

GENDER RELATIONS IN THE CLASSICAL GREEK HOUSEHOLD: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE¹

ASSUMPTIONS WE MAKE today about social relations in the Classical house form the background to our interpretation of the literature, history, and art of the period. Nevertheless, a full picture of many aspects of the household, including gender relations, remains elusive. Our few direct descriptions of Greek houses are dominated by the use of the words ἀνδρῶν and γυναικῶν (or ἀνδρωνῆτις and γυναικωνῆτις). The resemblance of these terms to the ancient Greek words for man and woman (ἄνθρωπος and γυνή) encourages the supposition that they denote gender-specific locations. In both Xenophon and Lysias these words describe the two areas of a divided house: in one case the *gunaikonitis* and *andronitis* are next door to each other,² and in the other, the *gunaikonitis* is, under normal circumstances, the upper room over an *andronitis*.³ Vitruvius, writing in the first century BC, also refers to the *gunaikonitis* as consisting of *cubicula*, *triclinia cotidiana*, and *sollae*.⁴ We should probably not rely on this description as a source for the fifth to fourth centuries, as there are too many unknown factors: we cannot be sure of the date he is referring to (whether his own, or some vague time in the past), or of the geographical area he is talking about (either Greece itself, or the Greek colonies of southern Italy and Sicily), and his own source of information is also unknown.

In the past, direct interpretation of this small number of detailed descriptions has led to a normative picture of the Greek house, in which ‘women and men were . . . segregated by sex . . . with women living upstairs in women’s quarters and men living downstairs in men’s quarters’.⁵ Nevertheless, when other more tangential references are considered alongside the passages in Xenophon and Lysias, they offer glimpses of a pattern of activity which seems to be rather more complex than a simple binary division of space into male and female. As well as being used for feasting,⁶ there is at least one case where the *andron* appears to have been a space in which both husband and wife slept,⁷ and the *andronitis* and *gunaikonitis* seem to have been quarters for male and female servants.⁸ Furthermore, problems are clearly apparent with such a pattern of organization in circumstances where amenities such as piped water to upper storeys were lacking. Eupiletos’ wife was unable to look after her child properly without access to the well in the court, and there must have been other activities for which women needed access to the space on the ground floor.⁹

¹ This paper is based on work carried out as part of my doctoral thesis, L. C. Nevett, *Variation in the Form and Use of Domestic Space in the Greek World in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Cambridge, 1992). I should like to thank the following for providing financial support for this work: the British Academy, the Allen Fund of the University of Cambridge, the British School at Athens, and the British School at Rome. In addition, the University Museums of the University of Mississippi gave me permission to look at the field notebooks from Robinson’s excavations at Olynthos, and Prof. L. Turnbull and the staff offered welcome assistance during my stay in Oxford. Continued support from the British Academy in the form of a postdoctoral fellowship provided the opportunity to write up this paper. Finally, I should like to thank Dr Bradley Ault, Dr J. Coulton, Dr Robin Osborne, Prof. Anthony

Snodgrass, Dr S. Walker, and Dr Todd Whitelaw for their support and advice in developing the ideas put forward here. I do, of course, remain responsible for any errors.

² Xenophon, *Oec.* ix. 5.

³ Lysias, i. 9–10.

⁴ Vitr. vi. 7.

⁵ S. Pomeroy, editor’s preface to S. Pomeroy (ed.), *Women’s History and Ancient History* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 1991), xiii.

⁶ Xen. *Symp.* 1.13.1; Ar. *Ecol.* 675–6; Vitr. vi. 7. 5.

⁷ Lys. i. 10.

⁸ Xen. *Oec.* ix. 5.

⁹ Compare S. Walker, ‘Women and housing in Classical Greece’, in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds), *Images of Women in Antiquity* (London, 1983), 81–91, at 83.

It seems likely, then, that the gender association of particular areas of the house is only one aspect of what is likely to have been a complex pattern of spatial usage, yet the paucity of the literary sources makes it difficult to re-construct behaviour in greater detail. Moreover, there are a range of other problems to be faced when using literary material as evidence of Greek society: it has been recognized that different genres of literature can produce differing impressions of female roles in Greek society in general,¹⁰ and there are additional factors which mean that the literary evidence is not ideal for investigating social relations. One fundamental problem is that the process of writing must have involved selection and interpretation of everyday events by individual authors, and given the fact that those authors were male and probably came from the upper end of the social and economic scale, the lives and views of large sections of society, such as women and the less wealthy, are likely to be under represented or not represented at all.¹¹ The fact that they are also likely to have been writing for others of similar background must act to reinforce these inherent biases. So although the literary sources offer a unique insight into the Classical world, what they present is a series of images of society as seen through the eyes of individuals from a narrow range of backgrounds. In view of this, generalizing from such a small number of specific instances to include areas which are geographically remote from Athens (the place to which the majority refer), or to draw conclusions about different social or economic classes, relies on the assumption that gender relations were similar throughout Greece, regardless of economic and social background. These are assumptions which are now beginning to be discarded in studies of the role of women in antiquity. Although the earliest commentators on Athenian women made little distinction between women of different social levels, aside from differentiating *hetairai* from 'respectable' women,¹² it has been recognized more recently that the construction of a single, rigid model for the 'role of women' is likely to be a significant oversimplification of a complex of changing social identities, and that we should be trying to isolate and explore variability as well as constructing a generalized picture.¹³

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE: SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this context it seems strange that the value of archaeology, which has a particular contribution to make to the investigation of variability, has often tended to be overlooked. With respect to domestic social relations, cross-cultural studies of the organization of domestic space, in ethnographic, sociological, and architectural, as well as archaeological contexts, have demonstrated the importance of the dwelling as a setting for daily activity, both designed to facilitate interaction and acting as an influence on patterns of social relations.¹⁴ This close connection between the physical organization and decoration of the house and the behaviour of its occupants means that a detailed analysis of the remains of the Classical house should offer a means of exploring domestic social relations.

¹⁰ S. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (New York, 1975), 58–60.

¹¹ W. V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), 65–115.

¹² e.g. A. W. Gomme, 'The position of women in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BC', in *Essays in Greek History and Literature* (Oxford, 1937), 89–115, at 98; A. D. F. Kitto, *The Greeks* (Harmondsworth, 1951), 219–36; C. Selman, *Women in Antiquity* (London and New York, 1956), 102–16; R. Flacelière, *La Vie quotidienne en Grèce au siècle de Périclès* (Paris, 1959), 75–106.

¹³ e.g. Pomeroy (n. 10), 60; G. Arrigoni (ed.), *Le donne in Grecia* (Rome, 1985); J. Blok and P. Mason (eds), *Sexual Asymmetry* (Amsterdam, 1987); Pomeroy (n. 5).

¹⁴ The extensive literature on this subject is reviewed by D. Lawrence and S. M. Low, 'The built environment and spatial form', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 19 (1990), 453–505, *passim*. Examples of the application of this type of work in archaeological contexts can be found in S. Kent (ed.), *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space* (Cambridge, 1990).

In the ancient Greek context archaeological evidence is especially valuable in that it will allow us to fill some of the lacunae left by the literary sources: archaeological assemblages represent the residues of actual patterns of activity, unfiltered by the kinds of choices operating to produce the written evidence, and the range of material from various parts of Greece can potentially be used to investigate social relations in different geographical areas and at varying social and/or economic levels. Nevertheless, there are obviously specific problems to be addressed when using archaeological remains as compared with the complete houses and the information about daily activity which are available for ethnographic and sociological studies. In addition to reconstructing a three-dimensional building from what is usually a two-dimensional outline of foundations, it is also necessary to identify the patterns of activity which took place within individual household spaces, for which very specific and detailed information is necessary. In the course of this process, various aspects of the formation of the archaeological record must also be taken into account, such as the effects of the circumstances under which an individual site was abandoned, the extent of subsequent human activity and erosive processes, and the choices made during the excavation of the site.

Scholars working with material of this period traditionally have a Classical rather than an archaeological and anthropological background,¹⁵ and have therefore sometimes been slow to recognize the potential of the archaeological material and to look at social questions.¹⁶ The result is that the archaeological remains of houses have not been widely considered in studies of Greek social organization,¹⁷ and only in a single recent study, that of Susan Walker, is such evidence discussed in any detail in connection with gender relations.¹⁸ At the start of this piece, Walker stresses the fact that her aim is to ‘assimilate’ the archaeological and literary evidence. Her investigation is thus focused on a search for aspects of domestic architecture which correspond to the literary-based model of women confined to their own part of the house and separated from the men, who are assumed to have occupied the *andron*. The study raises important issues in terms of the way in which social relations are linked with practical constraints. Nevertheless, in the space available there is little opportunity to consider the possibility of patterns of behaviour which are outside the scope of, or do not conform to, the literary-based model. This means that one of the most beneficial aspects of the archaeology, namely its potential for looking beyond the literature, is not exploited.

A DETAILED MODEL FOR GENDER RELATIONS IN THE GREEK HOUSEHOLD: THE EVIDENCE FROM OLYNTHOS

My aim in the remainder of this paper is to suggest a detailed model for gender relations within the Classical household, which is based on an examination of the archaeological remains of houses dating from the late fifth to the late fourth century BC, found in the area of the modern Greek state. An important aspect of the study is to assess the degree to which a single model is valid throughout Greece and at all levels of the economic scale. Ideally, this

¹⁵ A. M. Snodgrass, *An Archaeology of Greece* (Berkeley, 1987), 1–16, esp. 4.

¹⁶ I. Morris, ‘Archaeologies of Greece’, in I. Morris (ed.), *Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeologies* (Cambridge, 1994), 8–47, at 13–15.

¹⁷ A notable exception is W. Hoepfner and E.-L. Schwandner, *Haus und Stadt im klassischen Griechenland* (Munich, 1986), although the emphasis of this study is

architectural and the authors concentrate on social organization within communities as a whole rather than in individual houses.

¹⁸ Walker (n. 9). The topic is also considered more briefly by M. Jameson, ‘Domestic space in the Greek city state’, in Kent (ed.) (n. 14), 92–113, at 104; M. Jameson, ‘Private space and the Greek city’, in O. Murray and S. Price (eds), *The Greek City: From Homer to Alexander* (Oxford, 1990), 171–95, at 185–8.

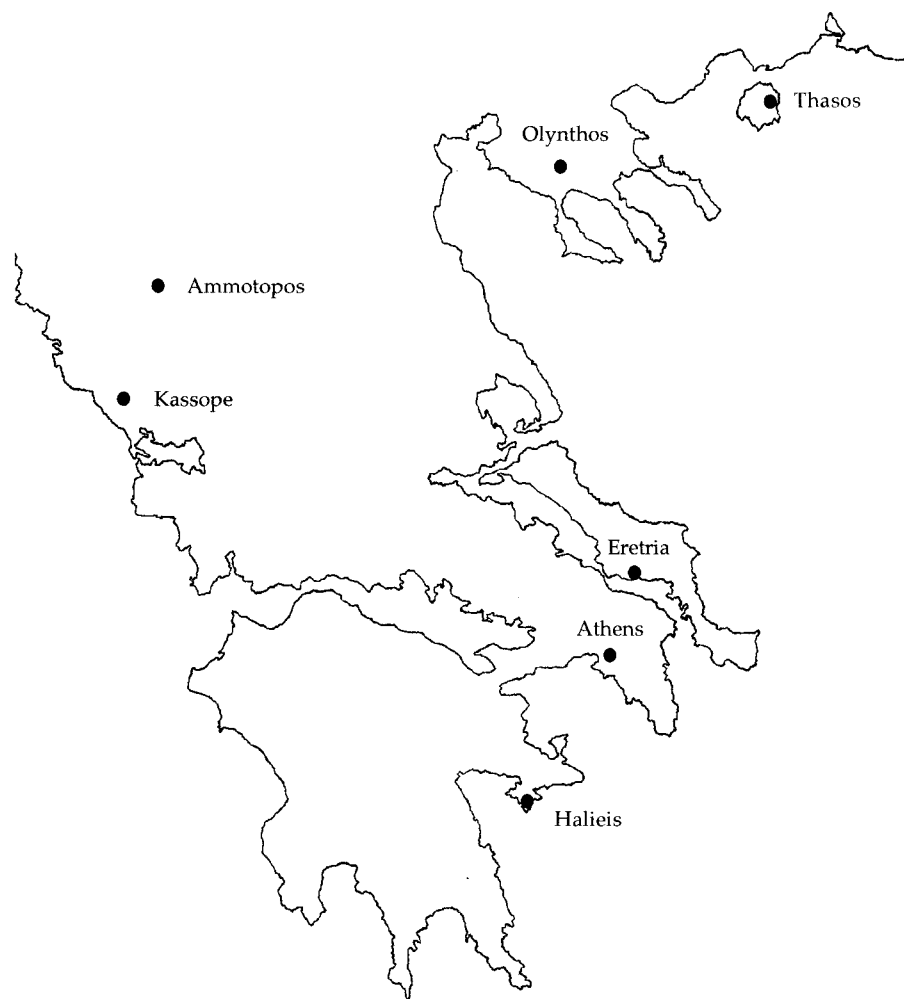


FIG. 1. Map of Greece showing sites discussed in text.

type of analysis should take account not only of architectural organization, but also of the distribution of finds, which offer the key to a full understanding of how various spaces were used and the identities of the household members who are likely to have used them. In practice, however, very few excavations have aimed to produce information at this level of detail.

One site for which the records do include lists of finds from each room, for a large number of excavated houses, is the site of Olynthos, on the Chalkidiki peninsula in northern Greece (FIG. 1).¹⁹ The main area of housing in the north hill district of the city seems to have been

¹⁹ Principally D. M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus*, ii: *Architecture and Sculpture* (Baltimore, 1930); id., *Excavations at Olynthus*, xii: *Domestic and Public Architecture* (Baltimore, Md., 1946); id. and J. W. Graham, *Excavations at Olynthus*, viii: *The*

Hellenic House (Baltimore, Md., 1938). My discussion of the site is based on this publication, together with information from the field-books, which I studied at the University Museums at Oxford, Mississippi, in 1989.

constructed over a relatively short space of time in the late fifth and early fourth centuries,²⁰ and we know from literary sources that the city was razed to the ground during military action in 348 BC.²¹ With the exception of a limited area at the north end of the site, no substantial re-occupation took place,²² and most of the site has not subsequently been re-used except as farm land. This combination of circumstances means that the material from Olynthos provides a substantial body of evidence which is largely contemporary and relatively undisturbed.

The city covers an area of two hill-tops, the north and south hills, and spills out onto the plain below. The earliest area of settlement seems to have been on the south hill, although excavations in this area were reported only in a limited way. The majority of the excavated houses are on the north hill: more than seventy have been fully excavated, and some fifty-five are well enough preserved to yield complete plans, although, as was the case with nearly all Greek houses of this period, the walls were of mudbrick on stone socles so that little is known of the superstructure. The streets of the city are laid out on a regular grid of roads, between which the majority of the houses are arranged in blocks of ten (FIG. 2). Individual plots measure approximately 17 × 17 m, giving a house area of around 290 sq m, although there is some variation in the living-space available in each, taking into account the shops and stables which are integrated into some 20% of the sample. There are also cases in which one household took over part of a neighbouring plot, and ended up with a total area of more than 350 sq m.²³ The potential variability in available living space is increased by the fact that upper storeys were clearly present in a minority of houses where stone stairbases have been found;²⁴ whether the remainder also had upper storeys is difficult to determine from the available evidence.²⁵ The absence of such bases might be due to differences in construction, preservation, or recording, rather than being indicative of single storey houses. In short, given the regular grid plan of the city and the apparent standardization in house-plot size, there is a surprising degree of variability.²⁶ At the same time, statistical analysis suggests that there are a range of features which are common in the majority houses of average and larger than average size,²⁷ and these similarities can be interpreted in terms of the social relations of the occupants.

A prominent feature of the organization of the Olynthian houses seems to have been a desire to isolate the inhabitants from the world outside: there was normally only a single street door and the opportunity to provide additional access at the side or the back of the house does not regularly seem to have been used.²⁸ Except in the smallest examples, the entrance

²⁰ Robinson 1930 (n. 19), x xi.

²¹ Diod. xvi. 53. 3.

²² Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 3–6; S. Rotroff, 'Olynthos and other Deposits: the pottery', *AJA* 94 (1989), 315–16; N. Cahill, *Olynthos: Social and Spatial Planning in a Greek City* (Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of California at Berkeley, 1991), 165–95, esp. 194–5.

²³ House AV 6, Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 92–4, c.430 sq m, and house F-III 10 (house of the Twin Erotes), Robinson 1946 (n. 19), 223–35, c.374 sq m. Building F-III 2 (the Villa of Good Fortune), *ibid.* 55–63, c.442 sq m, also falls into this category, although it is possible that this was not a residential structure, cf. W. A. McDonald, 'Villa or Pandokeion', in G. Mylonas (ed.), *Studies Presented to D. M. Robinson* (St Louis, Mo., 1951), 365–73.

²⁴ Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 271–3. The presence of large quantities of tile in the fill above the houses suggest a

pitched tile roof, so that the stairs must have led to upper storeys rather than to space on a flat roof.

²⁵ Cf. Cahill (n. 22), 209–11.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 213.

²⁷ Nevet (n. 1), 63–85; ead., *House and Society: Domestic Space in the Classical and Hellenistic Greek World* (Cambridge; in preparation).

²⁸ Robinson says that this space is for drainage of water from the pitched roof and was not intended for access: D. M. Robinson, 'A typical block of houses at Olynthos with an account also of three hoards of coins', *AJA* 37 (1933), 112. In fact there are houses which have more than one street door, but if we exclude shops which do not communicate with the interior of the house, together with houses where the rear wall appears to have been badly preserved, such exceptions are small in number.

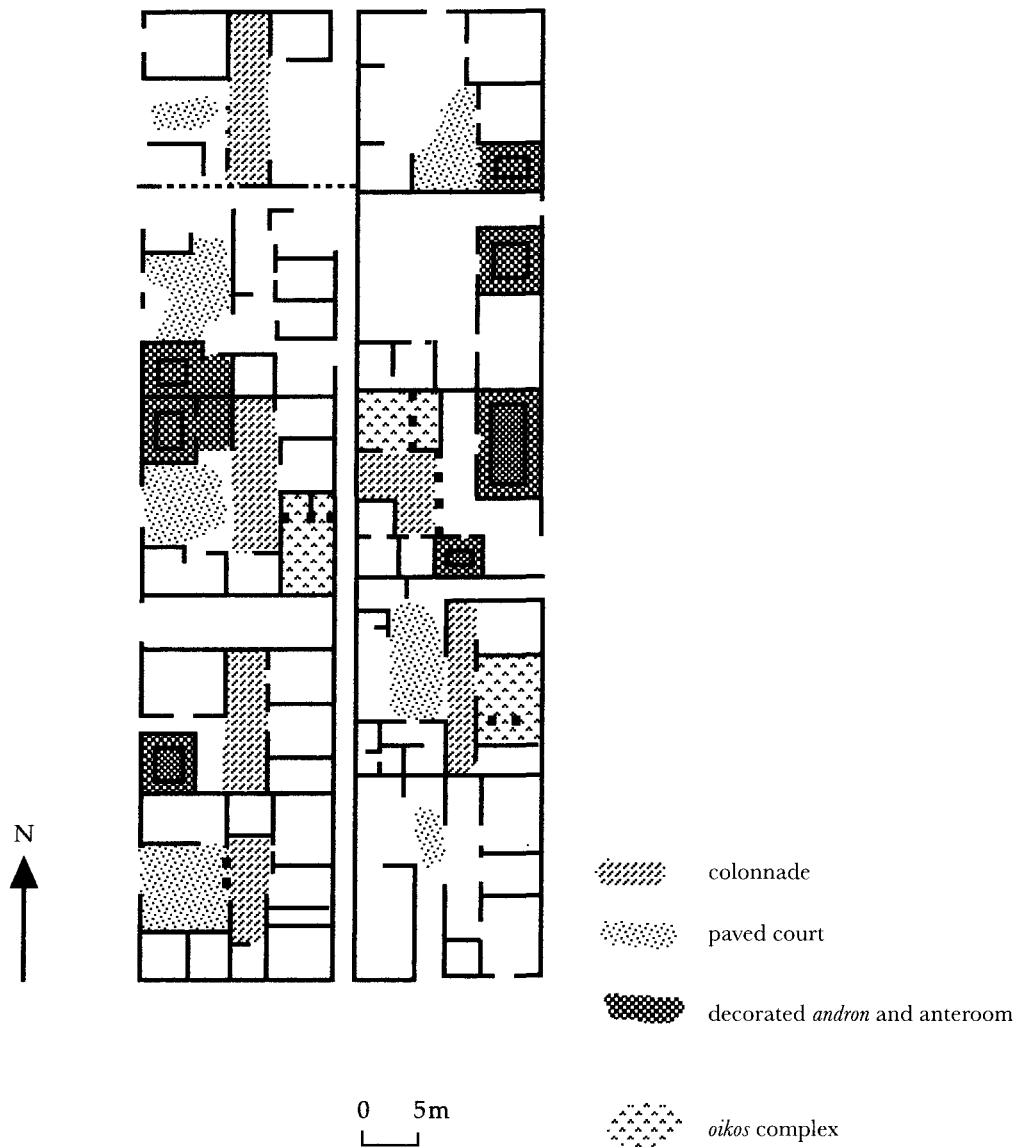


FIG. 2. Example of a housing block from Olynthos: block AV (adapted from Robinson 1946 (n. 19), pl. 1).

frequently looks as though it was designed to prevent passers-by from seeing into the interior, either by the provision of a screen wall or lobby, or because an angled passage led to the centre of the building.²⁹

In plan the Olynthian houses tended to be very inward-looking: space was invariably organized around an open court, which was normally to the centre or south of the structure and bordered on one or more sides by a shady colonnade or *pastas* (FIG. 3). The number and

²⁹ e.g. houses AV 3, Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 90, pl. 95, and AV I 7, *ibid.* 109–11, pl. 97.

range of finds in the court and *pastas* together suggest that a variety of household activities were carried out there, and many of these objects (such as loomweights, *alabastra*, and *kalathoi*) can be associated through literary and iconographic evidence with the activities of female members of the household.³⁰

This courtyard arrangement, which enclosed the outdoor space with the walls of the remainder of the house, can partly be explained by the effects of the warm climate. Nevertheless, a veranda house with open areas to the outside such as is sometimes used today in similar climates,³¹ would also have provided benefits in terms of heat control, and this implies that there must have been an additional explanation for the adoption of the courtyard arrangement. It seems likely that because a veranda faces outwards it would have encouraged contact with the outside by those using it, and that the courtyard may have been favoured to shield the outdoor space from view.

In addition to providing an enclosed location for household activity, a second and equally important role of the court was that of a central space: once inside the street door it was necessary to pass into the court to gain access to the rooms since, rather than communicating directly, they were mostly entered only via the court. This is also true of the upper storey in houses where a staircase has been found. In short, the court played a central role both in contact between the house and the outside world and in communications around the house.

Rooms with various functions can be identified on the basis of architectural features together with the objects found in them. One characteristic and recurring set of rooms was the 'oikos unit'³² which consisted of a relatively large space sometimes containing a hearth, and a variety of household objects were found here. At one end, this gave onto two smaller spaces: one seems to have been a cooking area, distinguished by the presence of ash and bone, and sometimes also broken pottery, while the other was a bathroom, identifiable by its hydraulic plaster floor, and sometimes also fragments of a terracotta hip-bath.

Many of the Olynthos houses also contained a distinctive room which had coloured plaster walls and a plaster or mosaic floor into which was set a drainage channel. This apartment was often approached through a small ante-chamber which was decorated in a similar fashion. In contrast to many of the other rooms, the door of the inner room was always off-centre. This type of complex has convincingly been identified as an *andron*, both because such decoration contrasts with the remaining rooms of the house and because there was often also a raised border which is taken to be the location for couches on which diners would have reclined.³³ In contrast with some modern cultures, however, where male visitors are spatially separated from the main household,³⁴ there is no evidence at Olynthos for an isolated wing which would have enabled guests to be entertained away from the rest of the household. On the contrary, although the *andron* was often located close to the street door,³⁵ the aim seems to have been to provide the room with light and ventilation from the street,³⁶ rather than to give easy access from the outside, and visitors frequently had to pass through the court in order to reach the *andron* complex. In view of the fact that it would often have been possible to provide access

³⁰ Nevett (n. 1), 47–52.

³¹ See e.g. the 'gallery' houses of the Lebanon described by F. Ragette, *Architecture in Lebanon* (Beirut, 1974), 15–65.

³² G. Mylonas, 'Excursus 2: the oecos unit of the Olynthian house', in Robinson 1946 (n. 19), 369–98.

³³ Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 171–8.

³⁴ D. Small, 'Initial study of the structure of women's seclusion in the archaeological past', in D. Walde and D.

Willows (eds), *The Archaeology of Gender: Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Chacmool Conference* (Calgary, 1991), 336–42.

³⁵ G. E. Mylonas, 'The Olynthian house of the classical period', *CJ* 35 (1940), 389–402, at 402.

³⁶ J. Raeder, 'Vitruv, de architectura VI 7 (aedificia Graecorum) und die hellenistische Wohnhaus und Palastarchitektur', *Gymnasium*, 95 (1988), 316–68, at 349. (I am grateful to Ms Monika Trümper for sending me this article.)

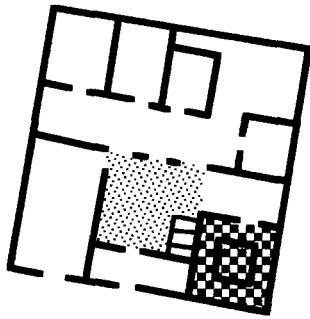


FIG. 3. Example of a house from Olynthos: house AV II 4 (adapted from Robinson and Graham (n. 19), pl. 99).

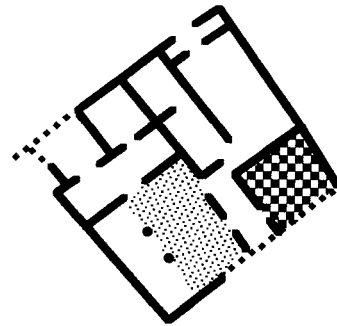


FIG. 4. Example of a house from Halieis: house C (adapted from Boyd and Rudolph (n. 47), 348).

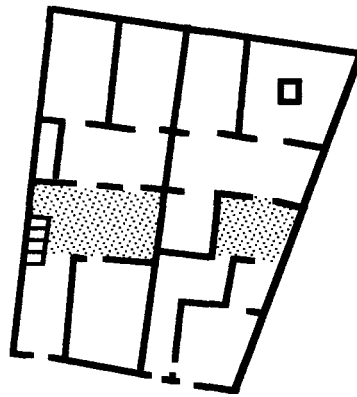


FIG. 5. Thasos: houses *a* and *b*, insula I (adapted from Grandjean (n. 52), pls 47, 64).

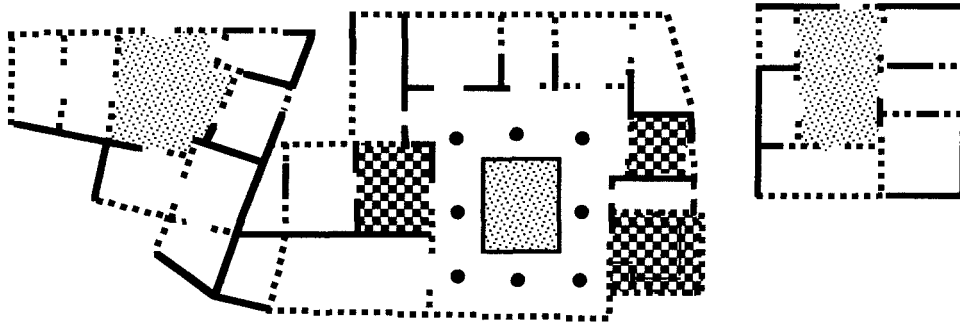


FIG. 6. Athens: block of houses at N foot of Arcopagus (adapted from Thompson (n. 60), pl. 17).

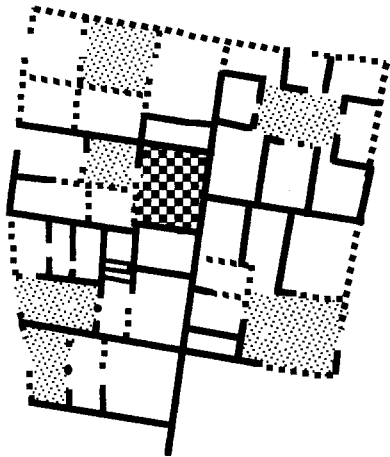


FIG. 7. Athens: houses on the Areopagus (adapted from Shear (n. 63), fig. 4).

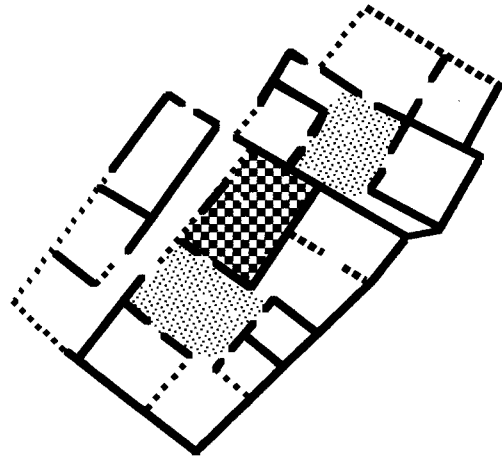


FIG. 8. Athens: block of houses near the great drain (adapted from Young (n. 66), fig. 7).

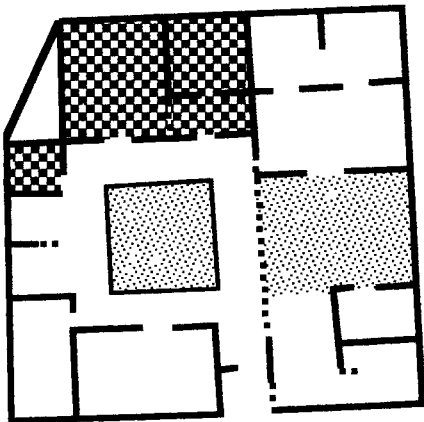


FIG. 9. Eretria: the house with the mosaics (adapted from Ducrey 1991 (n. 70), fig. 1).

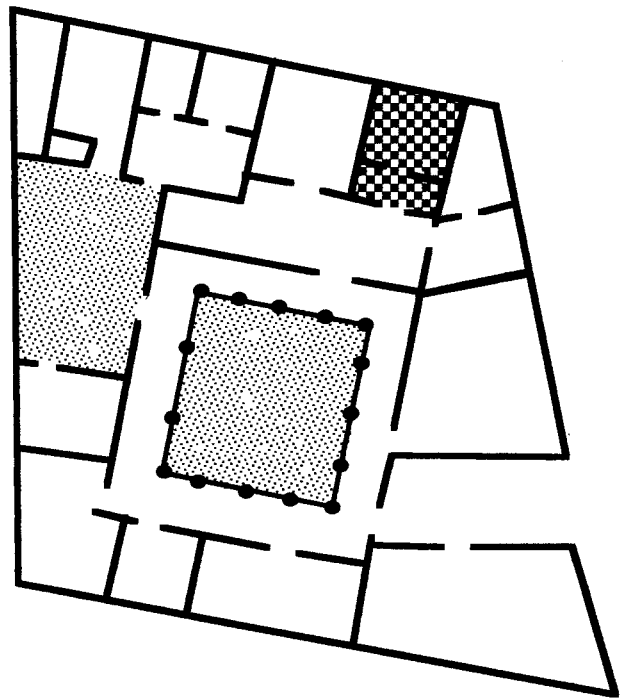


FIG. 10. Eretria: house 2 (adapted from Auberson and Schefold (n. 73), fig. 16).

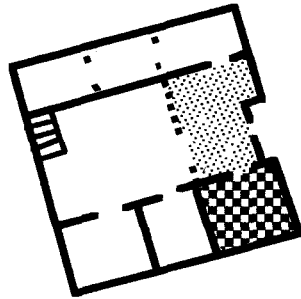


FIG. 11. Example of a house from Kassope (adapted from Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), fig. 104).

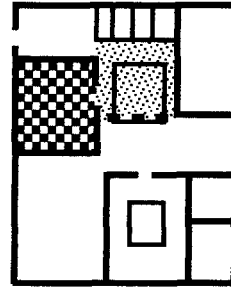


FIG. 12. Ammotopos: house 1 (adapted from Dakaris 1986 (n. 80), fig. 5).

either directly from outside the house or from the entrance area, this seems to have been a deliberate arrangement. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to interpret the close proximity of the *andron* to the parts of the house used by the family as evidence for free social interaction between guests and household, as this would be to ignore the emphasis on the privacy of the house as a whole, which is stressed above. Further, a variety of features within the house itself suggest that there was also careful control over contact between the occupants of the *andron* and the remainder of the household. Threshold blocks indicate that the *andron* was provided with a closeable door, and its entrance was frequently positioned so that there was no direct line of sight into any other room. As mentioned above, there was often also an antechamber, whose entrance was not aligned with that of the *andron* and thus provided additional visual and spatial separation from the remainder of the house.

On the basis of the literary evidence for the restriction of women, together with ethnographic parallels from societies practising seclusion, where similar measures are sometimes taken, it seems possible that a strong motivating factor behind the measures taken both to isolate the house from the world outside and to control movement within, may have been a desire to restrict contact between the women of the household and unrelated male visitors.³⁷ The location of the *andron* would have meant that the possibility of such contact taking place in the court could often have been avoided only by the scheduling of activity so that female members of the household were not present in the court when visitors passed through, or by behavioural conventions which prevented social contact between individuals occupying the same space. (Such strategies are sometimes used today in parts of the Islamic world, in order to maintain a separation between guests and female family members.)³⁸

In this context, the positioning of the *andron* can be seen as part of a conscious strategy deliberately designed to bring the visitor through the court, which like the *andron* (but unlike the remainder of the house), was often decorated with architectural fittings and coloured plaster walls. This architectural elaboration must have helped to present the house as a whole in a good light to visitors, and also served to emphasize the court and colonnade which together formed one of the locations for the productive activity so praised by Classical authors.

³⁷ e.g. Small (n. 34); L. C. Nevett, 'Separation or seclusion?', in M. Parker Pearson and C. Richards (eds), *Architecture and Order* (London, 1994), 98–112.

³⁸ e.g. J. A. Akbar, 'Courtyard houses: a case-study from Riyadh', in I. Serageldin and S. El-Sadek (eds), *The Arab City* (Medina, 1982), 162–76, at 174.

There is no clear evidence on the ground floor for the existence of a specific women's area or *gunaikon*, such as is mentioned in the written sources. Limited textual evidence supports the existence of a female area in the upper storey of the house.³⁹ At present, however, there is no evidence to suggest that such an arrangement was followed at Olynthos. A comparison between the organization of houses where there is evidence for an upper storey and those for which such evidence is lacking shows no significant differences.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the absence of a specific female space need not totally contradict the literary evidence. It is possible that there was no such area in the literal sense that men never entered. Bearing in mind, however, that it is male authors who are responsible for the literary allusions, it seems possible that the term *gunaikon* may have referred to the areas to which they were not admitted when visiting, and which would have been used by the women of the house (although not necessarily to the exclusion of male family members).⁴¹ If this interpretation is correct, then the movement of male visitors would have been restricted as much as or more than the movement of female occupants, and behaviour would have been governed not only by gender but also by other factors such as kinship. The manner in which space was defined and used would have changed according to the identity of the individual perceiving and entering it.

In sum, despite the underlying variability there are a number of recurring features which offer a picture of a 'single-entrance, courtyard house', in which social interaction seems to have been closely controlled through a number of architectural devices. There are, however, a minority of houses in which (as mentioned above) the available living space was severely reduced, and these do not adhere so closely to the 'single-entrance, courtyard' model.⁴² These houses do tend to have a court, but they lack some of the features of their larger neighbours which separate the domestic space from the outside world, such as the interrupted sight-lines between internal court and outside door. The decorated *andrones* are also frequently absent.⁴³ On the analogy of some modern ethnographic parallels, it is possible that in these houses spatial distinctions between visitors and family members were observed but that this was done in a way which is less visible archaeologically. Guests may have been entertained in the home and may have occupied a separate space from the family, but this space may have been less elaborate, and therefore less obvious in an archaeological context. Interruption of sight-lines could have been achieved using barriers such as curtains or wooden partitions, which have left little or no trace, rather than with the permanent walls found in the larger houses. Alternatively, visitors and female household members could have been separated by behavioural and conceptual, rather than physical barriers.⁴⁴

A second possibility is that what we are seeing is a group of people for whom the ideals of

³⁹ Lys. i. 9–10; Hom. *Od.* (e.g. xviii. 206) can also be cited in this context, although the usual caveats about the doubtful connection between the Homeric poems and social practice (e.g. I. Morris, 'The use and abuse of Homer', *Classical Antiquity*, 5 (1986), 81–138) must certainly apply, especially in relation to a period as late as that under discussion here.

⁴⁰ Nevett (n. 1), 79, although the problems of distinguishing between one- and two-storey houses, noted above, render this conclusion rather tentative.

⁴¹ Raeder (n. 36), 350–1, uses a similar model of spatial organization with reference to the Classical house in his comparison of Vitruvius's description of the Greek house

with the archaeological material.

⁴² e.g. houses DV 6 (the House of Zoilos), Robinson 1946 (n. 19), 160–7, pl. 134; AV III 10, *ibid.* 54–7, pl. 44; AV II 8, Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 124, pl. 124.

⁴³ e.g. houses AV III 10 west, Robinson 1946 (n. 19), 54–7; DV 6, *ibid.* 160–7; but contrast AV 8, Robinson and Graham (n. 19), 95–6, which does have an *andron* and ante-room despite its small size.

⁴⁴ This possibility is suggested as a means by which women would have been able to move about outside the house: J. P. Gould, 'Law, custom and myth: aspects of the social position of women in Classical Athens,' *JHS* 100 (1980), 38–59, at 48–9.

domestic spatial organization expressed in the majority of the sample were simply not possible for economic reasons. It may have been the case that relationships in such households were not subject to the same kind of regulation of social contact suggested above in the context of the larger houses, and that all household members were compelled to move around more freely in order to assist household production. The existence of such a group of people would fit with the suggestion made by literary-based commentators, that complete seclusion of the women of the household would not have been possible for all sections of society.⁴⁵ From an archaeological point of view, the material from Olynthos supports this hypothesis to some degree, since these small houses generally seem to have contained fewer high value goods (such as sculpture, metal vessels and imported pottery) per square metre of floor space, and may therefore have been less wealthy than their larger counter-parts.⁴⁶

Conclusive evidence by which to distinguish between these alternatives would take the form of more information on the exact distribution of finds within domestic contexts, not only identifying the room they came from, but also specifying their spatial distribution within that room. Once such information becomes available it should be possible to detect any functionally discrete areas which are not separated by permanent barriers but which might reveal differential behaviour in various parts of a single living space.

THE 'SINGLE-ENTRANCE, COURTYARD HOUSE' IN A WIDER CONTEXT: EXAMPLES FROM BEYOND OLYNTHOS

The Olynthos material offers a relatively coherent picture on the basis of material from a single site, but the location of the city is marginal in terms of Greece as a whole and it would be dangerous to make the a priori assumption that households in the rest of Greece observed similar patterns of spatial and social behaviour. The remainder of this paper explores whether the model for social relations developed above in relation to Olynthos is relevant to the interpretation of households from other settlements. Because the material from Olynthos is without parallel in terms of the number of houses excavated and the detail of the recording, my argument is largely dependent on architectural criteria, although information about the nature and distribution of small finds is introduced where available.

The other main site for which the distribution of artefacts has been recorded and studied in detail (although not yet published) is the city of Halieis in the Argolid, where some six fourth-century BC houses have been excavated almost fully, along with sections of a number of others (FIG. 4).⁴⁷ The houses vary in size from around 110 sq m (house A) to about 220 sq m (house D).⁴⁸ Internal organization seems to have been quite variable, but some generalizations can be made. Except in the case of house E, where two shops were entered separately from the main living area and did not connect with it, there seems to have been only one entrance, and a recessed doorway or *prothyron* must have provided some degree of separation between the house and the street, although in most cases the court lay immediately inside the door. Access to the individual rooms was via the court. There was generally some form of colonnade along at least one side, and finds from here and from the court itself suggest that a range of

⁴⁵ e.g. Pomeroy (n. 10), 73.

⁴⁶ Nevett in prep. (n. 27).

⁴⁷ The domestic architecture is described in T. Boyd and W. Rudolph, 'Excavations at Porto Cheli and vicinity', *Hesp.* 47 (1978), 333–55. For information relating to the finds, their distribution through the house, and how this may have related to household activity I am deeply indebted to

Bradley Ault of SUNY Buffalo, who has analysed the material in connection with his doctoral thesis: B. Ault, *Classical Houses and Households: An Architectural and Artefactual Case Study from Halieis* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Indiana, 1994).

⁴⁸ These are estimates based on the published plans.

household activities such as cooking took place in these areas.⁴⁹ In one instance a decorated *andron* with ante-room can be discerned (area 7 house),⁵⁰ with its characteristic cement floor, raised border, and drainage channel. The entrance is positioned so as to bring the visitor through the court, which was thus on display, but the entrances to the ante-room and to the *andron* itself are not aligned, so that there would have been no direct line of sight between the inner room and the court. Possible *androne*s can be identified in at least two other cases (house C and house B),⁵¹ although their state of preservation does not permit detailed comments on the positioning of the entrances. In short, although these houses are generally considerably smaller than is the rule at Olynthos, the organization of activity within seems to have been similar with respect to many of the features discussed above.

A smaller number of houses, which provide some detail about finds, have been excavated on the island of Thasos, to the east of the Chalkidiki peninsula. Two fairly well-preserved examples from near the Silen Gate at the edge of the main city have been revealed in their entirety (FIG. 5). In their fourth-century forms (excavators' phase 4) they were both organized in a similar fashion.⁵² Again, the houses are smaller than the standard Olynthian house plot, having an area of only just over 200 sq m each.⁵³ In house A, the eastern house, a single entrance led via a passage to a central court, which was out of sight of the street door. The courtyard gave access to a variety of different spaces, including a staircase to an upper storey, and a possible *andron*.⁵⁴ It also had a narrow room running along the north side, which is reminiscent of the colonnades found at Olynthos and Halieis, although in this case it was bounded on the court side by a line of walling, rather than by the columns which are more familiar elsewhere, and it is unclear whether this would have been solid to its full height, or whether there would have been openings further up.⁵⁵ The limited information relating to finds makes it unclear whether this area and the court served as locations for household activities.

House B presents a similar overall pattern of organization, although two entrances from the street were used simultaneously, one giving access to what was possibly a shop in the south-east corner, which was later walled off from the remainder of the house.⁵⁶ In both cases a room constructed next to the court is entered via the northern section of the house, and there is effectively a division between the three rooms and their entrance passage, and the remainder of the house, which is entered via the court.⁵⁷ A third structure in block II presents a somewhat less complex and smaller house of around 170 sq m,⁵⁸ containing only a large court and two individual rooms during period 4.⁵⁹ Its lack of *andron* and colonnade, and the simple entry direct into the court are reminiscent of the smaller houses at Olynthos which are described above.

A larger number of houses have been excavated around the centre of Athens. Details relating to the finds are generally not available, and because of the urban location the

⁴⁹ Ault (n. 47). ⁵⁰ Boyd and Rudolph (n. 47), 349 n. 22.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 349–50.

⁵² Y. Garlan, 'Travaux de l'École Française en Grèce en 1973', *BCH* 98 (1974), 796–9, at 799; *id.*, 'Travaux de l'École Française en Grèce en 1975', *BCH* (1976), 767–98, at 768–71; Y. Grandjean, *Études thasiennes, xii: Recherches sur l'habitat thasien à l'époque grecque* (Athens, 1988), 67–198.

⁵³ Area estimated on the basis of published plans.

⁵⁴ This slightly tenuous identification is made on the grounds of the size and position of this room in relation to

the street and to the remainder of the house: Grandjean (n. 52), 111–12. For this reason any discussion of its location would involve a circular argument.

⁵⁵ This would parallel some later, Roman peristyles from the Italian peninsula, such as the house of the mosaic atrium at Herculaneum: cf. J. Ward-Perkins, *Roman Imperial Architecture* (2nd edn; London 1983), 187.

⁵⁶ Grandjean (n. 52), 195.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* pl. 65.

⁵⁸ Estimated area based on the published plan.

⁵⁹ Grandjean (n. 52), 230–1, pl. 77.

architectural history is frequently complex, nevertheless it is still possible to examine the plans of some of the houses to establish some aspects of the spatial layout. Unlike Olynthos and Halieis, the street plan of the city was not rectilinear and the houses are therefore highly irregular in shape and size and it is difficult to generalize about them.

A block of relatively early houses comes from the north foot of the Areopagus (FIG. 7).⁶⁰ These were constructed in the second quarter of the fifth century and were still in use during the fourth.⁶¹ In the final phase, there seem to have been six different houses which are of varying sizes, but are small and cramped by comparison with the others described so far. The smallest is the south-west house which has an area of around 60 sq m, and even the largest covers only about 120 sq m (north-east house).⁶² Because of its relatively large size compared with most of the others, the latter is untypical. The single street entrance led into a lobby, and the street door and the one leading into the interior court beyond are not aligned, so that there was no direct line of sight into the house. Once inside, the individual rooms were each approached separately via the court. The court itself is small in proportion to the area of the house as a whole, and there is no sign of a colonnade, although there is one room which appears not to have been walled on the side facing the court, which could have served some of the same range of activities.

The other houses were somewhat smaller in size, and consequently simpler in plan. Again, one of the main features was a court: in most cases there were rooms behind and along one side, although the south-western structure consisted simply of a court, a colonnade or porch and a single room behind (if this can, indeed be identified as an independent dwelling – further details of the range of finds would perhaps help to clarify the roles of these different structures). In scale and spatial organization, these houses find their closest parallels in the smallest structures at Olynthos, discussed above, although contrary to what was seen there it seems to be the case that a colonnade or porch is more common in the smaller houses at Athens.

Other Athenian houses represent a contrast to this group in terms of size and spatial organization. One of the largest and most highly decorated is the central house of a group of three excavated on the Areopagus,⁶³ whose clearest phase dates to the late fourth century.⁶⁴ It is a spacious structure occupying a ground area of around 400 sq m (FIG. 6). The entrance was through a narrow passage on the east side and gave onto a central peristyle court. The rooms radiate from this space and include an *andron*, which although located next to the entrance, is approached from the court itself, and a larger room of uncertain purpose, that had a mosaic ante-room. This house is flanked on the west by an irregular and much rebuilt house with a smaller area (around 130 sq m), and a second one of similar size but of rectilinear design.⁶⁵ Each is entered by a single street door leading directly into a central court, and in neither case does there appear to have been a portico or colonnade to shade the entrances to the main rooms and provide a summer work-space.

There seems to be a similar lack of colonnade in the larger of two adjoining houses (houses D and C) excavated in the Agora near the great drain (FIG. 8).⁶⁶ These structures underwent several phases of rebuilding, and for part of the fourth century the smaller structure, house D, seems to have been converted into a workshop, with a doorway constructed through from the larger house. When they were built, however, in the fifth century, the two seem to have been

⁶⁰ H. A. Thompson, 'Activities in the Athenian agora: 1958', *Hesp.* 28 (1959), 91–108, at 98–102; id. and R. E. Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora*, xiv: *The Agora of Athens* (Princeton, 1972), 177–9.

⁶¹ Thompson (n. 60), 100.

⁶² Areas estimated on the basis of published plans.

⁶³ T. L. Shear, 'The Athenian agora: excavations of 1971',

Hesp. 42 (1973), 121–79, at 146–56.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 154.

⁶⁵ The areas of these and the central house are estimated on the basis of the published plan.

⁶⁶ R. S. Young, 'An industrial district in Athens', *Hesp.* 20 (1951), 135–288, at 187–252; Thompson and Wycherley (n. 60), 174–7.

independent dwellings. With an area of c.320 sq m house C was of substantial size compared with the other houses from Athens, although the space allotted to house D was not as generous (less than 150 sq m).⁶⁷ Each was approached through a single entrance which was angled so that there was no view into the court which was the main central space of each building. During its second phase, the entrance to house D was changed so that the entrance led indirectly into the court via a substantial room, and the original entrance passage came to form a type of narrow ante-room or enclosed colonnade, similar to that at Thasos but with a broader opening. In its original form house C shows a curious division between the main group of rooms which were clustered about the central court, and three other northern rooms. It has been suggested that one of these, which was entered from the street and did not connect with the remainder of the house, must have been a shop.⁶⁸ The remaining rooms led off the entrance passage, forming a more 'public' area, although without information relating to the finds it is impossible to determine whether they were connected with strictly household activities, or whether they may have been workshops or additional shops.

A more dramatic division of space can be seen in a number of excavated houses from Eretria in Euboea.⁶⁹ One of the most fully documented examples is the fourth-century house with the mosaics,⁷⁰ which seems to have been divided into two unequal sections, each of which was as large as some of the largest houses seen elsewhere (the total house area was around 625 sq m).⁷¹ The two sections of the house were each organized around their own open space (FIG. 9): to the east an elaborate peristyle court gave access to a number of rooms, including three of different sizes which were lavishly decorated and resemble the *andron* found elsewhere. This area was separated from a further open space to the west by a solid wall, although it is unclear how high this would have been and how the two areas would have communicated.⁷² The western court formed the centre for a group of rooms including a kitchen and bathroom. The northern range was approached via a long, narrow room of similar type to those seen in Thasos, walled off from the court, although again there is insufficient evidence to suggest whether the wall would have formed a solid barrier, or whether there would have been openings higher up.

In this example the house occupied a large area. The extra space was used both to accommodate the second open court, and to give a larger number of rooms. The unusually large quantity of space and resources devoted to the provision of entertainment facilities suggests that considerable importance was attached to receiving guests within the home. The organization of the reception areas and the main domestic facilities of the house around separate courts may have allowed household tasks to be pursued in one court, uninterrupted by the arrival of visitors. It is more difficult to ascertain whether sight-lines between the two areas were interrupted because of the uncertain nature of the division between the two. This pattern of arrangement was not unique, but was also repeated in at least four much larger fourth-century houses from a different area of the same site, where the separation of the two sections was enhanced by placing the two courts at a greater distance from each other (FIG. 10).⁷³

⁶⁷ Areas estimated from published plans.

⁶⁸ Young (n. 66), 206.

⁶⁹ K. Reber, 'Aedificia Graecorum: zu Vitruv's Beschreibung des griechischen Hauses', *AA* 1988, 653–66.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 658–61; P. Ducrey, 'La maison aux mosaïques à Eretrie', *AK* 22 (1979), 3–13; *id.*, *Eretria: A Guide to the House of the Mosaics* (Athens, 1991); *id.*, I. Metzger, and K. Reber, *Eretria: fouilles et recherches*, viii: *Le Quartier de la maison aux mosaïques* (Lausanne, 1993).

⁷¹ Ducrey 1991 (n. 70), 9.

⁷² Reber (n. 69), 658.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 655, 8, 661–6; P. Auberson and K. Schefold, *Führer*

durch Eretria (Bern, 1972), 77–96; K. Schefold, 'Grabung in Eretria 1973', *AK* 17 (1974), 71–3; P. Ducrey *et al.* 'Les activités de l'École Suisse de l'Archéologie en Grèce 1985–1988', *AK* 32 (1989), 104–15, at 108–13; K. Reber, 'Vorbericht über die Grabungen der Schweizerischen Archäologischen Schule in Haus IV von Eretria', *AK* 33 (1990), 111–14; *id.* 'Die Grabungen in Haus IV von Eretria: Kampagne 1990', *AK* 34 (1991), 133–6; *id.*, 'Die Grabungen in Haus IV von Eretria: Kampagne 1991', *AK* 35 (1992), 123–8; *id.* 'Die Grabungen in Haus IV von Eretria: Kampagne 1992', *AK* 36 (1993), 126–31.

A similar degree of spatial separation is achieved in a different manner in some of the houses which have been excavated at the city of Kassope in Epirus.⁷⁴ The city was laid out in the fourth century on a regular grid plan which gave house plots of approximately 226 sq m, with the houses set back-to-back in an arrangement similar to that at Olynthos.⁷⁵ The site was occupied down into the Roman period. It is clear, from a comparison of Hoepfner and Schwandner's reconstructed fourth-century levels with the plans of Dakaris, that the houses underwent a series of substantial alterations,⁷⁶ and in one case, house 5, these have been documented in detail.⁷⁷ On the basis of Hoepfner and Schwandner's reconstruction it seems that the houses originally had only one street entrance, leading directly into a small space, probably an open court (FIG. 11). The *andron* and one other room opened off here while the remaining rooms were entered through an indoor space, probably the main living room or *oikos*.⁷⁸ The architecture suggests that, as elsewhere, some functions were performed in this main room rather than in the court; in terms of movement around the house it was this space rather than the court, which usually dominated access to the majority of the rooms and to the upper storey. Its exceptionally large size in proportion to the court, and the fact that a covered colonnade was absent, also suggests that more activity was carried out indoors in these houses than seems to have been the case elsewhere. For this to be proved conclusively, information relating to the distribution of the finds needs to be analysed.

In this case, although the house was provided with only a single, small court, some degree of division of household space between more public and more private areas seems to have been achieved. This involved reducing the importance of the court by providing rooms which communicated with each other rather than using the court as a transitional space, and also perhaps by transferring some of the household activity which more usually took place outside into the large indoor space of the *oikos*.

A final site to mention is another fourth-century settlement at Orraon or Ammotopos.⁷⁹ Only a single house, house 1, has so far been excavated and published in summary form,⁸⁰ but because of the stone construction, preservation is exceptional, and the organization of this house has been used to shed light on the less well-preserved structures at Kassope. The house covered a ground area of around 290 sq m,⁸¹ and because it is preserved almost to roof-level it offers a rare chance to observe a house of this date in three, rather than two dimensions. The separation between house and street is dramatic; the only exterior windows are high and narrow, and their shape and position would have prevented the occupants of the house from being observed from the street. There were clearly two storeys as beam holes which would have supported an upper floor are still visible, along with the remains of two staircases.

⁷⁴ S. Dakaris, 'Ανασκαφή στην Κασσώπη Ηπείρου', *PAE* 1980, 21–32; id., *Κασσώπη: νεώτερες ανασκαφές 1977–83* (Ioannina, 1989), *passim*; Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 107–20.

⁷⁵ Dakaris 1989 (n. 74), 38.

⁷⁶ Compare Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), fig. 104, with Dakaris 1980 (n. 74), fig. 1, and id. 1989 (n. 74), figs. 9 and 11.

⁷⁷ Dakaris 1989 (n. 74), fig. 10; Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 119.

⁷⁸ Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 109–10; Dakaris 1989 (n. 74), 38–41.

⁷⁹ N. G. L. Hammond, 'Hellenic houses at Ammotopos', *BSA* 48 (1953), 135–40.

⁸⁰ S. Dakaris, 'Ανασκαφή στον Άμμότοπο', *Δωδώνη*, 5 (1976), 431–6; id. 1989 (n. 74), 41–9; id., 'Το Όρραον: το σπίτι στην αρχαία Ήπειρο', *Arch. Eph.* 1986, 108–14; Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 109–12.

⁸¹ Dakaris 1986 (n. 80), 120.

The organization of space in this house was relatively complex (FIG. 12): there was an open courtyard area, which would largely have been hidden from the view of passers-by. The court gave access to a room identified by the excavators as an *andron* on the basis of its location next to the street and of its off-centre door.⁸² On the opposite side of the court lay a room which contained traces of bones, ashes, and household pottery, and which may therefore have been a kitchen.⁸³ To the south, a colonnade gave access to a room which seems to have been a store, and perhaps by the second century a stable,⁸⁴ and to a large indoor space with a central hearth, which the excavators have termed the *oikos*, comparing it with the large interior spaces found in the houses at Kassope.⁸⁵ The *oikos* was in turn linked with two further rooms, one of which seems to have been a bathroom,⁸⁶ and such a juxtaposition is reminiscent of the Olynthian ‘*oikos-unit*’, although the third element, the kitchen, is elsewhere. A collection of loomweights found in the *oikos* suggest that weaving may have taken place somewhere in this area. Although there were small windows the rooms would have been rather dark, and the excavators suggest that the loom may have been located in the upper storey.⁸⁷ It also seems possible that a loom may have been stored somewhere here and used elsewhere.

Despite the comparisons which have been drawn between this house and those at Kassope, it is clear that the parallel between the two is a fairly restricted one, and rests on the presence of the large *oikos* or *Herdraum* at both sites. It is unwise to make generalizations about the organization of space in houses at Ammotopos on the basis of a single excavated example, nevertheless, the organization of space in that house is somewhat different from that which has been reconstructed at Kassope. In the Ammotopos example the *oikos* is less dominant in terms of the layout of the house as a whole; although it does offer access to two indoor rooms, one of these was also approachable from the colonnade. Furthermore, the existence of a staircase near the entrance to the house, as well as one in the *oikos*, would have made the upper storey more accessible (although it is unclear whether the upper areas to which these stairs gave access would have joined up). The existence of the kitchen in the outer area, leading off the court also indicates that at least some household activity took place in this part of the house rather than in the less accessible interior, suggesting some parallels with the use of the portico at Olynthos and Halieis. In terms of the patterns of access to different rooms and of the role of the court, there are also some parallels between this house and the ‘single entrance, courtyard model’. In short, although the uses of the individual rooms at Kassope are unclear, there do seem to have been substantial differences between Kassope and Ammotopos in the organization of space and the ways in which the rooms were accessed, despite the existence of a *Herdraum* or *oikos* in both.

CONCLUSIONS

This brief survey of the organization of houses in a number of areas of Greece suggests that in many cases, and particularly in the larger houses, the ‘single entrance, courtyard model’ was adopted. Various architectural devices operated to achieve privacy, both for the household as a whole, and, to varying degrees, for the domestic areas, from visitors entering the house. Such measures suggest that regulation of social relations was an important element of the organization of domestic space, and based on the decoration and design of the *andron* it seems

⁸² Ibid. 121–2; id. 1989 (n. 74), 43.

⁸³ Id. 1986 (n. 80), 121; id. 1989 (n. 74), 43.

⁸⁴ Id. 1986 (n. 80), 126, 128; id. 1989 (n. 74), 46, 50.

⁸⁵ Id. 1986 (n. 80), 122; id. 1989 (n. 74), 43.

⁸⁶ Id. 1986 (n. 80), 124; id. 1989 (n. 74), 46.

⁸⁷ Id. 1986 (n. 80), 127; id. 1989 (n. 74), 46.

that interaction between household members and visitors was an important aspect of this regulation. When this is viewed in the context of the literary sources which emphasize the importance of restricting the social contact of women, it seems possible that control of relations between female household members and male guests would have been a major component of this pattern of behaviour. The variations on the 'single entrance, courtyard model', seen at Kassope and Eretria, suggest increased separation of family areas and *andron*, implying a similar desire for privacy to that seen elsewhere, but that this may have been enforced more strongly. Furthermore, it seems that this increased degree of separation between the more public and more private aspects of the household may have become more pronounced through time.⁸⁸

The existence of these similar features and the underlying parallels in social behaviour which they suggest, cuts across the categories which are normally used for Greek housing of this period. Previous types have been defined largely on the basis of a single architectural feature, either the form of construction of the colonnade (the *prostas/pastas* distinction),⁸⁹ or based on the existence of a large oikos with hearth (Hoepfner and Schwandner's *Herdraumhaus*).⁹⁰ Such architectural categories have not, however, taken into account the organization of the house as a whole, and they do not prove very relevant to discussion of the house as a functioning space.

As an indication of the range of forms of domestic organization which must have been adopted in Greece during the period under discussion, it is difficult to assess how representative our present sample of archaeological material is. There are clearly gaps in the geographical coverage of the evidence currently available: for example, as far as I know there are no coherent plans available from Sparta, or indeed from anywhere else in the Peloponnese, leaving us ignorant of the extent and nature of any differences in domestic organization in that region. It is also probable that our sample is biased towards the upper end of the social and economic spectrum, since it is naturally the larger, more well-built structures which are likely to have been preserved and to have caught the attention of excavators. Nevertheless, there are already some indications that there was variability in the size and facilities of the available housing, particularly by the later fourth century. In addition to the existence of the small houses at Olynthos, mentioned above, there are also enough excavated dwellings from different areas of Athens to offer a similar picture, which ranges from a single-room house to examples with ten or more rooms and mosaic floors. The excavators of the smallest houses claim that the finds from these structures were of reasonable quality, and that there is no reason to think that these were the dwellings of unusually poor members of society,⁹¹ although this makes the stark contrast difficult to explain. Given that many of the smallest houses at Olynthos lie in the older, south hill area, and the smaller examples from Athens are also among the oldest it seems possible that part of the explanation lies in a change in living standards through time, and indeed it is the case that there seems to have been a tendency towards increasing size and elaboration of houses through time on a longer time-scale.⁹² Nevertheless, these houses were still occupied during the fourth century, at the same

⁸⁸ Raeder (n. 36), esp. 353; L. C. Nevett, 'Greek households under Roman hegemony', in R. Samson (ed.), *Proceedings of the 3rd Theoretical Roman Archaeological Conference* (Glasgow, in press), *passim*.

⁸⁹ J. W. Graham, 'Origins and inter-relationship of the Greek house and the Roman house', *Phoenix*, 20 (1966), 3–31,

at 4–6; C. Krause, 'Grundformen des griechischen Pastashauses', *AA* 92 (1977), 165–79; Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 268–9.

⁹⁰ Hoepfner and Schwandner (n. 17), 108–12, 269–70.

⁹¹ Thompson (n. 60), 103.

time as the larger ones, so that a differential did exist between dwellings which were occupied contemporaneously. It seems hard to escape the conclusion that we are seeing some sort of economic stratification here, and we should perhaps be willing to re-assess the criteria on which the relative wealth of the finds in different households is assessed. It may be that our own judgements about the 'quality' of the pottery found in a particular house are not in themselves grounds for making inferences about the economic resources of the occupants.⁹³

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that the model offered here is aimed at addressing a specific problem, namely the nature of gender relations, which the ancient sources suggest were a dominant influence on the organization of the Greek house. In examining this question it has been necessary to raise a number of other issues, such as the degree and nature of variability in household organization in different areas, at different social levels, and at different stages of the century or so covered by this paper. As houses are excavated in larger numbers we may expect to see more variations on and deviations from the basic 'single-entrance, courtyard' design, and these might involve differences in underlying patterns of social interaction as well as in their architectural expression. In this context, the suggestions made here can only be tentative, and many questions remain unanswered. Nevertheless, if future excavation is carried out bearing in mind the possibility of addressing questions relating to social organization, there should be plenty of opportunity to build up a more detailed and comprehensive picture both of these and of other aspects of social relations in the Classical household.

University of Durham

L. C. NEVETT

⁹² Nevett (n. 1); Nevett in prep. (n. 27).

⁹³ This will be especially the case if Vickers is correct to argue that pottery vessels as a class would have been of relatively low value: M. Vickers, 'The influence of exotic materials on Attic white-ground pottery', in *Ancient Greek and*

Related Pottery: Proceedings of the International Vase Symposium (Amsterdam, 1984), 88–97; id., 'Artful crafts: the influence of metal work on Athenian painted pottery', *JHS* 105 (1985), 108–28.