The Roman Gens as House: Understanding the Development of the Gens Through a House Society Model

1. What is a House?

“moral person keeper of a domain (estate) composed all together of material and immaterial property, which perpetuates itself by the transmission of its name, of its fortune and of its titles in a real or fictive line, held as legitimate on the sole condition that this continuity can express itself in the language of kinship or of alliance, and, most often, of both together. (Lévi-Strauss 1979, 47; trans. Gillespie 2001, 13).

2. Aspects of a House:

1. bilateral and cognatic kinship systems
2. the importance of the physical house as a symbol
3. material investment in the house
4. titles of nobility, rank and office
5. strong concern with the past
6. the concept of the house as both a material building and the possessions and inhabitants of the space.

3. Twelve Tables

Table 5.4-4: Si intestato moritur cui suos heres nec escit, adgnatus proximus familiam habeto. Si adgnatus nec escit, gentiles familiam habento.

If anyone dies without an heir, his closest relatative shall have his familia. If there is no closest relative, the gentes shall have the familia.

Table VII.21: Patronus si clienti fraudem fecerit, sacer esto.

If a patron should defraud a client, he should be ritually killed.

Auditorium Site (Phase 1: 6th c. BCE) 

Lapis Satricanus (6th-5th c. BCE)

IEI STETERAI POPLIOSIO VALESIOSIO 
SVODALES MAMARTEI

[?] dedicated this, as brothers-in-arms to Poploisios Valesios, to Mars.

Fig. 3. Auditorium, reconstructed plan of the building in Phase 1 (Carandini et al. 1997).
Bibliography


