

KIM BOWES: *Houses and Society in the Later Roman Empire*. Duckworth Debates in Archaeology. Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., London 2010. ISBN 978-0-7156-3882-8. 120 pp. GBP 12.99.

LISA C. NEVETT: *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity*. Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-78336-1 (hb), 978-0-521-78945-5 (pb). XVIII, 178 pp. GBP 45, USD 75 (hb), GBP 19.99, USD 32.99 (pb).

Various aspects of ancient domestic space and households have been rigorously described and vigorously debated in the past few decades. These two slim volumes, published in 2010, continue this process in slightly different ways. Kim Bowes's book concentrates on Late Antiquity whereas Lisa Nevett takes a diachronic view on ancient houses, both Greek and Roman. Both authors are acknowledged experts in the study of domestic space, although Nevett is perhaps best known for her work on Greek houses.

Bowes's book is published in the Duckworth Debates in Archaeology series and takes a polemic view of its topic. The initial intention is to offer an overview of what kind of research has been done on Late Antique housing in the past and what the state of research is at the moment. The second aim is to offer new points of view based on new analyses of historical contexts as well as the buildings themselves. The book is divided into four chapters with the first two on the archaeology of Later Roman houses and the third on developments in the study of the history of the period. The fourth chapter proposes new directions for the study of domestic architecture and society in Late Antiquity. The book features a useful bibliography and is richly illustrated. Most of the images are reproductions of ground plans and drawings from earlier publications, and sometimes I would have wished for plans redrawn for this purpose – some of the points Bowes makes based on the images are not easily understandable.

Traditionally, the Late Roman house seems to have a life of its own quite separate from what happened before on the site as well as in Roman society in general. Bowes effectively demonstrates how the Late Roman house has been almost "invented" in scholarly literature. The study has been based on a very limited number of town houses and villas which tend to have been excavated and documented early and usually not to exacting standards. The most common architectural element connected to the Late Roman period is the apse, which has been read from the point of view of medieval church architecture. Previous studies have also been driven by textual evidence emphasizing the hierarchization and ritualization of space for which there is not so much tangible archaeological evidence. The extending database of excavated sites and the emergence of detailed archaeological analyses of these buildings have shown that the apse is not exclusively Late Roman and that it was used in different ways. The Late Antique house was also usually a direct continuation of an earlier building, a phase and not an independent creation of its time. Views on Late Antique society are also changing and this will also hopefully lead to a re-evaluation of archaeological evidence. Bowes suggests looking at the use of the elements more widely and open-mindedly – the apse is used functionally in dining or reception spaces, but it can also be a stylistic element in many other kinds of spaces. Instead of interpreting the house as a means whereby the house owner could dominate his social inferiors, the Late Antique domestic space should be looked at as a pawn in the social competition between peers resulting from reforms in the elite's career tracks. A more careful analysis of the geographical distribution of the Late Antique building boom could also result in a better under-

standing of how the houses – both urban and rural – functioned in this competition.

Nevett's book does not perhaps aim at such a polemic view of its subject matter, but rather tries to bridge the gap between studies on households and houses based on texts and archaeological evidence. The six main chapters are based on a series of seminar and conference papers given in the 2000s and then adapted to form a coherent whole. This has resulted in a slightly eclectic-looking bibliography lacking in works from the late 2000s – some of which could have added to or even changed Nevett's conclusions. The first chapter takes a more general look at how houses can reflect society after which there are five case studies. The second chapter takes a look at how houses changed in Early Iron Age Greece from the 10th century to the 6th century B.C. The evidence is sketchy and geographically unevenly distributed, but it is striking to note how single-room houses dominated most of the area and time periods. The 8th century is usually associated with rapid changes in society, but this is not so clearly reflected in domestic architecture. House forms become more complicated, but change comes slowly and also spreads slowly. Control of movement and the individual's use of space seems to be connected to the Classical period and citizen-states which are the topic in Chapter Three. Nevett takes a look at the spaces that could have been used in domestic symposium in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. The enclosed andron with off-centre doorway and spaces for couches usually associated with symposia appears quite late and suggests changes in the ways the symposium was held, who was able to participate and how its significance was perceived in society in general.

In the fourth chapter, Nevett moves forward in time and travels to the island of Delos, which has long been held as an important meeting point between eastern and western cultures. This makes it an interesting place to study how cultural identity could be reflected in domestic space. Nevett is able to discern two different types of houses based on the access and visibility of the interior space from the entrance. Most of the houses form a secluded environment, which is visible to a guest only after he/she has entered the house. A small group of large houses placed their interior space as if deliberately on display. The first group could potentially be associated with Greek housing traditions and the second with Roman tradition. However, underlying this pattern is a varying use of space and adaptation to different needs and requirements of the household. The fifth chapter takes the reader to Roman Pompeii and takes a look at artifact distributions and social groups inside houses. Nevett analyses the contents of houses with respect to short-term changes such as seasons and also tries to trace long-term changes based mostly on architecture. Particularly the short-term change is an interesting topic as literary sources suggest a use of space according to the availability of natural light, warmth or coolness depending on the season. Nevett's conclusions remain tentative – for example, the atrium is described both as the coolest and the warmest space in the house – but the idea would be worth pursuing more rigorously. The last chapter is on Late Roman North African housing and elite self-representation and re-contextualizes the *Dominus Julius* mosaic in its architectural and cultural sphere. The interpretation follows the traditional ideas of hierarchization, and reading it after Bowes's deconstruction of the underlying paradigms of the study of Late Roman houses suggests the need for yet another re-interpretation.

Both books offer plenty of theoretical ideas and practical data for the future study of domestic space in Classical Antiquity. Their clear and concise texts also make them excellent for use in the classroom as a basis for further discussions and papers on the topic. Despite the

wealth of publications, domestic space is far from having been exhaustively studied and both volumes emphasize the need for further work.

Eeva-Maria Viitanen

SHEILA DILLON: *The Female Portrait Statue in the Greek World*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-76450-6. XVI, 254 pp. GBP 55, USD 99.

A warm welcome to this captivating book that most scholars, be they interested in the stylistic developments of Greek portraiture or on some social aspects of ancient women's condition, will find enjoyable to read and useful for future research studies. In this new monograph, Sheila Dillon discusses an area that has not received much attention in the traditional studies of Greek sculpture. In fact, while the subject of traditional scholarly interest has predominantly been the sculptural representation of male and divine subjects, Dillon has interestingly chosen to focus on the portrait statues of non-divine and non-royal women in Greek society from the Classical period to Roman times.

The book includes an Introduction, which briefly outlines the scope and method of the text, four chapters forming the main body of the text, and the Conclusion, which summarises the main points of the discussion.

In Chapter 1, Dillon discusses the epigraphic and archaeological evidence for the inscribed bases supporting female portrait statues as a means of reconstructing their original display context. The survey of a selected number of inscribed bases found in Athens, Priene, Pergamon, and Delos shows that most portrait statues of women were set up as votive dedications in sanctuary contexts by either the demos or the (mainly male) members of their family. Though the male identity of the dedicators and the mention of their names in the inscribed texts are not surprising in a patriarchal society where female identity is shaped by men, the display of physically imposing portrait statues of female subjects in public areas clearly suggested the importance of women's role within the family and the city's cults.

The physical appearance of portrait statues is analysed in the two following chapters, which are devoted to draped bodies (Chapter 2) and portrait heads (Chapter 3).

While nudity was the costume of male and divine bodies, Greek women were always displayed as fully clothed. In ancient society, clothing was immediately associated with women, who were responsible for the household production of textiles. Weaving and spinning were also associated with a number of feminine virtues such as industriousness, modesty, and chastity. However, as Dillon correctly points out, the representation of female bodies draped in semi-transparent and luxurious clothes also emphasised their sexual attractiveness. The author argues that the representation of women wearing ornate and expensive garments was a matter of elite visibility: the display of luxurious clothing was a symbol of the woman's social status and a means by which elite women were visually set apart from the rest of the female population. Also the wide range of options in types of pose, gesture, costume, and drapery that the author discusses in the central part of Chapter 2 served to visually emphasise the individuality and particularity of the represented women. While agreeing with Dillon's social reading of the draped statues, I would add that the erotic potential of the female statues, which were dedicated