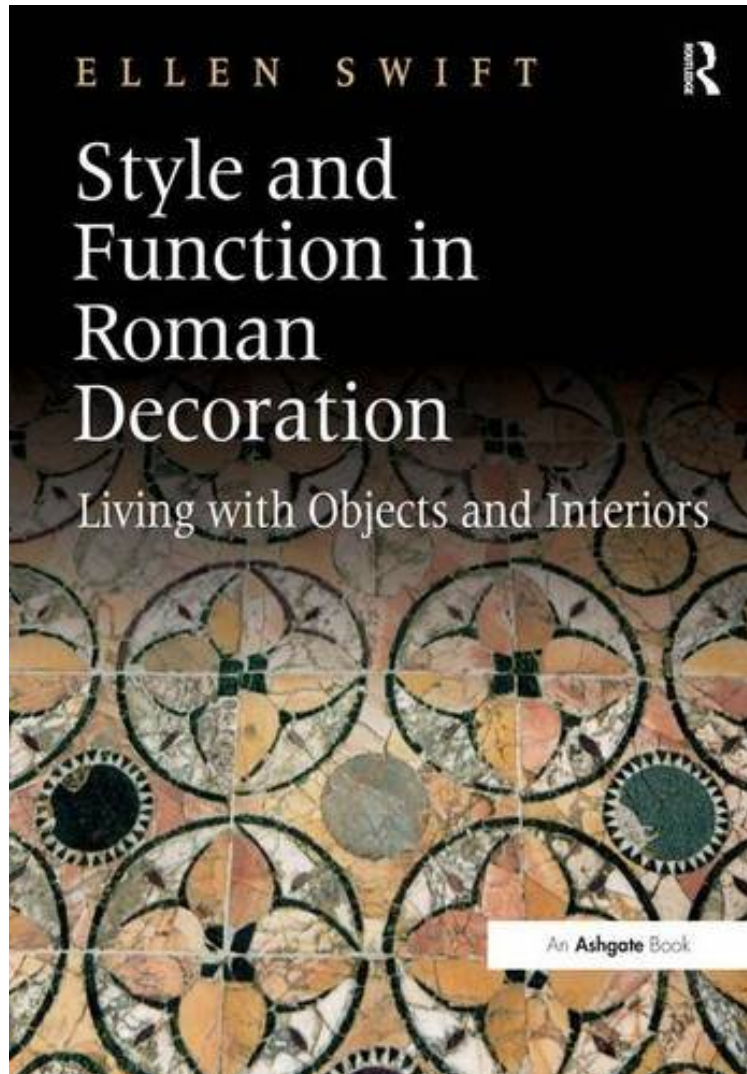


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Style and Function in Roman Decoration: Living with Objects and Interiors

Ellen Swift

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Ellen Swift : Style and Function in Roman Decoration: Living with Objects and Interiors before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Style and Function in Roman Decoration: Living with Objects and Interiors:

This important book puts forward a new interpretation of Roman decorative art, focusing on the function of decoration in the social context. It examines the three principal areas of social display and conspicuous consumption in the

Roman world: social space, entertainment, and dress, and discusses the significance of the decoration of objects and interiors within these contexts, drawing examples from both Rome and its environs, and the Western provinces, from the early Imperial period to Late Antiquity. Focusing on specific examples, including mosaics and other interior decor, silver plate, glass and pottery vessels, and jewellery and other dress accessories, Swift demonstrates the importance of decoration in creating and maintaining social networks and identities and fostering appropriate social behaviour, and its role in perpetuating social convention and social norms. It is argued that our understanding of stylistic change and the relationship between this and the wider social context in the art of the Roman period is greatly enhanced by an initial focus on the particular social relationships fostered by decorated objects and spaces. The book demonstrates that an examination of so-called 'minor art' is fundamental in any understanding of the relationship between art and its social context, and aims to reinvigorate debate on the value of decoration and ornament in the Roman period and beyond.

'Swift suggests interesting ways in which the "minor arts" could play active roles in the creation of status and gender in the later Roman empire, paving the way for future work in this area.' Bryn Mawr Classical 'With this volume on Roman decorative habits, Ellen Swift offers an interesting, thoughtful and well-constructed survey of the social experience of design. ... Swift is engaging, thoughtful and persuasive throughout, and her strong writing skills make for a smooth and accessible read. The book is abundantly illustrated, and even though one may always regret the cost-effective reliance on black-and-white photography, Swift has also provided the reader with 18 well-chosen color plates in addition to black-and-whites with clear resolution.' Journal of Art Historiography About the Author Ellen Swift is Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Kent, UK