Die um Präzision bemühten archäologischen Darlegungen wirken spröde, aber das ist wohl kaum lesbarer zu machen. Die einzelnen Kapitel, vor allem die größeren, z. B. 5. 2 (37–50) hätten der Übersicht halber in mit Überschriften versehene Unterkapitel gegliedert werden sollen. Abb. 3 (53, 55) muß zu Abb. 4 bzw. 5 (!) korrigiert werden. Diese Anmerkungen mindern aber den Wert der Untersuchung keineswegs, die ein grundlegendes Werk zum behandelten Thema ist.

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One of the main priorities of Pompeian research since the 1960s has been the study of the buildings excavated in the past. Too few of them, both public and private, have received the kind of publication which accords with modern standards. Meanwhile, the relentless pace of deterioration associated with weathering, plant infestation, and vandalism – not to mention events such as the earthquake of 1980 – entails a steady loss of crucial evidence: wall paintings fade and disintegrate, pavements are broken up, walls collapse or are restored in a way that obscures their original form. An awareness of the need to record the available information before it disappears has resulted in various initiatives. Particularly important are the programmes of photography undertaken by the Pompeii Soprintendenza and by the Istituto per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, the main fruits of which are a computerised catalogue of wall paintings and mosaics\footnote{I. Bragantini, M. De Vos, F. Parise Badoni, and V. Sampaolo, Pitture e pavimenti di Pompei (Repertorio delle fotografie del Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale) 1–3 (1981–86), Indici (1992).} and a monumental multi-volume encyclopaedia published by the Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana.\footnote{Pompei: pitture e mosaici 1–10 (1990–2003).} On a more modest level there have been analytical publications of individual buildings. Among the public edifices to have received monographic treatment are the Stabian Baths, the Basilica, and the Doric temple in the Triangular Forum.\footnote{H. Eschbach, Die Stabianer Thermen in Pompeji (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Denkmäler antiker Architektur, 13) (1979); K. Ohr, Die Basilika in Pompeji (1991); J. A. K. E. De Waele (ed.), Il Tempio Dorico del Foro Triangolare di Pompei (Studi della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei, 2) (2002).} For the domestic buildings which bulk much larger in Pompeii’s urban landscape, and which provide such invaluable information on everyday life and life-styles in the city, particular importance attaches to the German project Häuser in Pompeji, which features studies of selected houses excavated mainly in the 19th and early 20th centuries.\footnote{V. M. Strocka (ed.), Häuser in Pompeji 1–11 (1984–2002).} But there have also been useful publications by M. and A. De Vos of some of the houses excavated by Amedeo Maiuri in the 1950s in the eastern part of Region I,\footnote{M. and A. De Vos, ’Scavi nuovi sconosciuti (I 11, 14; I 11, 12): pitture memorande di Pompei. Con una tipologia provvisoria dello stile a candelabri’, MededRom 37 (1975), 47–85; M. De Vos, ’Scavi nuovi sconosciuti (I 9, 13): pitture e pavimenti della Casa di Cerere a Pompei’, MededRom 38 (1976), 37–75.} as well as a detailed

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\item Pompei: pitture e mosaici 1–10 (1990–2003).
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study of the House of M. Lucretius Fronto by W. J. T. Peters and a team of collaborators.¹

One weakness of these recent publications is their policy of concentrating on individual monuments. Close scrutiny of Pompeian houses – and of many public buildings too – reveals that they are the result of a long and complex history in which boundaries have constantly changed, bringing together separate properties (or parts of them) or alternatively breaking them up into smaller components. In short, no building can be fully understood – in historical terms at least – without taking into account its neighbours. To gain a true picture of the development of any part of Pompeii we need to focus on a larger unit than the individual building – one that remained fixed and finite across the centuries: namely the insula.

A few projects have recognised this imperative. Path-blazing was the 1930s study of F. Noack and K. Lehmann-Hartleben on the so-called Hanghäuser constructed over the southern walls of the city, which involved analysis of the architecture and building history of the southern part of Region VIII.² More recently there has been the work of researchers from the University of Perugia on a couple of small triangular insulae in Region VI³ and the programme directed by the reviewer in the Insula of the Menander (I 10).⁴ Other projects not yet published include those of an Anglo-Italian team in I 9⁵ and of an Anglo-American team in VI 1.⁶

A similar undertaking is A. Gallo’s analysis of IX 1, of which the volume under review is the first fruit. Here it is disappointing to report that the publication is being produced piecemeal and that the present volume covers only the western third of the block (IX 1, 1–19). Admittedly the occupation of the middle third by an elite mansion, the House of Epidius Rufus, which runs the full length from south to north, creates a convenient three-part division. But, as the present study reveals, the boundaries of A. D. 79 had not remained hard and fast through the history of the block.

For example, rooms N and O of IX 1, 12, a house in the western third, originally opened into spaces which were later subsumed within the House of Epidius Rufus. House 14, in other words, had clearly once extended further to the east. The relationships in this case have been explored by G. by means of test pits which are published in the present volume; but one cannot help but feel that an understanding of the area’s historical devel-

¹ W. J. T. Peters, La Casa di Marcus Lucretius Fronto a Pompei e le sue piture (Scrinium, 3) (1993).
opment, and of the factors that affected it, would have been better served by a publication which treated the whole block together.1

This proviso stated, there is much to commend in G.’s book. The western part of IX 1 faces one of Pompeii’s busiest streets, the Via Stabiana, and many of the properties involved are shops and workshops, the types of units which have been most neglected in modern publications. The block is especially important because it is adjacent to the intersection with Via dell’Abbondanza, one of the other main thoroughfares, and thus lies at the hub of the city’s social and economic activity. To seek to provide a detailed record of this busy commercial quarter is a valuable end in itself; and the fact that the bulk of the original excavation took place between 1852 and 1860, before the arrival of Giuseppe Fiorelli introduced more scientific techniques and more accurate standards of recording, makes the value of the project still greater. When one also takes into account the deterioration that the remains have suffered since they were exposed, the debt that we owe to G. is all too obvious.

In the first part of his book, the author provides careful descriptions of the architecture, building by building, and room by room. This is followed by a similar descriptive catalogue of the pavements and wall decorations, which are used as the basis for suggestions about possible chronological sequences within individual properties. Then comes a catalogue of the artefacts recovered in the nineteenth-century excavations, as listed in the excavation diaries, with full descriptions and illustrations of the 17 objects (only 17, alas!) which the author has been able to identify in the modern ‘magazzini’. The main account ends with a report on the results of the three test pits dug within the boundaries of the House of Epidius Rufus to test relationships with house 12; this is supplemented by an appendix which catalogues the stratified pottery and other finds on which the chronological conclusions of the excavations are based. Finally, there is a short excursus on the place of IX 1 in Pompeii’s urban development.

The author has salvaged what information he can. But the picture remains defective. Apart from IX 1, 3, where the presence of mills and a bread oven leaves no doubt that we are dealing with a bakery, and from IX 1, 8 and IX 1, 15–16, where the presence of L-shaped counters with inset dolia points to identification as food or drink shops, it is not possible to reach firm decisions on the functioning of any units.2 The finding of pigments in either IX 1, 1 or IX 1, 2 may, as G. suggests (p. 37 n. 112), indicate that it was a decora-
tor’s shop, but no other appropriate tools and equipment are attested. A more attractive possibility, suggested by a relief of masons’ tools set in the wall adjacent to the street entrance, is that IX 1, 5, the rear part of which consists of a large working area perhaps without a roof (pace G., p. 18), was a mason’s or builder’s yard (not the workshop of a faber ferrarius, as argued by Fiorelli).3 But once again no diagnostic finds are recorded. The same applies to the remaining establishments. Even the most unusual objects found in the excavations, a pair of bronze sistra from the double-fronted shop 10–11, say nothing about the function of the premises. The trades practised in the bulk of the various ‘impianti commerciali’ remain unknown quantities.

2 For some suggestions see L. Eschebach, Gebäudeverzeichnis und Stadtplan der antiken Stadt Pompeji (1993), 397–401.
3 G. Fiorelli, La descrizione di Pompei (1875), 368; questioned by Eschebach, op.cit., 398.
The strengths of the volume are, unfortunately, offset by some serious deficiencies. Most fundamental is the poverty of the illustrations. The account of the architecture depends almost entirely upon a single general plan. There are no elevation or section drawings, and the photographic coverage is extremely patchy, with duplicated details in a couple of cases (the dolia of the bakery in Figs. 1 and 2, and the impluvium of house 12 in Figs. 12 and 13) but no pictures at all for the vast majority of rooms. As a result, it is often difficult to follow the description in the text. The difficulty is exacerbated by the shortcomings of the plan, which is inexplicably printed with north at the bottom of the page, and which classifies the symbols and the small scale of reproduction, is almost impossible to read.

There are, moreover, a number of mistakes, or at least inconsistencies between drawing and text. For example, in the bakery the plan shows an open doorway between rooms E and G whereas the text (pp. 13, 14) makes it clear that this was blocked; in IX 1, 10 the plan fails to show the back wall of the latrine at the south-east corner; and in IX 1, 12 the restriction of the entrance of exedra N described in the text (pp. 29 f.) is omitted from the plan.

The shortage of illustrations makes it difficult to judge the validity of the author’s theories about the building history of the block; but I am not convinced by all of his interpretations. Three problem areas may be cited. The first is IX 1, 12, where features of the plan hint at different beginnings from those proposed by G. On the one hand, I suspect that the width of the original plot did not include establishment 9, but extended only from the north wall of IX 1, 10 to the south wall of IX 1, 13. On the other, it is possible that the atrium was initially deeper than at present. G. notes that the almost square proportions (1:1:05) are unusual, but not that the impluvium is set nearer the back wall than the front.

If the rear wall had originally been further east, on the same alignment as the east wall of the room at its south-east corner (E), there would be no anomaly: the impluvium would have been more or less central, and the atrium’s proportions would have been more nearly normal (3:4). The arrangement of the rooms on the south side would also have been more conventional, since room E would lose the awkward re-entrant at its north-east corner.

One would have to argue that the shortening of the atrium was designed to allow more space for the peristyle garden at the rear, which was installed perhaps in the second half of the second century B.C. (p. 54). The closing of the rear colonnade of the peristyle to form a couple of cubicle would have taken place in a third phase.

Secondly, IX 1, 17–19. It is difficult to follow G. in interpreting this complex, which lies south of house 12, as having begun as a ‘domus’ of canonical plan, with fauces, atrium and tablinum on the same axis’ (p. 34). The presence of house 12 at the rear actually militates against the likelihood of this; and G.’s contention that the putative atrium was cropped on the east side to make way for the House of Epidius Rufus, and that the present arrangements on this side represent a set of compromises to compensate for the lost space, seem to me incapable of substantiation. The fact that house 12 may at one stage have communicated with spaces later occupied by Epidius Rufus does not mean that the same was true of the house to the south of it.

Thirdly, IX 1, 1–3. On p. 39 it is argued that the bakery (3), along with shops 1 and 2, was originally combined with a small house to the east (IX 1, 32) to form a single complex.1 This theory is buttressed by a claim that the southern property boundaries form a continuous alignment and by the observation that there is a blocked doorway in the wall between the bakery and house 32. But there is actually a dog-leg where the south wall of

1 In the light of this theory, and of the fact that it is almost completely surrounded by the other properties under consideration, it is inexplicable that house 32 is totally omitted from the present volume.
house 32 meets that of the bakery – a circumstance that argues against a unitary origin – while the blocked doorway need not go back to the original phase but may be a relic of a short-lived link between the properties in a subsequent period. G.’s case, in other words, is far from secure.

The dearth of illustrations makes it difficult also to pass judgement on issues of dating. But a number of the author’s basic assumptions need to be questioned. An absence of a coat of plaster, for instance, does not necessarily indicate (as he frequently claims) that reconstruction or refurbishment was taking place in 79: there are many reasons why a given space may lack plaster, including the effects of 150 years of exposure since the 1860 excavations. Nor do repairs in *opus vittatum mixtum* (block and brick work) inevitably entail a date after the earthquake of 62, as he tends to assume: there is ample evidence from other parts of the city that this structural technique was already in use during the time of the Third Style.

The chronological uncertainties are particularly apparent in the author’s handling of the wall paintings. Here the reader is once again hampered by the inadequacy of the illustrations, which are restricted to one drawing and six photographs of well preserved details.

Even for the comparatively complete decoration in *triclinium E* in IX 1, 7, where ‘una fastosa decorazione parietale in III stile ... ricopre le tre pareti dell’ambiente’ (p. 43), there are only three photographs, all of details, and all of the north wall. These are sufficient, however, to demonstrate that the decoration is not Third Style or (as seems to be argued on pp. 46f. and 49) a Third Style decoration partially updated in the time of the Fourth Style. It belongs unequivocally to the mature Fourth Style. Uncertainty about the Third and Fourth Styles recurs in the discussion of *cubiculum H* (p. 47), where the author finally opts for a Third Style decoration in process of replacement at the time of the eruption; but in this case the reader is unable to judge, because there are no photographs. Elsewhere there is sometimes a similar hazy in relation to earlier periods. In *thermopolium 8*, a building phase associated with fragments of Third Style paintings ‘potrebbe datarsi in epoca augustea o anche negli ultimi decenni del periodo repubblicano’ (p. 48). An Augustan date is possible, an earlier one not. In house 12 the first phase of wall decoration in room C is linked with Barbet’s ‘schematic Second Style’, dated to 30–25 B.C., while the corresponding first phase decoration in the adjacent rooms D and E is assigned to the First Style. Did room C, which shows no sign of being structurally later than its neighbours, have to wait two or more generations for its initial decoration? Or are the identifications of the schemes to be questioned? We lack the information to decide, but it is possible that all three decorations belong to a category too simple to be classified in the four Styles.

To the author’s uncertainties about wall-painting chronology may be added errors and omissions in his description of the subject-matter. In *triclinium E* in house 7, for example, the figures of a scene in the predella are wrongly described as ‘quattro amorini, ritratti in diversi atteggiamenti, intorno ad un caproneorrente verso destra’ (p. 44). The photograph in Fig. 20 shows that they are actually two goats drawing a vehicle on which sits a Psyche, with an ‘amorino’ leading the way and a second Psyche bringing up the rear. In the perspectival architecture of the same decoration the ‘centauri armati di scudo e spada’ who support an entablature on their heads (p. 44) seem to be a dittography for the ‘tritone armato’ mentioned in the previous sentence, but, to judge from Fig. 19, the exact species is strictly neither a centaur nor a Triton but a sea centaur. Still on this decoration, the author omits to mention the well preserved still life panel in Fig. 19. It is worrying that these defects are one that can be picked up from the photographs. One wonders how much is wrong or missing in the descriptions of the paintings which are not illustrated.

A further problem is that the author is not au fait with some of the latest research on Pompeii. The interesting comments in the social and historical analysis of house 12 (p. 54) are somewhat vitiated by his apparent ignorance of recent modifications to our understanding of the social situation in the city’s last years; he still seems wedded to Maiuri’s theory that the earthquake of 62 triggered a
mass exodus of families and the resultant selling or letting of their properties (cf. p. 55) – a model that now needs to be treated with extreme caution.

In the excursus on the place of IX 1 in Pompeii’s urban development he reveals himself unaware of Nappo’s arguments about the principles of the layout of the insulae in the eastern part of the city1 or of the powerful arguments advanced by Fulford and Wallace-Hadrill for pushing even this last stage in the development of the city-plan back to the sixth century B.C.2 Nor is he aware that recent Japanese excavations have disproved the existence of the Capua Gate.3

Many of the foregoing comments may appear to be negative; but it is necessary to conclude by stressing the positive aspects of G.’s contribution. Even if the present volume tackles only one third of Insula IX 1, the author’s approach is resolutely geared to the kind of global analysis which modern publications of Pompeii demand. He has also been prepared to test the evolving relationships between different properties by means of test excavations. The three pits which he publishes are methodically presented (despite confusions in detail) and produce some dating evidence for the closure of the doorways in the rear wall of house 12 and thus for the creation of the House of Epidius Rufus (mid second century B.C.). The publication of the finds from his excavations is one of the main contributions of the book; the fullness of the descriptions and illustrations eclipses the chapters on the architecture and decorations.

There are also, despite some arithmetical and topographical errors, and despite an unconvincing theory of Pythagorean influence in the layout of the eastern part of the city (which would be invalidated if this had happened in the sixth century B.C.), there are interesting ideas in the discussion on urban development.

Particularly striking is the observation that the large squarish insulae (including IX 1) along the east side of Via Stabiana would, if repeated nine times, reach neatly to the eastern walls of the city, and that, by preserving the orientation of the Via Stabiana, i.e. intersecting Via dell’Abbondanza at an angle of 96°/97°, would produce a street between the fifth and sixth rows of insulae that directly linked the Nuceria gate with Tower VIII on the north walls, in the same way that streets running from west to east are aligned on towers of the eastern defences. This would reinforce De Caro’s argument that the two rows of square insulae were not an isolated development but part of a coherent plan, never completed, to develop the whole of the remaining intra-mural space.4 If the earliest pottery from the test pits can be used to date this phase, it appears to support De Caro’s chronology, which puts it around the beginning of the third century B.C.5 The decision to change over to a regular orthogonal grid of 120-foot wide blocks is connected, following a theory of A. Varone,6 with an influx of refugees from Nuceria after its destruction in the Hannibalic wars.

All this and much more makes G.’s book an important contribution to the bibliography on Pompeii. We must wish him all speed in the production of the remaining volumes on Insula IX 1.

Manchester

Roger Ling

2 See PBSR 67 (1999), 103–12.
5 Ibid., 79f.