminist scholarship for studies of Roman space, and more critical analyses of the use of ancient written sources to provide processes for contextualizing gender roles within space.

With a tradition of scholarship founded on nineteenth-century concepts of empire and colonialism (Freeman 1997; Hingley 2000), investigations of the Roman world have conventionally been concerned with the representation of masculine power. The

biases of ancient authors and of past investigators, both predominantly male elites, have also had a major impact on the types of research into this world. The visual impact of the physical remains of Roman architectural and engineering feats, of Roman roads, armies and trading networks have fuelled the concentration of much archaeological scholarship on the "maleness" of this world. This, in turn, has led scholars in other disciplines to conceptualize a Roman world which epitomizes "manliness" and "masculine values and virtues, those of the military man and the administrator" (Lefebvre 1991:249).

Roman historians, notably Australian ones (Dixon 1988, 1992, 2001; Rawson 1986, 1991; Rawson and Weaver 1997), have been concerned with redressing the balance, and with focusing on Roman women and families towards more rounded views of Roman society. The most widely used evidence for such research is representations of women in ancient texts – texts that are predominantly written from a male viewpoint. More recently, inscriptions and works of art, particularly sculpture and papyri, have also been used as less biased resources (Fanham et al. 1994; Kleiner and Matheson 1996; Koloski-Ostrow 1997; Phang 2001). However, attempts to use a wider range of contextualized Roman material culture (e.g., architecture, pottery, household objects) for more engendered perspectives of Roman society have generally been untheorized, using material-cultural evidence as the setting for the textual, rather than as independent information.

One of the principal issues for the archaeological discipline, more broadly, is the gender-marking of activities that once took place in the material conditions, now represented by the archaeological record. The main theoretical perspective of my project is that

these material conditions facilitate the negotiation of gender, age and status distinctions. The archaeological record provides the spatial signatures of these historical processes, recognized in the organization and the characteristics of these material remains.

The combination of the written and material evidence from the Roman world provides a much richer resource than is available for most other branches of the archaeological discipline. A principal significance of this project is its demonstration that much can be learnt about past societies through more theorized and sophisticated approaches to their material culture and to the relationships between history and archaeology (see Dyson 1995; Storey 1998). While written sources can assist in the reading of material culture, they are not always the appropriate tools with which to direct that reading. Material culture is both an indicator of social behaviour and an active agent in social relations. Gender relations may be played out as spatial distributions between activity areas, rights of access, and the orientation and distribution of people in private and communal gatherings. Written texts predominantly project the male, usually elite, voice. Females and non-elite males were also both viewers and active participants in the production and utilization of material culture and space.

To quote Bernard Knapp (1998:32), "[A]n archaeology informed by feminism... looks critically at theories of human action and uses archaeological data to challenge existing structures of knowledge." An engagement with feminist theory "can help to balance objectivism against extreme relativism, and to realize a more encompassing archaeology that acknowledges contexts, contingencies and ambiguities" (Knapp 1998:34). Much work has been carried out in other branches of archaeology to engender the past (e.g., Baucus et al. 1993; Gilchrist 1999). However, there has been criticism that few so-called feminist archaeological publications have engaged directly with feminist theory (Engelsstad 1999). Shelley Brown (1997:14) noted that "classical archaeologists continue to avoid feminist theory" and Louise Zarmati (1994:73) observed the lack of articles on classical archaeology in *Bacchus* et al. (1993). While art-historical studies of the classical world have developed more feminist approaches, little attention has been paid to a rigorous engendering of the kinds of remains found in archaeological contexts of the Roman period (although see Scott 1999 for infant burials).

Fundamental to the theoretical design of this project is that it is grounded in the theoretical design of the project. The visibility of the roles of women in these institutional processes, recognized in the organization and the characteristics of these material remains.

The basic premise that gendered relations are constituted in historically specific ways means that particular categories of material cannot be assumed to have a universal significance. Awareness that twenty-first-century perspectives have thrown biases is equally important.

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## CASE STUDIES

### DOMESTIC SPACE

Previous studies of domestic space, particularly, have used material culture, but often merely to illuminate the written sources (e.g., George 1977; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 1996). Rather than analyzing the relationships between the historical and archaeological records, many studies use the extant remains of Roman dwellings to house analogical, and often anecdotal, literary and artistic resources with the modern world (e.g., Hingley 1993; cf. Gilchrist 1999); especially 34–113) are often used to produce dichotomies (e.g., public/private, male/female, inside/outside) that are not necessarily appropriate for Roman houses.

For example, Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994:11) emphasized Vitruvius' obsessive concern with social rank and divided the Roman house along public/private and grand/humble axes. To add weight to such divisions he used analogies with houses of the nobility in eighteenth-century France. This analogy is interesting in its potential elucidation of ancient written information on domestic differentiation, but it does not employ the material remains of Roman houses in this elucidation. Rather, it uses the weight of Vitruvius' authority, and behaviour in the French *ancien régime*, to explain behaviour in Roman houses. Such analogies can best be used to explore relationships between modern and ancient behaviours rather than to explain them. Indeed,

the physical remains of Pompeian houses—the arrangements of their courtyards, the distribution of wall and floor decoration, the locations for food-preparation and storage, and the distribution patterns of the contents—point to much more complex spatial integration of domestic activities (see Allison 1997a, 2004:124–158; Dunbabin 1995:390).

Since the attention paid to engendering Roman domestic space by other scholars has focused on Pompeian houses (e.g., Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill 1997), this project has commenced with a case study where people both lived and worked. The language of Pompeian houses and military forts are places where people both lived and worked. The language of a dichotomized public/private, in the modern sense, is not appropriate here. This project takes a differently structured approach, investigating ranges of accessibility and inaccessibility, and concepts of gender-marked, and to particular spaces, as found in other contexts. For example, mirrors and combs are generally associated with toilet activities and have been "symbolically associated with women" since Greek times (Kampen

Principal concerns are the archaeological and historical record of the roles of women in these institutions, as well as the roles of other groups who are also of particular importance. The project takes a critical approach to the interpretations of textual remains of gender as a social construction (e.g., children, slaves, non-soldiers, etc.). The project takes a critical approach to the interpretation of the fluidity of gender in the archaeological record, concentrating on the objective and subjective—*sensu lato*—aspects of gender in which activities are both segregated and integrated spatially. This highlights the fluidity of gender theory but more complex in practice. The rich textual theory but more complex in practice. The rich textual and artistic resources from the Roman world render these approaches more complex for Roman archaeology than for prehistoric and early historical archaeology, but at the same time more rewarding. A rigorous, gendered analysis of the evidence for the spatial and gender distribution of activities in Roman archaeology provides useful cross-cultural analogies for gendering such activities in other past societies.

The main datasets for this project are excavation reports, but also Roman authors, inscriptions and works of art with relevant iconography. As the principal concern is the engendering of material culture, the project involves a critical approach to the way in which activities and gender contexts have been ascribed to Roman material culture in past scholarship. It uses an understanding of the range and nature of material culture found in archaeological contexts, together with those contexts themselves, as the basis from which to investigate relevant textual information on spatial and gender distribution of activities. By this process, these archaeological remains are investigated for the expression of the roles of women and other occupants in patterning of material culture across the various spaces within these sites.

An essential issue in this project is a comprehension of the concepts of "public" and "private" space in the Roman world, a set of relationships which is inadequate for a more critical perspective on Roman physical remains and social behaviour (see Riggaby 1999:557). Roman houses and military forts are places where people both lived and worked. The language of a dichotomized public/private, in the modern sense, is not appropriate here. This project takes a differently structured approach, investigating ranges of accessibility and inaccessibility, and concepts of gender-marked, and to particular spaces, as found in other contexts. For example, mirrors and combs are generally associated with toilet activities and have been "symbolically associated with women" since Greek times (Kampen

## PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGIES

The excavated remains of two types of sites that are emblematic of Roman spaces provide the archaeological contexts for different case studies. These are domestic space and military space.

1996:22). However, they were also used by males (see Wyke 1994; especially 135–138) and found in assemblies with razors in Pompeii (Rhea Berg, personal communication 2001).

#### POMPEIAN HOUSES

My investigations of artifact assemblages and their spatial distribution in thirty Pompeian *atrium* houses have involved the analyses and collation of old excavation reports to produce computerized catalogues of household artifacts and room assemblages (e.g., Allison 1994, 1995, 1997a, 1997b, 2004, n.d.a). Some 6,000 artifacts from over 800 rooms in thirty Pompeian *atrium* houses have been studied. These datasets were analyzed and interpreted through material-cultural approaches and their relationships to any textual evidence on the use of space in Roman houses assessed. That is, the interpretations of the use of space in Pompeian houses were not driven by the textual evidence, as is more common in Roman archaeology and history (see Allison 2001). Rather these interpretations commenced with a contextual study of the material culture and the results were then examined in relation to textual evidence, which is largely analogical as few texts survive that refer directly to Pompeian houses (although see Prison 1997; especially 168, 179).

Important to a gendered study of Roman domestic space is an understanding of what can be considered female material and female activities. An industry that is relevant in this regard is cloth production. Gender and status separation of cloth producers and locations for cloth production in the Roman world has traditionally been based on whether or not the cloth was for household or commercial use (see Ling 1997:80). The term *tevor* (e.g., Martial, *Ep.* 12, 59.6; Juvenal, Sat. 9, 30) indicates that weaving was an activity engaged in by men as well as by women. However, there is little reason to assume that male involvement was for commercial purposes, taking place in specialist workshops, and that female participation was for domestic purposes only, taking place within the household context (see Dixon 2001:117–125). Evidence from Pompeii appears to indicate that women, whether slave or free, worked in commercial weaving workshops (see Dixon 2001:122). Thus, evidence for weaving is not, of necessity, evidence of the activities of women, but evidence for spinning and perhaps needlework can probably be more securely used as documentation of the presence

of female activities at least within the household (e.g., Deschler-Erb 1998:136–137; 'Iregguri' 1976:82; of Allason-Jones 1995:28).

Material evidence for cloth production in Pompeian houses occurred in the form of loom weights, combs and warp-beaters, spindles and spindle whorls, bronze and bone needles. In the sample of thirty *atrium* houses cloth production-related artifacts occurred in nearly every house (Allison 2004:146–148), their distribution indicating that there were 46 possible locations for this activity throughout these houses (Allison 2004:Table 6.2a). The majority of the spinning production artifacts also occurred in small, closed rooms off it, the so-called *cubicula*. The evidence in the front hall consisted mainly of that for weaving and that weaving tools placed in this area. For example, 56 loom weights found in the front hall of House I.10.8 might doubt indicated that a warp-weighted loom had been in use here. Sometimes, however, loom weights were also stored in this area (e.g., in a cupboard in the front hall of the Casa del Saccello [Ilaco]). Spinning and needlework equipment tended to be found in so-called *cubicula*, the small closed rooms off front halls. This equipment was likely to have been stored in these rooms for use in better lit front halls or possibly garden areas. While cloth-production items were remarkably absent from main garden areas themselves, there was a notable pattern for the presence of weaving, spinning and needlework items in the small closed rooms off them (Allison 2004:Table 6.9a). Such material also occurred in the upper levels and in the areas of the ground floor away from the main front hall/garden axis, but less frequently. Thus, the most likely location for all types of cloth production had been the front hall or *atrium* area, with some perhaps occurring in the garden, but less on upper floors or in what are considered to have been the service areas of the house. This suggests that it had been a highly visible activity and therefore an important part of the "public" activities in the household.

What is not discernible from this study is any distinction between cloth production destined for household use or for distribution outside. Simpson noted (1997:35) that weaving is the task of every household in the Roman world and thus that loom weights give no indication of the economic basis of site. Ling suggests (1997:180, especially no. 22) that the quantity of loom weights found in the front hall of House I.10.8

was excessive for a domestic loom but, comparable quantities occur in other Pompeian houses (e.g., in the Casa di Principe di Napoli and in House VI.16.26) and are consistent with the presence of a single loom (Wild 1970:61, plates Xa–b, Table M no. 28). There seems little reason to assume that the weights found in the front hall represent anything other than normal domestic activity, at least some of which was likely to have been carried out by a slave, whether slave or free. In combination with the evidence for spinning and needlework, this suggests that women were actively involved in cloth-production in this most public part of the house.

Also important to a study of gender in Pompeian houses are notions of the dichotomies public/private: male/female, which seem to pervade studies of the ancient world. Such notions can be shown to apply to Greek houses, where female household members could be separated from male guests (Never 1999:18–20, 174). Assumptions that Roman houses were organized along similar lines are unverified, however. For example, based in Vitruvius' description of a Roman town and country houses (Book VI, 3–7), the front hall, or *atrium*, of a Pompeian house is believed to be a public space, a largely empty and spacious reception area, reserved for the *paterfamilias* to receive his male clients in the mornings (see Leech 1993). Conversely, the colonnaded garden, further into the house, is assumed to be a more private, family, space and the small rooms opening of both these spaces, the so-called *cubicula*, a more private still (see Wallace-Hadrill 1994; especially 17). Artifact distribution studies demonstrate that such dichotomies do not adequately explain domestic behaviour in Pompeii. Rather relationships between gender and space in Pompeian houses are more complex. For example, instead of being furnished only with display furniture to impress the visitor, as assumed by most scholars (e.g., Dwyer 1982:113–115), the front hall can be found to have been filled with a great range of household paraphernalia. In particular, most of the thirty houses in the sample had cupboards and chest filled with domestic material (although interestingly not cooking apparatus) as well as evidence for commerce, in the form of amphorae, and for household industries, notably weaving (Allison 2004:65–70). The consistency of this pattern across a number of Pompeian houses demonstrates that the front hall was not the reserve of the male owner and his male visitors, but rather that it was frequented by

all who needed to use household equipment, or were involved in activities such as weaving or supplying produce to the house. Rather than being like the foyer in an elite Georgian house, Pompeian front halls were the centre for many household activities and space where all household members could enter and congregate for these activities (see Allison 1997a:349–350). Indeed, both Virgil (*Aeneid* 7:377–389) and Lucretius (4:400–404) depicted household playing in the *atrium*. It may have been the most "public" part of the houses, with direct access to the street, but Pompeian householders did not hide their other activities and utilitarian domestic materials, or their women and their children, from the public eye nor prohibit them from using this more public space.

The artifact distribution in the rear garden areas of Pompeian houses is, perhaps surprisingly, similar to that in the front halls. Again, cupboards and chests with domestic contents were found against the walls of the ambulatories. Unlike the assemblages in the front hall area, however, there is evidence that this area was used for eating, and also for cooking, in front of the diners (Allison 2004:87–90). While these gardens might be considered to have been more private than the front halls, in that they were further inside the house, the assemblages in these garden areas indicate that they were used by the householders themselves in much the same manner as the front halls. Indeed Vitruvius stated that uninvited people could also enter the peristyles, as well as the front part of the house (Book VII, 5).

One aspect of both the front hall and colonnaded garden areas indicates that these public and display areas were also very much part of the more utilitarian functioning of the house. In most Pompeian houses, water could only be collected from those open areas, from well-heads that led to cisterns underneath (see Allison 2004; especially 'Tables 5, 3a, 5, 9b'). This water was used for display features, particularly in the garden, but most members of the household would have needed to collect water from well-heads in both the garden area and the front hall. This included slaves (although interestingly not cooking apparatus) as well as evidence for commerce, in the form of amphorae, and for household industries, notably weaving (Allison 2004:65–70). The consistency of this pattern across a number of Pompeian houses demonstrates that the front hall was not the reserve of the male owner and his male visitors, but rather that it was frequented by

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to contain a higher proportion of more personal items, such as washing equipment and small glass bottles (see Allison 2004 especially 71–76, 94–98, Table 4.3). However, there is no specific reason to assume that many of the personal items and toiletries were associated with women. For example, the *argentaria* could have been used by men to take oils to the bath, or for the storage of substances needed for medical treatments (Jackson 1988 especially 73). It is sometimes possible to use association to ascribe them to women; however, In room 2 in the Casa del Fabbro in Pompeii, possibly in a chest, three such bottles were found with two spindles and a bone spoon, suggesting a woman's collection (Allison 2004 companion website).

By adopting a more critical and theorized approach to contextual and gender associations of household material culture, this project demonstrates that the first step in understanding gender relations within Pompeian houses is to investigate the material-cultural patterning. Any mismatch between interpretation of that patterning and current perspectives should not be interpreted as the unreliability of the archaeological remains. Rather it should encourage a re-examination of the origins of such perspectives which often tend to draw too heavily on modern analogy before fully interrogating the contemporary evidence, both the material and the textual.

#### MILITARY SPACE

Roman military studies have concentrated on the expression of fort as a male domain, a combat unit at the edge of the civilized world. Studies of the archaeology of Roman military forts have concentrated on the evidence that these forts provide for strategic military constructions and to document Roman power, especially its chronological spread and its relationships with native populations (e.g., Groeneman van Waering 1997; Jones 1997:90). However, these sites were both habitation and administrative spaces, involving a whole frontier community. In recent years, therefore, more attention has been paid to the presence of non-military personnel at these sites, particularly in settlements often found outside the fortifications, the so-called *vici* or *castra* (e.g., Bowman 1994; Goldsworthy and Haynes 1999). Certain textual and inscriptional material has been used as evidence for living conditions (e.g., gravestones and the Vindolanda tablets), and Lindsay Allason-Jones (1989:59, 1995,

good textual evidence, is to apply nineteenth-century Roman households. Rather, the evidence suggests that Pompeian houses functioned in a much more integrated fashion than is widely assumed. Feminist readings of ancient authors and of inscriptional evidence indicate that women, both free and slave, were involved in a range of commercial activities outside the home (see Kampen 1981; Lixson 2001:113–132). They also indicate that both men and women were involved in cooking (Foss 1994:47–50), that both men and women dined together (see e.g., Yardley 1991:151–152) and that children could be important members of the household (Rawson 2003).

By adopting a more critical and theorized approach to contextual and gender associations of household material culture, this project demonstrates that the first step in understanding gender relations within Pompeian houses is to investigate the material-cultural patterning. Any mismatch between interpretation of that patterning and current perspectives should not be interpreted as the unreliability of the archaeological remains. Rather it should encourage a re-examination of the origins of such perspectives which often tend to draw too heavily on modern analogy before fully interrogating the contemporary evidence, both the material and the textual.

#### VETERA I

Vetera I was probably founded ca. 10 B.C.E., substantially rebuilt in stone ca. 43 C.E., and then destroyed during revolutionary upheavals in 68/69 C.E. Only the central part of the fort has been excavated so little of the ordinary soldiers' barracks are known but the central administrative buildings, two legates' palaces and possibly six other officers' buildings have been excavated, as well as many other buildings whose identification is less clear, along the principal cross street, the *vicus principatus*. Being a first century fort one would expect to find evidence for the presence of women predominantly within the officer's residences. This could also apply to the quarters of the petty officers, the centurions (Phang 2001:130–132), which were often found at the ends of barrack blocks. Unfortunately, no such centurions' quarters have been identified at Vetera I.

1999) has combined skeletal and inscriptional evidence with other artifacts and with spatial arrangements to provide more information on these communities. In general, studies of artifact from within military forts have largely concentrated on military equipment (e.g., Bishop and Cauldron 1993; Southern and Dixon 1996:89–126). Pat Southern and Karen Ramsay Dixon (1996:3) noted that pottery "can illustrate the quality of mundane life" but that it is generally employed only as dating evidence. That is, does the distribution of material definitively associated with women's presence and women's activities, such as certain types of *utensilia* (household), cloth-working artifacts, and jewelry (see Allason-Jones 1995), support van Driel-Murray's evidence for women's and children's shoes within the soldiers' barracks of first- and second-century forts? With the exception of officers' households, therefore, can women be found to have been present within the fort prior to the end of the second century C.E. and if so, where and what were they doing there?

This case study has commenced with well-excavated and rapidly abandoned military forts in the western provinces, particularly on the Rhine and Danube frontiers. For example, the recent publication of the artifacts excavated from the double legionary fort of Vetera I in the Lower Rhine region (Hanel 1995) has provided useful material for spatially mapping artifact distribution at this site (Allison n.d.; Allison et al. n.d.). Again, feminist critique of current research of Roman military space and archaeological approaches to material-cultural patterning provides a basis for a rigorous investigation of the activities of all occupants of these forts. The date from Roman military sites is being used to assess for similarities and differences of material-cultural patterning within the various architectural spaces of a fort and between forts. In the first instance, the differences that can result from different site formation processes (e.g., rapid abandonment or slow decay), different dates for the excavation, or chronological or geographical differences between sites are assessed. Once such anomalies have been accounted for, relationships between the structural remains and artifact assemblages are investigated for information on the range and distribution of the activities documented at each site. Thus, this project takes a critical approach to relationships between artifacts and their contexts within these forts, and the range of social activities and social actors with which they may have been associated.

An important issue in this study is the relationship between these material-cultural patterns and the changing laws permitting legal marriages for ordinary soldiers at the end of the second century C.E. (see Phang 2001). Prior to that date, only officers had been permitted to be accompanied by their wives and children while on military duty (see Allason-Jones 1989:50–69). Therefore, only the wives, families and households of officers were thought to have inhabited or frequented the inside of a military fort. All commercial or entertainment activities, in which other women

partook, are traditionally believed to have been transacted in the settlement outside the fort proper (see Allason-Jones 1989:60, 81). It is still assumed that, even after ordinary soldiers were permitted to marry their families would have also lived in the *vici* or *casubae* (see Phang 2001:18, 35, 122–124). Thus, an important question for this project is whether this change of law was reflected in a change in the distribution of material within military forts. That is, does the distribution of material definitively associated with women's presence and women's activities, such as certain types of *utensilia* (household), cloth-working artifacts, and jewelry (see Allason-Jones 1995), support van Driel-Murray's evidence for women's and children's shoes within the soldiers' barracks of first- and second-century forts? With the exception of officers' households, therefore, can women be found to have been present within the fort prior to the end of the second century C.E. and if so, where and what were they doing there?

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It was possible to assign gender categories to some 700 of the 11,000 artifacts recorded from Vetera I. These are predominantly items related to dress and various crafts and other activities. In some cases it is possible to assign a specific gender category to certain artifacts. For example, hair pins, spinning items and some fibulae and jewellery have been classified as definitely "female" while other fibulae and activities such as combat or stone-working are classified as definitely "male." In other cases, such as certain types of fibulae, bone pins and beads, the classification is less certain so a number of possible categories are included. These are: "male," "female," "male/female?" and "female?/child?" For the reasons given above, most toilet items were classified as "male/female?" Food-preparation items may also, potentially, be classified as possibly female. As van Driel-Murray has noted (1997:55), the technological difference between handmade cooking vessels and other artifacts (e.g., weaponry) found within military forts should make us question whether cooking was being carried out by soldiers themselves, as is traditionally believed, or by local women within the camp. However, this is a complex issue and so is not included in this current study.

On the bases of the above gender classifications, GIS mapping capabilities were used to plot the spatial distribution of these gender categories across the excavated area of Vetera I and then these plots were analyzed. They showed that the central administrative buildings contained a wealth of items related to male activities, especially combat activities, but also to administrative activities such as writing. In contrast, personal activities, such as dress (excluding combat dress), toilet activities, and leisure activities (e.g., gaming), whether male, female or unassigned, were comparatively less well represented in these buildings than they were in buildings identified as the officers' residences and in buildings along the *via principalis*. Similarly, items which could be identified as women's, or possibly women's and children's, were almost non-existent in the administrative buildings but relatively predominant in the officers' residences. In addition to this expected pattern though, there was also a relative concentration of women's and children's material in the central open area of the fort, believed to have been the market area (Flane 1995:311-312; Pseudo-Hyginus 12), as well as in the east gateway of the *vía principalis* and in the smaller buildings lining this street. The high proportion of possibly female and children's

items in these parts of the fort may point to the sexual or even greater, numbers of women and children passing along and frequenting these public and relatively commercial areas as the officers' private residences. This includes a noted concentration of dress-related items in the buildings lining the main street, believed to have been shops (Lechner 1930:39). The numbers are extremely small but, if the quantity women's and children's items in the officers' residences documents their habitation there, then the quantity and nature of the artifacts in these so-called shops might also document female habitation. Thus the evidence from Vetera I hints that women and children may have lived in the commercial parts of the forts as prevalent in the officer's residences. Interestingly, a concentration of food-preparation items and tableware was also found in these areas (Allison n.d.b.). It is therefore, tempting to suggest that this distribution pattern indicates that women were involved in feeding the troops from these more public spaces and supplied them with required merchandise.

This evidence supports that identified on inscribed wooden tablets found in the rubbish dump of the first century C.E. fort of Vindonissa, in Switzerland. Some of these wooden tablets have house numbers, which have been identified as belonging to buildings within the fort, and these same tablets refer to women who worked in these establishments as barmaids and innkeepers (Speidel 1996:186-187). Thus, these documents, likewise, suggest that women were involved in providing services to soldiers, including food and drink. However, it has been assumed that such women would only have worked within the fort during the day and resided in the settlement outside. It is difficult to imagine how a female innkeeper would have operated, had she not also inhabited her place of work.

Thus, analysis of the distribution of gender-marked artifacts at Vetera I adds further weight to the growing perception that Roman military forts in the first and second centuries C.E. were far from exclusively male zones. Rather, a range of women and families were likely to have been involved in activities within fort and may also have been domiciled there. As well as the officers' households, these included women involved in supplying various needs of the soldiers, within the fort and as well as in the settlement outside. It is not possible, from the Vetera or the Vindonissa evidence, to establish the relationships of such women to ordinary soldiers but the presence of children's items

could support an argument for some co-habiting arrangement. Given such evidence, it is not, as Carol van Driel-Murray has stated (1997:61), a question of whether the women were within the forts, but how we use the archaeological record to provide more information on their presence and their activities.

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#### REMARKS

This project involves a more self-reflexive approach to the construction of archaeological knowledge about the Roman world and more critical perspectives in our understanding of the nature and the complexity of gender relations in Roman society. In this, it contributes to understandings of the intrinsic nature of theorized gender in the discipline of archaeology more generally. In addition, it contributes to a gendered history of the western world and to more informed perspectives on issues relating to the continuity of social structures from ancient to modern worlds.

Issues concerning the social use of space in the Roman world have wider ramifications for humanities and social science research, as well as architectural and engineering research of the built environment, which often draw on the Roman world for explanations of social behaviour (e.g., Leibvre 1991). A project which takes a more critical perspective on the relationships between gender and space in the Roman world can provide an important resource for social theorists and philosophers who explore the ancient world for concepts of continuity in attitudes to sexuality and gender relations (see McNay 1992; especially 49-50; Spencer-Wood 1999).

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#### NOTES

- 1 See Whitley (1998:7, and especially 301) on the question of the existence of an objective reconstruction of the past.