



Schwerpunktfachswochen Latein, 2024:

DE DOMIBUS, OPPIDIS ET PRANDIIS

As has been the case since 2021, the week began at the KSH where the students presented their researched topics to the class. They covered subjects such as roman temples, funerary monuments, inscriptions and roads amongst others, gaining some public speaking experience as well as developing their analytical and critical skills by evaluating each other's presentations. That was followed by my, now become usual, presentations on the development of technologies and migrations of peoples from the end of the last ice age to the iron age in preparation for our visit of the Laténium in Neuchâtel the next day, same as last year.

On the morning of the third day, prior to travelling down to Lausanne, we met up with M. Luc Bourquin at *La Collégiale Notre-Dame de Neuchâtel* for a tour of the grounds and its structures with a focus on the evolution of theatre performance from antiquity to the middle ages, followed by some warm up exercises for the students who then performed a short piece in the main square, entertaining us and baffling some passersby.

We then travelled down to Lausanne and walked about the archaeological park which extends over a section of the ancient roman harbour area in Vidy.

The next day we visited the small but charming roman museum built over the remains of a roman *domus* (i.e. a house with workshops and various other spaces on the ground floor and living spaces above) and exhibiting the finds from it. What makes it extremely interesting is that the entire exhibit is composed of objects found in the area beneath and around one's feet. This particular building produced Terra Sigillata pottery, the finest ware produced in the empire and only licensed to few places within it, a shrine dedicated to Isis and a Celtic goddess also associated with fertility, with the usual hypocaust system typical for the more northern residences of the roman provinces. The museum offers a succinct overview of roman

living, beliefs and industry in the first century AD.



We also took the opportunity of booking a workshop at the museum on roman cooking. After an introduction on the written sources and history of

roman foods and their preparation, we split into groups and each prepared a dish according to the ancient recipes, and within the hour we had our lunch and only ourselves to blame if it was not to our liking. Luckily, everyone seemed to know what they were doing and the food was rather tasty.

On the way back to St. Gallen, we made a stop in Zürich in order to visit the antiquities collection housed at the university. From the Bronze to Iron Ages, from Egypt through southern Europe and Asia Minor, the collection offers the visitor a decently comprehensive view of ancient ceramics on the first floor and ancient sculpture (in 1:1 scale replicas) in the basement. An opportunity for everyone to stretch their legs midway home, and broaden their appreciation of art and culture prior to the well-deserved Fall break.

