

The Literary Allusions to the *Suburbium* of Rome and their Social Implications: Catullus 44, Statius *Silvae* 4.4 and Martial 5.62

The study of archaeological sites and literary references on the Roman *suburbium* has gathered momentum in the last decade, with studies such as *Roman Villas around the Urbs: Interaction with landscape and environment* being a perfect example.¹ The analysis of these sites has exhibited their close connection to the capital and their social status among the Roman aristocracy. However, two important points remain to be discussed: firstly, how were the different regions considered by the Roman elites; and secondly, to determine how each distinct 'type' of property should be viewed, particularly in relation to the suburban *hortus* and *villa suburbana*. For this examination there are three literary references that are particular use: Catullus 44, Statius' *Silvae* 4.4 and Martial 5.62. these texts, when compared against the archaeological evidence, allow for a better insight into not only how the Roman aristocracy viewed these properties, but also the social implications of their perceived value and function.

Catullus 44

O funde noster, seu Sabine seu Tiburs.....sed seu Sabine sive verius Tiburs / fui libenter in tua suburbana / villa. The well-known beginning of Catullus 44 makes a clear statement about the social pressures and distinctions placed upon residents and their residences within the *suburbium* of the capital. Not only is this passage one of the few that actually uses the term *villa suburbana*,² or in this case *suburbana villa*, but it clearly refers to the subjectivity of the perception of what (or who) was deemed socially élite and what was not.³ The distinction between these two regions (Sabinum and Tibur) in the hinterland of Rome was frequently drawn in literature by other authors such as Horace, Livy and Suetonius.⁴ However, in this poem Catullus has drawn a more obvious distinction between the two regions. He argued that his property was located in the vicinity of Tibur rather than in the Sabine territory, which

¹ Frizell, B.S. and Klynne, A. (eds.), *Roman Villas around the Urbs. Interaction with landscape and environment*, Swedish Institute in Rome: Rome, 2005. www.svenska-institutet-rom.org/villa/

² The other references to *villae suburbanae*, found in Nep. Att. 25.14.3; Fro. Amic. 1.6; Apul. Apol. 87-8; Digest, 27.9.1.

³ For further discussion of the term *villa suburbana* see G.W. Adams, *The Suburban Villas of Campania and their Social Function*, (Oxford, 2006), 9-24.

⁴ Hor. Carm. 3.4.21-3; Liv. 22.12.1-2; Suet. Vita Horati.

makes several interesting points in regard to how the different locations within the *suburbium* of the capital were viewed.

Firstly, it is clear that there was a degree of confusion in the social division between these two areas. If there had been a definitive division then the whole purpose of this introduction to the poem would have been superfluous. However, in this poem Catullus makes it clear that both Sabine and Tibur were perceived as being quite distinct. This distinction may have been originally tied to the agriculturally productive differences between them,⁵ but this is clearly not the most important aspect to Catullus. It is pertinent to note that in Catullus 39.10 he also emphasises the distinction between the areas, referring to their communities as being either *Sabinus aut Tiburs*. In this context, the differentiation was intended to highlight the uncultivated practices of Egnatius,⁶ but it still provides a good example of how the Sabine and Tiburtine regions were seen as distinct entities. However, this reference to Sabinum and Tibur was also a part of a catalogue of places, each more uncouth than the last,⁷ which not only highlights their perceived differences, but also their close association in status (as well as geography). It was necessary for Catullus to refer to *Sabinus* first in this instance (rather than *Tiburs*) in order to maintain his Choliambic meter (*aūt Sābīnūs aūt Tībŭrs*), but it is evident that these two regions were seen as being both distinct and also preferable to those that he mentioned further away from the capital (Umbria, Etruria, Lanuvium, Transpadana, and particularly Celtiberia).⁸ This is particularly interesting because Catullus also depicts the people from these places as belonging to a separate group from those people who were seen as *urbanus* (line 10).⁹ It may also be worthy of note that these are the only two occasions in which either location (Sabinum, Tibur) is mentioned by Catullus. The fact that he uses them only in conjunction with each other may further establish the close link in the perception of both areas.

⁵ See Col. 5.8.5, 10.138; R. Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus*, (New York, 1988), 154-5.

⁶ C. Nappa, *Aspects of Catullus' Social Fiction* (Frankfurt, 2001), 60, 77-9; J.T. Katz, "Egnatius' Dental Fricatives (Catullus 39.20)", *CP* 95.3 (2000), 338-48; B.A. Krostenko, "Arbitria Vrbanitatis: Language, Style, and Characterization in Catullus cc. 39 and 37", *CA* 20.2 (2001), 239-72.

⁷ Catull. 39.10-16. *si urbanus esses aut Sabinus aut Tiburs / aut Lanuvinus ater atque dentatus / aut Transpadanus, ut meos quoque attingam / aut quilubet, qui puriter lavit dentes / tamen renidere usquequaque te nollem / nam risu inepto res ineptior nullast*. For further discussion see Nappa (n. 5), 79-80.

⁸ The gradual sequence of locations was intended to further emphasise the distant origins of Egnatius.

⁹ See C.J. Fordyce, *Catullus* (Oxford, 1961), 185.

The difference in a person's origin was more defined than the geographical division between Roman, Sabine and Tiburtine estates. The various regions deemed to be within the Roman *suburbium* have been given by Florus,¹⁰ Suetonius,¹¹ Ovid,¹² and Petronius.¹³ The distinction between Sabine and Tiburtine properties would have been well known among elite circles, and Catullus was suggesting to his audience that status was the reason behind this distinction. The first seven lines were an attempt to establish the worth of his property, despite the taunts that he had evidently received from some of his peers (lines 2-3). It is clear from this opening passage that there was a social distinction between these two regions, with Tiburtine estates being regarded in a better light than the Sabine properties.

However, Catullus does not necessarily agree with the social distinction between these two regions. The initial reference to the property as *fundus* (line 1) by Catullus and then later as a *suburbana villa* (lines 6-7) highlights how this estate could be referred to as either. *Fundus* was a common term, frequently used in agricultural contexts with no suggestion of social status,¹⁴ as opposed to the connotations of a *villa suburbana*. *Laedere* in line 3 was intended to imply social injury,¹⁵ a usage that has been noted in other authors such as Sallust, Propertius, Horace and Martial.¹⁶ But Catullus' disregard for the view that his property was 'lower class' is shown in his use of *quovis Sabinum pignore esse contendunt* in line 4, which belittles the evidence that it was *Sabinum*, rather than *Tiburtem*.

The social divisions and distinctions in Catullus 44 have been discussed previously,¹⁷ but usually in the context of the dinner with Sestius. It would seem that it was more likely that Catullus had been invited to Sestius' dinner with a copy of the speech, which resulted in his 'illness': *qui tunc vocat me, cum malum librum legi* (line 21).¹⁸ This would explain the 'pendantmotiv' in lines 2-4 referred to by Schuster,¹⁹

¹⁰ Flor., *Epit.*, 1.5.7.

¹¹ Suet., *Aug.*, 6.

¹² Ov., *Fast.*, 3.667-8.

¹³ Prop., 4.33-6.

¹⁴ Cato, *Agr.*, 2.1.4; 4.1.5; Varro, *R.*, 1.4.4.7; 1.6.1.6; 1.11.1.6; 1.12.2.7; 1.13.6.2; 1.16.3.9; 1.20.5.2; 2.4.16.8; 3.2.10.5; 3.2.15.7; Col., 1.3.9.5; 1.4.6.2; 1.4.7.4; 1.4.8.8; 2.14.7.7; Hor. *Ep.*, 1.2.47; 1.16.1; 1.17.47; *TLL*, 1573-4.

¹⁵ *TLL*, 869. See also Catull. 69.5.

¹⁶ Sal. *Jug.* 84.1; 85.27; Prop. 1.16.37; 2.32.23; Hor. *S.* 1.4.78; 2.1.21; Mart. 3.97.2; 10.5.2.

¹⁷ See G. Friedrich, *Catulli Veronensis Liber* (Berlin, 1908); S. Small, *Catullus: a Reader's Guide to the Poems* (London, 1983); D.B. George, "Catullus 44: the vulnerability of wanting to be included", *AJPh* 112.2 (1991), 249; D.F.S. Thomson, *Catullus* (Toronto 1997), 314.

¹⁸ For similar views of this interpretation see A. Baehrens, *Poésies de Catulle* (Paris, 1890); R. Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford, 1889); G. Goold, *Catullus* (London, 1983); H. Karsten, "De Catulli

which was a description of Catullus' subtle disregard for the social perceptions of his property.²⁰ This belittling of social judgement is continued in his discussion of Sestius' speech and its negative effects. As Fordyce has shown,²¹ *frigus* was used as a pun for *frigidus* and *frigere* in relation to the literary criticism mentioned by Aristotle.²² He also ridicules himself for his participation in such social activity in his comment on his pursuit of costly feasts,²³ but he still emphasises that he is glad to be in his *suburbana villa*: *fui libenter in tua suburbana / villa* (lines 6-7).

If we assume that it was P. Sestius referred to here,²⁴ an additional theme may have been to parody Sestius' social aspirations. The later charge of *ambitus* against him (in 54 B.C.) is a clear indication of his ambition, which was also a subtle topic of Catullus' jests, which is further emphasised in his description of the property as a *villa suburbana*.

This is only one of four examples of this particular classification,²⁵ and all of these imply a degree of social status and value for this type of residence. By using the classification of *villa suburbana* in lines 6-7 of this property, Catullus was indicating the perceived value and status of this residence. It can be noted that the message of this introduction was clear: not only was the property Tiburtine rather than Sabine, but it was also worthy of the status of a suburban villa. Judging from the extant literary evidence, the use of the term *villa suburbana* was a clear statement about status. The status of such residences was clearly inferred through its use by Cornelius Nepos in

Carmine XLIII", *Mnemosyne* 19 (1891), 222-28; W. Kroll, *C. Valerius Catullus* (Stuttgart, 1968); M. Lenchantin, *Il Libro di Catullo Veronese* (Torino, 1928); E. Merrill, *Catullus* (Cambridge, MA, 1893); K. Quinn, *Catullus: the Poems* (London, 1970). For an opposing interpretation see T.J. Haarhoff, "On Catullus XLIV.21", *CP* 29.3 (1934), 255-6.

¹⁹ M. Schuster, "Catulls Gedicht an sein Landgut (c. 44)" in *Cavrisma. Festgabe zur 25 jährigen Stiftungsfeier des Vereines Klassischen Philologen in Wien* (Wien, 1924), 42-8.

²⁰ This should not be taken to mean that Catullus was immune to the social pressures of the time, but it is rather intended to highlight his scepticism of such social pressures. For further discussion of Catullus' involvement in *amicitia* and *clientela* see W.J. Tatum, "Friendship, Politics and Literature in Catullus: Poems 1, 65 and 66, 116", *CQ* 47.2 (1997), 482-500.

²¹ Fordyce (n. 8), 197.

²² Arist. *Rhet.* 1406a-1406b. Catullus' strong views on the merits of various authors are well documented. Contrast this critical pun with his views expressed in 50 on Calvus. For further discussion of this poem see E. Gunderson, "Catullus, Pliny, and Love-Letters", *TAPA* 127 (1997), 203-8. Catullus' playful assault on Calvus' style in 14 is quite different to the theme of Catullus 44. For an opposing view see C. Murley, "Was Catullus Present at Sestius' Dinner?" *CP* 33.2 (1938), 206-8.

²³ For recent discussion of the abandonment of social integrity for social/political advancement see Nappa (n. 5), 85-6.

²⁴ Fordyce (n. 8), 198.

²⁵ Nep. *Att.* 25.14.3; Fro. *Amic.* 1.6; Apul. *Apol.* 87-8; *Digest*, 27.9.1.

relation to Atticus' modest expenditure upon residences,²⁶ whereas Fronto indicates the beneficial living conditions that were frequently associated with such residences.²⁷ Apuleius' use of the term in the *Apologia* indicates their use for social occasions outside the urban precincts,²⁸ which would have greatly added to the appeal of such properties. In addition to Catullus 44, these references are the only extant instances in which the term *villa suburbana* is used and it is quite clear that they were perceived as being of significant financial value, as shown through the evidence taken from the *Digest*.²⁹

The use of *villa suburbana* to indicate élite residences is further highlighted in the comparison of its use with other alternatives. The majority of references to suburban properties took a variety of forms, such as *fundo suburbano*,³⁰ *suburbano rure*,³¹ *suburbani agri*,³² and *suburbanum praedium*,³³ but these passages focused upon matters that were not related to status or lifestyle. The majority of the references to suburban properties simply consisted of the term *suburbano*,³⁴ or *suburbanum*,³⁵ which did not suggest an elevated status for the property either, owing to their

²⁶ Nep. Att. 25.14.3: *nullos habuit hortos, nullam suburbanam aut maritimam sumptuosam villam, neque in Italia, praeter Arretinum et Nomentanum, rusticum praedium.*

²⁷ Fro. Amic. 1.6: *Ad me quidem minus valentem quom in suburbanam villam venisset, numquam cessavit in vesperum usque fabulas nectere itinerum tuorum et disciplinae ad priscum morem institutae ac retentae.*

²⁸ Apul. Apol. 87-8: *Quippe ita placuerat, in suburbana villa potius ut coniungeremur, ne ciues denuo ad sportulas conuolarent, cum haud pridem Pudentilla de suo quinquaginta milia nummum in populam expunxisset ea die qua Pontianus uxorem duxit et hic puerulus toga est inuolutus, praeterea, ut conuiuiis multis ac molestiis supersederemus, quae ferme ex more nouis maritis abunda sunt. Habes, Aemiliane, causam totam, cur tabulae nubtiales inter me ac Pudentillam non in oppido sint, sed in villa suburbana consignatae: ne quinquaginta milia nummum denuo profundenda essent nec tecum aut apud te cenandum. estne causa idonea? minor tamen, quod tu am villam tantopere abhorreas, qui plerumque rure uersere.*

²⁹ Digest, 27.9.1: *Imperatoris Seueri oratione prohibiti sunt tutores et curatores praedia rustica uel suburbana distrahere. Quae oratio in senatu recitata est Tertullo et Clemente consulibus idibus Iuniis et sunt uerba eius huiusmodi: Praeterea, patres conscripti, interdica tutoribus et curatoribus, ne praedia rustica uel suburbana distrahant, nisi ut id fieret, parentes testamento uel codicillis cauerint.*

³⁰ Such as Cat. Agr. 7.1.1: *fundum suburbanum arbustum maxime convenit habere; et ligna et virgae venire possunt, et domino erit qui utatur.* For the other two instances of this, see Cat. Agr. 9.1 and Cic. Qfr. 3.1.9.7.

³¹ Such as Tac. Ann. 15.60.19: *is forte an prudens ad eum diem ex Campania remeauerat quartumque apud lapidem suburbano rure substiterat.* For the other two instances of this, see Hor. Ep. 1.7.76 and Ov. Ars. 2.265.

³² Such as Cic. Mur. 85.6: *in agros suburbanos repente aduolabit.* For the other three instances of this, see Cic. Div. 2.69.9, Plin. NH. 26.19.9, and Sen. Ep. 87.7.3.

³³ Such as Col. RR. 1.1.19.4: *nunc quoniam plerosque nostrum civilis ambition saepe evocat ac saepius detinet evocatus, sequitur ut suburbanum praedium commodissimum esse putem, quo vel occupato cotidianus excursus facile post negotia fori contingat.* For the other two instances of this, see Digest, 27.9.1, 32.93.2.

³⁴ Such as Cic. Har. 20.7; Planc. 22.6; Att. 4.2.7.5, 7.3.6.2, 12.34.1.5, 12.37.2.15, 12.38.1.4, 12.40.5.3, 16.13.3.4; Qfr. 3.1.23.6, 3.1.23.8, 3.1.24.1, 3.4.5.9; Suet. Tib., 11.1.8; Vesp. 5.2.1; Dom. 17.3.4.

³⁵ Such as Cic. S. Rosc. 133.2; Ver. 2.2.87.12; de Orat. 1.99.1; Qfr. 3.1.23.4; Flor. Ep. 1.5.20; Mart. 8.61.9; Suet. Aug., 72.2.5; Nero, 48.1.3.

predominantly rural foci. The use of term *villa suburbana* would have confused the theme of their message, owing to the sense of social status that was implied by this term.

The archaeological evidence from around Rome confirms the distinction that was present within the terminology: while there were numerous residences constructed in the Roman hinterland that were primarily agricultural/utilitarian in their disposition, there were also a smaller number of structures that were clearly intended for *otium* – the *villae suburbanae*. There are several good examples of such structures within the suburban regions of Rome,³⁶ such as the Villas of the Quintili (Fig. 1),³⁷ Volusii Saturnini (Fig. 2),³⁸ and the so-called Villa of Horace at Licenza (Fig. 3).³⁹ Each of these structures epitomised the *luxuria* that characterized *villae suburbanae*, possessing significant amounts of space for entertaining guests with generous provisions for both internally and externally orientated dining. However, with that being said, these structures were in the minority: the majority of villa-structures discovered in the extra-urban regions of Rome (of which at least 900 have been recorded) were much smaller and primarily focused upon agricultural production.⁴⁰ Examples of these smaller agricultural farmsteads can be viewed at sites such as the Villa Colli di Enea (Fig. 4) and the Villa at Dragoncello (Fig. 5)

³⁶ For further discussion of these structures, see G.W. Adams, *Rome and the Social Role of Élite Villas in its Suburbs*, (2007, forthcoming).

³⁷ R. Paris (ed.), *Via Appia: The Villa of the Quintili* (Milan, 2000).

³⁸ M.T. Boatwright (ed.), *I Volusii Saturnini: una famiglia romana della prima età imperiale* (Bari, 1982).

³⁹ E.A. Schmidt, *Sabinum: Horaz und sein Landgut im Lincezatal* (Heidelberg, 1997); B. Frischer, K. Gleason, S. Camaiani, L. Cerri, I. Lekstutis and L. Passalacqua, “A Preliminary Report on New Studies and Excavations at Horace’s Villa: the campaigns of 1997 and 1998”, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 45 (2000), 247-76.

⁴⁰ See H. Di Giuseppe, “Villae, villulae e fattorie nella Media Valle del Tevere”, in B. Frizell and A. Klynne (eds.), *Roman Villas around the Urbs: interaction with landscape and environment* (Rome, 2005), 1-16.

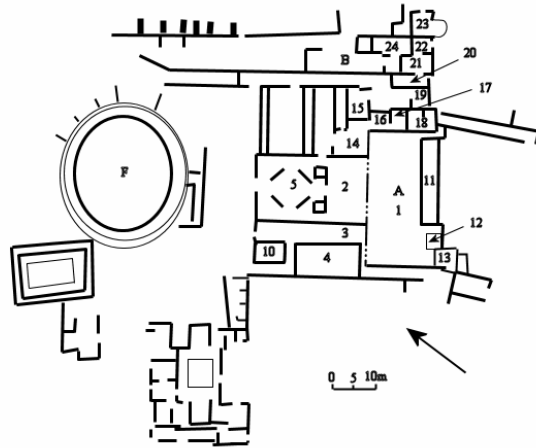


Fig. 1 – The Villa of the Quintili

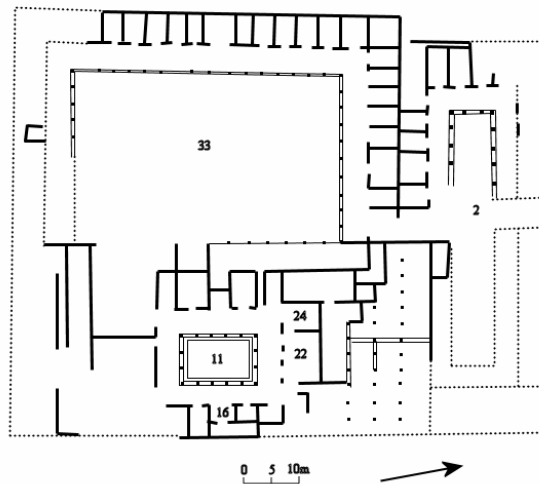


Fig. 2 – The Villa of the Volusii Saturnini

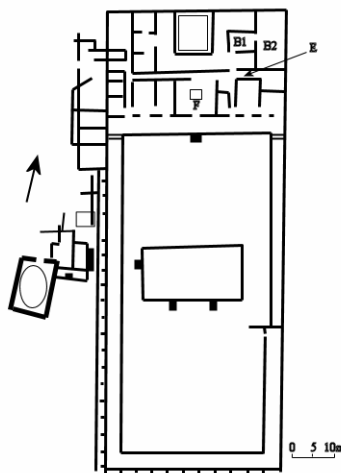


Fig. 3 – The Villa of Horace at Licenza

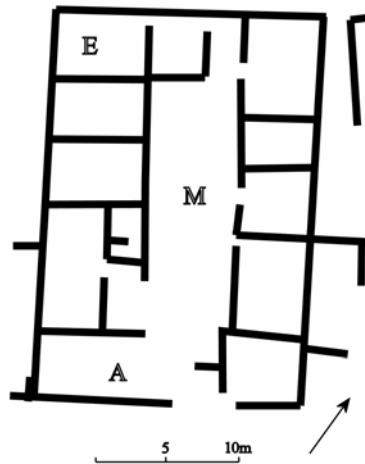


Fig. 4 – The Villa at Colli di Enea

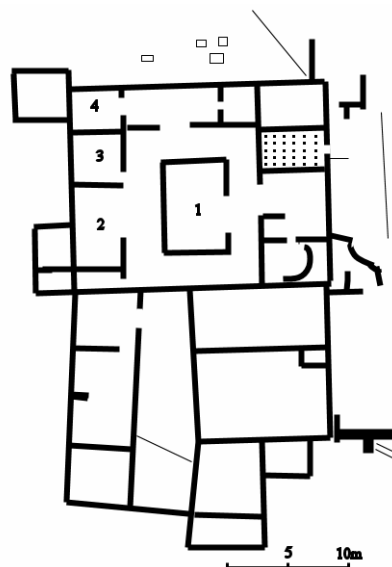


Fig. 5 – The Villa at Dragoncello

The contrast between *Sabine seu Tiburs* drawn upon by Catullus explains the social distinction between these regions. Tibur was viewed as one of the ultimate regions for a *villa suburbana*, clearly preferable to the Sabine territory, but the division was highly subjective. The region in which they were deemed to have been located depended upon the perspective of the owner and the broader community. The status that was suggested by owning a suburban villa in the Tiburtine region was evidently highly prized, being emphasised by Catullus through his parody of Sestius' ambition in lines 10-21. The social activity (and the resulting pressures/expectations)

of the Roman élite in the *suburbium* of the capital was clearly depicted by Catullus in the introduction, illustrating not only that *villae suburbanae* were seen as representations of their owner's status, but also that there was a clear hierarchy perceived in their location. However, the *villae suburbanae* were not the only aristocratic properties located in the suburbs of Rome. The wealthy classes also frequently owned gardens, or *horti*, in these regions. While the term *horti* has been used in some texts, such as Suetonius' *Tiberius* 15.1, in an urban context, and was often used to indicate a spacious city property, the suburban *horti* induced a different connotation.

Statius Silvae 4.4 and Martial 5.62

The references to *horti* in Statius *Silvae* 4.4 and Martial 5.62 have appeared ambiguous in their interpretation.⁴¹ In general *horti* could be used to refer to an entire estate or to just the garden area (be it productive or ornamental). According to the elder Pliny, the traditional classification for a productive estate was *hortus* rather than *villa*: *in XII tabulis legum nostrarum nusquam nominatur villa, semper in significatione ea hortus, in horti vero heredium*.⁴² However, the typical usage of *horti* by most authors was in reference to either productive or ornamental gardens.⁴³ It seems that the purpose of these references to *horti* was to allude to the contrasting character of extra-urban properties with the urban environment in Rome. On a broader scale this may in turn affect our reading of other instances of the term *horti*, which may affect our understanding of the use [and perception] of the Italian hinterland by the Roman élite. This was quite distinct to the use of *villa*, which frequently inferred a different focus by both authors in relation to their intended literary themes. However, it should be clarified that these suburban gardens were quite different in their conception to the urban *horti*, which referred to a large house that was of 'villa' form located in an urban environment.⁴⁴

In *Silvae* 4.4 Statius addresses Vitorius Marcellus,⁴⁵ and refers to a suburban property, highlighting the gardens of the extra-urban regions of Rome:

⁴¹ Most recently, Shackleton Bailey, 2003, 267 and 1993, 409.

⁴² Plin., *NH* 19.19.50.

⁴³ *OLD*, p. 806; *TLL*, pp. 3016-17.

⁴⁴ For discussion of this see L. Richardson jnr., *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1992, p. 112.

⁴⁵ For discussion of the significance of Vitorius Marcellus, see Van Dam, 1992, 210-11; Nauta, 2002, 213-16.

curre per Euboicos non segnis, epistula, campos | hac ingressa vias qua nobilis Appia crescit | in latus et molles solidus premit agger harenas | atque ubi Romuleas velox penetraveris arces | continuo dextras flavi pete Thybridis oras | Lydia qua penitus stagnum navale coerces | ripa suburbanisque vadum praetexitur hortis.

‘Run through the plains of Euboea and don’t wait, letter, starting your journey by road where the famous Appia grows sideways and a solid bank presses down the soft sands. And when you have made your swift way into the Romulan heights, find the right bank of the yellow Tiber where the shore of Lydia from deep down restrains the watery pool and the water is bordered by suburban gardens.’ (Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.1-7)

While inferring the presence of a suburban villa, this passage was intentionally highlighting the benefits of staying outside the capital because of the natural surroundings, rather than the villa itself.⁴⁶ This is why Statius continues this emphasis by referring to the reduced number of people in Rome and how they have made for various destinations in the hinterland of the capital: *ardua iam densae rarescunt moenia Romae | hos Praeneste sacrum, nemus hos glaciale Dianae | Algidus aut horrens aut Tuscula protegit umbra | Tiburis hi lucos Anienaque frigora captant.*⁴⁷ Suburban villas were places for respite when taken by illness, as mentioned by Catullus and Fronto,⁴⁸ which may explain Marcellus’ presence in the *suburbium*, judging from Statius’ concern for his health.⁴⁹ However, if it were the villa residences that Statius wanted to emphasise at this point, he would have directly referred to the *villae suburbanae*, which was a phrase that had been in use for over a century by the time that he was writing.⁵⁰ There are numerous examples of elite residences in the Roman *suburbium* where the villa itself dominated the surrounding countryside, such as the Villa of Numisia Procula (Fig. 6) and the Villa at Barco di Borghese (Fig. 7). These structures incorporated the surrounding gardens within their precincts, but ultimately dominated the countryside itself.

⁴⁶ For similar perspectives on the interpretation of this passage, see Coleman, 1988, 139; Grimal, 1969, 162.

⁴⁷ Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.15-17.

⁴⁸ Catull. 44.1-9; Fron. *Am.* 1.6 (212).

⁴⁹ See Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.28-42. For further discussion see Newmyer, 1979, 32. However, this may be an allusion to the aftermath of the eruption of Vesuvius on 24th August, AD 79 and how the land had not completely recovered; Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.79-86; See also Newlands, 2002, 296.

⁵⁰ Catull. 44.6; Nep. *Att.* 14.3; *OLD*, p. 1855.

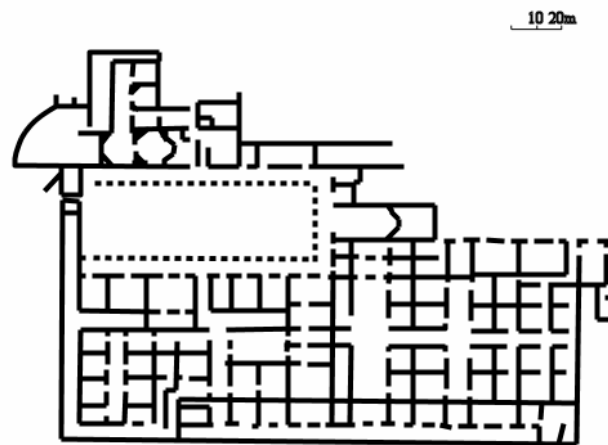


Fig. 6 – The Villa of Numisia Procula

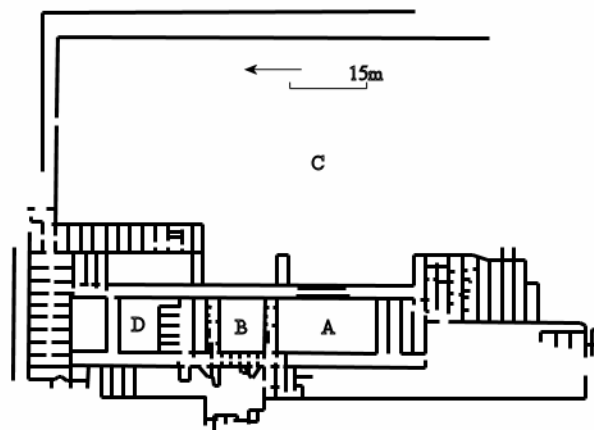


Fig. 7 – The Villa at Barco di Borghese

Instead Statius was emphasising the gardens that were commonly associated with suburban villas in the regions of Campania and Latium,⁵¹ which were one of the prime reasons for owning such properties in the *suburbium*.⁵² This contrasts the view portrayed in *Silvae* 2.2, where Statius emphasises the dominance of man over nature.⁵³ In *Silvae* 4.4, the benefits of the villa residence itself complements the natural landscape rather than dominating the poem,⁵⁴ which is the intention of the phrase: to highlight the balanced relationship of man with nature. When Statius

⁵¹ See Adams, 2006.

⁵² See Mariscal, 2006, 249

⁵³ For this interpretation see Newmyer, *Aesthetics*, 1984, 1-7.

⁵⁴ See also Stat. *Silv.* 3.1; Newlands, 1991, 449.

actually uses the term *villa*, which he does on four occasions,⁵⁵ they directly refer to the structure itself, which emphasises the different intentions of the author.

Martial 5.62 has also been translated as directly referring to a villa residence whereas the *hortis* clearly refers to the property as a garden:

*iure tuo nostris maneat licet hospes in hortis | si potes in nudo ponere
membra solo | aut si portatur tecum tibi magna supellex | nam mea iam
digitum sustulit hospitibus | nulla tegit fractos - nec inanis - culcita lectos |
putris et abrupta fascia recte iacet | sit tamen hospitium nobis commune
duobus | emi hortos; plus est: instrue tu; minus est.*

‘You have full permission to spend the night as a guest at my garden near the city if you can lie your limbs on the bare floor or if a large amount of furniture is brought with you. For mine has already held up its finger to visitors. No cushion, not even an empty one, covers the broken couches, the rotten bands lie limp with a broken cord. But in hospitality let us go halves: I bought the garden, which is larger; you furnish it, which is smaller.’ (Mart. 5.62)

The theme of *Epigram* 5.62 is intended to highlight the paucity of fittings at Martial’s residence,⁵⁶ which is why he refers to it as *hortis/hortos* (lines 1, 9) rather than *villa*. In this sense it was Martial’s statement that there was so little furniture that it may as well have been a garden. The use of *hortus* may also have been intended to emphasise the primary benefit of the property: the *hortus* itself. The importance of domestic gardens has been previously discussed,⁵⁷ with Purcell noting the use of ornamental gardens to display elite status.⁵⁸ Roman gardens were often adorned with paintings of plants, complementing these *horti* and further accentuating their pleasant character.⁵⁹ Bergmann has also illustrated that the *hortus* was a significant feature in the architectural layout, combining both natural and constructed features within the same visual plane.⁶⁰

The literal interpretation of *hortus* in both *Silvae* 4.4 and Martial 5.62 is further emphasised by the other instances when both authors use this term. Throughout all of his extant works, Statius only used *hortus* on one other occasion:

⁵⁵ *Silv.* 1.pr.27; 1.3.4; 2.pr.13; 2.2.3. This does not include the use of *villa* in titles (*Silv.* 1.3; 2.2).

⁵⁶ For this reading, see Sullivan, 1991, 28.

⁵⁷ Jashemski, 1981, 29-48; Purcell, 1996, 121-51.

⁵⁸ Purcell, 1996, 135.

⁵⁹ Hoffmann, 2001, 85.

⁶⁰ Bergmann, 1994, 65.

Silvae 1.3.⁶¹ This piece was written about the villa of Manilius Vopiscus at Tibur, which accentuated the magnificent villa and its beautiful natural surroundings. In this context the use of *hortus* was used in reference to the garden of Epicurus with Statius preferring to refer to the properties in the regions as *villa* in line 4.⁶² Martial used *hortus* on many more occasions in the *Epigrams* (22 times) and they were also only in relation to the garden proper. Seventeen of these passages were referring to the gardens of his associates or his own,⁶³ and on two occasions (3.58, 4.64) *villa* was also used to refer to the entire property itself,⁶⁴ accentuating the distinction between *villa* and *hortus*. Martial's use of *hortus* in 9.18 and 11.34 also highlights the accentuation being placed upon the garden rather than the villa residence. In 9.18 the emphasis is also upon the *hortus*, owing to its great thirst,⁶⁵ whereas in 11.34 the focus is upon the good food produced in Maro's garden, which his neighbour Aper will benefit from despite the uninviting nature of his dark residence.⁶⁶

The use of *hortus* to mean specifically 'garden' by Martial and Statius is consistent and understandable. Frequently the presence of a *villa* was intended to be understood by the audience and often the choice of terminology was also meant to emphasise further the theme of the poetry. This is particularly evident in Martial's reference to his property in 5.62 as a *hortus* rather than a *villa* in order to emphasise its lack of furniture and natural surroundings. The countryside was the intended point of reference by Statius in *Silvae* 4.4, highlighting the benefits of staying outside Rome in the summertime, regardless of where a property was located: *te quoque clamosae quae iam plaga mitior urbi | subtrahit? aestivos quo decipis aëre soles?*⁶⁷ The point of *Silvae* 4.4 was to highlight the benefits of the gardens in the *suburbium* of the capital. This may also have been one reason for its use in Martial 5.62. However, the reference to *horti* in these poems was to emphasise the different character of these properties to those in the city, which would have been clear to their élite, urban audience in the capital.

⁶¹ Stat. *Silv.* 1.3.93-4. *quas ipse suis digressus Athenis | mallet deserto senior Gargettius horto.*

⁶² Stat. *Silv.* 1.3.3-4. *aut potuit sociae commercia noscere ripae | certantesque sibi dominum defendere villas;* See Hardie, 1983, 176-8.

⁶³ Mart. 1.114.1, 3.68.9, 5.78.8, 6.72.2-3, 6.80.3, 7.49.1, 7.69.3, 8.40.1, 9.60.3, 10.48.8, 10.94.3, 11.8.8, 11.18.12, 12.31.9, 12.33.1, 13.20.1, 13.37.1. See Friedlander, 1967, 436.

⁶⁴ See Mart. 3.58, lines 1, 29 and 49; 4.64, lines 2 and 10.

⁶⁵ Mart. 9.18.3-4. *sed de valle brevi quas det sitientibus hortis | curva laboratas antlia tollit aquas.*

⁶⁶ Mart. 11.34.3-4. *vicinos illi nitidos Maro possidet hortos | Cenabit belle, non habitabit Aper.*

⁶⁷ Stat. *Silv.* 4.4.19.

The contrast between *Sabine seu Tiburs* drawn upon by Catullus explains the social distinction between these regions. Tibur was viewed as one of the ultimate regions for a *villa suburbana*, clearly preferable to the Sabine territory, but the division was highly subjective. The region in which they were deemed to have been located depended upon the perspective of the owner and the broader community. The status that was suggested by owning a suburban villa in the Tiburtine region was evidently highly prized, being emphasised by Catullus through his parody of Sestius' ambition in lines 10-21. However, through the analysis of Statius *Silvae* 4.4 and Martial 5.62 there was also evidently a distinction in the types of property in the Roman *suburbium* as well. Terms such as *fundus*, *villa* and *hortus* were all intended to accentuate the primary intended function of each individual owner. These texts have illustrated that the use of such terms was intentional and conveyed a great deal about the social context in which these properties were viewed. This is particularly evident when the archaeological evidence of residences in the Roman *suburbium* are considered in conjunction with these references by Catullus, Statius and Martial.

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