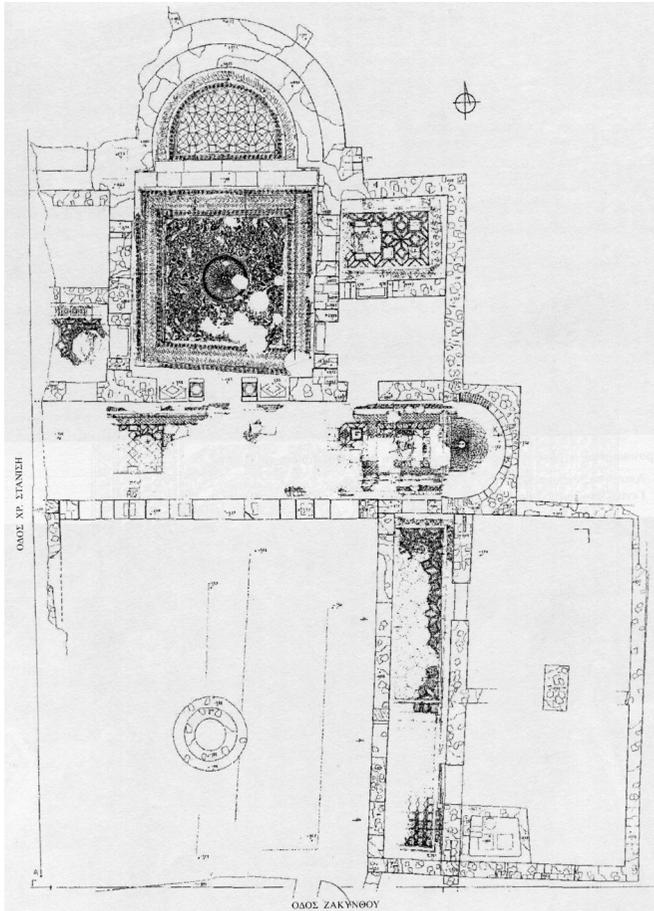


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BEGINN: 17.15 UHR  
ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE  
DER WISSENSCHAFTEN  
E-LECTURE



The mosaics of Macedonia and Thrace ©  
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EINLADUNG ZUM VORTRAG

# ARISTOCRATIC HOUSING IN THE LATE ANTIQUE THESSALONIKI AND ITS ENVIRONS

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In the case of Thessaloniki and its environs, the architecture of private space during Late Antiquity is represented by a large number of houses. Their majority being located *intra muros*, they have all been revealed during salvage excavations, mainly carried out during the past fifty years; as an almost inevitable consequence, none of these houses is exposed in its total ground extent. Still, Thessaloniki holds a leading position among the urban centres of the Eastern Illyricum on the number of late antique private dwellings known so far.

Architectural remnants belonging to houses in Thessaloniki form a continuous thread from the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. A rough estimate of about forty-five houses within the city walls and in its environs can be given, almost half of which include spaces that can be identified with certainty. It seems that the peristyle house with an apsidal *triclinium* was the prevalent type of aristocratic residence. The majority of the buildings being located in the upper part of the city, were embellished with wall and floor decoration, the latter consisting mainly of mosaics with geometric and figural patterns, some of which bear inscriptions. Despite the fragmentary condition of the evidence, the surviving remnants of houses provide at least a rough picture of the architectural and ornamental choices made by the rich inhabitants of Thessaloniki for their residences, in which the local taste as well as the general tendencies that affect the organization of private space in the Mediterranean are apparent.

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