

## 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. Gillesepie 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

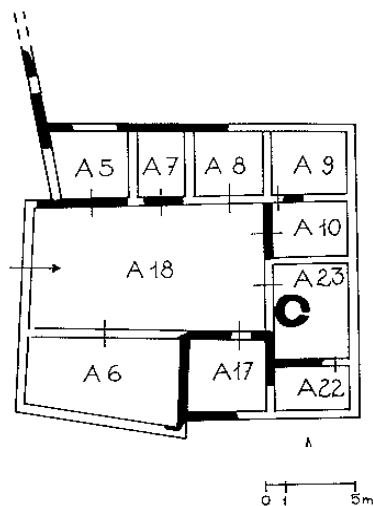
Table 5.4-4: *Si intestato moritur cui suos heres nec escit, adgnatus proximus familiam habeto. Si adgnatus nec escit, gentiles familiam habento.*

If anyone dies without an heir, his closest relative 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: 6<sup>th</sup> c. BCE)



#### Lapis Satricanus (6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 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).

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