PUBLIC USE AND PRIVACY IN LATE ANTIQUE HOUSES IN ASIA MINOR: THE ARCHITECTURE OF SPATIAL CONTROL

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Abstract

Large numbers of visitors frequented the town houses of influential patrons in Late Antiquity. The owners responded to this increased public access, and hence met their heightened need for privacy, by adopting certain architectural measures to isolate and/or redesign reception rooms, especially audience halls, which received unpredictable numbers of people of varying status. This paper looks at architectural and spatial features, such as planning, circulation, location, accessibility and design in late antique houses in Asia Minor. It outlines and comments upon the ways in which their reception spaces were designed and distinguished to control public intrusion and access.

Introduction

Late antique town houses have been studied less in terms of public and private usage than the houses of the Imperial Roman period, for which both the material evidence and secondary interpretations are more plentiful.[1] Little work has been carried out on how public areas were incorporated into the late antique house and how the publicly prominent owners, who devoted their time to hosting regular receptions involving a variety of activities with spatial requirements, managed this interaction with the public.[2] One way to approach the use of space in late antique domestic contexts is to look at architecture. The plan, location, accessibility, form and function of some distinctive spaces can provide salient clues about how these public areas were spatially distinguished

[1] For the private and public use and privacy of the Pompeian house, see Dunbabin (1994); Grahame (1997); Wallace-Hadrill (1988) 58–77 and (1991) 17–37; Riggsby (1998).
[2] See the works of Simon Ellis in the bibliography.

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within the house, thus respecting the owners' need for privacy. This paper addresses these issues in the architectural context of late antique houses in Asia Minor. Because it focuses on the architectural evidence, it does not discuss in detail fittings, furniture or textual evidence.

The Houses

It is necessary to look at houses with common architectural characteristics and settings. In this case, large houses found in Aphrodisias, Sardis, Ephesus, Halikarnassos, Perge and Xanthos will be considered.[3] These were all town houses of considerable size and spatial variety, often occupying prominent locations within the urban fabric. Most were transformed from pre-existing houses in the 5th and 6th centuries, and they continued to be occupied, with changes, until the 7th and/or 8th centuries. Although the state of archaeological survey, excavation, and preservation vary from site to site, when taken together, the remains of these houses provide useful information on the domestic architecture of the period in Asia Minor. Throughout the text I have preferred to use the traditional names coined by the excavators. However, it should be noted that there is no archaeological evidence for identifying the 'Bishop's House' in Aphrodisias as the residence of a bishop or the 'Governor's Palace' in Ephesus as the residence of a governor in Late Antiquity.[4]

In Aphrodisias, the houses include: the 'Bishop's House' (fig. 1a), 'North Tenemos House' (fig. 1b, partial plan), and the 'Priest's' or 'Atrium House' (fig. 1c, partial plan).[5] Following the recent stratigraphic

[3] For this reason, other well-known examples of late antique houses in Asia Minor, like the terrace houses in Ephesus, the episcopal residences found in the ecclesiastical contexts, or the suburban villas in Antioch, are not included in this discussion. For the same reasons, comparative examples outside of Asia Minor are limited to town houses, and exclude villas and palaces, except for a few examples included for spatial comparison. For a discussion of houses dating to Late Antiquity and later periods in western Asia Minor, see Türkoğlu (2004).

[4] Lavan (1999) 149–50.

[5] There are more examples in Aphrodisias, but little has been excavated of and published on these houses. In the so-called 'Byzantine House' by the Tetrapylon, the only visible part is a small courtyard with columns, but a bath room and another adjacent room were recorded in the excavation reports: Erim (1969) 110 and (1986b) 543; Campbell (1991) 16–19 and (1996) 195; Baldini Lippolis (2001) 120. In the 'Cryptoporticus House', short-term excavation work revealed the basement of a late antique house and the remains of an apsidal room behind a colonnaded courtyard: Erim (1990) 13 and Smith (1996) 48–50; in the 'North Byzantine House' (or the 'Water Channel

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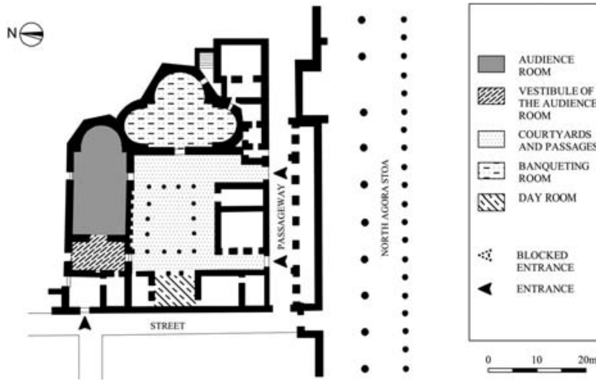

Fig. 1a Aphrodisias, 'Bishop's House' (after Berenfeld 2002).

Fig. 1b Aphrodisias, 'North Temenos House' (after Dillon 1997).

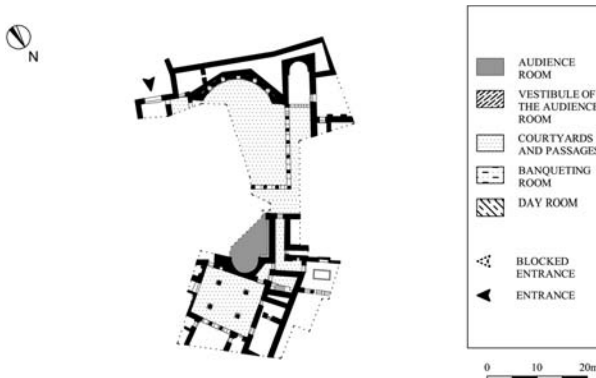

Fig. 1c Aphrodisias, 'Priest's (Atrium) House' (after Smith 1990).

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studies it is generally accepted that the 'Bishop's House' took its form between the early 5th and the late 6th c.[6] The 'North Tenemos House' was occupied from the late 3rd to 4th c. to the 6th c. This is clear from the stylistic evidence, like the pilaster capitals in the apsidal hall, which suggests a late 3rd or 4th c. occupation. Meanwhile, an inscription found on the marble revetment in the same hall may indicate a 5th c. repair, and fragments of a stamped ampulla found embedded in a floor suggest that the house was also in use in the late 6th c.[7] The 'Priest's' or 'Atrium' house was formed when an Early Roman *atrium* house was incorporated by an apsed peristyle complex to its south.[8] The large apse in the peristyle seems to have been built in the 2nd–3rd c. Numismatic evidence derived from the small apsidal room on the southwest corner indicates that it underwent an alteration in the late 3rd c. According to architectural remains, the main apse was articulated with an aedicular façade sometime in the 4th c. Stylistic factors demonstrate that the mosaics in the house are dated to the mid to late 5th c. The house itself was occupied until at least the 6th c.

Meanwhile, the residential area of Perge was developed between the 1st and the 6th centuries. The 'Late Antique Residence' (fig. 2), to be looked at in this paper, seems to have taken its final shape between the 5th and 6th centuries.[9] This is suggested by the excavations, stratigraphy and the comparative analysis of different wall techniques. 'The Late Roman Villa' (fig. 3, partial plan) at Halikarnassos contained the remnants of mosaics, the latest level currently dated to the mid to late

House'), some rooms, including a large room with wall-paintings and a small apsidal room, were found: Erim (1986b) 543–44, (1987) 353–54 and 377–79.

[6] The most recent and thorough study on this house is Berenfeld (2002) 120–36, who provides a detailed archaeological account of the building between the early 5th and the late 6th c. A.D.; also see Erim (1964a) 160–61, (1964b) 89–90, (1965) 139, (1966) 62 and (1986a) 71–73; Campbell (1991) and (1996) 189–92; Ellis (1997a) 42–43; Ratté (2001) 129–30; Ratté and Smith (2003) 162–66.

[7] Ratté (2001) 134; also see Erim (1966) 2 and (1986a) 73–74; Campbell (1991) 1–4 and (1996) 188–89; Dillon (1997) 731–34; Smith and Ratté (1998) 230–33; Baldini Lippolis (2001) 120–21; Ratté (2001) 134.

[8] Smith (1990) 130; Ratté (2001) 136; also see Erim (1989) 279 and (1990) 15–18; Smith (1990) 128–30 and (1991) 144, 158; Campbell (1991) 22–26 and (1996) 192–95; Ratté (2001) 136. For the date of the mosaics, see Campbell (1996) 195.

[9] Zeyrek (2002) 19–24, 195; Abbasoğlu (1996) 108–109, (1997) 42 and (2001) 183.

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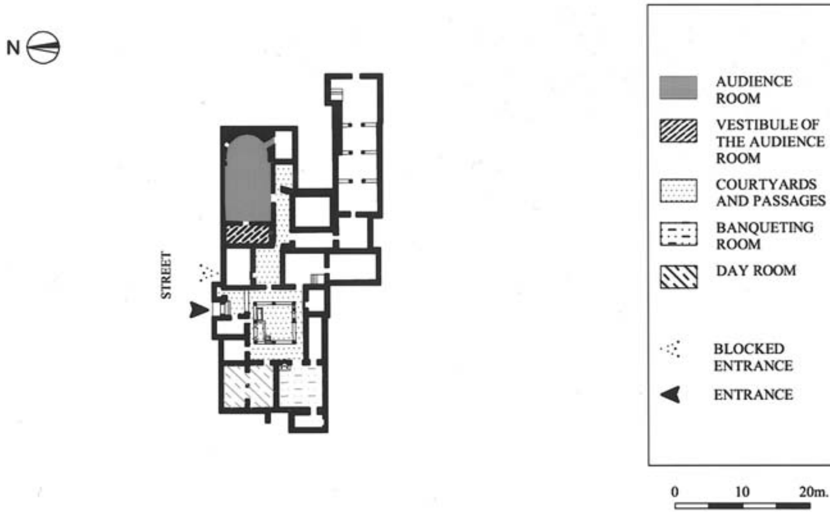

Fig. 2 Perge, 'Late Antique Residence' (after Zeyrek 2002).

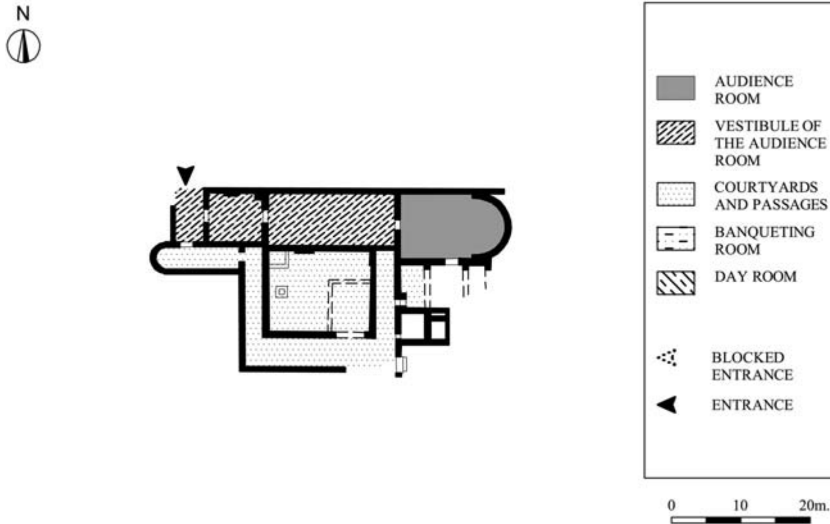

Fig. 3 Halikarnassos, 'Late Roman Villa' (after Poulsen 1995).

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5th c. on stylistic grounds.[10] The surviving layout seems to originate in the 5th c., while the earliest mosaic level excavated in one room indicates that the house was constructed in around 100 B.C.[11] The lack of traces of fire; fallen roof tiles and bricks, and the presence of few utensils have led archaeologists to generally accept that this grand residence was already abandoned before its collapse; the final abandonment might have been related to the Persian attacks or Arab assaults in around the early or mid 7th c., or to an earthquake, which is less likely as the region is not known to be seismologically active.[12] Two important late antique residences excavated at Sardis will also provide vital case studies in this discussion; these are 'The Late Roman House' (fig. 4a) and the 'Twelve Room House' (fig. 4b).[13] Diagnostic Late Roman pottery, the monogram of the Emperor Heraclius (610–41 A.D.) found stamped on glass weights, and two coins of Heraclius are used to date the final phase of the 'Twelve Room House'.[14] Extensive alterations to the 'Late Roman House', such as the re-building of walls, the raising of floor levels and subdivision, indicate that it was inhabited most densely between the 5th and 7th centuries.[15]

'The Northeast House of the Lycian Acropolis' (fig. 5) at Xanthos, discussed elsewhere in this volume, represents another important late antique elite residence recently studied.[16] Archaeologists have posited several building phases of which the earliest dates to mid 4th c.[17] Their analysis of the stratigraphy at various points in the house has led them to argue that this mansion was altered in the late 5th to 6th centuries. Further major renovations were apparently carried out in the course of the 6th and probably 7th centuries, when destruction debris

[10] Two more houses with mosaic floors are recorded but these are not published: Poulsen (1995) 206 and n.59.

[11] Poulsen (1994) 130.

[12] Poulsen (1997) 11–12; also see Isager (1995) and (1997); Pedersen (1995) 328–29; Poulsen (1995) and (1997); Ellis (1997a) 44–45; Baldini Lippolis (2001) 124–25.

[13] Greenewalt, Ratté and Rautman (1993) 6–12, (1994) 7–11 and (1995) 6–8 on the 'Late Roman House' and Greenewalt (1997) 515, (1998) 704, (1999) 2 and (2000) 1 on the 'Twelve-Room House'.

[14] Greenewalt (1998) 704.

[15] Rautman (1995) 56–64.

[16] Manière-Lévêque (2002) and in this volume. There are more houses with mosaic floors on this acropolis, see des Courtils and Cavalier (2001) 165–66.

[17] Manière-Lévêque (2002) 235; also see des Courtils and Laroche (1998) and (1999) 376–79; des Courtils, Laroche *et al.* (2000) 346–48; des Courtils *et al.* (2001) 231–32; des Courtils and Cavalier (2001) 165; Manière-Lévêque (2002) 235–43.

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Fig. 4a Sardis, 'Late Roman Town House' (after Rautman 1995).

Fig. 4b Sardis, 'Twelve Room House' (after Greenewalt 1999).

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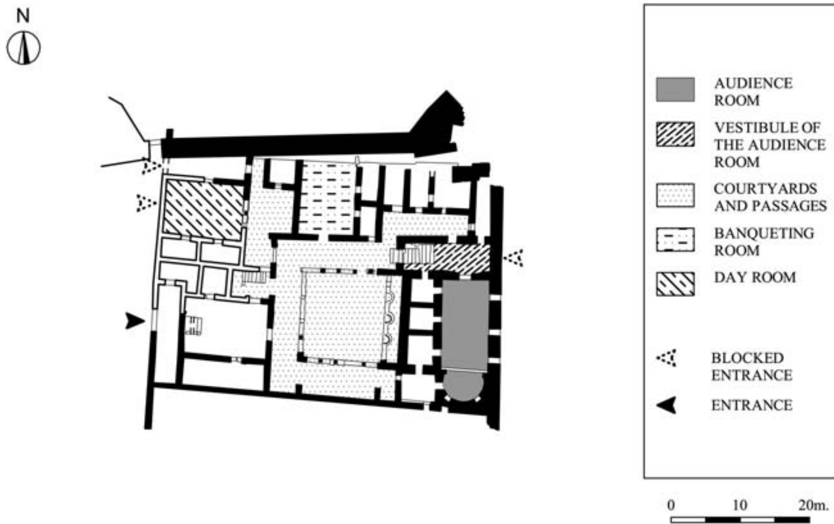

Fig. 5 Xanthos, 'Northeast House on the Lycian Acropolis' (after des Courtils *et al.* 2001).

demonstrated that the house was damaged, possibly after an earthquake. The surviving plan bears witness more or less to the 6th c. phase.

Finally, the 'Villa above the Theatre' (fig. 6a) and 'Governor's Palace' (fig. 6b, partial plan) at Ephesus serve as important examples of late antique urban residences. The former has been dated to the 5th c. A.D. and was enlarged and remodelled from a Hellenistic residence.[18] The dating of the latter has been a matter of some controversy, some arguing that it was erected in the 4th c. A.D. according to historical and stylistic considerations, others, the 6th c. citing the building technique.[19] The remains of this large structure were originally interpreted as those of a bath building and were only later understood to have been part of a residence with a private bath, perhaps belonging to the Governor. That a chapel was later added to this complex would imply that it was used for residential purposes throughout Late Antiquity.[20]

[18] Thür (2002); also see Miltner (1958) 79–81; Ellis (1997a) 43–44.
[19] Foss (1979) 51 and n. 9; also see Miltner (1955) 44–50, (1956) 3–14 and (1959) 243–52; Vetters (1966) 278–81; Foss (1979) 50–51; Wiplinger and Wlach (1996) 64–65; Baldini Lippolis (2001) 195–96. Foss (1979) 50–51 and Lavan (1999) 148–49.
[20] Foss (1979) 50–51 and Lavan (1999) 148–49.

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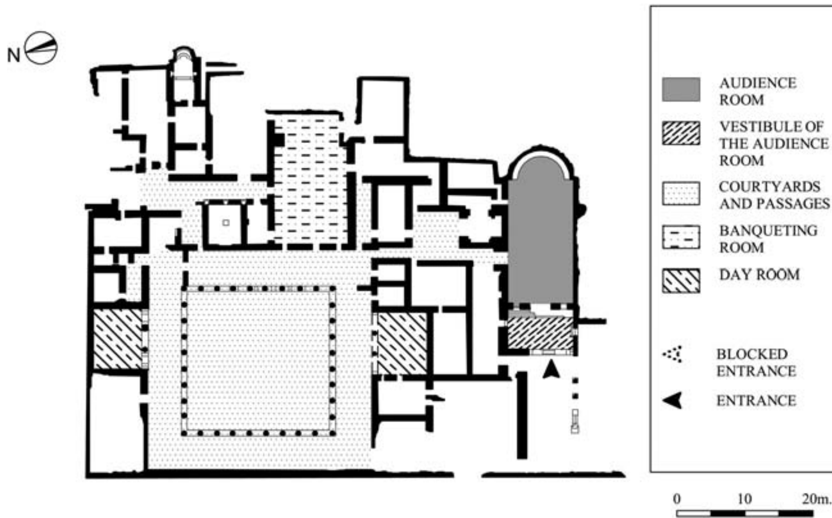

Fig. 6a Ephesus, 'Villa above the Theatre' (after Miltner 1958).

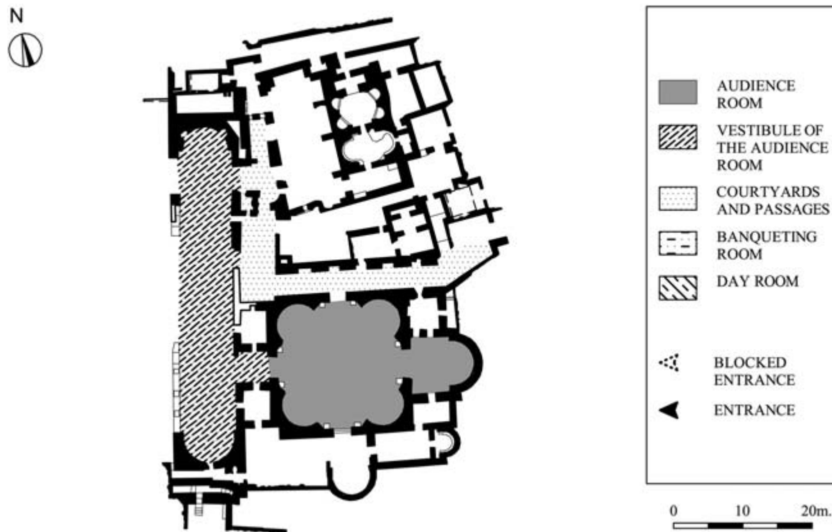

Fig. 6b Ephesus, 'Governor's Palace' (after Miltner 1959).

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These houses have been discussed in different contexts elsewhere and there is no need to describe them individually once again.[21] Instead, a brief overview will concentrate on the following architectural features: i) Plan layout (courtyards), ii) Circulation (entrances, passageways, corridors, staircases), and iii) Distinctive Spaces (apsidal rooms and other substantial rooms).

Architectural Features

Plan Layout: Courtyards

The plan of all the houses was determined by at least one open and paved central courtyard. The size of the courtyard was often determined by the available building space, and thus some houses received large and imposing courtyards, often adorned with colonnades, as seen in the house in Xanthos, the 'Villa above the Theatre' in Ephesus and the so-called 'Bishop's' and 'Priest's' Houses in Aphrodisias. Houses that were built on smaller and/or polygonal lots within the urban core were also organised around central courtyards of differing size and decoration. The houses in Perge, Halikarnassos and Sardis, for instance, had relatively smaller but rather elegant courtyards.[22] Multiple courtyards are often found in large and complex residences, like the large house in Sardis,[23] the 'Villa above the Theatre' in Ephesus, the house in Xanthos, and the 'Priest's House' in Aphrodisias. In houses with two courtyards, one was primary, as indicated by its size and association with substantial and well-decorated rooms placed in commanding positions. The secondary courtyards were smaller and surrounded by several other rooms of more modest appearance with a limited view of the main courtyard.

Water tanks, pools or other displays were common functional or decorative features of courtyards. Two good examples can be found

[21] Sodini (1997) 472–79; Ellis (1988) and (1997a); Baldini-Lippolis (2001).

[22] The courtyard in the Villa at Halikarnassos is a closed one, though at an earlier stage it could have been an open court and possibly even included a peristyle, Poulsen (1995) 203.

[23] Both courtyards had peristyles, Rautman (1995) 56, 58. The south-east wing of the house, organised around a colonnaded courtyard, was in fact an independent peristyle house in the 4th c. A.D. In the 5th c. A.D., it was enlarged, first by the addition of the northern wings, and later by the south-east wing, to take its final shape, Rautman (1995) 57, 59–60.

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in the 'Late Antique Residence' in Perge, where a well, a cistern and a number of water basins dominate the peristyle courtyard, and in the houses in Sardis, where several water tanks and basins are found.[24] The most elaborate water display, however, was the fountain assemblage in Xanthos. Here, one wall of the courtyard was articulated with a series of semi-circular basins, a design reminiscent of two small but elegant late antique houses in Ostia ('House of Cupid and Psyche' and 'House of the Nymphaeum').[25]

Circulation[26]

1. *Entrances*

It is often difficult to locate all of the entrances to a house because these could change to meet new spatial requirements during different periods, and because many houses have not been sufficiently excavated. Multiple entrances were common, and can be detected in several houses. The fully excavated 'Bishop's House' in Aphrodisias was approached from two streets and had three different entrances.[27] The 'Priest's House' must have had two entrances; one was on the south-east corner, near the large apse, and the other was presumably located in the northern section of the house.[28]

In the 'Late Roman Town House' in Sardis, there was one entrance from the north and one from the colonnaded street to the south, though more could have existed in this large and chronologically complex

[24] In the 'Twelve Room House' in Sardis, a large square basin was located in one corner of the courtyard, while in the other house, six water basins were found in different wings. In the latter house, two water basins were located at the turn of the wide corridor in the north-east wing and in the large room in the north-west wing respectively; both of these seem to have been utilised as water display units. Of the remaining three, two were found in the two small rooms adjacent to the northern ambulatory, and one in the large room adjoining the courtyard in the south-west wing, Rautman (1995) 54, 57–59; this last one had a cross on its front face.

[25] For Ostia, see Becatti (1948) 105–107, 109–11 and Meiggs (1973) 259–61; though very little is known of any spaces other than their dining halls and mosaics, the suburban residences in Antioch, especially 'House of the Boat of Psyche', 'House of Cilicia' and 'House of Menander', had elaborate fountains of different forms placed on one wall of their courtyards, see Stillwell (1961) and Dobbins (2000). Semi-circular fountains are also common in North African houses, see Thébert (1987) 361–62.

[26] On circulation in the Roman houses, see Ellis (1999) and (2000) 166–70.

[27] Berenfeld (2002) 209.

[28] The northern part of the building remains unexcavated, but a street entrance was, in all likelihood, located in this part of the house, Smith (1990) 128.

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residence.[29] In the smaller 'Twelve Room House', there were three entrances, one from the side street on the east and two from the colonnaded avenue to the north. Of the latter two, one opened onto the courtyard and the other into a basement room adjacent to the courtyard further west.[30] In the houses at Sardis, some earlier entrances were later converted into spaces with totally different functions.

The house in Xanthos welcomed visitors through different entrances in different periods.[31] In its late 4th c. phase, it was entered from the room in the north-west corner, now partially preserved under the rampart wall. Another door gave access to the rectangular room in the south-east corner, which, at this point, did not have an apse: the door set in the corner that later contained the apse. In the second phase (end of the 5th, beginning of the 6th c.), a second entrance that led to the vestibule of the apsidal room was opened in the east wall, and the previous entrance in the apsed corner was transformed into a window. During the same period, but presumably later than the opening of this entrance on the east wall, the entrance in the north-west corner was shifted to the neighbouring large room that faced the small courtyard on the west. Later on (6th–8th centuries), the eastern entrance was blocked, and the house could now be approached only from the entrance lobby in the south-west corner.

The 'Villa above the Theatre' in Ephesus was a large and complex residence with an entrance near the apsidal room. Its northern and western sides rested on terrace walls, although it may have had another entrance on the east. The 'Late Roman Villa' at Halikarnassos had at least one major entrance, but it is plausible that this large house also possessed numerous points of access. A single entrance has been recorded in the house at Perge, even though it once had at least one

[29] The entrance to the south-west wing was previously a larger space and presumably also used as the main entrance lobby in the earlier 4th c. A.D. peristyle house. In the 5th c. A.D., this vestibule was divided into two halves, of which the eastern became the entrance to this part of the house, Rautman (1995) 57. There was once another entrance on this side that opened into the narrow space behind the large room in the south-west wing. This entrance provided access to the rooms in the south-east wing before it was blocked, and a latrine inserted in the later 5th c. A.D., Rautman (1995) 60.

[30] The house had two other doors on its north-east corner that once opened out onto the side street and a colonnaded portico. These were later blocked, and a latrine was placed in this corner, Greenewalt (2000) 1.

[31] des Courtils and Laroche (1999) 377–78.

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other street access through an opening in its north wall, which was later blocked.[32]

Although the location and number of their entrances changed, most houses in our sample could be entered from at least two points. However, articulated entrances in the form of columned doorways or porches, standing on or projecting towards the pavements or streets, like those in the houses of Roman Africa, are only recorded at the house in Perge, whose entrance was placed in a slightly recessed alcove.[33] All entrances gave access to courtyards of different forms, most through some sort of modest vestibule. This scheme appears in all but two examples. In the 'Twelve-Room House' in Sardis, the northern entrance door opened straight into the courtyard, and in the 'Bishop's House' in Aphrodisias, the two southern entrances opened into the courtyard through passageways, and not separate vestibules.

2. *Passageways and Corridors*

Circulation within the houses was determined through their courtyards and adjoining passages. Ambulatories around the courtyards and other wide passages provided direct access to the most important rooms. Rooms located away from the courtyards and main arteries were more indirectly reached through narrow paths or corridors. Long corridors appear to have been avoided. A good example of circulation is provided by the 'Late Roman Town House' in Sardis, where an L-shaped, wide passage connected different wings of the house; other passages and short corridors opened into this spine.

At Xanthos, two of the ambulatories around the courtyard also functioned as principal arteries, and were connected to corridors on both sides.[34] A second smaller courtyard, and an adjacent corridor on the north-west, connected the cluster of rooms in this wing to one of the ambulatories. Similarly, the northern ambulatory flowed into another

[32] The blocking of the entrance took place in the third building phase, which is dated to 5th–6th centuries A.D. according to the architectural evidence: Zeyrek (2002) 86, 94.

[33] The best examples for such columned entrances come from the imperial Roman houses in various North African sites: see the plans in Kraeling (1962) 83–89 and 119–39 and Thébert (1987) 337, 359–60, 379; for examples from late antique Africa, see Stucchi (1975) 493, 495. Apamea is the closest example to Perge, see Duval (1984).

[34] The role of the southern ambulatory in the circulation of the house is uncertain, as it is unknown how it was connected to the square room, and hence the apsidal room located at a lower level on the south-west corner, des Courtils and Laroche (1999) 377.

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corridor on the north-east that provided access to the small rooms in that area. In the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus, there were at least two similar, secondary courtyards, one with a colonnade, located on both sides of the large rectangular room on the west. Here, several rooms on both sides were organised around these courtyards and accessed through several short passages and corridors. Meanwhile, in the 'Priest's House' at Aphrodisias, an L-shaped corridor separated the small courtyards and surrounding rooms from the area of the apsidal chamber and peristyle.

Occasionally, little rooms or alcoves, usually found on points of junction, connected different wings. At Perge, for example, the apsidal room and adjoining spaces were reached from the peristyle through a small room functioning as a passage, or rather an intermediary vestibule, with doors on both ends. In some houses, rooms with several doors functioned as connectors and circulation nodes. For instance, two such large rooms with multiple doors featured in the 'Late Roman Town House' at Sardis. Both rooms were decorated with wall paintings, marble niches and tile floors, and hence could have served both as living spaces and spatial connectors. The 'Twelve Room House' in Sardis is not an architecturally complex dwelling, but here too, a large room on one side of the courtyard had a second door to the rear that gave access to a narrow room and the basement. In the same house, next to the apsidal room, a closed, paved courtyard with a well was found. This space communicated through an entrance with the street. In this house, rooms that opened into each other compensated for an absence of passageways or corridors.

Distinctive Spaces

In Late Antiquity, two vital social gatherings, namely meetings with clients and banquets, continued to take place in spatially distinct public rooms.[35] These reception rooms can be distinguished in the archaeological record by their location, form, size and decoration. Such major rooms occupied two recognisable locations. First, they were usually positioned in close proximity to the street, that is, in a

[35] Ellis (1991), (1997b) and (2000) 172; Lavan (2001) 47–48. For the dining rooms in late antique villas, see Rossiter (1991).

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lateral location with respect to the rest of the house, and well-suited to the spatial requirements of an audience hall used for hosting the crowds attending patron-client meetings. Second, they could be found far from the main entrance, usually on the opposite side of the house, adjacent to the courtyard, and, therefore, in a central location that accorded well with the spatial requirements for dining. Most wealthy late antique houses, including those in our sample, incorporated both types of reception room.

Audience halls could be connected with the rest of the house in two ways: via the doors located in separate, preceding vestibules that opened directly into the courtyard, or via adjacent, smaller rooms that accommodated the service facilities necessary for social gatherings. Therefore, in both cases, an intermediary space was provided between the audience hall and the courtyard. Reception rooms were usually bigger than most of the other rooms, and designed with an apse facing their entrance, or occasionally a series of apses, most commonly in the form of a triconch, or three-apsed room.[36] The floor of the apse was often laid at a higher level than the floor in the preceding rectangular part of the room; this emphasised and differentiated it.

Apsidal Rooms

Apsidal rooms existed in every house in our sample. In the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus, an apsidal room with an individual vestibule and separate street entrance is found in an almost exactly lateral location, like in an audience hall, with respect to the remaining rooms of the house. There were two doors on one long wall of this hall. From the door located near the apse, one could enter a group of small rooms via a series of passages. The second door served as an exit to a longer passageway that culminated in the eastern ambulatory of the imposing peristyle. This passage also communicated with a number of interconnected spaces on both sides.

In the 'Bishop's House' at Aphrodisias, there were two ample rooms distinguished by their apses. One of these occupied almost the entire northern wing and was entered from the street through a vestibule.

[36] For triconch reception rooms, see Lavin (1962); Gorges (1979) 127–39; Bek (1980) 92–93; Wilson (1983) 29–32; Duval (1984); Ward-Pekins *et al.* (1986) 143–49; Ellis (1988) 570–72 and (1991) 119; Morvillez (1995); Dunbabin (1996) 77–79 and (2003) 172–74; Bowden, Hodges and Lako (2002) 201–209 and Bowden (2003) 47–50.

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This vestibule had two further doors, one opening into the courtyard, and the other into the entrance lobby in the north-west corner of the house. The audience hall was of the usual type and décor, and was reached from a central door in the vestibule and two other entrances, one on each long wall.[37] These opened into the eastern ambulatory of the courtyard and into a room added at a later date respectively.[38] The room had a screen immediately in front of the apse, clear from a row of marble blocks with cuttings to hold the panels, embedded in and flush with the floor.[39] The second apsidal space in this house was a triconch hall that occupied the eastern wing.[40] It was primarily entered from the courtyard, through a door that faced the wider central apse. The triconch was also connected with the other parts of the house. In the middle apse, an off-centre door opened into a staircase that linked the triconch with the upper rooms, while a second door in the southern apse led to a series of small rooms, presumably comprising the service quarter.[41] Its formal scheme and courtyard location indicate the use of this triconch as a dining room.[42]

The location and spatial organisation of the apsidal room in Perge was similar to that of the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus.[43] In an earlier stage, this had been a large rectangular room. In its third phase, between the 5th and the 6th centuries A.D., it received an apse with niches, a vestibule, and an entrance connecting it to other rooms. Its vestibule, however, did not have a separate street entrance. Instead, upon entering the house, visitors turned left to the apsidal hall or right to the courtyard. Three small, narrow, interconnected rooms were situated along one long side of the apsidal hall. One of these communicated with the apse itself through a passageway. Hence, typically for an audience hall, the apsidal room could be reached by different routes from

[37] For the decoration of the apsidal room, see Berenfeld (2002) 39–40; Campbell (1991) 14–15 and (1996) 190–92.

[38] Berenfeld (2002) 39.

[39] Berenfeld (2002) 39.

[40] In an earlier stage this space could have been designed as a single apsidal hall, Berenfeld (2002) 47; for the decoration in the triconch, see Berenfeld (2002) 49.

[41] Pliny the Younger mentions a similar private staircase used for service in one of the dining rooms in his Tuscan villa, Plin. *Ep.* 5.6.30.

[42] Fragments of *sigma* tables with inscriptions were found in the earlier excavations: Berenfeld (2002) 126, n. 87.

[43] This apsidal room was identified first as a private chapel, then as an apsidal reception room, and finally as a *basilica privata*; more recently it has been identified as a reception hall with a religious function, see Zeyrek (2002) 91–92.

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different parts of the house. Among the finds from this room were a small, rectangular pool located next to an entrance on the south wall, and fragments of small columns and balustrade pieces, possibly from a screen that divided the apse from the rectangular space before it.[44]

The apsidal hall in Xanthos is our only example of such a room being located at a lower level than both the courtyard and the rest of the house. It is, nonetheless, in all other respects an almost exact replica of its equivalent in the house at Perge.[45] It was located on the periphery of the house, had a vestibule opening onto a group of small, possibly utility rooms located at the same level, and a street entrance that was still in use in the 6th c. Four rooms were connected individually to this apsidal hall. One of these opened straight into the apse, which was elevated above the remainder of the hall. The hall, which was identified as a *triclinium* by the excavators, was remodelled to include an apse and three high windows on its east wall sometime in the 6th or 7th centuries.[46] During the same period, other changes were implemented: the eastern entrance into the vestibule was blocked; the apsidal room was re-decorated; the *nymphaeum* in the courtyard was re-constructed; and the western entrance lobby was shifted to its final location, shown on the plan. It is very likely that, in this phase, the street entrance in the east wall provided access to the vestibule of the large rectangular hall in the south-east corner (which, according to the excavator, received its apse after the blocking of the east door).

Prior to the remodelling, the earlier rectangular hall was conveniently placed and designed to be used as an audience hall. This is because it had a separate vestibule and street entrance, was laterally located in the plan, and was architecturally detached from the elaborate central courtyard. Judging by its close proximity to the courtyard, it is likely that, in this earlier stage, the large chamber with its two small rooms, located in the northern part of the house, was used as a dining room. The purpose of the remodelling of the earlier rectangular hall could have been to create an impressive reception room with an apse, designed to function as a *triclinium*. The redesigned space was now reached only from the courtyard, as was common for dining halls. Therefore, it is

[44] Zeyrek (2002) 88–89. Remains of coloured plaster and paint, as well as marble revetments found *in-situ* on the lower level of the west wall indicate that the apsidal room was decorated, Zeyrek (2002) 25.

[45] For the decoration in this room, see Manière-Lévêque (2002) 236.

[46] des Courtils and Cavalier (2001) 165; Manière-Lévêque (2002) 236.

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reasonable to suppose that the owners overcame restrictions imposed by the city rampart and changes affecting the floor levels of the house by making alternations of form and function to the largest available interior space.

The apsidal audience hall adjacent to the street at Halikarnassos was preceded by three rooms of varying size. This was an atypical arrangement in which the approach to the apse was delayed and dramatised by the sequential placement of numerous rooms, some of which may not have functioned as vestibules. There are indications that, as in the 'Bishop's House' at Aphrodisias and the house in Perge, the apse was separated from the rest of the room by a low screen or parapet. This arrangement distanced the patron from his visitors.[47] Like the examples described above, the apsidal room here had another door on its long wall that joined it to the neighbouring room.[48] A small yard was positioned between this room and the courtyard.

In the partially excavated 'North Temenos House' in Aphrodisias, the remains of the apsidal room exhibit the familiar size, placement and composition.[49] Three rooms opened off its northern wall, while in the remaining long wall, another door opened into a small colonnaded courtyard and another wing of the house. The main entrance to the apsidal room led to an almost square vestibule that opened into a colonnaded corridor, which, in turn, was presumably connected to a street on the east. This vestibule, designed with two columned rooms on both sides, is one of the most spacious vestibules in our sample. Despite its fragmentary plan, the architectural configuration and the colonnaded streets on both sides strongly suggest that the apsidal room in this house was used as an audience hall.

Some of the apsidal spaces in our sample do not display the usual location and design. Both houses in Sardis had apsidal rooms, but these were arranged differently in relation to other spaces. In the 'Late Roman Town House', two apsidal rooms, both in a central location, distinguish two of the four wings. One of these opened directly into the courtyard on the south. It had a small room on one side, and a

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[47] Poulsen (1995) 194; Ellis (1997a) 45.

[48] Poulsen (1995) 196; the doors in the vestibules and those in the apsidal room are tentatively marked on the plan here, as their exact locations were not shown on the published plan.

[49] For the decoration, see Campbell (1991) 1–4 and (1996) 188; Dillon (1997) 734.

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large rectangular alcove separated by a raised floor on the other.[50] This location, right next to the courtyard, was well-suited for a dining room, perhaps a semi-circular dining space or *stibadium,* as in this case.[51] The second apsidal room to the north was more difficult to access directly from either the entrances or the courtyards, but, nevertheless, had two doors.[52] One of the doors was located near the apse and opened into a large neighbouring room, while the other was placed opposite the apse and opened into the L-shaped passage that divided the house into different wings.

The first impression is that this room was not suitable for use as a dining space, or as an audience hall. Nevertheless, together with the adjacent room, it is more likely to have functioned as an audience hall. The apsidal room in the 'Twelve Room House', on the other hand, was situated right next to the street, as was typical for an audience hall. However, this is the only example in our sample of an audience hall placed adjacent to a street on its short side.[53] One of the two doors in this room was positioned along the longer side and opened into a square vestibule, the other one was situated in the centre of the apse and opened into an irregular, small room containing a latrine.[54] The former served as the main approach to the room. The square vestibule behind it opened onto the entrance lobby of the house and a secondary courtyard that contained a staircase. This apsidal room had a window placed on its street façade, rare for a room of this type.[55]

[50] This section took its final form in the 5th c. A.D., when the rectangular room received an apse on one end and a brick partition that separated the remaining southern part of the room. The same room also received a door opening onto the adjoining room north of it, which was previously an independent room that opened into the courtyard, Rautman (1995) 58–59; for decoration, see Rautman (1995) 58.

[51] In the 4th c. A.D. phase, dining presumably took place in the large rectangular room that occupied the northern side of the courtyard and hence faced the entrance, Rautman (1995) 58.

[52] For its decoration, see Rautman (1995) 56.

[53] For the decoration in this room, see Greenewalt (1999) 1.

[54] The room once had another door on its north wall that connected it with the trapezoidal room in the north-east corner. This could have previously been its vestibule, as suggested by the earlier street entrance found in this corner, Greenewalt (2000) 1. Two examples of latrines attached to an apsidal room are found in the Palace at Apollonia, where a door in the apse of the audience hall opens into a narrow space, which leads to a latrine in the north-west corner of the house, Goodchild (1960) 249–51, and in the 10–11th c. A.D. settlement in Selime Kalesi, where a latrine was placed next to the *triclinium*, see Kalas in this volume.

[55] Greenewalt (1999) 2.

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The less well-known 'Priest's House' in Aphrodisias had a spectacular and monumental apse, engraved with a series of niches. It enclosed a vast open space marked with colonnades on at least two sides.[56] An apsidal room was placed opposite this large *aedicular* apse, and, together, these spaces constituted a reception suite, unique in terms of genre and ambiance.[57] As this is an exceptional design, found in a partially excavated building, it is difficult to judge the overall context and hence function of this suite. Two suggestions can be made. First, the plan suggests it could have been an exceptionally majestic audience hall: the apsidal room faced the apsidal courtyard surrounded with colonnades, and the two together were separated by a corridor with doors at both ends, from another set of domestic rooms. Second, it could have been a dining room, since it was paired with the colonnaded courtyard and not located in a peripheral location typical of Late Roman audience halls. In either case, private and public areas in this house were designed and integrated on a different scale and had a very different ambiance. A further small apsidal room, immediately adjacent to this monumental room, faced a long passageway. This slightly elevated, small apsidal room might have functioned together with the larger space as a supervision point, while the long passage, other than connecting different parts of the house, could have served as a waiting lounge or vestibule.[58]

In the partially excavated 'Governor's Palace' at Ephesus, an elaborate combination of apsidal spaces have been excavated. The most ornate reception hall here was a tetraconch connected to two small apsidal

[56] It is understood that the niches were designed to accommodate the marble shield portraits of pagan philosophers found dumped in the alley behind the apse. This led the excavators to identify the building, or at least this part of it, as a philosophical school, Smith (1990) 130, 153–55 and (1991) 157–58; the rest of the building included some more rooms whose layout and spatial organisation suggest a private use. Whether it was used as a school or not, the remains of this building exhibit the more elaborate versions of architectural elements common in the public spaces of large late antique houses. A similar large and elaborate apse is found in the 'House of Proclus' in Athens, Karivieri (1994).

[57] The apse in the courtyard was articulated, probably in the 3rd c. A.D., with fluted columns, Corinthian capitals and entablatures. The complex was altered in the 4th or 5th centuries A.D.; the large apse in the courtyard was redesigned with carved pediments for the shield portraits, whilst the atrium court was paved with a mosaic floor, and the apsidal room was built over some rooms of the atrium house, Smith (1990) 129–30. Both apses, in the courtyard and in the room opposite, had marble revetments, Smith (1990) 129–30.

[58] Traces of a stone slot in the floor indicate that a screen or a parapet separated this room from the long passage, Smith (1990) 129.

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rooms.[59] The tetraconch was entered through a long passageway, a longitudinal vestibule terminating with apses at both ends. This vestibule opened into a small square anteroom which was, in turn, flanked by small rooms. An apsidal space and two further small rooms projected from the side of the tetraconch facing the anteroom. Another apsidal room protruded from the tetraconch on the south, serving as the narthex of a possible chapel (also apsed) attached to it.[60] This scheme is particularly reminiscent of the 'Priest's House' in Aphrodisias. There too, a long, rectangular passage, which could have functioned as a vestibule, terminated with an apse on at least one end, and was placed next to an imposing apsidal courtyard and the apsidal room.[61] Nonetheless, the remains of the mansion at Ephesus display by far the most ambitiously designed reception complex found in a residential setting in late antique Asia Minor.[62]

Substantial Rooms

Other rooms in our houses were distinguished not by their apses, but by their size and location. They were often rectangular in form and smaller than the apsidal rooms, but larger than the remaining rooms in the house and usually found on one side of the courtyard. It is possible that these rooms accommodated less crowded and more private receptions, or were used as day rooms by the members of the household.[63] The house in Xanthos, for instance, possessed three such large rooms, of which two looked into the courtyard. One of these opened into the western ambulatory and was reached by a few steps from the street entrance to the west. Meanwhile, several other doors on the remaining three sides connected it with the main courtyard and the rest of the house. Its direct link with the street entrance, ample size and multiple access points suggest that this room served a public

[59] For the decoration, see Foss (1979) 51.

[60] A small apsidal room in the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus has also been identified as a possible chapel, Ellis (1997a) 44.

[61] A similar long passage with apses on both ends separated the eastern wing from the rest of the vast residence in Piazza Armerina. Here too, a monumental apsidal room opened into this elaborately paved passage: Carandini, Ricci and de Vos (1982) 194–230.

[62] A close parallel to this spacious and elaborate mansion in Ephesus is the 'Villa at Yakto' in Antioch, Lassus (1938) 95–147.

[63] I use the term 'day rooms' to denote the substantial rooms that could have been used for a variety of daily activities by the family members.

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function, perhaps as an audience hall.[64] The inhabitants might have intended the room as both an ample entrance lobby and an audience hall after the transformation of the rectangular hall, possibly the previous audience hall, into an apsidal dining room. The other substantial room facing the courtyard on the north was sufficiently spacious and conveniently located to be used as a dining room. A third large room marked with a columned entryway was found on the north-west corner, and opened into a small courtyard and neighbouring spaces on both sides. It could be reached from a door placed at this end of the northern ambulatory. Its scale, its association with a secondary courtyard, and the distance from the main courtyard all suggest a private use; possibly as a day room for the family.

A substantial room has been investigated in 'The Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus, that had many interconnected side rooms and a triple entryway from the courtyard. Its commanding courtyard location and ample size indicate that it was a dining space. Two other noteworthy, but smaller rectangular spaces were found in the same house. They were placed on opposite sides of the courtyard and faced one another. In addition to their courtyard orientation and axial alignment, two columns marking their entrances signal the domestic significance of these rooms, perhaps day rooms or semi-public chambers.[65]

At Perge, two large rectangular rooms were situated adjacent to one another on the same side of the courtyard. One was connected to smaller rooms on both sides and had a fountain or a small pool built into one wall. Apparently, this was typical of *triclinia* with fountain decorations.[66] The neighbouring room, on the other hand, was visually divided by two protruding spur walls with a column between them.

[64] The excavators also identified this room as a *tablinum*, Manière-Lévêque (2002) 236. Such ample entrances are found in the Roman houses in Africa, and are interpreted as having had the dual function of an entryway and a space for meeting with clients, see Thébert (1987) 355, 358–59. Grand entrance lobbies can be found in other late provincial houses, such as the Theodosian Palace in Stobi, Kitzinger (1946) fig. 162; Wiseman (1973) 44–45.

[65] Such open rooms located around the peristyle are called *exedra* in Campanian houses, and could be used for a number of purposes, including sitting and viewing the garden. *Exedrae* were found in the North African houses as well, see the plans in Thébert (1987) 366, 372, 373, 376.

[66] Viewing a water element placed opposite the dining room in a courtyard was a common feature in ancient Roman houses, and water elements found within dining rooms themselves clearly indicate the desirability of the view of a fountain. See Thébert (1987) for similar examples in Africa, especially 'House of Ass' in Djemila in p. 356; Dobbins (2000) for Antioch.

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This room was not orientated directly to the courtyard, although it was entered from this open space. It is more plausible that this room was a day room, for it would not have met the architectural requirements of a large social gathering. Nevertheless, it might have functioned well as a small and private reception space, for more personal and private meetings.[67]

In both of the houses at Sardis, one rectangular room was distinguishable by its size and location. In the 'Twelve Room House', it was situated immediately opposite the main entrance and opened into both the courtyard and a back room. Part of the floor was slightly raised, like a platform, at one end of the room.[68] Its proximity to the courtyard, size, and elevated floor suggest that it functioned as a dining room, though it was also large enough to be used as a day room. Likewise, in the 'Late Roman Town House', large rectangular rooms flanked the courtyard in both the south and the north wings. The southern room opened onto the courtyard, faced the apsidal chamber, and had another door to the south-east that gave access to rooms beyond it.[69] Although the remains of a marble *sigma* table found in this room imply that it operated as a dining room, it was large enough to accommodate a family gathering.[70] The other substantial room was located in the north-west wing and opened onto the apsidal room, the courtyard, and a neighbouring small square room.[71]

The archaeological remnants of two houses in Aphrodisias exhibit rooms of similar design. In the 'Bishop's House', a rather small but elegant room located opposite the triconch was probably used as a

[67] According to the excavator, this room may have been used as an atelier or a shop in an earlier stage, as a large threshold block is found on its north wall, Zeyrek (2002) 82. Fragments of a round marble table, found in the nothern section of this divided room and dated to the latest phase of the house, are taken as evidence that this room was an *oecus*, Zeyrek (2002) 90.

[68] A marble *sigma* table, or a semi-circular table, was found on the elevated part of this room, Greenewalt (1997) 515.

[69] Like many other rooms in this house, this large space consisted of smaller spaces before it was transformed into a large hall in the 5th c. A.D., Rautman (1995) 59.

[70] Rautman (1995) 59. However, though a marble *sigma* table is often taken as an evidence of a dining function, the exclusive association of such tables with dining is not firmly established, see Akerström Hougen (1974) 106–107 and also Morvillez (1995). This may have been another dining room as well as a day room in which the same type of table was used for dining, or for different purposes, both by the male-head and his visitors, or else by the remaining family members.

[71] This room was transformed into a large space with several doors on three sides, by combining the four smaller rooms used in the 4th c. A.D., Rautman (1995) 56.

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day room. This room had a view of the peristyle through a double-columned entryway. In the 'Priest's House', the archaeological evidence, though incomplete, indicates that at least one room with a colonnaded entrance was positioned in view of the small and stylish peristyle courtyard located behind the apsidal chamber.[72] It is possible that a similarly designed room existed next to the small peristyle courtyard in the 'North Temenos House'.

An Overview of the Architectural Evidence

Having introduced the architectural features of late antique houses in Asia Minor, some introductory remarks will now be made regarding the organisation of their public spaces. This discussion will follow the same course as in the preceding section, beginning with the layout of the houses, and moving onto circulation patterns and the significance of different rooms.

Like many western villas and town houses, all of the houses in our sample had one central courtyard. They did not have front and back courtyards, a strong axial emphasis, and a sequential flow of spaces, features often seen in the domestic architecture of Roman Italy.[73] The central courtyard plan of the eastern houses offered direct access to a large number of rooms, unlike the linear scheme which would only gradually reveal the house to a visitor. The houses in our sample were compact and introverted, their rooms looking into central courtyards. This is certainly not a scheme unique to or developed in Late Antiquity. Instead, the Roman and late antique houses in the eastern provinces, including Asia Minor, continued the Greek tradition of building around an open, paved, colonnaded and often central courtyard.[74]

Whether central or not, a courtyard was by definition a public space, since both visitors and inhabitants were required to cross it in order

[72] Smith (1990) 128.

[73] For houses with linear disposition in Campania, see Wallace-Hadrill (1991) and Pesando (1997); for Western provinces, see Meyer (1999).

[74] For the Roman houses of the imperial period in Anatolia, see the following: Mansel (1978) 241–55 for Side; Mitchell (1991) 170–71 for Ariassos; Radt (2001) 93–110 for Pergamon; Bayburtluoğlu (2003) 142–59 for Arykanda; Mitchell (1995) 158–75 for Cremna; Kennedy and Freeman (1998), Ergeç (1998) and (2000), Abadie-Reynal and Bulgan (2001), Abadie-Reynal and Darman (2003) and Early *et al.* (2003) 19–43, 51–55 for Zeugma.

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to go from one part of the house to another. In a way, the courtyard functioned as a kind of domestic piazza, a large public place representing the spatial centre of daily life. Here, as in an urban piazza, status and wealth could be displayed to an audience using a variety of architectural and decorative assemblages on a large scale. Domestic courtyards were prominently located to act as the centre of attention and action, and special care was given to their appearance and arrangement, irrespective of size. This was done in a number of ways. First of all, a large floor area was reserved for courtyards. Even where limitations, such as a lack of land or the density of built structures nearby, necessitated the construction of small courtyards, as in Sardis, a comparatively large area was still reserved for a single courtyard or even two courtyards. Second, all the courtyards were decorated with costly pavements of stone, marble or mosaic, paintings embellishing ambulatory walls, and water displays. Third, they were articulated, and hence given a monumental aspect, with towering colonnades. Even the smaller courtyards received columns or colonnades to add elegance and extra space. Architectural features, including a centralised location, large scale and rich decoration, indicate the public role of the courtyard. Nevertheless, the house was still a private setting, and its reception of outsiders required supervision and control.

One way to control public intrusion and traffic within a residential building is to influence its internal circulation by varying the routes, distances and difficulties of access to different parts and rooms of the house. Further, the provision of multiple entrances can create alternative routes into and away from public spaces. In Late Antiquity, architects typically controlled public access and circulation by providing direct access from the street to some rooms, and more lengthy and indirect access to others. The houses in our sample were designed according to such strategies, incorporating multiple entrances, from different directions, usually from both a side and a main street. These offered alternative routes into the house, especially into public reception rooms.

Another way to spatially distinguish public and private spaces is by adding an upper storey. This is perhaps one of the most appropriate and efficient architectural means of providing rooms with different levels of accessibility and privacy in houses constructed by limited urban confines. Although it is not immediately apparent from their plans, most of our houses had whole or partial upper storeys, which, in fact, had much larger floor areas than their ground floor plans suggest. The existence of multiple staircases in some cases indicates that certain upper

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floor rooms could have been accessed separately from the lower level. In these cases, it would appear that the ground floor was extensively exploited for public interaction, and the upper level, which was out of sight and indirectly accessible, probably devoted to more private activities. In comparison with a group of houses outside of Asia Minor, in which both the reception and living spaces were found on the upper levels, the reception rooms in the houses under consideration here are located at the entrance level.[75]

Therefore, in late antique houses in Asia Minor, two groups of significant public rooms can be distinguished: apsidal rooms and other substantial rooms without apses. Both types of rooms were found on the ground level of the houses, though similar reception rooms might have existed on the upper floors as well. The placement of these rooms differed in relation to the courtyard. The apsidal rooms were detached from the courtyard, paired with a separate vestibule and found in a peripheral location.[76] They can be identified as audience halls and were presumably used predominantly by the male head of the household for business meetings. Multiple doors and separate entrances and exits for the outsiders and the host, and the visual and physical segregation of the guests in a closed space, were the architectural measures that segregated patron and client in the audience hall. The substantial rooms without apses on the other hand, were placed in the centre of the houses, often adjoining a courtyard and were not adjoined to preceding vestibules. They were often placed in a commanding position in the courtyard and, being perforated by windows or multiple entryways, might be more open than the apsidal spaces. These rooms could be used to host dinner guests, who were often invited to attend business meetings, or else by household members during the day. Indeed, dining was not an exclusively male occasion; both men and women could dine together according to the Roman custom.

[75] Late antique houses with living and reception spaces found on the upper floors are taken to represent the early appearance of *piano nobile*, seen in the later Byzantine and medieval domestic architecture, see Polci (2003) 97–105 for different arguments.

[76] The triconch in the 'Bishop's House' at Aphrodisias is one exception, but this is a multi-apsed room for which there is no parallel in Anatolia. The *tetraconch* in the incomplete 'Governor's Palace' at Ephesus is another multi-apsed room, but unlike the 'Bishop's House' it does not face a courtyard.

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The Articulation of Public Spaces

Audience Halls

Visiting and consulting influential patrons continued to be an important domestic ritual in the later empire, with some variations. These included the social context, spatial locus and accommodation of such visits.[77] Unlike its Early Roman predecessor, the *tablinum*, which was at the centre of the earlier *atrium* house, the late antique audience hall for business callers, strangers, or regular visitors, was moved to a peripheral location, usually next to a street.[78]

Four possible influential factors in moving the audience hall closer to the street were the increase in the number of callers, their diverse social status, the need to control their entry into the house, and a desire to make waiting clients visible in the street; a large crowd was waiting to greet the influential patroness Hypatia in front of her house in Alexandria which made Cyril the Bishop jealous of her reputation.[79] Late-antique patrons had influence at court, in the city and in the countryside. They exerted influence over and represented a much larger group of people than their Early Roman counterparts.[80] These grandees frequented and probably spent more time in their audience halls than their predecessors had done in their *tablina*, for they were obliged to settle matters originating from a much wider clientele than ever before.[81] As such, there was a need, first of all, for a large space in which to accommodate greater crowds of people, and second, a different

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[77] Ellis (1985) 24 and (1991) 118; Wallace-Hadrill (1989) 64–65; Garnsey and Woolf (1989) 162–65. For the western aristocrats see Salzman (2002) 24–27, 55; for the mention of clients see Amm. Marc., 14.1.6, 14.1.12–13, 28.1.10, 28.4.12, 30.4.8, 30.4.14; Jer., *Ep.* 66.5 (from Garnsey and Humfress (2001) 127); Sid. Apoll., *Epist.* 1.9.

[78] For *tablinum* and the morning visits in the atrium houses, see Dwyer (1991) 27–28.

[79] According to Damascius, fr.104: Haas (1997) 311. I thank Luke Lavan for suggesting this last factor and for this reference.

[80] Brown (1971) 37; Ellis (1997a) 46 and (1991) 123; for patronage in Antioch and of Libanius see Liebeschuetz (1972) 193–208; Smith (1997) 178 illustrates how audience rooms with independent entrances were also adapted in the country houses or villas in the western provinces where the owners exerted power over numerous clients and tenants.

[81] In Late Antiquity, a patron could have used even the most humble dependent, perhaps not so much for personal political promotion, rivalry or elections, but rather to hold a force in reserve for local political manoeuvres or security, see Arce (1997) 28. Also see Liebeschuetz (1972) 192–93; Salzman (2002) 52–53; for other examples related to patronage, see Brown (1992) 79–80, 95.

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architectural scheme to control their presence and movement in the house. It was no longer suitable or even socially relevant to expose the private areas of one's house to people with such diverse demands. In addition, it allowed a patron's power and reputation to be recognised by his wider group of callers. Therefore, an audience hall located near the street seems to have served two functions: it respected the privacy of the household by segregating callers from private quarters; and enhanced the public image of the patrons.

Four features characterise the newly devised architectural scheme for the audience halls: size, location, accessibility and form. The audience halls of this period, including those in Asia Minor, were built on an imposing scale.[82] They were large and monumental in size, and can be more appropriately described as halls rather than rooms to emphasise their architectural grandeur. The need to include a much enlarged public space without disturbing the functional and architectural integrity of the remaining spaces led to these rooms being placed on one side of the house rather than in a central location. By doing so, the patron was also able to physically separate the heart of his dwelling from an anonymous crowd of callers of varying status and number, restrict their presence to a particular location, and prevent them from entering or seeing into the depths of his home. Indeed, audience halls could be physically isolated by shutting the doors leading from them to the innermost parts of the house. Furthermore, with the exception of Sardis, none of the audience halls discovered so far in Asia Minor contain firm archaeological evidence for any other openings such as windows. Their peripheral location and separate street entrance functioned together to create a short and direct path into, and out of, these audience halls.[83] The existence of doors near the apses in many examples illustrates that the patrons also reserved a separate entrance for themselves and hence avoided using the same route taken by their subjects.

We can also observe an increasing tendency to use elongated and basilical forms in late antique audience halls. These designs accentuated the segregated nature of the reception area, directing people's gaze

[82] The 'Palace of Dux' at Apollonia is a good comparison. Here, the audience room is large, located on the periphery of the house, had a separate entrance and a vestibule with benches, and, in addition, two more doors that connected it with the rest of the spaces, Ellis (1985).

[83] Apsidal spaces with a similar location and independance are also found in some large imperial houses in Roman Africa. For two examples, see Thébert (1987) 334–39, 378 and 397.

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on the patron, seated at a higher level in the apse, by their inherent depth and axial organisation.[84] Further, in contrast with the callers of earlier times, who were taken inside the house and allowed to see many adjoining spaces, the audience of the late antique patron was deliberately barred from the main body of the house and directed by means of apsidal arrangements to focus their attention solely on the patron. In Xanthos, the reception hall (in its earlier rectangular phase when it could have been used as an audience hall with a separate street entrance), was located at a lower level, and in this way physically detached from the elaborate courtyard. This illustrates how the complete physical separation of each room could be achieved within multi-storey houses.

Apsidal audience halls were used in different ways in the two houses of Sardis. The limited floor area in the 'Twelve Room House' prompted its inhabitants to construct a second storey and align the apsidal room at a perpendicular angle to the street. The room had a separate vestibule, but was not placed on the same axis as the apse to allow for an axial approach to the patron. Otherwise, the overall architectural composition and placement of this apsidal room are not unusual.

Another model is suggested by the plan of the 'Late Antique Town House' in Sardis. This opulent house was built or developed on an L-shaped lot. This must have posed several planning difficulties, one being the impossibility of including an imposing central courtyard. Instead, the builders shaped this house around two courtyards and several passageways, a scheme that resulted in many alternative routes of circulation and the spatial isolation of several rooms. There are two likely candidates for the audience hall in this house, neither conforming to the usual type. One is the square room in the north-east wing. This room was not longitudinal, basilical in form, or accessible from a street through a separate vestibule and entryway. It was, nonetheless, positioned in close proximity to the street entrance, from which two small vestibules, one with benches, led into a wide and well-paved axial

[84] For the apsidal spaces in general, see Lavin (1962); Sodini (1984); Dunbabin (1991); Ellis (1985), (1991) and (1997b); Lavan (1999) and Baldini Lippolis (2001); see also Becatti (1948) 122–24 for Ostia; Goodchild (1960) for Apollonia; Kitzinger (1946) 117–29, Wiseman (1973) 34–36 and 40–49, Sokolovska (1975) for Stobi; Duval (1984) for Apamea; Little (1985) and Ward-Perkins *et al.* (1986) 126–43 for Ptolemais; Argoud, Callot and Helly (1980) and Dazewski (1985) 279–86 for Cyprus; Frantz (1988) 34–48 for Athens; Hostetter (1994) 133–53 and Hansen (1997) 113–14 for Rome; Ellis (1995a) for Britain; Kuzmanov (2000) for Bulgaria.

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passageway that culminated solely in this room. In other words, even though this audience hall was not typical, with the usual placement, access and apsidal form, it was nevertheless designed to function in a similar manner. There was a direct and linear flow from the wide passageway into this room which meant that these two spaces were of similar width and architecturally integral. This scheme almost exactly replicated a basilical space without an apse. Moreover, this group of spaces was firmly separated as a unit from the rest of the house, both by the surrounding passageways, and by the doors placed at the ends of these passageways.

A second possible audience hall might have been the apsidal room in the neighbouring north-west wing. This room was also detached from the courtyards of the house. This isolated and rather unattractive location implies a formal use as a reception room rather than a dining area. Further, alternative routes of access led to this room. It could be reached from the courtyard, through the adjacent large hall in this wing, and also from the wide passageway; the spine of the house with which its apse was orientated. Although this apsidal room was a long distance from the main entrance, its importance as a public room is clear from its apse, designed to focus attention on a patron, and the rooms and passages surrounding it, which might have served as vestibules for waiting clients. Like the square audience hall and its auxiliary spaces in the opposite wing, the apsidal room and adjoining rooms were physically separated from the rest of the house by a wall that stood at the very end of the wide passageway.

Clearly, a single model does not suffice for every house. Several factors must have contributed to the development of variations or alternatives. Economic considerations might have discouraged some late antique owners from undertaking a costly renovation to include vast, ornately decorated audience halls. If houses had irregular layouts and spatial limitations, it was more difficult to accommodate large and/or basilical audience halls within their layout.[85] In houses such as the 'Late Antique Town House' at Sardis, spaces which lay parallel to the street, or rooms

[85] There is also a possible audience hall incorporated into a house in Hierapolis. The 'House of the Ionic Capitals' continued to be occupied in Late Antiquity when part of the peristyle was closed to create a room. This room was richly decorated with marble floors and panels, riveted and painted walls, and had a separate entrance hall, a waiting room with a stone bench, d'Andria (2001) 113. A partial plan shows an apsidal room with preceding rooms reached from a street entrance, Zaccaria Ruggiu (1995) 292; also see Sodini (1997) 477–78 and more recently d'Andria (2003) 144–46.

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which did not communicate directly with the courtyard, could function as audience halls. Conversely, the presence of two such arrangements side by side in this house may suggest that one could have been used as an audience hall while the other (more likely the apsidal one) had a different function, perhaps as a day room.

In addition, it should be remembered that not all late antique house owners had an identical social and political status. Some patrons of modest means in small communities with smaller groups of callers might have survived who did not need large audience halls, let alone those with a basilical design. For such patrons, a room near the entrance or even around the courtyard might well have sufficed for their lower key cliental meetings. Indeed, it is less likely that a small group of callers crossing the courtyard would pose a major threat to the privacy of a household than the crowds drawn to the residences of more influential patrons.

When spatial and economic requirements were met, owners could build elaborate audience halls, apparent from the 'Late Roman Villa' at Halikarnassos and the 'Governor's Palace in Ephesus. In the former, several stylish rooms preceded the audience hall, the first being the vestibule, embellished with sophisticated floor decorations, the latter, the reception room, which was designed according to the rare and flamboyant form of a tetraconch.[86] A far more conspicuous and monumental example is the apsidal room and preceding gigantic apsidal courtyard in the 'Priest's House' at Aphrodisias. In spite of the uncertainties regarding its identification as a house and incomplete plan, the apsidal hall here seems to have been designed and articulated as a sumptuous room for a large audience.

Dining Rooms

Throughout Roman Antiquity, dining remained an important requirement of social and political relationships, and in every house at least one substantial room around the courtyard was reserved for this purpose. Dining rooms opened onto the courtyards, and indeed, the two areas were spatially paired, as the dining room was open on its entrance side

[86] For the mosaic floors in the Halikarnassos villa, see Poulsen (1995) 203–206, and the footnotes and references in Poulsen (1997); this is also a rare case where the name of the owner was mentioned in a floor mosaic, for inscriptions in the mosaic floors, see Isager (1995).

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and thus had a view of the courtyard. The starting time of dining and the number and status of the dinner guests were fixed in advance. This select group of diners were allowed visual and physical access to the heart of the house.

The dining room also remained at the heart of the house in Late Antiquity.[87] Despite undergoing certain changes in form and use, its location remained the same. The houses with complete plans in our sample demonstrate that dining rooms, with the exception of those in the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus and the 'Late Roman Town House' in Sardis, were now designed with much narrower doorways and openings, and most had a single doorway to the courtyard.[88] This apparently diminished visual contact between the dining room and the courtyard. Dining rooms could be very large in width and depth, as were those in the 'Twelve Room House' in Sardis and the 'Villa above the Theatre' at Ephesus. In this architectural scheme, the diners, who were seated at one end of the room, could hardly see the rest of the house beyond the walls of the dining room. Therefore, according to architectural evidence, ceremonial dining had become a more introverted activity; a spectacle focused upon itself. The dining room was, in this respect, similar to the audience hall, another private area visually detached from the courtyard. However, unlike audience halls, dining rooms had windows, and although designed as introverted spaces, were not physically closed.[89]

Dining rooms in Late Antiquity were often articulated with apses.[90] The form was suitable for an introverted activity because it restricted the dining area to the apse and created an internal focus at one end of the room which, in turn, resulted in a far larger service and performance

[87] For late antique dining, see Dunbabin (2003) 141–74; Ellis (1997b); for banquets in *praetoria*, see Lavan (2001) 47–48; banquets mentioned in Amm. Marc. 28.4.13 and 30.4.14.

[88] Even in the 'Bishop's House' at Aphrodisias the large triconch room was entered by one narrow door, though as Ellis (1997a) 43 mentions, one would expect to find the traces of an earlier, more elaborate and wide entryway.

[89] Windows are recorded in the apsidal rooms in the 'Twelve Room House' in Sardis and in Xanthos. Few studies have been done on lighting in ancient houses, on Late Antiquity, see Ellis (1995b), (2000) 150–51 and also in this volume.

[90] Though the form was used earlier, in the 1st c. A.D., in the palace of Domitian, it appears in town houses and villas only from the late 3rd c. A.D., Ellis (1991) 119; for apsidal dining rooms with semi-circular couches or *stibadia* and the rectangular dining rooms with semi-circular couches, see Dunbabin (1991), (1996) 66–80 and (2003) 169–74; Ellis (1988) and (1997b); Akerström-Hougen (1974) 101–17.

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area in front.[91] This fashion does not seem to have been widespread in Asia Minor. Only two apsidal dining rooms are found in our sample: at the 'Late Roman Town House' in Sardis, and in Xanthos.[92] The triconch was a popular extravagant dining room that was found across the empire. The 'Bishop's House' in Aphrodisias is the only example in Asia Minor where an imposing triconch was placed in a dominating position on one side of the courtyard.[93] This was a large and impressive space, but was entered through a single and unpretentious door, an arrangement that might reflect the desire to internalise and confine the dining activity within a theatrical setting.

Day Rooms

Day rooms constituted another group of substantial rooms which were usually smaller than the public reception halls, but bigger than many of the remaining rooms. Like dining rooms, they were often found within easy reach of either central courtyards, as in Perge, Sardis, Ephesus, and the 'Bishop's House' in Aphrodisias, or else a secondary courtyard with more indirect accessibility, as at Xanthos. Such sizeable rooms had less privacy than rooms on the upper floors. In the Roman *atrium* houses, rooms of modest size that could accommodate few people were found adjacent to reception rooms or around the *atrium* and the courtyard. These are identified as *cubicula*, traditionally translated as 'bedrooms'. A *cubiculum*, however, might have been used for a number of functions, such as resting, reading, retiring, or even as a small and private

[91] Ellis (1997b) 45, (1997a) 43 and (2000) 150. This is also evident in the Late Roman palatial architecture where the dining room was designed as a closed hall, attracting attention to the emperor and the event itself rather than to the view outside, Bek (1983) 93–98.

[92] The apsidal hall in Xanthos was included on the assumption that it was used as a dining room at some point in the history of the house. The apsidal room in the 'Priest's House' at Aphrodisias cannot be excluded either. In Perge, the apsidal room is identified as a *triclinium* in the second phase, and as a reception room with religious use in the third phase; of the three building phases, both the second and the third correspond to the 5th to 6th centuries A.D., according to the architectural evidence, Zeyrek (2002) 83–84, 91–94.

[93] The 'House of the Triapsidal Hall' in Ptolemais has a similarly located triconch dining room. In this house the triconch had been further elaborated with two columns that marked the deep apse facing the wide and the columned entryway, Ward-Perkins *et al.* (1986) 126–43 and Little (1985).

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reception room.[94] As well as not displaying the characteristic features of reception rooms from this period, the substantial rooms found in the sample houses discussed in this paper differed in certain respects from traditional *cubicula*. They were not only bigger and located in more central locations, but frequently had multiple doors and were nodal locations that could be accessed from different parts of the house. These architectural features suggest that these rooms had a wider variety of uses for larger groups of people.

These rooms might be interpreted as the living and/or day rooms of the late antique household. After all, houses were inhabited not only by their patrons, but also by women, children, senior family members and other dependents who might have needed spaces to come together, work and entertain their own visitors.[95] Evidence on the domestic and public activities of women in Late Antiquity is scanty except for those involved in religious sphere. Nevertheless, it is not unlikely that during the day, women or other family members could occasionally receive guests, who might have included friends, neighbours and relatives.

Day rooms were also conveniently located for meeting with a family member in large and complex houses, as well as for exercising control over the daily routine. In addition, it is possible that such rooms could have been used both as family rooms during the day, and as dining rooms during the evening.[96] This might have been the case in the relatively modest 'Twelve Room House' in Sardis, where there were few substantial rooms on the ground floor. Here, the large rectangular room opposite the entrance was sufficiently large and conveniently placed to accommodate a dining party during the evening, as well as family activities during the day. The substantial room located on the north side of the house in Xanthos suggests another possible use of such spaces. According to the excavators, this room was once the *triclinium* and was later transformed into a *cubiculum*. They reached these

[94] Ellis (2000) 194 identifies *cubiculum* as a retiring room; a room used for sleeping or seeking privacy. For the different associations of *cubiculum* in the ancient literature see Riggsby (1998).

[95] For women involved in religious sphere in Late Antiquity, see Clark (1993) 94–118. Houses became the base for patronage of heresy and dissent with matrons and women also involved, see Maier (1995).

[96] Pliny the Younger also mentions about the multiple use of rooms, Plin. *Ep.* 2.17.7–10.

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conclusions after having associated the apsidal room with the new dining room.[97] Other possible identifications include a modest dining room with a view of the courtyard, a day room that enjoyed the same privileged view, or both.

Conclusion

Public and private spheres had to co-exist in the ancient houses, even though they could be separated by way of architectural measures within different rooms, or on different floors. Ironically, however, more is known about the public face of domestic architecture, a by-product of the dominating location and distinct layout of the reception rooms. In the late antique houses, the operation of privacy and the separation of the 'private' and the 'public' can be seen most clearly in the case of the domestic receptions, which continued to distinguish visitors and residents by spatial arrangements.[98] It is known from earlier periods that the regulation of boundaries, and hence the operation of privacy, was related to status, and manifested by spatially segregating people according to different categories. These included 'household member' and 'outsider', 'invited' and 'uninvited', 'inferior' and 'superior'.[99] In this respect, a visitor's social status and culturally generated access rights would determine whether or not they were allowed into the innermost locations of the house, an arrangement perhaps not much different from the situation today. The relative physical and visual accessibility of rooms beyond the public reception rooms played a major part in reifying these social distinctions.

The 1st c. A.D. Campanian house can serve as a model for comparison.[100] Here, the exposure of the house to one's social peers on certain formal occasions, such as dinner parties, neither caused an awkward situation, nor violated the privacy of the household. The house was designed to welcome this select group into its heart. In contrast, callers

[97] Manière Lévêque (2002) 237.
[98] On privacy in the Roman period see n. 1.
[99] Wallace-Hadrill (1994) 8–16.
[100] Because well-preserved and abundant in number, the Campanian house type is often taken as a model for describing and discussing the 'Roman house', but its representational validity is a disputed topic, see most recently Allison (2001) 189–92.

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of lower social status, who visited the same house for various short-term meetings, would be accommodated in the semi-open audience space, the *tablinum*, and the preceding *atrium*, both of which were not situated deep inside the house. During such visits, guests could see the rooms adjoining the *atrium*, but were not allowed to explore any further the remaining spaces beyond the *atrium*. They might have a chance to glimpse into the courtyard and the private areas at the back of the house only if the *tablinum* lacked a rear wall or the screens on the rear wall were open and not blocking the view. Therefore, as long as they kept their positions and did not move beyond the *tablinum*, their presence did not conflict with the privacy of the household. In short, private and public areas were defined according to rank and access, but not physically separated by having different access routes. Even though they were designed to accommodate different types of visitor, the audience hall and the dining room were not entirely segregated because they were reached from the same path.

In Late Antiquity, however, these blurred and indistinct physical and social boundaries, between both the house and its public spaces and between the public spaces themselves, were more firmly set. An increased spatial hierarchy and seclusion prevailed, best exemplified by the audience hall. Considered a purely public space, this room was now much enlarged, moved into a peripheral location with respect to the courtyard, and given a more introverted and closed form with a separate vestibule and immediate street access. This architectural adjustment not only enabled the owner to control public access to his house, but also spatially delineated the public and private areas within certain rooms in his house. This was put into practice in audience halls, but not in dining rooms. In none of the examples in our sample was the dining room given a separate vestibule or deliberately positioned a long way from the courtyard. Despite losing its unlimited visual contact with the courtyard, the dining room was never physically detached and moved elsewhere in the houses researched to date in Asia Minor. In Late Antiquity, unlike in the Campanian model, callers and visitors could be taken into a separate vestibule and then to an audience hall, whereas the more intimate dinner guests could be escorted to the grand dining-room. In this way, the two reception spaces could now be firmly separated and distanced.

In ancient private houses, the entrance level was exploited mostly for public use. In Late Antiquity both the reception rooms and day areas

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were found on this level of the house.[101] In this period, the houses of influential patrons attracted and accommodated members of the public more regularly and in greater numbers. Nevertheless, the physical limits of this intrusion depended primarily on the invitation status and purpose of the visitors. A combination of several architectural measures in the design and use of the reception rooms meant that these public spaces could be controlled more carefully. In Asia Minor, the layout of the late antique houses illustrates that they were designed to welcome only a select group of visitors into their hearts.

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[101] The presence of a triconch on the upper floor of the late antique palace in Bostra raises the question, did the custom of locating the public reception rooms on the entrance level continue more persistently in the late antique houses in Asia Minor? See Polci (2003), for the suggestion that the reception and the main living spaces of the late antique elite houses were eventually taken upstairs and relocated on the first floor in Early Medieval town houses.

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