

# THE PALIMPSEST OF THE HOUSE

Re-assessing Roman, Late Antique,  
Byzantine, and Early Islamic  
Living Patterns

EDITED BY

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# **Splendid Luxury. Representation and Display in the Roman and Late Antique Urban Elite Houses of Asia Minor**

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## **Abstract**

Once western Asia Minor became integrated into the Roman World in 133/129 BCE, a typical "Roman" upper-class house architecture started to develop in the region. The new house forms would also spread to other neighboring areas that gradually came under Roman control in the next generations. As part of the new developments in private housing in the cities, especially from the first century CE onwards, members of high society started to apply impressive architectural and decorative features in their urban dwellings on a much larger scale than had been the case in earlier Hellenistic times. In particular, the imposing character of the best accessible, and thus the most seen, parts of the houses were underscored using a well-selected combination of architectural and ornamental elements that displayed the owner's refined taste, status, and wealth and aimed at impressing outsiders. For this purpose, upper-class members built further on earlier late Hellenistic traditions while at the same time adopting and adapting innovative aspects inspired by "Roman" models in the existing domestic framework. This combination of "Greek" and "Roman" housing elements was reflected in the new vogues of wall and floor decoration, as well as in the development of infrastructural aspects (e.g. water supply). In this way, elite houseowners created a new common architectural and decorative language of representation in their private dwellings that became more defined and widespread during the following centuries of the Common Era. The evolutions that took place in elite housing during the early and mid-Imperial periods eventually culminated in the appearance of large aristocratic residences in the region during the fourth and fifth centuries CE, when extensive architectural forms and lavish decorative elements surpassed all earlier developments in private architecture and elite members gave their private residences "palatial" allures.

Starting with the Hellenistic housing tradition, this paper first discusses how the frequently entered "public" areas of private elite dwellings in Asia Minor were increasingly

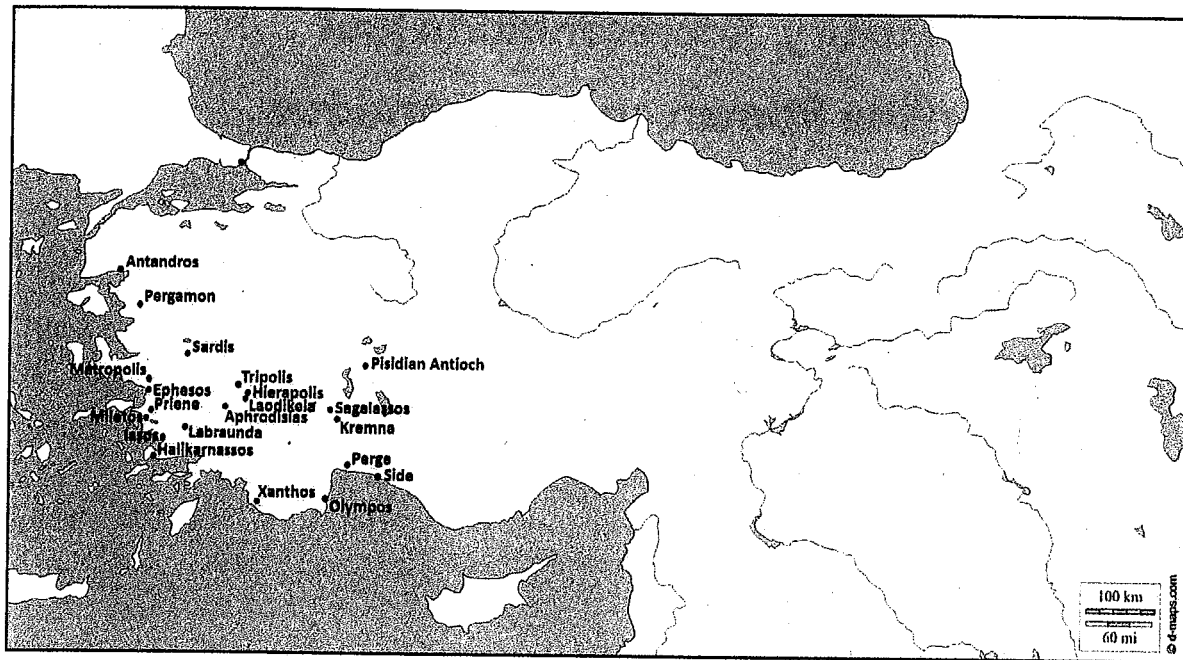


Fig. 1. Map of Turkey showing the ancient sites discussed in this paper. (Inge Uyterhoeven, based on a blind map available on [http://www.d-aps.com/carte.php?num\\_car=698&lang=en](http://www.d-aps.com/carte.php?num_car=698&lang=en).)

monumentalized during the Roman period. Then it explores how, with the development of the palace-like residences of Late Antiquity in the fourth and fifth centuries CE, the role of elite dwellings as showcases of the wealth, socioeconomic position, and political status of their owners was even more magnified. With their vast dimensions, complex architectural shapes, and magnificent decorative schemes surpassing those of earlier times, the lavish upper-class residences became fixed elements of the Late Antique cityscape, functioning as tools of self-representation for their inhabitants.

## Introduction

When Attalos III bequeathed his Pergamene Kingdom in 133 BCE to Rome and the *Provincia Asia* was eventually organized as the first Roman province in Anatolia between 129 and 126 BCE,<sup>1</sup> the Romans encountered an area that had been, at least partly, urbanized.<sup>2</sup> In the newly created province, and certain regions of Asia Minor that would come into Roman hands in the next generations,<sup>3</sup> the existing urban infrastructure and building traditions formed a starting point for further developments. Concerning

1 Braund, "Royal Wills and Rome," 21-23; Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 603.

2 This is especially true for the western and southern coastal areas of Asia Minor; large sections of the Anatolian inland would only become urbanized from Alexander the Great onwards, and especially under Roman rule. See Thonemann, "Asia Minor," 222-35; Greaves, "Greeks in Western Anatolia," 500; Harl, "Greeks in Anatolia," 770-72.

3 For Asia Minor under Roman rule, see Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*; Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor I*; Marek, *In the Land of a Thousand Gods* (esp. Ch. 6 and 7).

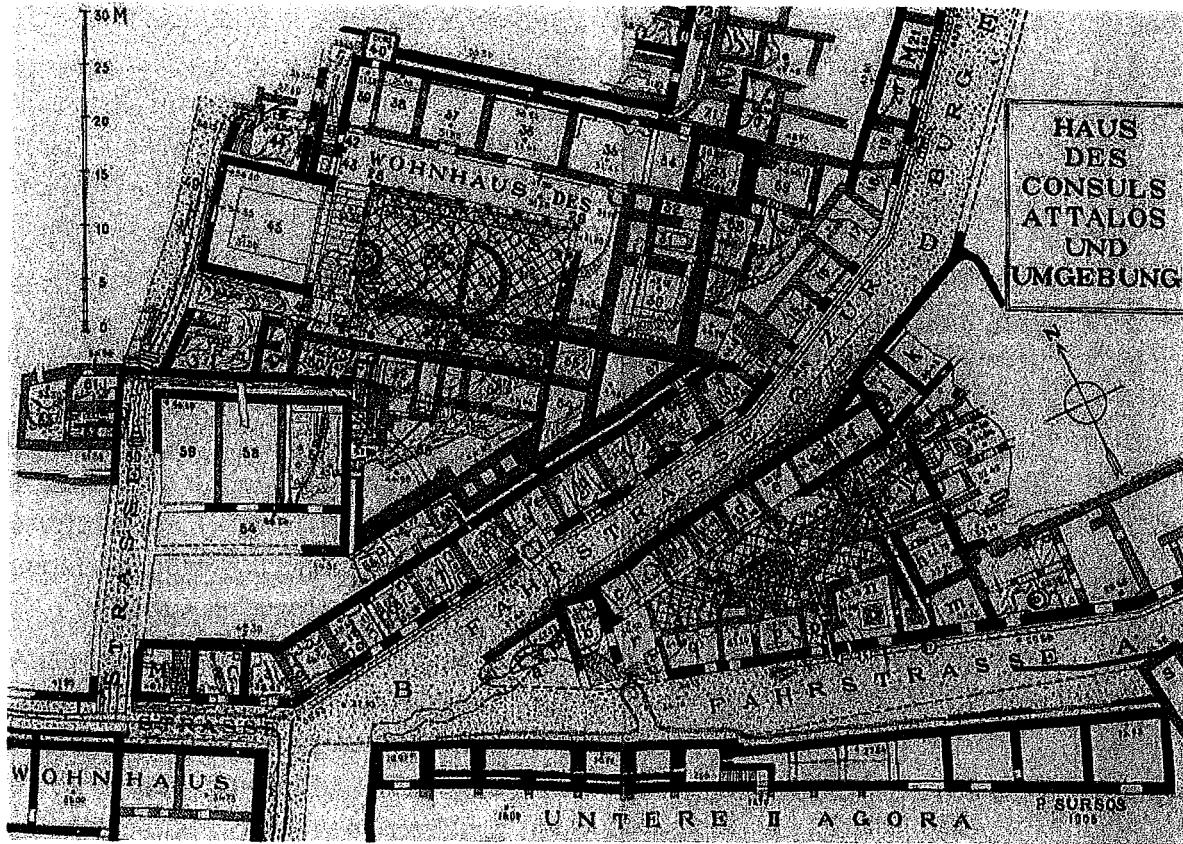


Fig. 2. Pergamon, "Attalos House." (Dörpfeld, "Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon," plate XIV).

private buildings, in the urbanized areas, a well-developed architecture of elite houses had already existed for some generations. The luxurious character of upper-class homes had increased in the previous late Classical and Hellenistic periods, and this had turned houses into accessories through which houseowners showed off their status in society.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the few houses investigated in Asia Minor thus far evidence that existing constructions remained in use for centuries, often after being rebuilt many times between the Hellenistic period and Late Antiquity<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 1). Although this long use strongly obscured the earlier Hellenistic and Imperial Roman building interventions, reading the palimpsests of the houses allows identifying characteristics per occupation period and recognizing the diachronic transformations and changes individual private houses in the cities underwent throughout the centuries.

This paper focuses on the elite houses in the cities of Asia Minor during their Roman and Late Antique occupation phases. Looking into the architectural and ornamental features that were differently applied in various parts of the residences,

4 Nevett, "Greek Houses," 10, concerning general developments in the Greek house from the fourth century BCE onwards.

5 Uytterhoeven, "Bathing," 291.

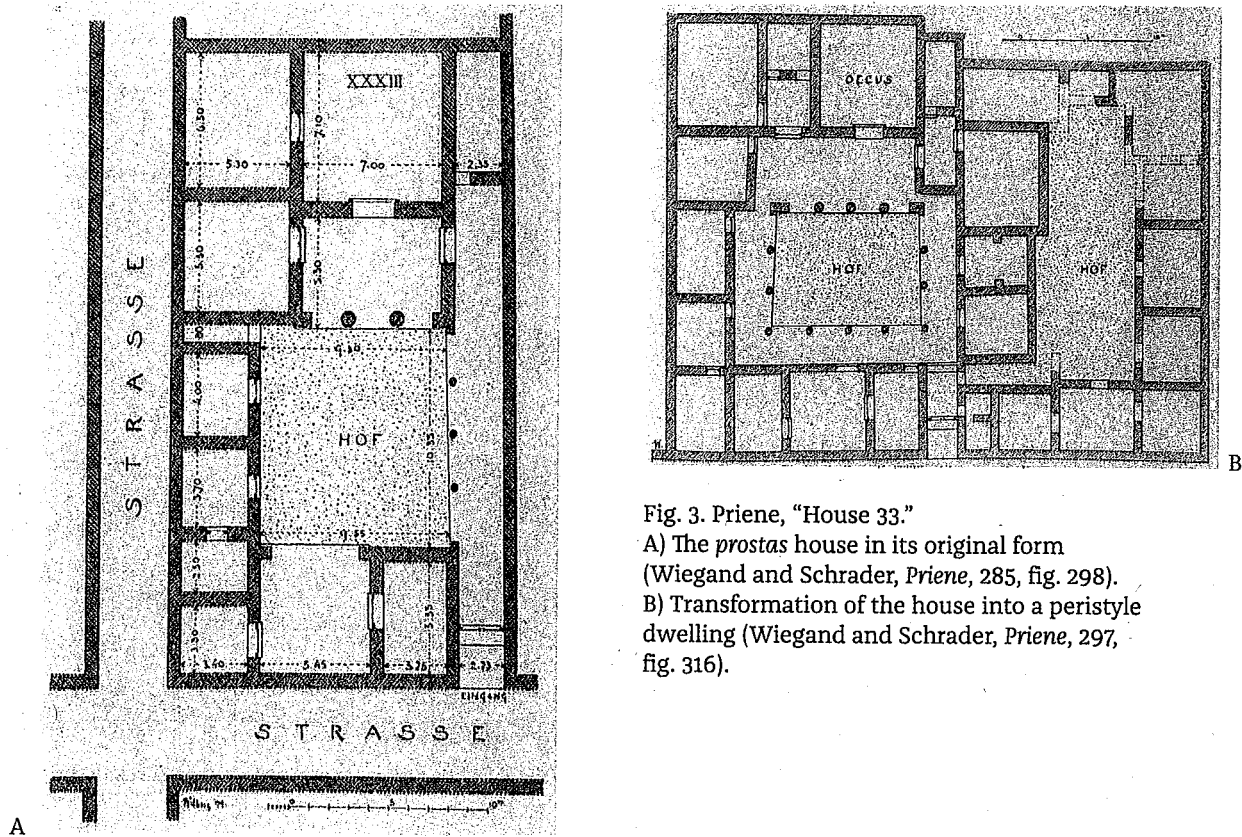


Fig. 3. Priene, "House 33."

- A) The *prosta* house in its original form (Wiegand and Schrader, *Priene*, 285, fig. 298).  
 B) Transformation of the house into a peristyle dwelling (Wiegand and Schrader, *Priene*, 297, fig. 316).

it especially intends to explore how builders and houseowners used large and lavishly decorated private buildings as instruments to make themselves visible in the cityscape. By paying attention to aspects of continuity and tradition, which often had their roots in the period before the arrival of the Romans, as well as to innovations in the Roman and Late Antique cities, this contribution aims at showing how private houses can be used as indicators of broader societal developments.

### Roman Houses in Asia Minor: Between Tradition and Innovation

#### *The Peristyle Courtyard: Following the Hellenistic Example*

When the Romans started to control parts of Anatolia in the second half of the second century BCE, the most widespread type of upper-class house was the peristyle dwelling.<sup>6</sup> In imitation of contemporaneous royal palaces and peristyle public spaces, such as agorae, gymnasia, and temple complexes, from the third century BCE onwards, elite members had integrated courtyards surrounded by porticoes in their houses thus increasing the monumental character of their private buildings.<sup>7</sup> Well-adapted to the Mediterranean climate,<sup>8</sup> this type of "courtyard house" continued to be the typical

6 See also Uytterhoeven, "Following 'Western' Fashion Trends," 453-71.

7 See also Rumscheid, "Fragen," 122.

8 For the development of the courtyard house in the Greek World, see Ault, "Greek Domestic Architecture," 663-65.

elite house under Roman rule.<sup>9</sup> Frequently, the peristyles of existing houses were kept when the buildings were changed, expanded, and refurbished in the Roman period. This was, for instance, the case with the “Attalos House” at Pergamon that had been constructed in the Hellenistic period as a small-scale version of the much larger Attalid palaces in the upper town<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 2). The peristyle dwelling was refurbished on various occasions under Roman rule and is currently named after its early third-century CE owner, the consul Claudius Attalus Paterculianus, who is epigraphically attested in the house.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the peristyle “Residence above the Theater” at Ephesos may have originally been built in the third century BCE as a royal palace, possibly by Lysimachos or one of his successors. With its high location overlooking the entire town, this large residence continued to hold a prominent place in the Ephesian cityscape even after having undergone adaptations in the Roman period.<sup>12</sup> Alongside these examples, several other Hellenistic houses that remained in use in Roman times attest that the peristyle courtyard kept its role as the heart of the dwellings.<sup>13</sup>

The peristyle became such an integrated part of the Roman elite house in Western Anatolia that even courtyard houses that had lacked a monumentalized peristyle during their Hellenistic occupation phases now received columned porticoes. “House 33” at Priene, which had been built around 200 BCE as a house of ca. 208 m<sup>2</sup> with a recessed porch (*prostas*) preceding a large reception space (*andrôn*) (Fig. 3A), was enlarged in the early Imperial period by encroaching upon the building plot of a neighboring dwelling and thus transformed into a large, luxurious peristyle house of 500 m<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 3B).<sup>14</sup> Similarly, the peristyle courtyard also became a distinctive feature of the upper-class houses that local elite members or aristocrats with an Italian background newly built in the cities of Imperial Roman Asia Minor.<sup>15</sup> Roman peristyle dwellings are known both in the coastal areas that had been in contact with Rome from an early moment onwards

9 For the concept of “courtyard house,” see Özgenel in this volume.

10 The “Attalos House” covered 1300 m<sup>2</sup>, whereas royal “Palaces I and IV” on the Pergamene citadel measured ca. 2400 m<sup>2</sup> and ca. 2240 m<sup>2</sup>, respectively. See Rumscheid, “Fragen,” 121. For the palaces of the Attalid kings, see Zimmer, “Repräsentatives Wohnen,” 155–66; Zimmer, “Der Palastbezirk von Pergamon,” 144–47; Zimmer, “Basileia,” 276–85.

11 PIR2 C800. For the “Attalos House,” see further Dörpfeld, “Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon,” 167–89; Radt, *Pergamon*, 120–24; Wulf, *Die Stadtgrabung* 3, 168–69; Wulf-Rheidt, “Die antiken Wohnhäuser,” 263–64; Wulf-Rheidt, “Ancient Residential Buildings,” 339–42. For sculpture and inscriptions related to Attalos, see Rathmayr, “Significance of Sculptures,” 155–61, 169–70.

12 For this building, see Thür, “Kontinuität und Diskontinuität,” 258–64; Baier, “Attolitur monte Pione,” 23–68; Baier, “A P(a)lace of Remembrance?,” 122–33. For a plan of this residence, see Özgenel pl. 1–G in this volume.

13 Examples include the early second-century BCE “Building Z” at Pergamon. On this house, see Bachmann, “Bau Z in Pergamon,” 214–25; Bachmann, “Analyse einer Langfristnutzung,” 179–91 (esp. 183); Bachmann, “Baugeschichtliche Genese,” 164–82. On the late Hellenistic-early Roman house in “Insula M01” at Ephesos, see Boulasikis, “Untersuchungen,” 259–74.

14 Wiegand and Schrader, *Priene*, 285–87, 297–300; Rumscheid, “Den Anschluß verpaßt,” 78; Rumscheid, “Fragen,” 122, 125.

15 For the identity of the homeowners, see Rathmayr, “Identity,” 109–21; Uytterhoeven, “Following ‘Western’ Fashion Trends,” 453–71.



Fig. 4. Pergamon, "Attalos House," garden painting in "Space 36" (Conze et al., *Stadt und Landschaft*, Beiblatt 53, Fig 88).

(e.g. at Pergamon and Ephesos)<sup>16</sup> and in the more remote mountainous inland (e.g. at Sagalassos and Kremna).<sup>17</sup> Only occasionally do aristocrats seem to have opted for more "old-fashioned" house types, as shown by the second-century CE "House of the Mosaics" at Iasos, which, with its columned corridor (*pastas*) preceding the spaces on the northern side of the courtyard, followed the tradition of the Classical-Hellenistic *pastas* house.<sup>18</sup>

16 The large dwelling in the "City Excavation" (*Stadtgrabung*) at Pergamon from the mid-first century BCE, which was substantially extended in the first third of the second century CE, is only one example of a newly-built Roman peristyle dwelling in this city, see Wulf, *Die Stadtgrabung* 3; Wulf-Rheidt, "Die antiken Wohnhäuser," 268; Wulf-Rheidt, "Ancient Residential Buildings," 347-48. For "Terrace House 2" at Ephesos, which comprised seven peristyle dwellings and is one of the most extensively investigated Roman housing complexes of Asia Minor, see Ladstätter and Zimmermann, *Wandmalerei in Ephesos*, 46-49, 77-80; Rathmayr in this volume.

17 Sagalassos: Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 376. Kremna: Mitchell et al., *Kremna*, 161-62.

18 Baldoni et al., *Carian Iasos*, 111-12. For the Classical-Hellenistic *pastas* house, see Nevett, "Greek Houses," 6; Wulf-Rheidt, "Die antiken Wohnhäuser," 262.

### Receiving Guests in a "Graeco-Roman" Setting

The Roman elite practice of receiving visitors at dinners in private dining rooms, which had in the Late Republican period under Greek influence developed into a fixed aspect of a luxurious lifestyle in the West,<sup>19</sup> is well-attested in the literary, archaeological, and iconographical sources.<sup>20</sup> After the Roman conquest, this "Roman" habit, based on strong social conventions,<sup>21</sup> was, in Asia Minor, in a new way combined with the widespread existing local custom of inviting male guests to the Hellenistic Greek house. Members of the urban Hellenistic elites had provided their houses with at least one luxurious reception space opening onto the (peristyle) courtyard. In these (single or multiplied) *andrônes* (spaces reserved for men), hosts invited guests for drinking, dining, and entertainment at the *symposion*.<sup>22</sup> These substantial rooms were typically the most highly decorated parts of the house.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, being the most easily accessible spaces of the dwellings, they functioned as agreeable settings for entertainment while at the same time being showcases for the status and wealth of the hosts.<sup>24</sup>

Building further on developments that had begun in the late Hellenistic period, the Roman elite house underwent essential changes that impacted its general appearance and its perception by outsiders.<sup>25</sup> Most conspicuously, in the Roman period, private spaces for dining and entertainment gradually took larger dimensions and gained a much more impressive and elaborate character than before, as evidenced by the material remains of elite dwellings in the region. This also resulted in a general increase in the dimensions of the houses.<sup>26</sup> For instance, the mid-first-century BCE owner of the "Attalos House" at Pergamon followed the latest trends in house architecture and interior decoration when he extended and refurbished the pre-existing Hellenistic building (Fig. 2). By developing new, extensive areas for receiving guests, especially in the eastern wing of the peristyle courtyard, and opting for "Western" pavement types, such as *opus signinum*, and "Western" wall decoration styles, including garden representations (Fig.

19 See further Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, 315–55.

20 See e.g. Slater, *Dining*; Dunbabin, "Wine and Water," 116–41; Dunbabin, "Convivial Spaces," 66–80; Dunbabin, *Roman Banquet*.

21 See Stein-Hölkeskamp, "Class and Power," 85–94.

22 For examples of *andrônes* known in several houses at Priene, see Rumscheid, "Fragen," 122. The *andrôn* was also a frequently occurring characteristic of upper-class houses at Pergamon; see Wulf-Rheidt, "Die antiken Wohnhäuser," 264. For the *symposion*, see Lynch, "More Thoughts," 248.

23 See also Westgate, "Greek Mosaics," 93–115; Westgate, "Space and Decoration," 391–426; Nevett, "Housing and Households. The Greek World," 216–19; Ault, "Greek Domestic Architecture," 667–68.

24 See also Trümper, "Wohnen in Delos," 17, 52–63.

25 For the late Hellenistic period, see Westgate, "House and Society," 423–57. For the increasing role of decoration in houses from the late fourth century BCE onwards, see Brecoulaki, "Greek Interior Decoration," 672–92.

26 This is exemplified by the above-mentioned "House 33" in Priene, whose surface was more than doubled in the Early Imperial Period. See Rumscheid, "Fragen," 122. The dwelling units of "Terrace House 2" at Ephesos were originally of equal dimensions, but due to internal changes and arrangements, their individual dimensions eventually varied between 350m<sup>2</sup> ("Dwelling Unit 3") and 950m<sup>2</sup> ("Dwelling Unit 6"). See further Ladstätter, *Hanghaus 2*.



4), he was among the earliest persons in Asia Minor who introduced these new vogues in their houses. However, he certainly did not stand alone in his choices.<sup>27</sup>

The increasing emphasis on reception spaces is, for example, also evident in the "Large Peristyle House" in the area of the "City Excavation" (*Stadtgrabung*) in Pergamon, which was, in line with Hellenistic traditions, provided with a three-room suite in the northeast. The black-and-white mosaic that was laid out in the central space of this reception wing in the mid-first century CE was clearly influenced by contemporaneous tendencies in Italy and counts as an early example of this mosaic style in Asia Minor.<sup>28</sup> In the second century CE, the space was transformed into a lavishly decorated reception room without fixed reclining beds. The central, elaborate entrance to the room, framed by Doric columns, must have formed a focal point for visitors entering the peristyle. Besides, another large reception space was arranged in the north, thus further underscoring the role of reception in the private domestic contexts of this time.<sup>29</sup>

Similar tendencies laid at the basis of the development of "Building Z" at Pergamon, where an existing three-room suite was extensively embellished in the first half of the second century CE. The entrance to the central space of the three-room group was monumentalized, and this main room got luxurious marble wall revetment. Moreover, not only the most important dining space of the house was decorated, as would generally have been the case in the Hellenistic period, but other rooms also got mosaic pavements.<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, the owner of "Building Z" of this time opted for mosaics that were technically in line with Hellenistic traditions (i.e. made of separately made *emblemata* of minute tesserae and combining large-scale figures and panels with various concentric borders in *opus tessellatum* and *opus vermiculatum*), while the entire decorative program, which referred to Dionysos, the god of wine, feasts, and theater, was also typically "Hellenistic." Moreover, these mosaics in the retro-style, which may or may not have been part of a broader revival of Hellenistic pavement traditions,<sup>31</sup> complemented the Hellenistic stucco wall decoration that still ornamented the spaces of the building and included examples of the "Masonry Style" or "Zone Style" (also known as the "First Pompeian Style" in Italy).<sup>32</sup> Additionally, a large water basin was installed precisely along the axis of the house's main dining room, thus offering nice

27 For "Western" influences in the decoration of the elite houses of Roman Asia Minor, see Uytterhoeven, "Following 'Western' Fashion Trends," 453-71. For pavement types, see also Scheibelreiter, "Die Anfänger," 764-65; Scheibelreiter, "Mosaics," 66-68; Jobst, "West Meets East," 213-20. For *opus signinum* and its development in the Mediterranean, see Tang, "Decorating Floors," 31-46. For the wall ornamentation of the "Attalos House", see also Bingöl, *Malerei und Mosaik* 101, 103, 105-6; Schwarzer, "Antike Wandmalereien aus Pergamon," 168-69.

28 Scheibelreiter, "Die Anfänger," 766-67; Scheibelreiter, "Mosaics," 68; Salzmann, "Mosaiken und Pavimente in Pergamon," 106; Jobst, "West Meets East," 217.

29 Wulf-Rheidt, "Die antiken Wohnhäuser," 268.

30 For this building phase, see Bachmann, "Baugeschichtliche Genese," 183-89.

31 Bachmann, "Bau Z in Pergamon," 216; Scheibelreiter, "Mosaics," 68.

32 Bachmann, "Analyse einer Langfristnutzung," 181-82; Radt, "Die Ausstattung," 207-330.

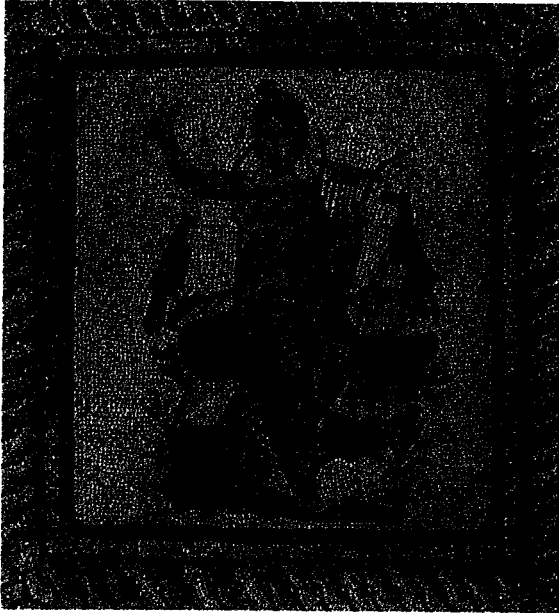


Fig. 5. Miletos, "Orpheus House," central panel of the "Orpheus Mosaic" that decorated the triclinium (Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz).

views to the diners inside.<sup>33</sup> This example attests to the new vogue of inserting water-related features, such as fountains and water basins, in the domestic context, which became standard practice in Roman upper-class houses from the late first century BCE-early first century CE onwards. Thanks to an increase in public water supplies, due to the construction of aqueducts starting in the early Roman period, private homeowners had the opportunity to acquire expensive private connections with the urban water networks. Placed on deliberately selected visible places in the houses, such as in entrance zones, peristyle courtyards, or dining spaces, luxurious private water features, which would increase in numbers and dimensions throughout the Roman period, contributed to the domestic comfort and seem to have become essential tools of self-display for aristocrats in Western Anatolia.<sup>34</sup>

A comparable monumentalizing of reception areas can be seen in various other cities, including at Ephesos where "House 2" in "Insula M01," originally built in the second century BCE, was extended in the mid-first century CE with a representative room. This intervention significantly increased the dimensions of the building, as well as its general representative character.<sup>35</sup> In line with "Western" vogues, the new room was ornamented with marble wall revetment in three zones, combined with paintings in the upper wall areas.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the growing importance of reception facilities with lavish ornamentation is evident in the peristyle houses of the Ephesian "Terrace House

33 Bachmann, "Bau Z in Pergamon," 225; Bachmann, "Analyse einer Langfristnutzung," 183; Bachmann, "Baugeschichtliche Genese," 105.

34 For private connections with the public water system and water installations in the Roman houses of Asia Minor, see Uytterhoeven, "Running Water," 142-47.

35 Boulasikis, "Untersuchungen," 263-65.

36 Boulasikis, "Freudenhaus zu Ephesos," 34.

2." Although each of the "Dwelling Units" had its own decorative program in accordance with the personal taste of the houseowner, they nevertheless shared common "Roman" elements, such as the presence of black-and-white mosaics, which underscored the high status of the inhabitants.<sup>37</sup> The early Imperial fashions in the wall and floor decoration in "Terrace House 2" further developed in the second and third centuries CE, resulting in polychrome geometrical and figurative mosaics, multi-colored figurative and vegetal wall paintings, and marble revetment. These Ephesian examples are currently the best illustrations of domestic ornamentation for the region.<sup>38</sup> As at Pergamon, also at Ephesos, water-related features were inserted at places with high visibility within the house. In this way, they formed, alongside all other decorative elements, complementary indicators for the degree of importance of spaces within the house, which was—as in Hellenistic times—readable from the quantity and quality of ornamentation.<sup>39</sup> Interestingly, we know some of the upper-class owners of the Ephesian "Terrace House 2" by name. C. Vibanius Salutaris, who lived in "Dwelling Unit 2" of the Ephesian "Terrace House 2" during the late first-early second centuries CE, and C. Flavius Furius Aptus, who transformed "Dwelling Unit 6" of the same complex in the mid-second century CE into a luxurious house with extended reception facilities, are exceptional examples of epigraphically attested local elite members who expressed their social position and wealth, as well as their connection with the Roman ruler, through the architecture and decoration of their private dwellings.<sup>40</sup>

Apart from Pergamon and Ephesos, the same development in upper-class house forms can be retraced everywhere in western Anatolia throughout the Roman period, as further illustrated by two peristyle dwellings at Miletos. The triclinium of the second-century CE "Orpheus House" was decorated with the luxurious "Orpheus mosaic," which included indications for the position of the dining couches and gave its name to the house<sup>41</sup> (Fig. 5), and the importance of the dining room of the late second to early third-century CE "Courtyard House near the Athena Temple" was underscored by a mosaic floor with sea animals and opus sectile wall decoration.<sup>42</sup> The latter was further decorated with sculptural ornamentation, including the statuette of a young African

37 In "Terrace House 2" bichrome tessellate floors stayed in use between the Tiberian period (14–37 CE) and the third century CE. For these black-and-white floors and further mosaic developments, see Scheibelreiter, "Die Anfänger," 765–67; Scheibelreiter, "Mosaics," 68; Jobst, "West Meets East," 217–22.

38 For pavements, see Scheibelreiter, "Mosaics," 68–69; Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*. For wall decoration, see Ladstätter and Zimmermann, *Wandmalerei in Ephesos*.

39 Uytterhoeven, "Running Water," 143–44; Uytterhoeven, "Private Piece of Nature," 230–35.

40 For C. Vibanius Salutaris, see Taeuber, "C. Vibius Salutaris," 349–54. For C. Flavius Furius Aptus, see especially Rathmayr, "Das Haus des Ritters," 307–36. For the houseowners of the Ephesian "Terrace Houses," see further Rathmayr in this volume.

41 Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 316–18 (cat. 87), 620, fig. 410.

42 For the mosaic, see Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 310 (cat. 87), 610–12, figs. 393–95. Unfortunately, the wall revetment was lost during WWII and is only known through pictures of the reconstructed decoration, consisting of four panels. See Heres, "Buntmarmordekoration," 44, 47–48, 64 (mosaic).

in blue-black-colored marble, which may have represented an offering servant at the dinner.<sup>43</sup> Private collections of statuary, often of an eclectic character, were typical components of the decoration of the Roman upper-class house. This was the case in the West,<sup>44</sup> but also in the East, where the role of freestanding sculpture in private houses (following the examples of the Hellenistic royal palaces) had especially increased from the late fourth century BCE onwards.<sup>45</sup> Sculptures displayed in the house frequently consisted of representations of the homeowners, their relatives, friends, and deities. They were often accompanied by inscriptions underscoring the social position of the patrons, their elite and high educational backgrounds, and their roles as hosts. As has already been pointed out for "Terrace House 2" at Ephesos and the "Attalos House" at Pergamon, when these statues were positioned at strategic, frequently-accessed places in the houses, e.g. near or in reception spaces, they could function as additional tools for self-display of the inhabitants.<sup>46</sup>

Besides, just like Romans in Italy and the West invited their guests for a bath in their private bathing suites before reclining at the dining table,<sup>47</sup> from the early Imperial period onwards, aristocrats in the cities of Asia Minor also introduced this "Western" habit. Instead of using the undecorated, utilitarian private baths of the Hellenistic Greek World, they now incorporated private baths of the "Italian" type, which closely followed contemporaneous bathing developments in Italy, in their Greek-style dwellings.<sup>48</sup> These lavish baths became an additional indicator of luxury that reinforced the elite status of the house and its inhabitants. The earliest Roman examples in Western Anatolia, such as the early first-century CE bath of "Building Z" at Pergamon, which was part of an extensive upgrade of the dwelling,<sup>49</sup> were still rather basic installations consisting of a *caldarium* (warm water bath) and a *praefurnium* (furnace room). However, soon

43 Heres, "Buntmarmordekoration," 46.

44 For collecting practices and decorating in Roman houses and villas in the West, see Neudecker, *Die Skulpturen-ausstattung*; Tronchin, "Introduction," 261-82; Tronchin, "Roman Collecting," 333-45; Gazda, "Domestic Displays," 374-89. For the deeper religious meaning of some sculptures, see Hackworth Petersen, "Collecting Gods," 319-32.

45 For sculpture in Hellenistic house contexts, see Brecoulaki, "Greek Interior Decoration," 684-88. Thus far, private sculptural collections of Roman Asia Minor have been most extensively studied for Ephesos. For "Terrace House 1," see Aurenhammer, "Zur Skulpturenausstattung," 535-44; Aurenhammer, "Skulpturen," 153-208. For "Terrace House 2," see Christof and Rathmayr, "Die chronologische Stellung," 137-44; Rathmayr, "XIII Skulpturen," 207-29; Rathmayr, "Skulpturen aus buntem Stein," 279-85; Christof, "B.XV Skulpturen," 660-67; Rathmayr, "A.XV Skulpturen," 333-42; Rathmayr, "XIV Skulpturenfunde," 367-433; Rathmayr, "XIX Skulpturen," 543-84; Rathmayr, "Sculptural Programs," 129-46.

46 See Rathmayr, "Significance of Sculptures," 146-78.

47 For private baths in Rome and Italy, see Lafon, "Les bains privés," 97-114; Papi, "Ad delenimenta vitiorum," 695-728; de Haan, *Römische Privatbäder*. For Gaul, see Bouet, *Les thermes privés*. For Spain, see García-Entero, *Los balnea domésticos*. For Northern Africa, see Hewitt, "Urban Domestic Baths;" Ghiotto, "Gli impianti termali," 221-32 (Tunisia).

48 Uytterhoeven, "Bathing," 287-346; Uytterhoeven, "Following 'Western' Fashion Trends," 453-71. The same development can be pointed out for Roman Greece, see Bonini, *La casa nella Grecia romana*, 144-53.

49 Bachmann, "Analyse einer Langfristnutzung," 183-84. For this building phase, see Bachmann, "Baugeschichtliche Genese," 180-82.

the baths evolved into richly ornamented and technically sophisticated complexes with specialized rooms of varying temperature—a dressing room (*apodyterium*), a cold bath (*frigidarium*), a lukewarm bath (*tepidarium*), and/or a warm water bath (*caldarium*)—provided with heating installations (*hypocaustum*), as well as water supply and drainage systems. This evolution can be followed in the coastal regions of Western Anatolia (e.g. at Pergamon),<sup>50</sup> and in inland areas, such as at Pisidian Antioch and Sagalassos.<sup>51</sup> From the first appearance of the private bathing suites in the region, marble and colored stone were extensively used for walls and floors, niches, bathtubs, and steps, sometimes in combination with wall paintings and floor mosaics. The geometric pavements with their prevailing blue colors recalling water in the late first to early second-century CE baths of the “Urban Mansion” at Sagalassos is just an example of decorative types that were preferred for bathing contexts.<sup>52</sup>

As a result, in the Roman period, several newly added elements emphasized the representative character of the upper-class house. Not only did the dimensions of the houses and the numbers of spaces increase compared to the earlier Hellenistic period, but the decorative elements also became more varied. Although “private” sections of the house were also gradually decorated now as part of a general tendency to spread ornamentation over the entire house, including “public” and “private” spaces,<sup>53</sup> the areas accessed by outsiders remained the focus of decoration. Various aspects, such as personal taste and available financial means, may have influenced the choice of ornamentation.<sup>54</sup> However, the emphasis on the decoration of the most accessible and visible parts of the houses and the similarities in decoration patterns applied in these areas in different houses suggest that the houseowners also used them as indicators of their status and that social competition between peers played a role.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast to the early and middle Hellenistic periods when generally only the *andrônes* had been ornamented as the limited representative spaces of the house, in the transition period from the late Hellenistic period towards the Roman period,<sup>56</sup> but especially under Roman rule, a larger range of room types was opened to outsiders and guests. Consequently, a more extended section of the Roman house got a “public” role than

50 For “Peristyle House VII” (late first to early second centuries CE) and “Peristyle House II” (second half of the second century CE) at Pergamon, see Wulf, *Die Stadtgrabung* 3, 71-101; Wulf-Rheidt, “Die antiken Wohnhäuser,” 268; Uytterhoeven, “Bathing,” 297, 303-4.

51 Pisidian Antioch: Özhanlı, “Pisidia Antiokheia,” 14-16. Sagalassos: Uytterhoeven, “Bathing,” 297-99.

52 Uytterhoeven, “Bathing,” 297-98; Uytterhoeven et al., “Late Antique Private Luxury,” 377-79.

53 The same development can be followed in Roman houses in Greece, see Nevett, “Greek Houses,” 10. See also Westgate, “Making Yourself at Home,” 260.

54 For these motivations, see Uytterhoeven, “Investing in Luxury,” 345.

55 For the social meaning of architectural forms and ornamentation in the Roman house (esp. in the Vesuvius region), which were selected in close relation with the intended users, see Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society*, 38-61 (esp. 51-57 for reception rooms). For social competition as expressed in houses, see also Anguissola, *Intimità a Pompei*, 19.

56 See also Westgate, “House and Society,” 423-57.

had been the case in the Hellenistic period. Nevertheless, access to the house happened in a controlled way, and some spaces had a more intimate character being accessible only for persons with a close relationship to the houseowner.<sup>57</sup> The representative spaces of the houses, including dining rooms but also private baths and guest rooms, which were generally reached from the entrance area via the central peristyle courtyard, all received lavish ornamentation. The extensive array of decorative types that were applied in these spaces, ranging from mosaic floors, wall paintings, and marble revetment to statuary and water features, strongly added to creating an impressive setting for receiving visitors within the house context. Although all these spaces could be accessed by outsiders, they each had a place in the room hierarchy based on their deliberate insertion in the houses, the variation in their architectural features, and the difference in quality and type of their decoration.<sup>58</sup> Within this hierarchical organization, dining rooms were clearly intended to be the most imposing part of the Roman upper-class house.

### The “Heyday” of Late Antiquity: Luxurious Elite Residences in Fourth–Fifth Century Asia Minor

#### *Speaking a “Palatial” Language*

In the fourth and fifth centuries CE, the cities of Asia Minor witnessed new developments in domestic architecture. Members of the urban elites increased the investment in their private houses, which resulted in the development of very large, lavishly decorated elite residences showing close similarities with examples in other regions of the Empire. In both the East and West, elite peers constructed extensive complexes characterized by similar plans, complex architectural shapes, such as large apsidal rooms, and rich decorative programs.<sup>59</sup> With these features, the mansions followed tendencies of the contemporary Late Antique imperial palace architecture that was itself the result of developments that had set in earlier.<sup>60</sup> As attested by the written and material evidence,

57 The dichotomy between “private” and “public” in the Roman house (esp. in Republican and Early Imperial Italy) has been a much-discussed topic, especially since Wallace-Hadrill, “Social Structure,” 43–97; Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society*, 17–27. See among others also Grahame, “Casa del Fauno,” 137–64; Riggsby, “Case of the Cubiculum,” 36–56; Cooper, “Closely Watched Households,” 3–33; Carucci, “Visualising Ancient Privacy,” 45–60. For the “private” and “public” character of Late Antique villas, see Sfameni, “Committenza e funzioni,” 69–71. For the more recent approach to “intimacy” in the Roman house, see Anguissola, *Intimità a Pompei*; Zaccaria Ruggiù, “Metamorfosi,” 17–38. For boundaries in the Roman house defining the accessibility of spaces, see Lauritsen, “The Form and Function,” 95–114.

58 For this aspect at Ephesos, see Ladstätter and Zimmermann, “History and the Site,” 120.

59 Sodini, “L’habitat urbain,” 395; Baldini Lippolis, “Case a palazzi,” 286–92; Brands and Rutgers, “Wohnen in der Spätantike,” 875, 890. For further literature on Late Antique housing in the different regions of the Empire, see Uytterhoeven, “Regional Perspectives,” 67–96.

60 For the relation between Late Antique palaces and private houses, see Duval, “Les maisons d’Apamée,” 447–70; Duval, “Existe-t-il?,” 463–90; Scagliarini Corlàita, “Domus – Villae – Palatia,” 153–72; Danner, *Wohnkultur*, 181–83. The “Apsidal Hall 8” and “Marble Hall 31” in “Terrace House 2” at Ephesos, built in the first half of the second century CE, count as earlier examples of architectural references to imperial palace

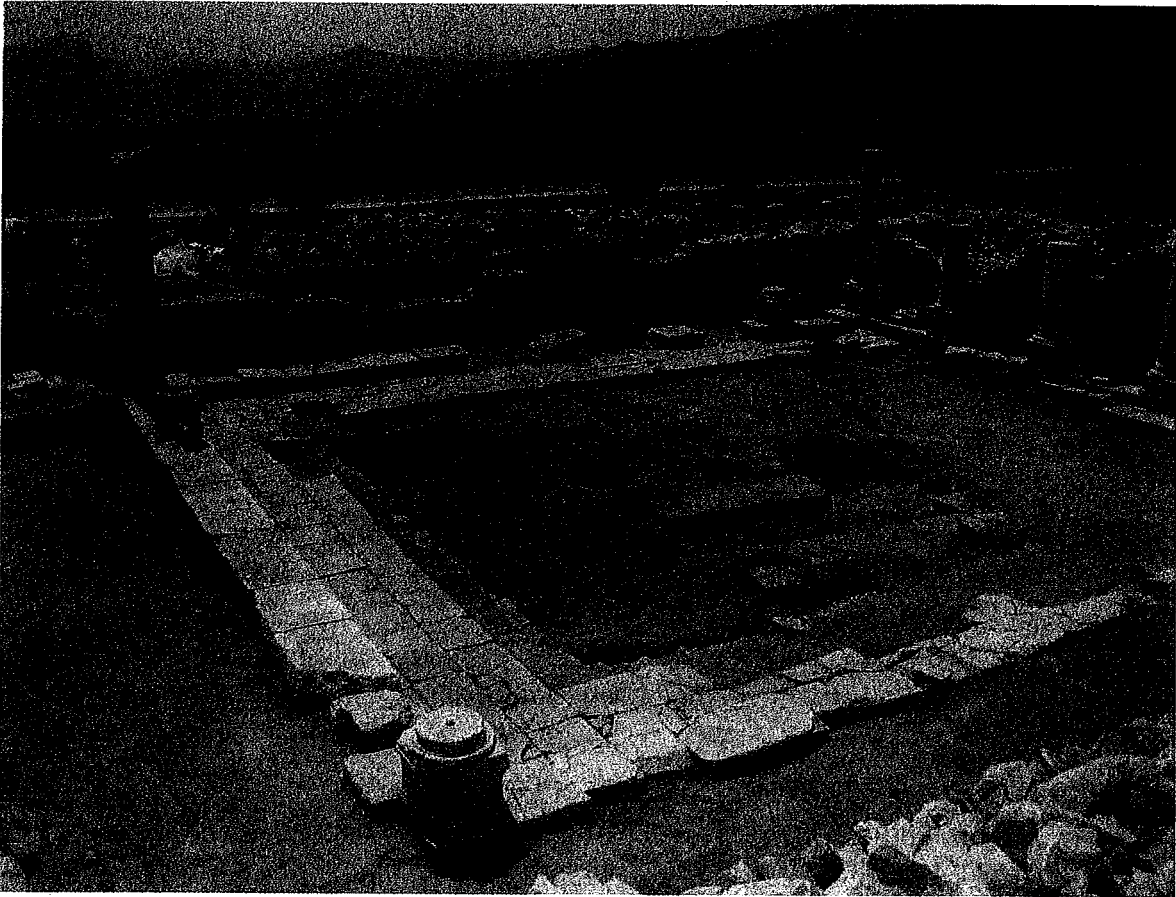


Fig. 6. Sagalassos, "Urban Mansion," "Courtyard LXIX" seen from the northeast (Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project).

governors and bishops, as well as other members of the Late Antique urban elites, all opted for similar "palatial" residences.<sup>61</sup> The choice of the urban elites to invest their capital in luxurious private mansions can be understood against the background of the changing socioeconomic and political situation in Late Antique society, making financial contributions at the public level unattractive for the urban upper-class.<sup>62</sup> Members of high society not only received clients and subordinates in their lavish mansions but also used their domestic settings to reinforce corroborate connections with their peers.<sup>63</sup> Some fourth to fifth-century CE elite houseowners constructed

and villa architecture. See Rathmayr, "Significance of Sculptures," 150. See also Rathmayr's contribution in this volume.

61 For *praetoria*, see Martin, "Praetoria," 229-40; Lavan, "Gazetteer," 135-64; Lavan, "Praetoria," 39-56. For bishop's palaces, see Baldini Lippolis, *L'architettura*, 102-36; Ceylan, "Episcopeia in Asia Minor," 169-97; Ceylan, "Episcopeia as a Reflection," 191-96. For the different types of Late Antique elite housing and further bibliographical references, see Uytterhoeven, "Thematic Perspectives," 33-43.

62 For the role of the Late Antique elites, see e.g. Brown, "Study of Elites," 321-46; Laniado, *Recherches*; Lizzi Testa, *Le trasformazioni*.

63 See also e.g. Ellis, "Power, Architecture and Décor," 117-34; Scott, "Elites," 39-66; Vipard, "Quelques

palace-like residences on a “normal” scale, but others, presumably members of the real top class of society, became owners of huge residences. Furthermore, most of these Late Antique complexes, including the “Residence above the Theater” at Ephesos, the “Terrace House” at Antandros, and the “Urban Mansion” at Sagalassos, were built by extending, incorporating, and overbuilding sections of earlier houses.<sup>64</sup> In many cases, their total dimensions, and the surface occupied by individual (esp. representative) spaces, were often multiplied several times compared to the Roman Imperial period, which resulted in complexes with surfaces of 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> and more.<sup>65</sup> Although often only one large Late Antique residence has been investigated in individual towns thus far, the occurrence of several examples in certain cities, such as Ephesos, Xanthos, Aphrodisias and Halikarnassos,<sup>66</sup> shows that more than one similar, large complex could exist in a single city. This observation suggests that the building type may have been more widespread than is currently assumed. Typically, Late Antique elites placed their residences at prominent and attractive places in the towns, either close to the city center or in areas from where they could enjoy beautiful views.<sup>67</sup>

To put a clear stamp on the urban tissue through their impressive private residences, elite builders combined various shared architectural and decorative elements in their houses.<sup>68</sup> However, all of them adapted these common features to their personal needs and tastes, which turned the mansions into individual, original constructions.<sup>69</sup> To a large extent, aristocrats further built upon earlier housing traditions, though not without increasing the scale of the already existing features. The

manifestations,” 379–99; Hudson, “Changing Places,” 663–95. For the “public” and “private” aspects of the Late Antique elite house, see Özgenel, “Public Use and Privacy,” 239–81; Özgenel, “Between Public and Private,” 541–47.

- 64 For the long occupation history of Late Antique houses, often reaching back to the Hellenistic period and continuing into the seventh century CE, see also Ellis, “La casa,” 174; Ellis, “Late Antique Houses,” 39. The changes and transformations all studied houses underwent between the mid-sixth and mid-seventh centuries CE which led to a less luxurious appearance are not considered here. For these later developments, see Uytterhoeven, “Change of Appearance,” 9–28; Uytterhoeven, “Second Life,” 23–68. Ephesos: Baier, “Attolitur monte Pione,” 23–68. Antandros: Polat et al., “Antandros 2013,” 136–37. Sagalassos: Uytterhoeven et al., “Late Antique Private Luxury,” 374–76.
- 65 E.g. the “Triconch House” at Aphrodisias: 2,585 m<sup>2</sup> (see Berenfeld, “Triconch House,” 211–12; Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 1); the “House of the Lycian Acropolis” at Xanthos: 775m<sup>2</sup> preserved; possibly an additional 1,650 m<sup>2</sup> was dismantled during earlier excavations (see Manière-Lévêque, “Habitat protobyzantine,” 426; Manière-Lévêque, “House of the Lycian Acropolis,” 477 n. 8); the “House above the Theatre” at Ephesos: more than 4,095 m<sup>2</sup> excavated (see Baier, “Attolitur monte Pione,” 23, 41–45).
- 66 Ephesos: Schwaiger, “Comparing Houses,” 187–207. Xanthos: Manière-Lévêque, “Les maisons,” 64–73; Manière-Lévêque, “House of the Lycian Acropolis,” in 475–94. Aphrodisias: Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 53–58. Halikarnassos: Poulsen, “Pagans,” 193–208 (esp. 206).
- 67 Ellis, “Late Antique Houses,” 41; Uytterhoeven et al., “Urban housing,” 301.
- 68 For general characteristics of the Late Antique house; see Scheibelreiter-Gail, “Inscriptions,” 138–40. For Late Antique houses in Asia Minor, see Ellis, “Late Antique Houses,” 38–50; Özgenel, “Architecture of Spatial Control,” 239–81; Uytterhoeven, “*Hypsorophos Dornos*,” 147–68.
- 69 For ancient houses as reflections of personal preferences, as well as cultural and functional conventions, see Nevett, “Understanding Variation,” 145.



most characteristic reoccurring element of the Late Antique "palatial" mansion was the peristyle courtyard, which already stretched back eight centuries.<sup>70</sup> As regulating elements for the interior circulation of the large elite residences, the peristyles often took enormous dimensions now, thus clearly fulfilling their role as monumentalizing features.<sup>71</sup> Frequently, the courtyards of pre-existing peristyle dwellings became part of the new complexes. For instance, the above-mentioned peristyle courtyard of the "Residence above the Theater" at Ephesos was a remnant of an earlier Hellenistic domestic construction that had stayed in use throughout the Roman period.<sup>72</sup> In the late fourth to early fifth centuries CE, when the luxurious "Urban Mansion" was built at Sagalassos, the columned courtyard of an early Imperial Roman peristyle dwelling was transformed into the heart of the private wing of the building, while a courtyard that had once belonged to another Imperial Roman peristyle dwelling located further down the slope was expanded into a new, larger peristyle<sup>73</sup> (Fig. 6<sup>74</sup>). Besides, peristyle courtyards were also still entirely newly built, as seen in the "House of the Lycian Acropolis" of Xanthos, where a large, new peristyle was added in the fourth century CE to already existing domestic structures.<sup>75</sup> Another example is the *episkopeion* of Olympos, which was built in the second half of the fifth century CE and provided with all the typical characteristics of a Late Antique elite residence, including a large peristyle.<sup>76</sup> Peristyle courtyards continued to be fixed features of newly built elite residences in Asia Minor into the mid-sixth century CE.<sup>77</sup>

### **Late Antique Self-Representation in a Private Setting**

Like aristocrats of earlier generations, Late Antique elites devoted much attention to the reception of guests in their houses, but welcoming outsiders required much larger reception spaces than before. Hosts received their clients and business relations at audiences during the day and organized dinner parties accompanied by musical and dramatic spectacles for friends and peers in the evenings.<sup>78</sup> In contrast to their Hellenistic and Roman predecessors, Late Antique upper-class members used much more conspicuous and imposing architectural forms for their private reception spaces, such as apsidal rooms, "triconchs" (triple-apsed), and "tetraconchs" (quadruple-apsed).<sup>79</sup>

70 For this architectural element, see Özgenel in this volume. The bishop's palace at Miletos, built in the first half of the fifth century CE, has been considered a possible deviation on this standard peristyle plan, see Niewöhner, "Der Bischofspalast von Milet," 181-273 (esp. 220-21).

71 Uytterhoeven, "Passages," 425-35 (esp. 426).

72 Baier, "Attolitur monte Pione," 23-68 (esp. 41-45 for the Late Antique phase).

73 Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 376.

74 For a plan of the "Urban Mansion," see Özgenel Pl. 1-C in this volume.

75 Manière-Lévêque, "House of the Lycian Acropolis," 482-83. For a plan, see Özgenel pl. 1-E in this volume.

76 Öztaşkın, "Olympos," 49-78.

77 Ellis, "End of the Roman House," 565-76; Ellis, "La casa," 173, 175.

78 See Vroom, "Archaeology," 313-61; Barnes, "Fusion," 72-78; Stephenson, "Dining," 54-71.

79 For a "triconch" in the "Triconch House" at Aphrodisias (circa 400 CE), see Berenfeld, "Triconch House," 203-29 (esp. 212-24); Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 34-39; 58-62. See also Özgenel pl. 1-A in this volume. For a



Fig. 7. Halikarnassos, "House of Charidemos," "Room B," mosaic fragment depicting Atalante on horseback hunting a lion (British Museum, London).

Moreover, they applied decorative forms more lavishly and reserved much larger floorspace of their houses for reception facilities, which allowed differentiating between the people who were given access to the house. As a result, distinct types of reception spaces frequently occurred, located either close to the entrance or further within the building, each intended for a specific target group. On the other hand, in more modest houses, the functions of the different spaces could be combined in a single reception room.

The degree of intrusiveness into the house allowed to individual visitors was defined by their status and relationship with the host, who controlled access to the different parts of the house using specific architectural and decorative mechanisms. Thus, the host may have received his clients in spaces close to the entrance. On the other hand, guests with a special invitation could participate in dinners in reception rooms that were located in the heart of the houses and reached after passing through other, more private, sections of the buildings.<sup>80</sup> In general, due to the increase in dimensions and complexity of Late Antique residences, interior circulation patterns became (deliberately) much more complex and were often less transparent than in the earlier Hellenistic and Roman houses.

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 "tetraconch" in the early fifth-century CE "Byzantine Palace" at Ephesos, see Ladstätter and Pülz, "Ephesus," 405-7. For polygonal spaces, see Scagliarini Corlàita, "Gli ambienti poligonali," 837-73.

80 S. P. Ellis has identified three kinds of reception rooms in the Late Antique aristocratic house: a large, rectangular audience hall with a single apse, close to the main entrance of the house; an apsidal triclinium used for dinners with relatives and close friends, located on the far side of the house opposite the main entrance; and a second large room with three or more apses flanking the triclinium; see Ellis, "End of the Roman House," 569-70; Ellis, "Early Byzantine Housing," 37-52. L. Özgenel has distinguished between two types of reception rooms: a space located close to the entrance for patron-client meetings and a dining room situated at the opposite side of the house, usually close to the courtyard, see Özgenel, "Architecture of Spatial Control," 252-53.

To make a visit to the house a unique experience for guests, extensive reception units were often created, including alongside the actual dining and audience rooms several other secondary rooms, such as vestibules and guest rooms.<sup>81</sup> The observation that in all residences, spaces accessible by outsiders were characterized by more lavish architectural and ornamental features than more modest spaces, which were generally situated further remote from the entrance(s) and main movement axes, reveals that this differentiation was a deliberate choice. As rooms where the hosts received their guests in person, the reception halls forming the center of these clusters were conceived in such a way that they materialized this moment of climax by combining opulent architectural and decorative features that would leave the largest impression possible on visitors.<sup>82</sup>

For instance, opus sectile pavements in various expensive marble and colored stone types seem to have formed the most luxurious pavement type in the Late Antique houses, as they frequently decorated the most prominent representative spaces of the houses at the end of the visitors' tracks. Thus, guests entering the audience halls and dining rooms in the "Urban Mansion" of Sagalassos, the dwellings of "Insula 104" at Hierapolis, and the houses that encroached on the "Halls of Verulanus" at Ephesos were impressed by this type of floor.<sup>83</sup> Polychrome mosaics showing interlaced geometrical patterns, sometimes accompanied with figurative scenes, were also highly appreciated and were either laid out in main spaces (e.g. in the apsidal hall of the "Residence above the Theater" at Ephesos)<sup>84</sup> or in reception spaces that had a place just one level below the main marble-paved reception halls in the room hierarchy (e.g. an apsidal upper-floor room in the "Urban Mansion" of Sagalassos and a substantial room in the "Triconch House" at Aphrodisias).<sup>85</sup> Moreover, not only the applied materials and techniques but also, in the case of figurative depictions, the represented themes, conveyed a message of impression and self-display.<sup>86</sup> For example, the fifth-century CE owner of the "House of the Ionic Capitals" at Hierapolis referred to his Classical education (*paideia*) through a mosaic depiction of the Greek delegation sent to Achilles's tent taken from Homer's *Iliad*, but with addition of Briseis who is missing in the epic description. In this way, he expressed the exclusiveness of his social status, which he shared with his aristocratic peers. Besides, he represented himself as a benefactor and host who, similar to

81 Uytterhoeven, "Power of Impression," forthcoming.

82 For this principle, see further Uytterhoeven, "Passages," 425–35.

83 Sagalassos: Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 396. Hierapolis: Cottica, "Pavimenti," 89–106; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Regio VIII," 229–34; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Cottica, "Hierapolis di Frigia," 150, 153; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Mazzocchin, "Un quartiere residenziale," 424, 427–28; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Hierapolis di Frigia, Insula 104," 123, 130, 132; Bortolin, "La Casa," 79–81; Bortolin, "Pavimentazioni," 207–18. Ephesos: Schwaiger, "Comparing Houses," 192.

84 Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 254 (cat. 39), 544, figs. 198–201; Baier, "Attolitur monte Pione," 42–44.

85 Sagalassos: Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 381–83. Aphrodisias: Berenfeld, "Triconch House," 215; Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 433, figs. 26–28; Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 41.

86 For a more detailed overview of expressions of elite education and lifestyle in Late Antique houses, see Uytterhoeven, "Know your Classics!," 321–42; Uytterhoeven, "Hypsorophos Domos," 154–57.

Achilles, received his guests at the banquet.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, many Late Antique aristocrats, including Charidemos, who refurbished a large residence at Halikarnassos in the fifth century CE, communicated, in line with Roman homeowners, aspects of their elite lifestyles with their guests through iconographic and epigraphical references. Thus, by representing Meleager and Atalante on one of the mosaics in his mansion (Fig. 7), Charidemos referred to hunting and sporting, which were substantial parts of his own life as a member of the upper-class.<sup>88</sup> Many other homeowners followed the same principle of displaying aristocratic values and virtues through selected depictions, as shown in the mosaic choice in the "North Temenos House" at Aphrodisias (hunting horse rider) and in the "House of the Ionic Capitals" at Hierapolis (boxers, animals, and birds).<sup>89</sup> Besides, statuary in the Classical tradition, portraits of famous historical figures, philosophers, and ancient authors, conveyed the same underlying messages. Thus, the owner of the "North Temenos House" at Aphrodisias showed his learned background and refined artistic taste by decorating the main apsidal room of his mansion with figured pilaster capitals that were produced in the late third to early fourth centuries CE and represented pagan deities, including a canonical version of the Knidian Aphrodite.<sup>90</sup>

Despite the numerous references to the pagan world, the occurrence of Christian symbols and texts on decorative elements and objects in elite houses attests that the inhabitants of many residences were Christian. Examples include a painted *chrismon* that adorned a niche in the north wall of a fourth century CE reception hall of the "Urban Mansion" at Sagalassos and the relief pottery with pagan iconography that remained in use in the residence into the early seventh century CE.<sup>91</sup> In the "House of the Painted Inscription" at Hierapolis the prayer of Manasseh from the Septuagint was in the late fifth-early sixth century CE painted on the walls of a secluded space,

87 For this mosaic, see Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Regio VIII," 235-44; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Cottica, "Hierapolis di Frigia," 149; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Mazzocchin, "Un quartiere residenziale," 425-26; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Hierapolis di Frigia, *Insula* 104," 123; Bortolin, "La Casa," 67; Bortolin, "Pavimentazioni," 203-6; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Il mosaico," 387-418.

88 For the "House of Charidemos," see Poulsen, "House of Charidemos." For its mosaic floors, see Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 270-78 (cat. 49), 567-73, figs. 277-302. The Meleager scene is discussed in Ellis, "Power, Architecture and Décor," 126.

89 Aphrodisias: Campbell, *Mosaics of Aphrodisias*, 1-4 (esp. 2-3, plates 9-11: South Room); Campbell, "Signs of Prosperity," 188-89; Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 57. See also Dillon, "Figured Pilaster Capitals," 733, 741, esp. n. 29 for the dating. For the mosaic floors of this house, see further Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 98, 203-5 (cat. 11), 436-39, figs. 34-40. Hierapolis: Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Regio VIII," 235-44; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Cottica, "Hierapolis di Frigia," 149; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Mazzocchin, "Un quartiere residenziale," 419, 421, 428-29; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Hierapolis di Frigia, *Insula* 104," 123; Bortolin, "La Casa," 67; Bortolin, "Pavimentazioni," 203-6; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Il mosaico," 413-15.

90 For these capitals, see Dillon, "Figured Pilaster Capitals," 731-44; Berenfeld, "Triconch House," 220; Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 56.

91 For the Christian context of pagan references in Late Antique house contexts and examples (including Sagalassos), see Uytterhoeven, "Know your Classics!," 332-35. See also Uytterhoeven et al., "Bits and Pieces," 221-31.

suggesting that this was used for private (penitential) contemplation and prayer.<sup>92</sup> In nearby Laodikeia ad Lycum the inhabitants of one of the houses showed their piety at a visible and frequently accessed place: a painted inscription with the two first verses of Psalm 90 (91) ("Praise to the Lord") was applied on the architrave above the entrance of a large representative space.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, the inhabitants of a house in "Sector MMS" at Sardis revealed their belief through a Christian evocation, "hagios o theos" painted on the walls of an apsidal hall.<sup>94</sup>

Alongside the above-mentioned decorative elements, real marble revetment, as seen in the apsidal space of the "North Temenos House" at Aphrodisias,<sup>95</sup> or its cheaper imitation in architectural wall paintings, applied, for instance, in three houses in "Insula 104" at Hierapolis, in a house in "Sector MMS" at Sardis, and in a house at Tripolis<sup>96</sup> additionally increased the impressiveness of the spaces. Moreover, in the "Terrace House" at Antandros and those of a house near the *odeion* at Ephesos, large-scale human figures offering food and drinks and alternated with painted columns in the central field of the wall paintings, welcomed the guests and emphasized the role of the houseowner as a good host.<sup>97</sup> In addition to all these rich ornamental elements, water features made the picture of luxury complete, especially because having a private connection with the urban water supply system was still a sign of wealth in itself in this period, as it had been before.<sup>98</sup> Water elements were inserted within dining halls, as seen in the "Urban Mansion" at Sagalassos,<sup>99</sup> or were integrated into the dining experience through impressive views of marble-clad nymphaea in courtyards, as was the case in the "House of the Lycian Acropolis" at Xanthos.<sup>100</sup>

Besides, since many audience and dining spaces were located inside the large-scale houses, far away from the entrance, other spaces passed through before reaching the actual reception rooms, such as corridors, stairways, and colonnades of peristyle courtyards, also received attention. However, their ornamentation was less lavish and

92 Zaccaria Ruggiù and Mazzocchin, "Un quartiere residenziale," 431-40; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Quale cristianesimo?" 187-211; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Hierapolis di Frigia, *Insula 104*," 135-37; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Metamorfosi," 35-37. See also Fugger, "Shedding Light," 201-35; Fugger, "Häusliche Religiosität," 101-12.

93 Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Quale cristianesimo?," 193-94.

94 Rautman, "Sardis in Late Antiquity," 19-20.

95 Campbell, "Signs of Prosperity," 188.

96 Hierapolis: Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Pitture," 321-31; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Regio VIII," 235-44; Zaccaria Ruggiù and Cottica, "Hierapolis di Frigia," 150, 153-55; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Sistemi decorativi," 209-19; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "Hierapolis di Frigia, *Insula 104*," 125-27, 136-37; Zaccaria Ruggiù, "La Casa," 48; Bragantini, "Apparati decorativi," 247-58. Sardis: Rautmann, "Aura of Affluence," 152; Rousseau, "Late Roman Wall Painting," 72. Tripolis: Duman and Koçyiğit, *Tripolis at Maeandrum*, 72-77.

97 Ephesos: Dunbabin, "Waiting Servant," 449, figs. 8-10; Ladstätter and Zimmermann, *Wandmalerei in Ephesos*, 168-69. Antandros: Polat, "Wandmalerei," 235-36.

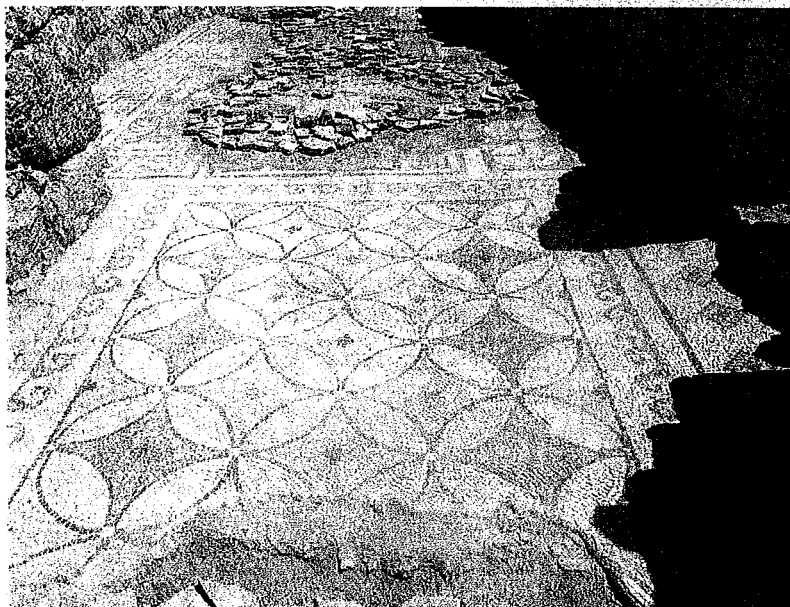
98 Uytterhoeven, "Running Water," 151.

99 Uytterhoeven, Poblome, and Waelkens, "Kent Konağı," 272-73, 280.

100 Manière-Lévêque, "Habitat protobyzantine," 425-40; Manière-Lévêque, "House of the Lycian Acropolis," 475-94.



A



B

Fig. 8. Sagalassos, "Urban Mansion."

A) "Stair XXXVI" seen from the west. (Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project).

B) Mosaic floors of "Vestibules XXXV and XVII" seen from the north (Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project).

generally plainer than the spaces at the top of the room hierarchy. Common pavement types used in these transition zones include room-filling mosaic carpets showing polychrome geometrical designs, as seen, for instance, in the "Urban Mansion" at Sagalassos and in the "Atrium House" and the "Tetrapylon House" at Aphrodisias.<sup>101</sup> Tessellate floors composed of a sequence of geometric panels, as applied in the "Terrace House" at Antandros,<sup>102</sup> were also popular for these types of spaces. Water basins and nymphaea inserted in peristyle courtyards (e.g. at Perge, Side, and Metropolis),<sup>103</sup> as well as in other well-selected places along the visitors' tracks (e.g. in a house in "Sector MMS" at Sardis and in the "House of the Lycian Acropolis" at Xanthos)<sup>104</sup> made the way to the reception halls even more agreeable. The ornamentation of these spaces that were accessed by outsiders strongly contrasted with that of the more plainly decorated non-public areas of the mansions that were used for private purposes or as service areas and did not need to fulfil the same display function.<sup>105</sup>

In this way, guests immediately got a taste of the luxury and wealth of the buildings upon their arrival. While entering further inside the house, they were gradually prepared for what they could expect at the end of their track. When all individual spaces of a house are considered together, it becomes clear that they were often all part of a single sophisticated building and ornamental program that aimed to create a luxurious domestic setting and to impress. This is nicely illustrated by the "Urban Mansion" at Sagalassos, where, except for the actual entrance area, the entire representative northern wing has been excavated and the circulation patterns can, consequently, be reconstructed between a waiting room and various reception halls at the end of the tracks. The late fourth to fifth-century CE owners may have received their clients in an impressive audience hall located close to the entrance ("Space XLVI"), thus avoiding this group of outsiders having to enter the building. In contrast, closer guests were allowed access to a more remote dining hall ("Space XXII"), reached via an impressive purple stairway and two mosaic-paved vestibules (Figs. 8A-B). Finally, the host's closest friends and special invitees got permission to enter a third reception space, located in the most private area of the mansion, where more intimate dinners could be organized ("Space

101 Sagalassos ("Space LVIII"): Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 383-84, 396. Aphrodisias (porticoes of the peristyle courtyards): Campbell, *Mosaics of Aphrodisias*, 16-19 ("Tetrapylon House"), 22-26 ("Atrium House"); Campbell, "Signs of Prosperity," 192-95 ("Atrium/Priest's House," "Tetrapylon House"); Scheibelreiter-Gail, *Die Mosaiken Westkleinasiens*, 97-98, 197-200 (cat. 7), 430-32, figs. 19-25 ("Atrium House"), 206-8 (cat. 13), 442-44, figs. 44-50 ("Tetrapylon House"); Berenfeld, *Triconch House*, 57.

102 Portico mosaic in the "Terrace House" at Antandros: Polat and Çokoğullu, "Mosaics of Roman House," 300-301, 304-7.

103 Perge: Abbasoğlu, *Anadolu'da antik çağda konut*, 78-81; Zeyrek, "Perge doğu konut alanı," *passim*; Çokay Kepçe et al., *Perge*, 94. Side: Mansel, Bean, and İnan, *Side Agorası*, 39-46; Mansel, *Die Ruinen von Side*, 157-62; Mansel, *Side*, 241-55. Metropolis: Aybek, Meriç, and Öz, *Metropolis*, 84-86; Aybek, Arslan, and Gülbay, *The Peristyle House*, 20-21.

104 Sardis: Rautmann, "Late Roman Town House," 54. Xanthos: Manière-Lévêque, "Habitat protobyzantine," 430.

105 See also Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 373-407.

XL"). To reach this space, guests had to pass through a sequence of richly decorated corridors, stairways, vestibules, and a private peristyle courtyard that functioned as a circulation hub.<sup>106</sup> A similar spatial organization and functional distinction between various reception facilities can be pointed out for other houses, including the "Terrace House" at Antandros, where the rooms at the top of the spatial hierarchy were decorated with opus sectile floors or geometrical/figurative pavements, in contrast to other spaces that had a much plainer ornamentation.<sup>107</sup>

As had been the case in the Imperial Roman period, before participating in dinners, Late Antique guests could spend some time in the private bathrooms of their hosts, which continued to be of the "Western" type, characterized by hypocaust systems and specialized spaces with different temperatures. Alongside the common *frigidarium*, *tepidarium*, and *caldarium*, some houses even had a sauna (*sudatorium/laconicum*), as attested at Labraunda.<sup>108</sup> The Late Antique private baths, which generally surpassed those of the Roman private bathrooms and followed the general increase in scale of the Late Antique upper-class mansions, as seen in the "Urban Mansion" of Sagalassos and the "Byzantine Palace" at Ephesos,<sup>109</sup> formed a key factor in the self-display of the hosts. This was further underscored by the rich marble ornamentation and paintings that adorned these private bathing spaces.

As in earlier periods, Late Antique homeowners thus continued to use a combination of architectural and ornamental elements to underscore the importance of spaces within the house, which allows us to use the dimensions, architectural shapes, and decoration as an instrument to define the place of a room in the room hierarchy. However, given the increased role of representative spaces in Late Antiquity residences, both their architectural features and ornamentation largely increased in scale, surpassing the earlier Roman houses by far. Moreover, elite homeowners also now systematically decorated much larger parts of their houses than before, turning all transition rooms, such as the corridors, staircases, peristyle courtyards, and vestibules that had to be passed before reaching the splendid audience and dining halls, into substantial parts of the reception architecture.

106 See further Uytterhoeven, "Passages," 425-35; Uytterhoeven et al., "Late Antique Private Luxury," 396-98.

107 Polat, "Antandros 2001," 21-24; Polat and Polat, "Antandros 2002," 453-55; Polat and Polat, "Antandros 2003-2004," 89-91; Polat, Polat, and Yağız, "Antandros 2005," 43-47; Polat et al., "Antandros 2006," 455-59; Polat et al., "Antandros 2007," 39-43; Polat et al., "Antandros 2008," 1-3; Polat et al., "Antandros 2009," 98-101; Polat et al., "Antandros 2010," 271-76; Polat et al., "Antandros 2013," 135-43; Polat et al., "Antandros 2014," 346-49. Polat and Çokoğullu, "Mosaics of Roman House," 299-310; Arkan, "Yamaç Ev."

108 For the "tetraconch" bath belonging to a private residence at Labraunda, see Blid, *Remains of Late Antiquity*, 17-71 (esp. 37). See also Uytterhoeven, "Bathing," 305.

109 Uytterhoeven, "Bathing," 298-99 (Sagalassos), 309 (Ephesos). A similar development has been pointed out for Late Antique Greece, see Bonini, "Il prestigio," 661.



## Conclusion

During the Roman period, the maintenance and additions of Greek-style peristyle courtyards and the expansion of pre-existing reception facilities, as well as the general increase in dimensions of the Imperial Roman upper-class houses in the cities of Asia Minor all point towards a stronger emphasis on the more luxurious character of the dwellings than before. The traditional elements that were already present in the Hellenistic period played a more pronounced role in self-representation and display. However, the evolution towards larger, more impressive, and more lavishly decorated houses was not only the result of applying traditional, Hellenistic architectural and ornamental housing elements on a larger scale than had been the case before the arrival of Rome. Significantly, in the early Imperial period, architectural elements and decoration schemes influenced by "Italic/Roman" models appeared. The use of specialized bathrooms of the "Western" type, the insertion of fountains, nymphaea, and basins supplied by private supplies of running water within the domestic context, and the preference for "Italian" pavement types, such as black-and-white mosaics, all expressed the wishes of the elites to follow "Western" trends and to be part of the Roman Imperial culture. In this way, architectural and decorative features demonstrated a longing to follow the contemporary vogues and create a luxurious home. However, their application, especially at the most accessed places in the houses, shows that they must also have conveyed an underlying message of self-display.

With the development of the palace-like residences of Late Antiquity during the fourth and fifth centuries CE, the degree of luxury and the role of the elite dwelling as a showcase of the position of its owner in society were even more magnified. Traditional elements, such as the peristyle courtyard, were combined with spaces that had exceptional shapes and extremely lavish ornamentation. Since receiving guests was one of the main representative functions of aristocratic mansions, the emphasis was on large rooms and halls where the host would receive his clients, peers, and other visitors. The ranking of these reception spaces at the top of the room hierarchy was reflected in the degree and quality of their ornamentation, making them stand out compared to the other spaces in the residences. Characterized by vast dimensions, complex architectural shapes, and magnificent decorative schemes, surpassing earlier house forms, the upper-class residences built during this period allowed upper-class members of Late Antique society to create a lavish home. Apart from that, they also manifested themselves and their families in the urban environment using private examples of splendid luxury.

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