Housing in the Ancient Mediterranean World

Material and Textual Approaches

Edited by J. A. Baird and April Pudsey

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One of the greatest benefits of studying the ancient Greek and Roman past is the ability to utilize different forms of evidence, in particular both written and archaeological sources. The contributors to this volume employ this evidence to examine ancient housing, and what might be learned of identities, families and societies, but they also use it as a methodological locus from which to interrogate the complex relationship between different types of sources. Chapters range from the recreation of the house as it was conceived in Homeric poetry, to the decipherment of a painted Greek *lekythos* to build up a picture of household activities, to the conjuring of the sensorial experience of a house in Pompeii. Together, they present a rich tapestry which demonstrates what can be gained for our understanding of ancient housing from examining the interplay between the words of ancient texts and the walls of archaeological evidence.

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That original conference included papers which do not appear here, including that of Barbara Tsakirgis, who sadly passed away in 2019 and whose work on Greek households continues to shape how we think about them. Included in this volume are scholars who did not present at the original conference, but whose attendance prompted invitations to contribute, including Caspar Meyer, Hannah Platts and Richard Alston. The editors are grateful to them, and to all the contributors, for bearing with the long gestation of the volume (due in part to a non-metaphorical gestation by one of the editors and the relocation, twice, of the other: we hope the delay caused by our own households to the publication of the households in this volume is forgivable). We are grateful also for the sage direction of the anonymous referees whose comments strengthened the volume immeasurably, although they are not to blame for any issues which remain. More than anyone else, though, we are grateful to Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press, who expertly shepherded this volume with incredible patience and wisdom.

Introduction

Between Words and Walls: Material and Textual Approaches to Housing in the Graeco-Roman World

RICHARD ALSTON, J. A. BAIRD AND APRIL PUDSEY

This collection begins from a methodological problem familiar to all who have worked on the housing of the ancient world. That problem centres on the relationship between the diverse texts that have come down to us from antiquity, documentary and literary, and the archaeology of Classical settlements. In relation to housing, the problem is a special instance of the sometimes fraught disciplinary relationship between Classical archaeology and Classical history, which goes back to the formation of the modern academic disciplines, and the more particular issue of a perceived gap between the material world and the textual world.[1] Texts and archaeology rarely tell the same story.

From the 18th century onwards, there was an increased availability and understanding of material remains. Classical archaeology brought together aesthetic interests, focused on art and architecture, but 'early' archaeology also aimed itself at resolving questions derived from the literary material (see the historiographical elements in the studies of Varto, Morgan and Allison in the volume). From Schliemann's discoveries of Troy and Mycenae to the investigations at Pompeii, texts often determined patterns of excavation and how that material evidence was interpreted.

Until the late 19th century, history was very much focused on the political and the event, while social history was a minor discipline.[2] The hegemony of political history created a problem for archaeology; Classical archaeology proved poor at providing evidence of particular events and thus the narratives emerging from archaeological material were difficult to reconcile with mainstream historical studies. Nevertheless, expeditionary and excavation decisions were determined largely by the interest in the political on the one hand and the aesthetic on the other, and so concentrated on major public buildings and monuments at those sites perceived to be of civic importance. Even today, if one wanders across major Classical urban sites, such as Corinth or the Athenian Agora or Rome, it is the major civic buildings, the temples, the meeting places, the basilicas, that is, especially the monuments, to which one's attention is directed. In so many

urban centres, the Campanian cities preserved by Vesuvius being an exception, the archaeology of housing is either invisible or hidden away. Archaeology's role as 'handmaiden to history' determined its agendas.[3]

Texts retained their primacy in understandings of the Classical world even after cultural and economic history came to challenge the hegemony of the history of the event.[4] With regard to household spaces, as various contributors to this volume show (Varto, Morgan, Speksnijder), historians and archaeologists sought to discover physical traces of the spaces and material artefacts represented in their texts.[5] The perceived presence or absence of such traces allowed them in some cases, particularly for Archaic periods, to argue about the realities depicted in those texts.[6] It also provided illustrative material for the social and political structures understood from the texts: archaeology was used to confirm what was already 'known' from historical sources.[7]

The hegemony of the textual heavily influenced the development of study of the ancient domestic, and indeed the very notion of 'the domestic' as Meyer's contribution to the volume demonstrates. Textual hegemonies encouraged a practice of labelling material remains and creating typologies thereof which drew heavily on textual resources (Speksnijder, in this volume), sometimes to the exclusion of material, archaeological, realities.[8] This was a particularly tempting tactic for work on the Roman world for which Vitruvius could be mined for a wealth of labels and architectural descriptions.[9] But such labelling created an epistemic circle: the use of Vitruvian labels for spaces in the archaeological record allowed the labels in the textual record to be given material form, which in turn confirmed the labels applied to the archaeological record. Consequently, archaeologists applied a vocabulary derived from Vitruvius to the spaces on which they worked with a presumption that the spaces in the texts (often very poorly described, or described with other purposes in mind) were identical to the spaces on the ground; historians saw the spaces on the ground as confirmation of the societal models they were developing from the texts. Practitioners of both disciplines ignored the leap of faith that such an epistemic circle required. In both cases, particular methodological concerns which are almost innate to the disciplinary areas (the 'elite' nature of texts; the difficulties of deriving social meaning from material form) were set aside.

For Greece, which does not have an associated treatise on architectural forms, the same process followed from the excavation of significant numbers of domestic structures, as at Olynthus and Priene.[10] The interpretation of the archaeological remains needed a vocabulary and a taxonomy. That taxonomy, as Morgan (in this volume) shows, employed a

vocabulary that was derived from Classical Greek. Consequently, the labels themselves gave the impression that the taxonomy was drawn from Classical texts, that it was part of a Classical Greek world view, and that there was thus a very close relationship between texts and walls that was simply uncovered by the scholars. In reality, of course, archaeologists educated in and deeply familiar with the Classical texts invented the taxonomic system. Baird points to a similar dynamic in the study of Durene housing. Consequently, the taxonomies had embedded within them similar epistemic relationships to texts in Italy, Greece, Egypt and Syria.[11]

This process of labelling also had the unfortunate consequence of reinforcing the primacy of the texts. In the 'Roman' instances, historians and archaeologists found ways of interpreting the social significance of those spaces through the textual record.[12] Archaeology remained subservient to the tropes and narratives of the historians. For the Roman world, narratives of aristocratic decline, luxury and the rise of 'insurgent' social groups, such as freedmen and a bourgeoisie, were written into the domestic architecture of Pompeii.[13] For the 'Greek' world, such labels encouraged historians to write into the very fabric of the house perceived features of 'Greek' society (normally derived from Athenocentric texts) such as the spatial segregation of women, homosociability, and democratic egalitarianism.[14] Hellenistic variation from this model fitted within a trope of Classical decline and cultural contact with non-Greeks.[15]

Methodologically, as Allison has forcibly argued, such scholarly endeavours took scholarship on the house to an unfortunate location.[16] In the first instance, the relationship between archaeological–architectural taxonomies and the labels drawn from texts tended not to be treated critically.[17] Nuances of textual description were lost. There was, for instance, no perceived need to entertain the possibility that Vitruvius was not describing an everyday reality of 'Roman' or 'Greek' housing, since Vitruvian models could be seen in the archaeology. Whereas, Varro and other didactic writers of the late Republican and Augustan period could be seen as engaged in a form of cultural creation, and thus treated more cautiously and critically.[18] Further, the words in texts tended to be treated as descriptive architectural terms, associated with built forms, and through analogy with modern architectural plans were divested of any ideological value or contentious content. Yet, almost every contribution in this volume stresses the flexibility of spatial use and that the function of the spaces within the house was likely to have been varied and subject to adaptation (see summaries below), related not only to the built environment but to

activities and objects. As a consequence, we need not necessarily think of the words in ancient texts as referring to closely defined and regulated architectural forms rather than to the function the space was performing at a particular moment.[19] As Morgan (in this volume), for example, polemically argues, the labelling of rooms by architectural features to which function is then associated misrepresents the nuanced descriptions of spaces that we see in our literary material. Indeed, the tendency in our sources is the reverse: rooms seems to have been identified by function rather than by architectural features. One may also note, in advance of the discussion below, that the modern bourgeois house operates with a high degree of functional separation, which is often clearly reflected in the architecture, and this tendency of scholars to universalize Western bourgeois experience has been a pervasive feature of much social history.

Furthermore, seeing the house through such labels constrains archaeological interpretation.[20] Allison's work on the domestic archaeology of Pompeii in particular argues for the employment of archaeological techniques and interpretative strategies familiar from non-Classical archaeological studies.[21] Her work (notably Allison 2004) poses the challenge of how can we understand the urban houses of Campania if we start from the archaeology rather than from the texts, and in the coda to this volume she argues once more for detailed attention to be paid to archaeological data. The rigour with which the archaeology is treated needs, in Allison's view (in this volume), to be matched by the rigour with which texts, especially literary texts, are treated.

The problems of interpretation are not, however, limited to the methodological. As Alston and Meyer (both in this volume) argue in very different ways, the interpretation of domestic architecture has embedded within it complex cultural assumptions about the 'home'.[22] Meyer examines the representation of domestic archaeology in three museum displays. These displays offered to reconstruct elements of domestic life, very much against contemporary preferences for taxonomic displays of artefacts. There seems to have been a need on the part of the museums to construct an image of 'everyday life', presumably in part to connect visitor to object and culture.

'Everyday life' is a difficult term. In a non-theorized way, it offers a descriptive insight into forms of low or popular culture.[23] These cultural forms can be distinguished from the products of high artistic cultures on display elsewhere in the museums, but also from the deeds and thoughts of 'the great men', who exercise hegemony over historical narratives. Once more, Classical archaeology, in forms other than art history, is deployed to

provide a narrative secondary to that of the perceived major fields of historical and literary analysis. This is not just a narrative from a century ago: anyone who visited the 2013 British Museum exhibition, *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (British Museum, London, 28 March–29 September, 2013) will have experienced that same emphasis on 'the everyday' the centrepiece of which was a reimagining of a Pompeian house.[24]

Within these models of the everyday, certain assumptions are offered. Invariably, these everydays are bourgeois. They offer us an image of Rome and Greece that is familiar to middle-class audiences. In the British Museum exhibition, the 'Roman house' was notable in its familiarity, explicit in drawing connections to contemporary middle-class Italian mores and startlingly liberal social values, particularly in regard to gender, especially in the depiction of a slave society. It even safely concentrated the erotica in the bedroom.

The reconstruction of this everyday also tends to provide a history for women, normally 'respectable' women.[25] For moderns, gender construction is deeply intertwined with an understanding of the domestic, and Meyer shows how modern norms and assumptions about domesticity and sexuality inflected the understanding of artefacts and spaces.[26] If the history and archaeology of women is to be a history and archaeology of the domestic, a history of an unproblematic everyday separated from the mainstreams of cultural, social and political history, then it simply maintains and repositions familiar, heavily gendered and repressive tropes of social and historical analysis.

Of course, some of this investigative focus on the female and the domestic derives from textual material, such as the much-quoted section of Lysias 1, but for eastern Mediterranean lands there is a clear replication of Orientalist tropes and explicit or implicit anachronistic parallels with much later societies.[27] More generally, seeing the domestic as somehow more closely related to female histories replicates modern notions of the domestic as predominantly female space and particular forms of gender politics. Such assumptions carry over into understandings of social class (through norms of respectability) and ethnic identity (for which the woman is seen as a carrier; see Alston in this volume). But imagined continuities between the Classical and more modern Mediterranean gender constructions tend to depict the house as fundamentally unchanging and representative of 'Mediterranean' sexualities or honour/shame cultures that are seen fundamentally as ahistorical.[28]

Such understandings of 'the everyday' can be traced back to the essentialist discourses around the formation of the nation state in the late

18th and 19th centuries and to the related perception of fundamental divisions between public and private realms that led to the 19th-century cult of bourgeois domesticity.[29] As Alston (in this volume) argues, within structuralist anthropology the domestic has been seen as the primary location of acculturation and even a microcosm of cultural value and identity. If the public was the realm of change, the private was the realm of continuity (and resistance). If national values were embedded in a remote past and a cultural inheritance, that past needed to be located not in the ever-changing public sphere, but in the resistant and culture-producing private.

'Seeing' the house as cultural or national signifier changes the sorts of questions that we ask of the evidence, determining what we 'look' for in ancient household structures and how we conceptualize difference between housing cultures.[30] The axis of private and public, for instance, which has been so influential in studies of Roman housing,[31] is a way of thinking about how the communal is integrated in the private and how the domestic becomes political.[32] It is also a way of thinking about difference between the 'Roman experience' and the 'modern experience': in weakening the separation of public and private, the Roman domestic sphere becomes more closely integrated into the dynamics of public culture and its histories than contemporary bourgeois domestic culture (supposedly). For the more private 'Greek' house, by contrast, the dynamics are reversed and the boundaries between public and private spheres maintained. The results may be different, but the theoretical presumptions are the same.[33]

One consequence of such a perception is to see the house as the producer of a form of cultural identity and to focus attention on any aspects of domestic cultures which seem exogenous to a community.[34] Structuralist or essentialist analyses are notoriously ahistorical and find accounting for change, especially change generated within societies, difficult. If cultures are set and timeless and cultural values are embedded within the everyday of the house, it follows that changes in that everyday structure are likely a response to influences external to the local culture. As Baird has pointed out, much of the historiography of the Middle East has been shaped around an obsession with cultural origins and identities.[35] The narratives that historians of culture have deployed have, for the Classical world, focused on the degree to which a culture has retained local values or adopted exogenous characteristics. For historians of imperial phases of Mediterranean history, notably the Hellenistic and Roman imperial periods, Hellenization and Romanization have been defining issues. For Classical archaeologists, taxonomic debates around artefacts and

architectural features have ultimately revolved around this question of cultural origins. The narratives spun around household archaeologies have been shaped by this essentialist rhetoric.[36] The ideal type of the 'Greek' or 'Roman' or 'Syrian' or 'Egyptian' house is driven by an assumption that there was a unitary and long-lasting 'Greek' or 'Roman' or 'Syrian' or 'Egyptian' culture.[37]

One response to the problems outlined here could be to sever the tie between words and walls. One could start afresh and examine the words without thinking about the archaeology, and the walls without regard to the texts. Arguably, one could consider the separate 'data' sets, as Allison describes them, separately. We could, as Speksnijder's analysis of 'vestibulum'(the word) or the *vestibulum* (the architectural feature) might encourage us to do, narrow our definitions so that those aristocratic residences in the city of Rome, as understood from Vitruvius, were seen as an entirely separate category to those of the Campanian cities. One might, as Morgan (2010) and Nevett (1999) suggest, emphasize the variety and mutability of housing from the 'Greek world', wherever and whenever that may have been, and thereby render diverse the category of the 'Greek' house', consequently undermining meanings underlying a 'national' typology.

But, of course, these are somewhat artificial techniques and one may doubt whether such mental discipline is even possible. One has undoubtedly to be critical of the way in which words used to describe architecture in one area of the ancient Mediterranean might inform our understanding of archaeological spaces in another part, and aware of the methodological and theoretical issues that are involved. Even with documentary evidence that can be closely associated with the archaeology, there are significant problems in the translation between document and space. But with the fragmentary and difficult evidence at our disposal, we need to use all that we can to understand the house and its meanings.

The key shift is not so much methodological as theoretical: we need to change the questions. If we reject the epistemological understandings associated with the nation state and bourgeois historiography as outlined above, then issues of typology and taxonomy and the meaningful content of spatial labels, ancient or modern, become much less important. Instead of seeing housing as representative of a culture, we get to ask a more basic question about how the house functioned within a culture and created cultural value. Specifically, we can ask about the cultural value of particular houses in particular settlements at particular times. Instead of thinking about the house in terms of the macro-level narratives of empires and peoples and their relationships with ethnic culture, we can focus on the

workings of power and the making of cultures within specific communities. The commitment, then, is to the microhistories, or object biographies, of houses and settlements.[38] Such histories may play into narratives of widespread cultural change or integration in or resistance to imperial forms, but will inevitably give more focus to immediate and local social, economic, environmental, cultural and political influences.[39] It is those influences which structured the 'everyday' lives of the inhabitants of the houses studied in this volume. This commitment to microhistories, in whatever form, is the guiding thread through this collection.

The benefits of such an approach can be seen in the chapters in this volume. The authors restore temporality and histories to their houses. Volioti uses the notion of a biography of things to think about *lekythoi* within the Greek cultural context. Baird applies the same notion to the Durene houses, whose 'biographies' might stretch over generations. Instead of seeing the house as a cultural symbol or as productive of a form of ethnic identity, we can situate the house in its particular conditions of production in which the everyday struggles to get by and maintain status are played out. Pudsey and Baird both focus on the familial and the complex interrelationship between the structures of family and its places.[40] The house emerges not just as having its own biography, but as offering us insight into the familial histories of those who resided within it. Family and household are also depicted as non-fixed groups, shifting in composition and interests, needs and abilities through their life courses. These familial entities are interrelated in complex ways, or as Baird puts it, 'entangled' in the physical forms of the houses. We can become more sensitive to variation, as Pudsey and Uytterhoeven show, for houses both within a single rural community (Tebtynis) and to variation between urban and rural settlement. Baird shows that although the Durene houses have marked similarities, they also have differences. But if we can, as outsiders, identify differences within the limited remains and documentation available to us, we can be certain that to members of the community themselves, likely hypersensitive to social nuance and sociocultural markers, such differences must have been very clear.

Such microhistories allow us to interpret houses within the social and economic structures of those local communities. The chapters associate shifts in house forms with changes in economic activities over the long term (Nevett; McHugh) and see its symbolic functions within a changing historical and cultural context (Varto and also Nevett). They are sensitive to the particular needs and desires of the residents (Alston; Platts) and how particular communities used the domestic as means of negotiating status

and identity (Kaczmarek). We can assess the needs of economic production (Alston; McHugh) in shaping the distribution of residences across the environment and the forms that those residences took. We can rethink housing design, paying attention to senses other than the visual (Platts) and functions beyond the symbolic. But we can also reframe our understanding of the symbolism of the house and the domestic, paying due regard to the values written into spaces in particular ritual contexts (Smith) and the emotional engagement with house (Varto) and its symbolic objects (Volioti) which must in part derive from a shared experience of living within that space (Baird).

Alston's contribution attempts to think through the problem of domestic space starting from a fundamental question about the relationships between space and society. Deploying insights from spatial theorists and political philosophers, he focuses on the micro-dynamics of household formation. If we assume, as he suggests, that the primary desire and requirement of the domestic community was for social reproduction, ensuring the continuity of individuals and families from year to year and generation to generation, then any household must have had an interest in controlling the economic resources necessary for maintaining itself to an appropriate status, controlling the household's labour resources and its productive and reproductive capacities, and negotiating and asserting status with persons and institutions external to the household. Social reproduction depended upon maintaining a level of control in the family and in negotiating relationships with wider societal powers. Households could not be in any meaningful sense autarkic since they must always have engaged in the wider community. Households must, however, have always been multiple, composed of individual agents whose interests and desires were not necessarily aligned: one need only imagine discussions around the forming of new conjugal relations. Yet, the multiplicity of agents does not open the way to anarchy. To negotiate one's path through society, one needed to follow social codes and convention and to find modes of communication and cooperation. The built environment becomes the enabling structure and symbolic representation of these needs and desires and it is in terms of those needs and desires that we can interpret those spaces. In a number of brief case studies, he argues that we might explain evident change, such as the development of villa culture in Italy, and seeming continuities, such as the rural housing types in Syria, through an interplay of desires, resources and power. The culture of villas, for example, can be seen as a coming together of an extreme desire for individual power and the concentration of economic, cultural and political resources in the

hands of a small and immensely privileged elite: what happens if when we look at one of the many fantastic 4th-century CE villa mosaics, we see them not as aesthetics, but as representations of massive social inequality? Through such an approach, Alston argues, we can explain the villa's cultural association with sexual excess and tyranny. In the Syrian examples, Alston links the house form to the modes of economic production and familial and societal reproduction. He embeds the house in particular needs and desires to concentrate and control household resources of land and labour. In contrast to the notion of the everyday deployed above, Alston's view of the everyday is of a field of contestation and competition, ordered, but subject to economic, ideological and political modifications.[41] There was more than one way of exploiting a particular environment and ensuring that a family survived from generation to generation, and it was the politics of the everyday that ensured that particular modes were followed and, sometimes, adapted. It was the everyday negotiation of these complex social requirements that gave shape to the histories of the domestic communities, and to understand those histories we need to return to the individual agents who acted within those households.

We can see a similar interplay of desires and needs in Pudsey's analysis of the houses of Tebtynis. Her focus is on the dynamics of family, dynamics which are only visible through the documentary material, and their interplay with housing. She shows how families (however defined) managed their marital strategies to ensure that their particular households maintained the means by which to survive and continue from generation to generation. She argues that there was a flexibility in the arrangements of domestic space that allowed a negotiation of complex tenurial arrangements. The Egyptian partible inheritance system empowered multiple agents within a household, which must have given rise to a need to negotiate within a household of mutually dependent individuals. Gender dynamics were likely influenced by female control of economic resources and the normative residency of a wife in the house of her husband's family. Since the management of the household/house depended on economic and social resources, it seems likely, as Pudsey suggests, that different dynamics applied in different types of settlement: the houses and households of Tebtynis were likely different, when taken as a group, than the houses and households of nearby Ptolemais Euergetis, the regional capital.

Uytterhoeven similarly argues for a level of diversity in the housing of the Fayum villages. Although many of the sites were poorly excavated and even more poorly published in the early years of the 20th century, more recent and smaller-scale archaeological investigation has allowed

Uytterhoeven to identify 'elite' residence within the villages, which at Tebtunis at least is marked through a different architectural style. Although some of the Fayumic villages were seemingly controlled, or at least heavily influenced, by powerful estate holders in the Ptolemaic period, by the early Roman period the villages seem to have been relatively egalitarian, in economic terms, judging from the ample tax and other documentation from the Roman Fayum, especially when compared with other contemporary Mediterranean communities.[42] But even within a relatively egalitarian community, social competition (the play of social desires) can be seen in the archaeology. One might imagine that status competition was manifested through other markers of status within a rural community which are less easily recognized in an archaeological record, such as holding priesthoods, leadership positions within the community, even in such things as dress and furnishings (see Smith, in this volume), but houses were also a way in which social competition and identity within the community were manifest.

Baird follows a similar pathway. Her investigation finds evidence of relationships in the houses of Dura-Europos. Relationships are, by their very nature, open to individual agency and are formed within social dynamics of power, including those of gender and age. It is those relationships which 'make up a household', but, as she shows, those relationships were 'entangled' with house structures. It was in those houses that the many everyday negotiations and celebrations and cooperations and, no doubt, arguments and disputes and feuds took place. We can detect in both the archaeology and the textual material divisions within houses consequent on tenurial division. But tenurial division was also a division of family and households and we may wonder quite how such a division would, in the everyday organization of the household(s), have worked. As Baird argues, the consequence of such a division was not to make a new house and erase the 'biography' or the memory of the old house, but to leave memories of the house as it was (and how it could again be).[43] One imagines that the memories of rituals, events, and the structuring of relationships was entangled within that structure and that the house, in whatever formation, operated as a 'place of memory'. Present in the imagined community of the house were the later divided residences but also the earlier united house and the consequent restructurings of the familial ties. The house as structured then reflected the complex processes of household formation and social reproduction over generations which were economic and social, but also engaged in the memories and relationships of the various inhabitants.

Such complexities can be seen in the way in which the cult of the *Lares compitalia* operated on Delos. As Kaczmarek shows, the 'Romans' in the Delian community established status and cultural identity through the worship of the cult. Moving between domestic cult and public cult, a connection was made between the Romans within this particularly heterogeneous community. The domestic elements of the cult brought the public and communal aspects of identity into the domestic sphere. In a community of immigrants and traders, establishing those connections and asserting identity were socially and economically necessary, more so because it seems likely that a significant number of the inhabitants of the houses were freed persons, who had an extreme need to assert status and identity in the community. The houses or, in this specific case, the use of cults associated with the houses responded to the needs and desires of the residents through a community context, and it is a story we can only tell through the association of the archaeology and epigraphy.

The contribution which focuses most closely on the productive capacities and functions of housing is McHugh's study of rural 'farmsteads'. McHugh focuses initially on an archaeological problem. Since most 'farms' are identified through survey archaeology rather than through excavation, how do we establish what we are looking at when we find a scatter of material in a rural context? If we use the term 'farm', do we know what sort of architectural structure or socioeconomic institution we are discussing? There are, of course, a variety of possible settlements that might generate a cluster of building materials and ceramics in the rural environment and a variety of possible ways in which the rural environment could be settled, managed and exploited. By using GIS analysis and through a consideration of the road network, McHugh shows that the 'farms' were closely related to transport routes. She concludes that her archaeological traces of farms correspond reasonably closely to the situation and operation of the farm described in Lysias 1: relatively easy to access from the city and relatively close to other agricultural structures. The economic integration of the farm into wider economic networks, certainly those of the city, would seem to mirror a social integration of urban and rural.

Speksnijder looks to the flexibility and functionality of housing. Starting with a conventional problem of identification (what might the *vestibula* discussed in Vitruvius have been and can we find such structures in the archaeological record?), his investigation explores the particular needs and requirements of different social groups within Rome and how those needs and requirements might have been met through architectural forms. His identification of the *vestibulum* as a waiting area for those calling on

aristocratic families provides a social practice which the structure served. But that social practice was limited to the leading families of the city. The consequence was that the structure that supported that social practice would also be limited in distribution to the houses of a particular socio-political group. It was, of course, to this group that Vitruvius' work was primarily addressed and it is therefore no surprise that the *vestibulum* seems more significant in Vitruvius than it does in the archaeology.

Morgan similarly focuses on flexibility and difference, but this time within Greek houses. She argues that the textual material shows that houses were extremely flexible spaces in which each space could perform multiple functions. Consequently, the house could be reordered to meet the changing needs and desires of the community, and thus what we see in the archaeology is not the house itself, but the framework in which the house was lived and experienced. Rooms could be adapted and even repurposed to become workshops. Morgan suggests that this flexibility undermines any definition of the house as built space, since what made the house was functionality not architecture.

It is that very flexibility that meant that the symbolic value of housing needed to be transmitted in different ways that were context-dependent. Smith considers the use of textiles within the house. Although precision is difficult and of course the archaeological evidence for textiles is slim, Smith employs epigraphic, iconographic and literary evidence to show that a house would be replete with soft furnishings, from pillows and cushions to coverings. Given the technologies available, textiles must have been a visible and tangible display of status and wealth. They must have notably influenced the aesthetic of the house. Her key example though comes from the marriage ceremony. She argues from the iconographic evidence that the textile references in the accounts of marriage relate not so much to the covering and uncovering of the bride as to the marriage bed: it was the bed and its associated decoration that came to symbolize the conjugal bond and to represent the spaces of marriage. And it was in the marriage rituals that the space was displayed. The shift in focus is from the person of the bride to the status and wealth of the husband. Such an approach adds to our understanding of the cultural resonance of the domestic space, but is arguably also transformational. When we read of the marital chamber or the bed in our literary material, we have to reimagine the significance of such spaces and furniture in symbolic association with the marriage ceremony and the display of male power and wealth. If Smith is right, we need to rethink the anthropology of marriage customs and how we understand what was at stake in the formation of marital alliances.

Nevett also traces this symbolic value of housing, but in a very different way. Her analysis locates changes in housing in shifting cultural and economic circumstances. But those changes generate a history of housing, probably better described as a cultural memory, on which basis Demosthenes seems to aim to create and exploit a political nostalgia for more egalitarian and democratic times. She identifies different housing traditions in Macedon and Athens and traces the development of a more regal form in Macedon. But if the palatial structures of Macedon did not follow fixed plans, neither did the houses of Athens. Nevett relates the changes in Athens to economic developments: people, especially richer people, were getting richer and this was reflected in their housing. But it is the combination of these changes that gives the housing cultural and political resonance. Nevett reinterprets Demosthenes' complaints about grand houses (as opposed to grand public buildings) as reflecting a decline in citizen values. But in the light of these perceived trends in housing, we can see that Demosthenes was using housing to suggest that the new aristocracy of Athens was somehow un-Athenian, more related to those North Greeks. Consequently, we see housing used as a signifier of political identity and political value, but also as a marker of a conservative and nostalgic vision of the democratic community. Like so many appeals to collective memory, Demosthenes was employing a cultural memory to marginalize his political opponents. The power of Demosthenes' image is to turn a relatively abstract idea and ideological complaint into the concrete realities of everyday life in the city; he makes the political differences between the rich and powerful and the 'ordinary' citizen visible and associates those differences with cultural value. As a process of labelling it works, presumably, because it gives significance to the built environment. It is strictly speaking irrelevant whether that significance was intended by the builders and owners of the houses since the meaning is imposed on the pre-existing structures by Demosthenes. Nevett turns on its head the idea that archaeology should be understood in light of texts, instead using archaeological evidence to provide a contextual framework through which to understand texts on the relationship between Greece and Macedon in the 4th century BCE and the workings of political symbolism in Demosthenic Athens.

Varto also sees the development of housing in the Archaic period as reflecting changing economic circumstances, but for a much earlier period. As the economy developed, houses became larger and more sophisticated; they developed spaces for storage and other economic functions. As in other periods, we can see changes in the house in response to economic resources and needs. Varto shows that the initial drive to investigate early

Greek housing came from the philologists' desire to find material evidence that would confirm or deny the reality of the Homeric world. This quest was unsuccessful: the archaeology and poetry made uneasy bedfellows. But she sees the value of the poetry as providing insight into the emotional values invested in the house. In the phrase conventionally translated as 'in the halls' she finds not a reference to some sort of heroic period architecture but a metonym for domestic values. Such 'halls' cease to have architectural significance, but become a way of thinking about what we might call 'home'.

Volioti approaches the same question, looking for the emotional investment in space. She finds it not in a phrase or language, but in the representation of *lekythoi*, a distinctive form of oil jar that is frequently represented in funerary contexts. She establishes an object biography for the *lekythoi*, from Attic production to everyday use to funerary contexts. She shows that the jar comes to be representative of domesticity. It is the investment of domestic value, of the everyday of the household, in a jar that accounts for its funerary use. But if we reverse the analysis, we can see that domesticity in itself comes to be associated with consumption and perhaps also commensality. Volioti offers us insight into the entanglement of the domestic and the objects of the everyday.

The symbolic values invested in the house point us in the way of the poetic disciplines of psychogeography, tracing the subtle cultural investments in domestic spaces.[44] These are, as many of the contributors show, spaces of feelings, memories and relationships, as well as spaces of production, reproduction, power and status. Platts asks the question what it might feel like to be in a Roman villa, specifically the villa of Diomedes. Excavated in the 18th century, we have to work mostly with the walls rather than with detailed artefactual records. Platts rejects the reductionist analyses of access plans and the emphasis on sight and bumping into people. She thinks about noise and smells, the multisensory world of the villa. And that multisensory experience is surely also part of the distinctiveness of the house and how meanings and memories are generated for the residents. In such luxurious residences, the owner could manipulate the sensory engagement of the residents both with the external world (audible perhaps more than visible), but also we need to imagine the sensory experience within the household, what was heard, what was smelled, and how luxury might be generated in various parts of the house through the control of sensory stimuli.

Finally, Meyer's contribution takes us back to the problems of presentation and understanding. By looking at the way in which the domestic is presented in museums, he warns us against easy assumptions and

methodological laziness. In a rather different way to Allison's concluding response to the papers, Meyer also makes an appeal to intellectual rigour, to really look at the evidence that we are considering and ask what it depicts. He considers the way in which a modern understanding of the domestic feeds into a reading of iconographic material depicting women and assumptions about those depictions. His analysis problematizes the nature of domesticity and the evidence we use to talk about it.

All the contributions are wary of fixity in our understanding of ancient houses. We see houses as flexible spaces, allowing their inhabitants to respond to their varying needs and desires. Houses are seen as having cycles and histories, following the cycles and histories of their residents. Baird and Pudsey think of families in terms of life courses, and to a great extent houses also had their life courses. The parallels between family histories and house histories are instructive, but also reflective of a symbolic association of family/household and house. Houses make households visible in the archaeological record. Houses can be metonymic for family. Houses contain all those feelings, hopes, desires and memories. They are foci of production, reproduction and, indeed, consumption. They are locations of loyalty and community. The chapters herein look to expose the working of power within the household, and the ways in which economic and political constraints shaped the households and houses. In each case, we are looking at microhistories, histories of the everyday (in the critical sense) through which local societies and social individuals are formed. Those microhistories take into account the symbolic and emotional value of the houses, again not as symbolic of belonging to a wider cultural identity, but in the complex interplay of family and community, tradition, development and memory. To access the complexity of the house and household, we need to understand the walls and the words.

Notes

1 The fraught relationship between the disciplines has itself been a topic of discussion; see e.g. the discussion in contributions to Sauer 2004; on the relationship between written and material evidence in Roman houses, Allison 2001 marks a key shift.

2 Arguably, the major change in the writing of ancient history came in the 20th century and resulted from the influences of the *Annales* movement, on which see the useful introductory essay, Clark 1985, Harsgor's 1978 review article, and the short book of Burke 1990 (and note 4).

3 Andrén 1998.

4 For the shift towards 'structural' history, see the pioneering work of the *Annales* school (note 2 above). Particularly influential for scholarship of antiquity remain Bloch 1939 and Braudel 1966. More recent work in ancient history influenced by the *Annales* school (though they denied they were a school) includes Bagnall 1995 and Horden and Purcell 1999, with further references. On archaeology and microhistory, Mímisson and Magnússon 2014, and on the nature of the archaeological event, Lucas 2008. On structuralist histories of event and archaeology, Bintliff 1991; on the relationship between ancient material culture and narratives of the past, Bassi 2011.

5 Dyson 2006. For a survey of the historiography of Campanian houses, see Wallace-Hadrill 2007.

6 Varto, Chapter 1, this volume; Carandini 1986; Cristofani 1990.

7 Dyson 1995.

8 Allison 1999a shows that this influence on the textual was not limited to the description of architectural forms.

9 Studies of Vitruvius have shifted the reading of *De architectura* considerably in recent years, e.g. the contributions in Cuomo and Formisano 2016.

10 See the reports of the pioneering excavations in Wiegand and Schrader 1904; Robinson 1930; 1946; Robinson and Graham 1938.

11 On the use of terminology from ancient sources for labelling rooms within archaeological structures e.g. Husson 1983; Alston 1997; Leach 1997; Baird 2007; Carucci 2012.

12 As famously and controversially in the groundbreaking article of Wallace-Hadrill 1988 (but also Richardson 1988: 382–90). See the balanced discussion of this essay and its approaches in Nevett 2010: 89–95. For discussions of such approaches, see Goldberg 1999 and for the historiography of Greek housing, and Allison 1999b and 2001 for Roman housing.

13 For Pompeii, the changes in the archaeology of the city in the later 1st century BCE are sometimes attributed to the values of veteran colonists: see Zanker 1998: 61–77; for the Claudian period (Zanker 1998: 192–99) for the rise of the middle classes and freedmen and their influence on domestic architecture (cf. Maiuri 1929: 1942; Castrén 1975: 85–124) and perceived as an urban 'crisis', see the discussion of Mouritsen 1997 and the detailed refutation of Mouritsen 1988.

14 For finding women's spaces in the Greek house, see the influential article of Walker 1983, with more critical discussion from Nevett 1995; 2011; and Davidson 2011. See also Cohen 1989, who links the discussion of female seclusion to Mediterraneanist and national rhetorics. See further below. More generally, see discussions in Nevett 1999 and Morgan 2010. For democratic values, see Nevett (Chapter 6, this volume) and Hoepfner and Schwanner 1994.

15 See, for example, Trümper's (1998: 132) discussion of change in Delian houses

16 Allison 2001; see also the discussion in Nevett 2010: 3–21.

17 See the useful summary account in Allison 2007.
18 See Wallace-Hadrill 1997.
19 Among many other discussions, see Leach 1997 and Riggsby 1997. Alston 1997 discusses the labelling of space on a graphic representation of a house (*P.Oxy*. 24.2406). He notes that the space was labelled '*atreion*', but that the space looked very unlike the modern category of the *atrium*. The point was not, as has been suggested, to imply that the ancient label was wrong, but to show issues with the modern typology. Notably, this unique document, which is the only house plan we have from Roman Egypt on papyrus, also provides us with a unique papyrological usage of 'atreion' for house architecture.
20 Berry 1997 shows that the distribution of artefacts in rooms in Pompeii shows that they were multifunctional. For the Greek house, see also Jameson 1990a; 1990b.
21 See, in particular, her analysis of datasets for artefacts in Pompeian residences in Allison 2004.
22 For the modern invention of 'home', see Chakrabarty 1997; Spencer-Wood 1999; Tosh 1999; Davidoff and Hall 2002; Hall and Rose 2006; Hall 2007.
23 As in the 'popular' Quennell and Quennell 1952 or Cowell 1961; Webster 1969.
24 Roberts 2013.
25 There is an extensive literature on how respectability in the 19th century focused on female behaviours. See, *exempli gratia*, Stoler 1995; Stoler and Cooper 1997; Cooper 2005; Hall 2007. See also the essays in Helly and Reverby 1992 and Ardener 1993.
26 Walkowitz 1992 shows how the social life of the 19th-century city was constructed around poles of gender and respectability. See also Gunn 2007.
27 See the critical discussions of Cohen 1989; Davidson 2011; and Nevett 2011. For misrepresentations of the seclusion of women in Islamic culture, see Lewis 2004; Noorani 2010; Fay 2012. For use of Islamic nomenclature (including *harem*) for housing spaces in Roman Syria, Baird 2007.
28 See the cogent critique offered by Herzfeld 1987 of approaches such as that of Blok 1974, 2001; Goody 1983; and Gilmore 1986. For Classics, see the discussion of Cairns 2011.
29 As shown by Tosh 1999. Habermas 1991 sees this period as marking the emergence of the 'public sphere'. For the emergence of national cultures, see Smith 2004; Anderson 2006; Gellner 2008. For a particular instance of national invention, see Jusdanis 1991; 2001.
30 For a discussion of the power relations engaged in a reduction of cultures to tableaux, see Mitchell 1991: 19–31.
31 Particularly influential were Thébert 1987 and Wallace-Hadrill 1988. See also Hales 2003 and Speksnijder 2015 on the sociocultural implications of the public–private divide in housing.
32 See this assumption in Zanker 1998: 5, in which limited differentiation of housing is seen as representative of democratic values. Compare the limited

differentiations in houses in Dura (Baird, in this volume) and Roman Egypt (Uttyerhoeven, in this volume) which do not seem particularly inspired by democratic ideologies.

33 Davidson 2011; Nevett 2011.

34 For Pompeii, see, *exempli gratia*, Zanker 1998: 9–15, on the Pompeian house as a display of Roman identity.

35 Baird 2014: 31–33.

36 See Wallace-Hadrill 2007 for a summary discussion of the historiographic issues around Campanian housing, which maintains as key issues cultural identity and cultural labels.

37 See Wallace-Hadrill's (2015) discussion of the Roman house, which reflects his rethinking of the conception of Roman culture (2008). His argument is that the Roman house is distinctive in its borrowings from other cultural traditions, notably the Greek, and in its *luxuria*. Alston (this volume) however argues we might endeavour towards a narrative of villa housing which entirely avoids 'ethnic' labels. For housing in the Roman provinces, the bibliography is vast, but compare the more traditional studies of Smith 1997 and Ellis 2000, with the more cautious Boozer 2010; 2011; 2012; 2014. Hales 2003 sees the house as a means of displaying a Roman identity; Baird 2014 sees 'Roman' most useful in a chronological or hegemonic sense. The 'Greek' house is an extremely diverse concept, see essays in Ault and Nevett 2005.

38 Kopytoff 1986; Gosden and Marshall 1999.

39 This argument is given further detail in Alston forthcoming in a discussion focused on Egyptian village housing.

40 For such approaches to houses in the ancient Near East utilizing textual evidence and archaeological plans, Baker 2010.

41 By contrast to the anglophone traditions of the 'everyday', French traditions have been more theorized and complex, closely connected to understandings of social theory. See, notably, de Certeau 1984; Lefebvre 1991; 2004; Highmore 2002.

42 See Bowman 1985; Bagnall 1992. Egypt in the Roman period probably saw a progressive concentration of wealth. See also Alston 2001 and Banaji 2001.

43 Compare the discussions of house division in Roman Egypt in Pudsey (Chapter 9 in this volume) and Alston (forthcoming). For places of memory, Nora 1997.

44 On psychogeographic approaches to the Roman world, see, most recently, Fitzgerald and Spentzou 2018.

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1 Kinship 'In the Halls'

Poetry and the Archaeology of Early Greek Housing

EMILY VARTO

> After a century of desperate scholarly attempts to reconstruct from Homer something that could be called, by a great effort of will, a Mycenaean palace, it must be obvious that the attempt was foredoomed.
>
> Moses I. Finley[1]

Responding to the critics of his *World of Odysseus*, Finley drew upon the example of the Homeric house, or rather the search for the Homeric house, to illustrate the futility of mining poetry to recover the Homeric world.[2] The scholarship had been trying to find what could not be found. The palaces in Homer, according to Finley, were uninformed creative visualizations of an heroic past. In this, Finley criticized both the identification of the Homeric world with the Mycenaean, as well as the tradition of searching for direct parallels between the poetic world and archaeological material. Rather than allowing archaeology to distance itself from textual or philological imperatives, the development of Aegean Bronze Age archaeology in the early part of the 20th century was bound so intricately and enduringly to Homeric poetry that it suffused the archaeological agenda and its methods until Finley's time and beyond.[3] Homer truly looms throughout.[4] For this reason, the Homeric house, that is, the house as it appears in Homeric poetry, illustrates well the challenges and common pitfalls of combining archaeological evidence with textual sources, especially poetry.

Through most of the 20th century, the scholarship on the Homeric house pressed archaeology into service of the textual material, using it not only to illuminate a historical Homeric society, but also to explain the poetry's origins, nature and date. In particular, the question of the poetry's Mycenaean origins or setting dominated scholarship on the Homeric house even beyond the translation of Linear B in the 1950s. Archaeology and the Homeric house, however, largely parted ways in the late 1960s, when Drerup published an influential study of Geometric period houses. He described and sorted the archaeological remains of houses into typologies by shape and number of rooms, instead of using Homeric passages to comprehend them.[5] Freed from immediate

association with the Homeric house, the domestic architecture of early Greek communities could be studied apart from and without necessary reference, or deference, to the poetry.[6]

This estrangement intensified as more nuanced theories about Homer and history developed.[7] No longer is it so easy to find Homeric society in any one time or place, or even anywhere at all, outside of the epics. The Homeric world is now often thought to have not a historical basis but a *social background* in the early Iron Age, usually the 8th century BCE.[8] Some argue that the Homeric world has no historical basis at all, but is fictive, existing nowhere outside of a poetic imagination.[9] Even where it is argued that some of its elements are historical, Homeric society is often considered an amalgam at an 'epic distance' from the world in which it was performed.[10] New questions asked of material culture have also contributed to the estrangement. Early Greek domestic architecture is now usually studied to investigate problems not defined by (although not absent from) the poetry, like class and social structure, economics, politics and state formation, and gender.[11] In a 2010 chapter on houses in the early Iron Age, Nevett dismisses the Homeric epics as having 'limited relevance as sources of information about any aspect of Greek society at any single place and time' and containing 'ideas which are not always representative of a single contemporary reality.'[12] The Homeric house is out.

For all the debate and uncertainty about the Homeric epics, however, those who debate the nature of the epic world of Homer all seem to agree upon its importance *in* the early Iron Age.[13] Very rarely do ideas ever belong strictly to any one single contemporary reality; the burgeoning wealth of classical reception studies reveals how ideas thrive and have relevance beyond their original contexts. The epics reflect norms, ideals, worries and experiences that were significant when they were composed and performed, and continued to be significant for centuries after.[14] This is where their usefulness for the historian and archaeologist truly lies. As Osborne writes, 'The contribution which the Homeric and Hesiodic poems make to the historian rests not with any additional information which they provide on topics illuminated by the archaeologist, but with the evidence they give for ways of seeing the world, ways which archaeology can at best only dimly illuminate.'[15] The heroes inhabit a world of 8th-century Greek *imagining*, and that world gives us access to the thought of a historical culture. We may, therefore, as Morris suggests, approach poetry as a source for cultural history, alongside material culture.[16] In the context of housing, Nevett advocates for a similar approach for using textual evidence to understand Greek perceptions of domestic space (for example, the

importance of orderliness or the symbolic value of the external appearance of a house).[17] My purpose here, therefore, is to contribute to the cultural history of the early Iron Age by examining cultural ideas about kinship and prosperity through poetry and domestic architecture.

In this chapter, I first present the history of the relationship between archaeology and the Homeric house to illustrate how Homer does loom throughout it all. I highlight the methodological issues that arise because of that influence and situate my approach to combining words and walls accordingly. In the second part, I employ this approach to investigate how the physical house was perceived and the importance the house had in early Greek kinship. To do this, I turn to the stock phrase *en megaroisi*, 'in the halls', used abundantly in early Greek poetry, especially Homeric poetry. A review of its uses in early Greek poetry suggests that in most cases the phrase should not be taken as an explicit reference to a specific structure or type of structure, but rather as a metonym in which the physical structure stands in for the household and the home. This is, perhaps, similar to how modern English employs 'home' to mean not just the physical house, but the ideas and feelings associated with the house (like kinship, familiarity and belonging). *En megaroisi* expresses not merely the physical house, but the conceptual household and its ongoing formation and success. In its metonymic use, the phrase reveals an important cultural idea, also observable in early Greek domestic architecture, in which kinship and prosperity are linked to the physical house. This association can be considered among other signs of developing social stratification from the early Iron Age into the Archaic period.

Archaeology and the Homeric House

The Dominance of the Mycenaean Question

In 1900, Myres published 'On the Plan of the Homeric House, with Special Reference to Mykenaian Analogies'. In this article, he combined evidence from Homeric poetry with recent Bronze Age archaeological discoveries to show that analogies for his poetry-based understanding of the layout and features of Odysseus' palace could be found in the palaces of Mycenae and Tiryns.[18] In part, the article aimed to describe the plan of the Homeric house, thereby illuminating the space in which the heroes lived and in which some actions of the poems occurred. Myres' greater purpose in turning to the archaeology, however, was to show that the plan devised from the poetry mapped onto Mycenaean palaces so well that Homeric

poetry should indeed be dated to the late Bronze Age. Myres was tapping into a broader debate that had intensified in the late 19th century, following discoveries in Mycenaean and Minoan archaeology.[19] Schliemann's excavations at Troy, Mycenae and Tiryns had revived the question of the historicity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Gladstone enthusiastically embraced the identification of a Mycenaean setting for Homeric poetry in his preface to Schliemann's *Mycenae*.[20] Everything in Homer, according to Gladstone, was Mycenaean; this was what the archaeology supposedly showed. There were detractors who questioned the historicity of the epics, but now they had to contend with the ever-expanding archaeology of the Bronze Age, which soon included the evidence of the Minoan palaces as well.[21] Detractors, like Jebb, now had to show how the archaeology did not fit with the poetry. Scholarship was therefore primarily concerned with what the new archaeological discoveries could contribute (or not) to understanding the origins, nature and date of the Homeric epics.[22]

The same concerns drove interest in the Homeric house. The problem of Odysseus' house, in particular, was part of this larger challenge to conventional scholarship. At the time, there were two competing proposed types for Odysseus' house.[23] After the excavations of Mycenae and Tiryns, Dörpfeld (following Schliemann) claimed that the Homeric house was of a Mycenaean or pre-Hellenic type.[24] This type was based particularly on the plan of the palace at Tiryns, thought by Dörpfeld and Middleton to be the best match for the palaces of the poetry on the basis of its layout. Mycenae and Athens were exemplars of this type too, but less perfect. That the Homeric house was the Mycenaean palace further confirmed for Dörpfeld and others that the setting of Homeric poetry was the Mycenaean world. Poetry's effect on the interpretation of the site can be seen in Dörpfeld's analysis, which labels rooms and features with Homeric terms and explains them with Homeric references, and in a plan, reproduced in Jebb's article, which is labelled as if it could indeed be the palace of Odysseus (Figure 1.1).[25]

The competing theory was the so-called conventional or Hellenic type, promoted by Gardner and Jebb, which followed a Hellenic plan, that is, it was modelled on later classical houses (Figure 1.2). Gardner and Jebb both rejected the idea that the Mycenaean palaces were the type of house occupied by Odysseus.[26] Gardner made his case for the Hellenic plan before the publication of Schliemann's *Tiryns*; Jebb, however, made his by studying the action in Odysseus' house and comparing it with Dörpfeld's description of Tiryns. He concluded, 'If the Tiryns type is assumed as that which the Homeric poet intended, the Odyssey ceases to

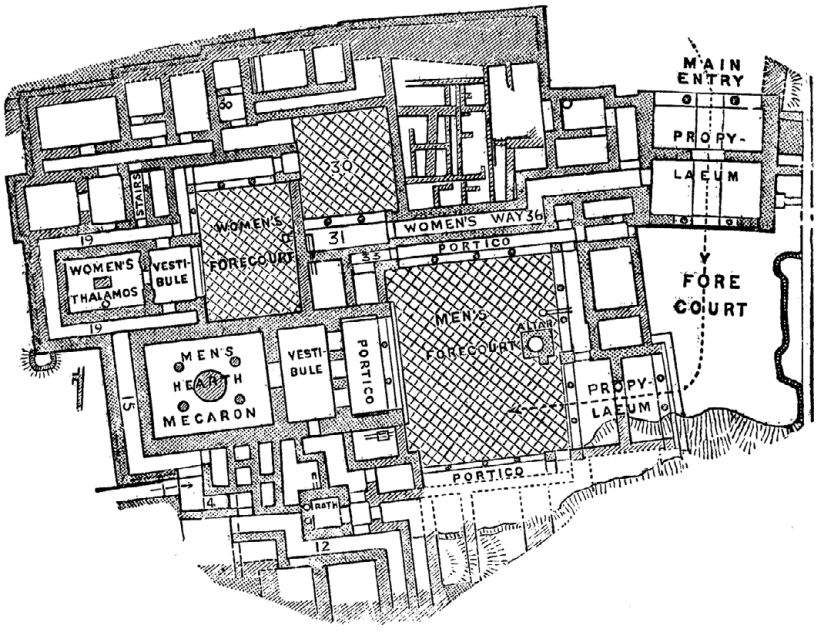

Figure 1.1 Jebb's plan of Tiryns with Homeric labels, following Dörpfeld (Jebb 1886: 172).

be intelligible.'[27] The Homeric house was, therefore, according to Jebb, a precursor to later Greek houses, something entirely different in type and in 'Greekness' from the earlier supposedly Oriental-style Mycenaean palaces. Jebb clearly understood the stakes: 'This is a very important issue, not only for Homeric archaeology, but for all study of Homer.'[28] Since Dörpfeld and Schliemann initially held that the palace at Tiryns was of prehistoric Phoenician origin,[29] the implications of finding the Homeric palace in its ruins would have been very interesting indeed and 'troubling' for the origins of Greek and European literature and culture. Jebb conceived of a division between an earlier Oriental prehistory and a later purely Hellenic history (a division that coincided neatly with the idea of a Dorian invasion). So, in rejecting a Mycenaean origin for the Homeric house, he put Homer clearly on the Greek side of history.

Despite Jebb's concerns, however, the Mycenaean plan for the Homeric house won the day. Schliemann and Dörpfeld's initial conjecture that the Bronze Age palaces were Phoenician in origin did not gain wide acceptance, rooted as it was in the idea of early Phoenician colonizers in Greece, which was contemporarily fashionable but ultimately insupportable.[30] Instead, in the early 20th century, the Bronze Age palaces suggested a

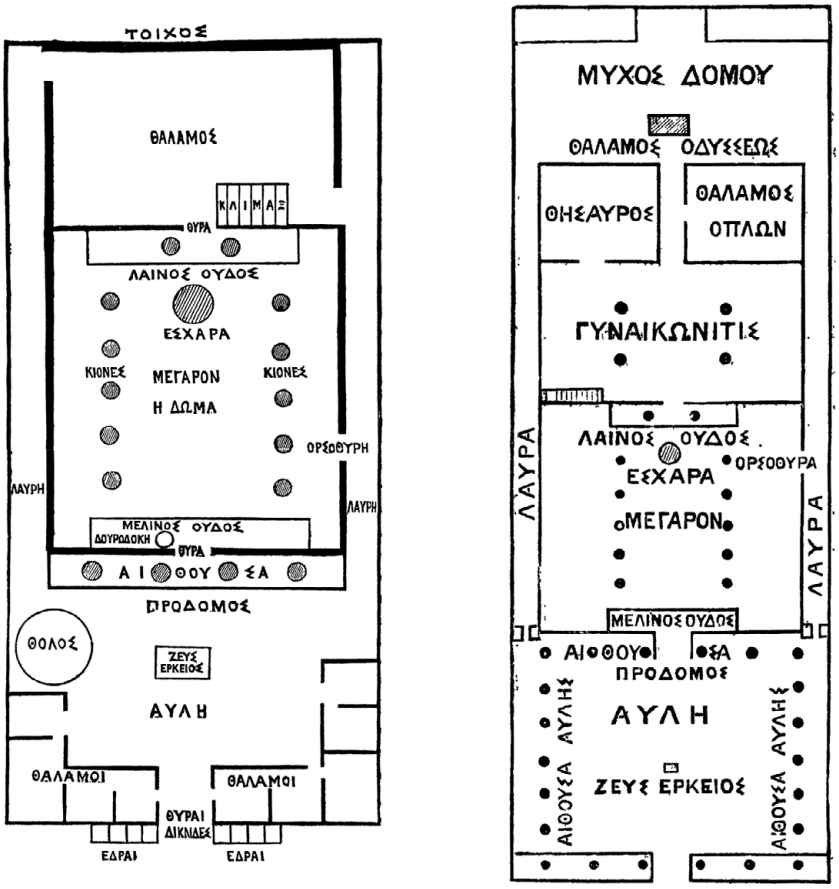

Figure 1.2 Two plans of Odysseus' house following the conventional Hellenic type. Left: Gardner's version (1882: 266). Right: the plan supported by Jebb (1886: 173).

deeper European antiquity, if not a specifically Greek one. The potential to illuminate the world of the heroes with the new archaeological finds, which on the surface seemed to coincide so well with the poetry, was alluring. This allure is evident in the gushing enthusiasm of Gladstone's introduction to Schliemann's *Mycenae*.[31] As part of this passion for a European Bronze Age antiquity, Mycenaean palaces became the dominant model for the Homeric house. It continued to be well into the 1960s.

An Homeric Society Illuminated by Archaeology

The early debates about the Mycenaean setting of Homeric poetry also set the positivist tone for the study of the Homeric house, which used