

- Allison, *Pompeian Households*, for the data behind that publication, see: P. M. Allison, "Pompeian households: an on-line companion," in R. Scaife (ed.), *The Stoa: a consortium for on-line publication in the humanities*, <http://www.stoa.org/projects/ps/home/>.
- 11 A. Mau, *Pompeii: its life and art* (transl. and ed. by F. W. Kelsey), London, 1899, fig. 110; J.-P. Descendres, "Rome and Roman art," in A. Cremi (ed.), *The Enduring Part: archaeology of the ancient world for Australians*, Sydney, 1987, figs. 10.12-13.
  - 12 E.g., M. Grant, *Chiefs of Vassum: Pompeii and Herculaneum*, London, 1971, figs. 6-11; A. G. Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Palaces in the Roman World*, Southampton, 1977, figs 8, 9 and 11; culture: the case of the *cubiculum*," *JRA*, 1997, vol. 10, pp. 36-56.
  - 13 P. M. Allison, "House contents in Pompeii: data collection and interpretive procedures for a reappraisal of Roman domestic life and site formation processes," *Journal of European Archaeology*, 1995, vol. 3, 1, pp. 163-7; Allison, *Pompeian Households*, pp. 43-8.
  - 14 See A. Vickers, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A review of the categories and chronology of English women's history," *Historical Journal*, 1993, vol. 36, pp. 383-414.
  - 15 J. Overbeck, *Pompeii in Seinen Gebäuden*, *Altsteinern und Kunstwerken für Kunst- und Alterthumsfreunde*, Leipzig, 1856, p. 192.
  - 16 For example, the assemblages in these types of rooms included bronze vessels, needlework items and lamps, which imply that these were private spaces where one might meet with intimates.
  - 17 Richardson, "Dining-rooms," pp. 63-4.
  - 18 Cf. E. Salza Prina Ricotti, "Cucine e quantari servili in epoca romana," *RendPontAec.*, 1978-80, vol. 51-2: pp. 240, 278.
  - 19 W. F. Jashemski, *The Gardens of Pompeii, Herculaneum and the Villas Destroyed by Vesuvius*, New Rochelle, NY, 1979, vol. 1, p. 604.
  - 20 E. Dwyer, *Pompeian Domestic Sculpture: a study of five Pompeian houses and their contents*, Rome, 1982, pp. 116-19, 123-8; S. De Caro, "The sculptures of the Villa of Poppaea at Oplontis: a preliminary report," in E. B. MacDougall (ed.), *Ancient Roman Villa Gardens*, Washington, DC, 1987, pp. 77-135; R. Neudecker, *Die Steinbrunnen-Anstaltung römischer Villen in Italien*, Mainz, 1988.
  - 21 P. Soprano, "I triclini all'aperto di Pompei," *Comptenna. Raccolta di studi per il secondo centenario degli scavi di Pompei*, Naples, 1950, pp. 288-310; L. Richardson, Jr., "Waer triclinia and bichina in Pompeii," in R. Curtis (ed.), *Studia pompeiana et classica in honore of Wilhelmus W. J. Stær* (ed.), New York, 1988, pp. 303-12; K. Dunbabin, "Triclinium and stibadium," in E.g., A. Maiuri, *La Casa del Menandro e il suo teatro di argentea*, Rome, 1933, pp. 186-224.
  - 22 See M. George, "Servus and domus: the slave in the Roman house," in R. Laurence and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds), *Domestic Space in the Roman world: Pompeii and beyond*, *JRA Suppl.* Ser. no. 22, 1997, pp. 15-24.
  - 24 Cf. F. Prinson, "Rented accommodation at Pompeii: the *Insula Arriana Polliana*," in Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill, *Domestic Space*, pp. 175-8.
  - 25 E.g., A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Refracting the Roman arium house," in Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill, *Domestic Space*, pp. 219-40.
  - 26 See esp. J. E. Packer, "Middle and lower class housing in Pompeii and Herculaneum: a preliminary report," in B. Andreue and H. Kyrielets (eds), *Neue Forschungen in Pompeii*, Krefeldinghausen, 1977, pp. 133-42; S. Nappo, "The urban transformation at Pompeii in the late third and early second centuries BC," in Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill, *Domestic Space*, pp. 91-120.
  - 27 See esp. Prinson, "Rented accommodation," pp. 165-81.
  - 28 R. Ling, *The Insulae of the Memandar at Pompeii 1: the structures*, Oxford, 1997, pp. 145-8; P. M. Allison, *The Insulae of the Memandar at Pompeii 3: the finds, a contextual study*, Oxford, 2006, pp. 154-7, 325-6.

Sown Dehrens, *Pedlar Foss* (eds)

The World of Pompeii

(London: Routledge 2005)

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMPANIAN HOUSE

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

## THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION

When, a century ago, Mau wrote about the Pompeian house, he could state with confidence that "the development of the Italic house can be traced at Pompeii over a period of almost four hundred years".<sup>1</sup> That confidence, characteristic of the advances of systematic nineteenth-century science, would have been impossible a hundred years previously; and new advances today make it inappropriate to continue repeating the time-honoured schema of the evolution of "the Italic house". At the start of the twenty-first century, we must register that we know rather less about such an evolution than was supposed, though the evidence is gradually accumulating that will help us pose the questions better.

Until the early part of the nineteenth century, descriptions of "the Roman house" rested on collections by antiquarians and philologists of passages from literary sources, with pride of place given to Vitruvius' detailed account in book 6 of the *De architectura*. It is revealing that Wilhelm Becker, the father of *Hanzlhofer* on Roman antiquities, in the first (1838) edition of his *Gallus*, which attached systematic documentation on Roman domestic life to a fictional narrative, explicitly denied any link between the Pompeian house and that described by Vitruvius, and persisted in ignoring the archaeological evidence.<sup>2</sup> Yet, the opposite viewpoint had been argued by François Mazois in his own account of a fictional visit to a typical Roman aristocratic house, *Le palais de Scævus* (1819), and then in his monumental publication of *Les ruines de Pompéi, dernière partie, les habitations* (1824).<sup>3</sup> Mazois sought to show not only that there was close fit between the Pompeian evidence and Vitruvius (and other literary descriptions of elite Roman houses), but also that the fragments of the marble plan of Severan Rome confirmed the same typology in the metropolis.

Mazois' point of view prevailed, and in later editions of Becker, in the handbook by Marquardt that replaced him, and in later handbooks of which Mau himself was the author, the convergence between the parts of the house described by Vitruvius and the analysis of the "typical" Pompeian house became canonical.<sup>4</sup> Nor is there anything inherently unreasonable in the assumption that what Vitruvius described might be found not just at Rome, but even in provincial Pompeii. Vitruvius, though making explicit reference to Roman magistrates and linking architectural forms to the exigencies of Roman public life (6.5.2), nowhere suggests he is describing a

limited metropolitan phenomenon. On the contrary, he writes of "our" usage in contrast to that of the Greeks (6.6-7), and when he labels it he does so as *italico more* ("Italic custom") not as "Roman" (6.7-7). In the *Italia Italia* of Augustus, a "national" cultural common tongue was ideologically desirable. Moreover, a substantial presence of the Roman ruling class on the Bay of Naples since the beginning of the second century BC was likely to have led to close contact between Roman and local Campanian practices, and it would be strange indeed if there were not multiple points of contact between literary texts of the late republic and early empire, and Campanian architecture of precisely the same period.

But if it is possible to speak in a general way of the "Italic" house by Vitruvius' day, we are on dangerous ground in projecting such a unity into a remote past. The evolution allegedly visible at Pompeii helped build a history of domestic form in Italy, but the evidential basis for this supposed evolution can no longer be regarded as sound. The method of analysis developed in the 1870s by Giuseppe Fiorelli depended on observable contrasts in construction techniques and materials of houses still standing in AD 79 (cf. Adam, Ch. 8). Among the houses excavated to that date, i.e., those in the western part of the city, he distinguished two characteristic groups that he took to be chronologically prior. The first were those with *atrium* constructed of local calcareous stone from the bed of the Sarno, customarily referred to as "limestone" (*calcarei, Kalkstein*), though it is more strictly a travertine, complete with fossilised leaves and reeds. This stone was occasionally put together in large ashlar fired blocks (*opus quadratum*, in Vitruvius' terminology); it appeared in façades, and more commonly in walls of *opus Africatum* (Figure 8.9).<sup>5</sup> The House of the Surgeon (VI.1.16) was taken as the type-house of this group, and frequently identified as the oldest house in the city, articulated completely around the *atrium*, without a rear garden (Figure 8.1). Fiorelli dated this group as early as the fifth century BC, though Mau more cautiously allowed any time before 200 BC.<sup>6</sup>

Fiorelli's second distinctive group were the *triffo* houses, those employing the grey, fine-grained volcanic tuff of neighbouring Nuceria, especially for ashlar façades and architectural details, notably column capitals and *impluvium* basins (cf. Adam, Ch. 8; Figure 8.2). While the Sarno stone houses are generally of modest dimensions, Nuceria tuff appears on some of the great show-houses, notably the House of the Faun (VI.12; see Map 3). Its frequent association with "Hellenistic" architectural details (e.g. Corinthian capitals, mosaic pavements and false marbling or First-Style mural plasterwork) pointed to a second-century BC date, a phase often referred to as Hellenistic Pompeii (cf. Stroock, Ch. 20; Clarke, Ch. 21; Fant, Ch. 22).

Other types of domestic construction were less distinctive than Sarno limestone and tuff: the vast majority of Pompeian walls are constructed of rubblework constructions based on lumps of Sarno stone and/or dark-grey lava joined by a lime and sand mortar (the Vitruvian term *opus incertum* is no more than a catch-all; cf. Dobbin, Appendix to Ch. 8; Figures 8.17 and A8.1). However, Fiorelli and Mau dated a number of techniques after the foundation of the Sullan colony of 80 BC; specifically, mortared stones laid in a more or less precise net-pattern (*opus quadratum* and *reticulatum*), and the construction of load-bearing elements, especially piers, pillars and quoins in fired brick or tile (*opus latericum* or *tetractemum*), or in alternating rows of brick and rectangular stone blocks (*opus vittatum mixtum*) (Figures 8.11, 8.12 and A8.1).<sup>7</sup>

While subsequent work has tended to confirm the first-century BC dating of these latter techniques, the key element for the evolutionary thesis is the early dating of Sarno stone (cf. Petersen, Ch. 24). It fits so neatly with a cherished Roman myth of Italian cultural development: from an "ancestral" simplicity suitable for sturdy rustics such as the Samnites (culturally unsophisticated, but still holding laudable peasant values), to the transformation brought by the wealth of eastern conquest and cultural "Hellenisation" in all its moral ambivalence. The move from the House of the Surgeon, modest in dimensions, bereft of ornament or decoration, but sturdy and four-square in construction, to the breathtaking palatial sophistication of the House of the Faun, seems to summarise such a transformation.

But this chronology can draw little comfort from a series of stratigraphic tests conducted during the past century. The matter was first put to the test in 1926 by Amedeo Maiuri in what was to prove a pioneering excavation.<sup>8</sup> He chose the House of the Surgeon itself to test the controversy between Fiorelli, who asserted the priority of Sarno stone construction, and Heinrich Nissen, who pointed out that different building materials served different functions, and architectural details such as capitals and *impluvium* basins could be cut easily in soft Nuceria tuff, but with great difficulty in the coarse-textured Sarno stone. His excavation found in favour of Fiorelli: in that tuff *impluvium*, indeed, belonged to a second phase of the house; but it simultaneously upset his chronology, since the presence of abundant Campanian black-ware pointed to a third-century BC date.

It is likely that even a third-century date is too high for the House of the Surgeon (Figure 25.4). Maiuri neither published his ceramics nor preserved them for future study, but a series of similar subsoil excavations in the last twenty years seems to show consistently that no domestic structure standing in AD 79 can be confidently dated before 200 BC (cf. Carafà, Ch. 5).<sup>9</sup> Similar results emerge from houses in widely scattered locations in the city: from the House of the Etruscan Column (VI.5.17-18) in the north,<sup>10</sup> to the House of The Emperor Joseph II (VIII.2.39) at the western edge of the "Triangular Forum" (cf. Tybout, Ch. 26); from the House of the Wedding of Hercules (VII.9.47, 65) east of the forum,<sup>11</sup> to the House of Amaranthus (I.9.12) in the rectangular grid of the southeastern quarter.<sup>12</sup> The House of Amaranthus is a particularly close typological parallel for the House of the Surgeon, with its ashlar façade in Sarno stone, and *opus Africatum* construction of the *atrium* courtyard. Yet the evidence indicates a date between the second and mid-first century BC for the walls that stand.

A second clear result that emerges from excavation of Sarno stone *atria* is that again and again they are preceded by earlier structures, following the same alignments, but built of flimsier materials, whether un-mortared Sarno stone, or the crumbly local tuff called *poppannata*, or simply of postholes for wooden structures (see Jones and Robinson, Ch. 25). The alternative picture now emerging is of a Pompeii with a long history before the second century, but one we can scarcely see. It seems to have been laid out, so far as the interior alignments of houses indicate, on the same street grid. It also seems to have been constructed less solidly, doubtless of mud-brick or pisé walls on stone foundations.<sup>13</sup> Because the alignments remain the same for centuries, and because the later foundations for heavier walls may cut deeper than the earlier ones, the evidence is largely disturbed, and we are unlikely to gain more than a fragmentary picture of such early houses.

However, it does not follow that no sequential development is visible in the domestic structures still standing in AD 79. Excavation confirms the picture already visible—in the almost universal spread of blocked windows and doors, and the patchwork of constantly changing construction techniques and materials—that Pompeian houses were subject to repeated and intensive modification, often ebbing and flowing beyond the property boundaries in place during the final phase.<sup>14</sup> But the intense history of construction and modification belongs to a much shorter period than Man could have guessed—at most the last three centuries of the city's history, when Pompeii was already touched by the enormous wealth flowing into Italy from Rome's eastern conquests.

### THE ATRIUM NUCLEUS

Even if the surviving evidence will not permit us to observe the evolution of the Italic house from its "origins", the traceable transformations of the last two centuries BC and the first century AD are substantial: the pace of change is frenetic, whether one looks at construction techniques, decoration, or simply the traces of constant rebuilding (cf. Nappo, Ch. 23; Perese, Ch. 24; Tybout, Ch. 26). The nucleus of the Roman house is the *atrium*. Whether one considers this (in evolutionist terms) an "original core" from which a more complex house develops, or regards it as a basic element of the syntax of the house—the variations upon which generate the extant house forms—it is hard to describe or analyse the Pompeian house except from this point of view (cf. Allison, Ch. 17).

The Vitruvian prescription for an *atrium* (with which his account of the Roman house opens) focuses foremost on the varying types of roof-construction (Figure 8.19): the five variants of Tuscanic, Corinthian, tetrastyle, displuviate and estrudinate (6.3.1) give the appearance of a canon almost like that of the orders. For that reason, it has been widely assumed that a space must be roofed to qualify as an "*atrium*", and in particular that the rainwater basin of the central *impluvium* is a necessary marker of a true *atrium*. But this assumption hampers discussion in two ways. The first is that, even when the evidence is preserved so clearly and to such a height as is the case at Pompeii, it is frequently impossible to determine what the roofline of the building was. Even the tall-tale *impluvium* basin is not so certain a signal of an inwardly sloping "compluviate" roof of the classic Tuscanic *atrium*, since there are cases where the basin acted as a sump for the run-off to collect water from a wholly open area, and did not correspond to a limited opening in the roof. As most Pompeian houses are known primarily from their ground plans, this is a significant disadvantage. The second is that in emphasising the *atrium* as a sheltered internal space, we miss its functional connection to the central open court of the standard Mediterranean house, whether in Greece, or elsewhere in Italy and the Roman world. Of course it does matter if the central court is roofed over, and what effect that has on the status and functionality of the house. But in any case, the *atrium* is simply a central space, whether open to the sky or partly enclosed, around which individual rooms are ordered.<sup>15</sup>

Looking at the ground-plans, and setting aside for a moment the roofs, the regularity of the syntax that determines how rooms are organized around the central space is striking. One feature above all emerges as characteristic of the Romano-Pompeian house, and that is the presence of rooms opening directly onto the central area

without substantial walls and narrow doors to limit movement from one area to another. The classic example is the *tablinum*, conventionally situated on axis with the entrance passage, and forming the central focus of the vista from the entrance door, though in a number of houses the *tablinum* may also be found off-centre, or even to one side. So familiar is this conventional image that it is easy to forget how unusual it is in domestic architecture for rooms not to be entirely isolable from each other. Indeed, as in the House of the Wooden Partition (III.11) in Herculaneum, temporary wooden structures or even curtains could partially isolate the *tablinum* (cf. Figure 27.2). Nevertheless, the distinctive design feature is the absence of such a structural partition (cf. Allison, Ch. 17).

The same form is replicated in the *alae* of the classic Vitruvian type, much smaller rooms than the *tablinum*, and normally, as their name ("wings") implies, flanking it on either side. Their characteristic, too, is the absence of a separating wall, so that one can move unimpeded between the central space of the *atrium*, to the *alae* at the sides, and to the *tablinum* at the end. The phenomenon of the "open" room is not limited to the *atrium*. Around the peristyle walkway may also be found open rooms, though these more usually show in their thresholds and jamb signs of widely opening shutters: according to their size these are generally termed (following Vitruvius) *exedrae* and *aedae*. The vital implication of all these open rooms for human encounters is that they offer positive encouragement for people to move freely in and out, whereas a room only accessible through a narrow doorway seems more "private", not to be entered without explicit permission. Since, according to Vitruvius (6.5.1), one of the basic social requirements of Roman domestic architecture is that it distinguish "common" space accessible without invitation from "private" space of limited access, the structural distinction of "open" and "closed" rooms is likely to be socially significant.

The *atrium* nucleus, based on a rhythm of "open" and "closed" rooms, implies equally ritualised patterns of social encounter. The circumstances of imperial Rome and Ostia, where such *domus* were the exception, and multiple-occupancy properties or *insulae* the norm, have given rise to the impression that *atrium* houses were limited to the rich. Though this was true of high-density population centres, even in AD 79 houses built round an *atrium* nucleus were more like the norm. The enormous flexibility of the *atrium* scheme made this possible. The classic arrangement with central *tablinum* opposite the door, flanked by two *alae*, and with a "Tuscanic" *impluvium* at the centre, on the scale, e.g., of the House of Pansa (VI.6.1, 12), requires a broad plot of ground (Figure 18.1). But many more modest houses, such as the House of the Fruit Orchard (1.9.5) or the House of the Lararium (1.6.4), dispense with one side (Figure 18.2), settling for a *tablinum* with only one *alae* and corresponding side-rooms. Others dispense with side-rooms entirely, so that the atrium area occupies the whole width of the plot (cf. Perese, Ch. 24). Curiously enough, this is the case with some houses of considerable magnificence, such as the House of Paquius Proculus (1.7.1, 20), which by dint of painted doors on the side walls gives the impression of a far more ample space than it has at its disposal (Figure 21.4). Similarly, the Samnite House at Herculaneum (V.1), which has no side-rooms except a staircase to rooms above (Figure 27.1), gives the impression of being a traditional *atrium* house (whence its name).

The fact that reasonably grand houses could permit variations on the *tablinum/alae* formula should encourage us to recognise similar principles at work in the much

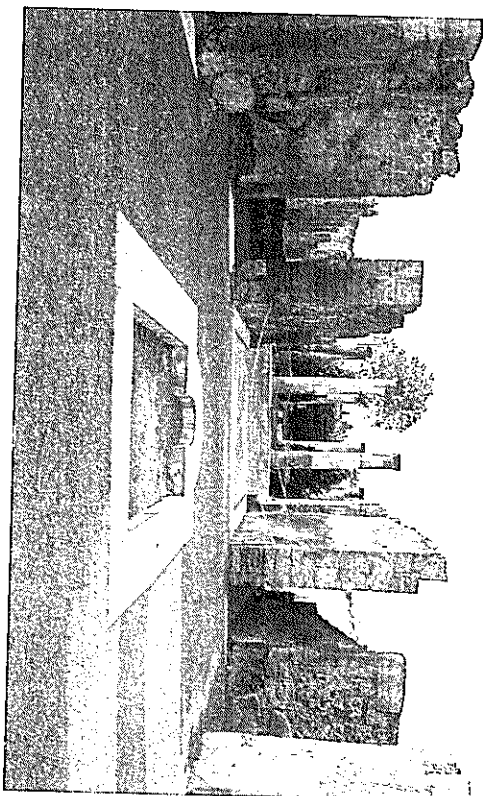


Figure 18.1 View north from the *atrium* to the peristyle in the House of Pausus (VI.6.1).  
Photo: P. W. Foss.

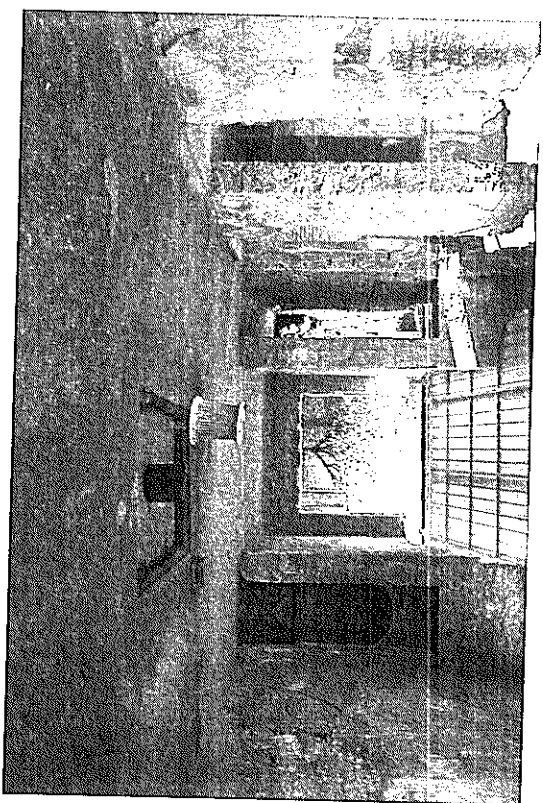


Figure 18.2 The *atrium* of the House of the Lararium (I.6.4).  
Photo: P. W. Foss.

more modest "traced" houses of Pompeii. Recent work in the southeast quarter has suggested that many of the rectangular blocks were laid out around 200 BC, with modest houses on a standard set of patterns in narrow strips 25 to 30 ft wide (Napoli, Ch. 23; Figure 23.2). Front rooms were grouped around a court that appears to have been originally open, on principles clearly linked to those of the *atrium*. Usually there are no side-rooms, and the court occupies the full width of the plot. The *tablinum* may be set off-centre on the opposite side of the court from the entrance (Figure 23.3); more rarely, as in the House of the Ship Europa (I.15.1), it may be set on the central axis (cf. Map 3). An interesting variation is found in House (I.20.4), where the entrance is at the edge of the plot, instead of the centre, and the *tablinum* and its flanking rooms rest on an axis at a right-angle to that of the entrance. These variations demonstrate that even in modest houses, datable as early as any of the grander ones, the "open" areas of court and *tablinum* serve a social function, and the appeal of axially is not forgotten.

At the other end of the spectrum, the *atrium* nucleus allowed multiplication. The House of the Faun (VI.12) is the classic example of a well-attested phenomenon of houses with twin *atria* (cf. Map 3). Here, it is evidently part of the architectural design, not the result of amalgamating two previously independent units. There has been much speculation over the function of the doubled *atrium*, and it has been argued that a secondary *atrium* serves as a "private" side for the use of the family, while the main *atrium* is the show-piece for visitors.<sup>16</sup> Certainly, doubling up the *atrium* nucleus would provide the owner with greater flexibility. But this doubling, like the removal of side-rooms, again signals how flexible the idea of the *atrium* was: a basic building block from which the grandest and the more modest houses alike could be adapted.

The *atrium* nucleus was deeply embedded in how the Pompeian house was conceived. As the Romans imagined, it was rooted in tradition. The term "Tuscanic" for the typical arrangement of the *atrium* roof implies an Etruscan origin, which antiquarians such as Varro were happy to assert.<sup>17</sup> The *atrium* form is notable in a number of fourth-century BC Etruscan tombs, and excavations are now indicating the antiquity of the arrangement (and cf. Figure 24.5).<sup>18</sup> The houses of fifth-century Marzabotto provide clear evidence for houses with the "cruciform" pattern of *atrium* and *tablinum* flanked by *alae*.<sup>19</sup> Something similar is distinguishable at sixth-century Regisvilla, and (rather less clearly) in the "House of the Impluvium" at Roselle.<sup>20</sup> The great *atrium* houses at the foot of the Palatine have sixth-century origins, and though traces of the earliest phases are frustratingly fragmentary, the suggestion is attractive that some type of *atrium* organisation goes back to the beginning.<sup>21</sup> The great villa on the outskirts of Rome on the Via Flaminia (Auditorium site) has an equally long history, and at least by the third century BC the canonical *atrium* arrangement is certain.<sup>22</sup>

How similar patterns reached Pompeii cannot yet be told for certain. Either what is attested in Etruria is part of a more widespread Italic phenomenon; or if we are dealing with a specifically Etruscan tradition that was taken up by the Romans, it is possible that it reached Pompeii through imitation of third-century Roman settlements. Certainly, the *atrium* house emerges as standard at the Latin colony of Fregellae from the earliest visible phases in the third century.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, in Cosa we find large *atrium* houses around the forum with the classic cruciform *atrium* pattern dating back to the early second century; more modest traced houses of the same date are based on open courts reminiscent of those at Pompeii.<sup>24</sup> One way or

another, the language of domestic architecture as we meet it in Pompeii during the last two centuries BC belongs to a common language widely diffused through the rapidly Romanising cities of Italy.

## HELLENISATION AND ROMANISATION

Pompeian house form was subject to evolution, and the period where our evidence survives is one of rapid change in all fields of Italian material culture. It is traditional and convenient to refer to this transformation, especially in the last two centuries BC, by the term "Hellenisation". But the term conceals a range of assumptions that should be treated with caution. The extensive imitation, or appropriation, of a wide range of eastern Mediterranean cultural goods is beyond doubt. But the picture of an authentic native culture becoming absorbed into a Greek cultural ambit is misleading. It underestimates the continuous and profound impact of Greek models in preceding centuries, especially in an area that lay on the borders of Greek south Italy, and it conceals the fact that the cultural change goes hand-in-hand with the political absorption of Italian cities into the Roman sphere. "Hellenisation" is shorthand for the cultural process by which Italy became Roman. This is the period during which Pompeii is transformed from an Oscan-speaking independent "ally" into a Latin-speaking colony operating under Roman law. The idea that the Pompeian house is transformed from an "Italic" model to a compromise between Greek and Italic makes little sense.

"Hellenistic" influence on the Pompeian house is clear at many levels, from the articulation of the house as a whole, to the shaping and disposition of individual rooms, to their furnishing and decoration. The House of the Faun (VI.12) may be the classic example of second-century Hellenisation. The house has frequently been compared to the royal palaces of Hellenistic cities such as Pergamum or Alexandria, not only because of its exceptional size (nearly 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>), but because of its articulation around two magnificent colonnaded gardens or "peristyles". The rooms around these peristyles, though we can only guess how the inhabitants used them, let alone named them, fit the typology of the Greek room names transmitted by Vitruvius, *oeci* or *exedrae*, rather than that of the traditional Roman reception room, *trichlinium* (cf. Allison, Ch. 17). The culmination of the decorative system of the house, the Alexander mosaic, is placed on the central visual axis between the first and second peristyles, in a room referred to as an *exedra* (37), echoing the vocabulary form of the Hellenistic public gymnasium, with large sitting-out spaces (especially on the central axes) used for philosophical discussion, etc. (cf. Clarke, Ch. 21).<sup>25</sup>

The decoration of the house consciously transports the viewer into the Hellenistic world, with its image of Alexander in battle against the Persian king, with mosaics evoking the flora and fauna of the Nile, and mythological and religious icons of Greek culture such as the panther-borne Dionysus, or the erotic embrace of a satyr. The eponymous bronze statue of a Faun points to the same Greek world of satyrs, though by an attractive conjecture, it may also be word-play on the name of the owners, the distinguished Oscan family of the Satrii or Satrii.<sup>26</sup> The wall-decoration above these pavements is the most extensive surviving example of the false marble panelling characteristic of the First Style, well attested on contemporary second-century Delos (cf. Strocka, Ch. 20; Fant, Ch. 22).

The standard account of Pompeian house development sees the addition of the peristyle to the *atrium* nucleus as the hallmark of the Hellenisation of the Italic house. But the House of the Faun shows how complex the transformation actually is. The peristyles do not follow a model based on domestic architecture. The ordinary Greek house was frequently organised around a courtyard, which in second-century Delos, for example, may be enhanced by a colonnade. The palaces of Pergamum are also organised around colonnaded peristyles, off which rows of banqueting rooms open. But the peristyles of the House of the Faun do not exist to articulate the rooms, which are few in number. The model is that of the public gymnasium, with an occasional *exedra*, and a set of baths to one side. In this sense, far from showing the influence of Hellenistic domestic architecture, the peristyles are an attempt to lift the house beyond the merely domestic, and to add the magnificence of a public building, rich with evocations of the opulent East.<sup>27</sup>

The peristyle only gradually transforms the underlying articulation of the house. If the traditional pattern was a group of rooms around an *atrium* court, with a garden plot (*hortus*) behind, the colonnades of the peristyle initially serve to give luxury and magnificence to the garden plot (cf. Jaschewski, Ch. 31). The terraced houses of the early second century, which are too modest to have peristyles, may still have a few rooms looking out on the backyard and the *hortus*. Only as the image of the colonnade becomes embedded does the focus shift from the *atrium* to the peristyle as the place to locate major reception rooms. Rooms originally constructed to open on the *atrium* are re-orientated to face the peristyle. If the *tablinum*, for instance, starts as a room towards the garden, by the first century AD it becomes normal to remove the back wall entirely, so that the *tablinum* becomes a transitional area that pulls the visitor through to the peristyle behind. In the House of Paquius Proculus (I.7.1, 20), the enormous *atrium* with its eye-catching mosaic floor ceases to be the focus for habitable rooms, which are set around the peristyle (Figure 21.4). The *tablinum* is deep and high, and its lack of a back wall pulls the eye through to the peristyle beyond with a fountain at its centre.

In view of the enthusiasm with which houses draw on the architecture and decoration of the Hellenistic world, it is remarkable how tenaciously the *atrium* survives at Pompeii. Indeed, we are not dealing with a mere "survival", but with a key part of the self-image of the inhabitants, comparable to the toga-clad statues on tombs outside the city gates. It is the very awareness that peristyles and mosaics and mythological paintings and statues in the garden point to a non-Italic world that enables the *atrium* to act as a guarantee of Italian identity. Vitruvius explicitly associates the architectural form with Roman social rituals of *diemalis* (6.5.2). That does not mean that every Pompeian house with an *atrium* and *tablinum* received clients, but the symbolic associations of the form gave it widespread appeal and potency.

We can trace, then, a shift of emphasis over the course of two centuries, as entertainment comes to centre on the peristyle rather than the *atrium*. But while countless features are imitated from the Greek world, the Pompeian house does not thereby become assimilated to the Greek house. On the contrary, the cultural distinctiveness of the face it presents to the visitor is underlined, making what was probably a common Italic house-form in the third century BC a marker of "Roman" identity in

an Italy increasingly culturally homogeneous under the forcible impact of Roman control.

### PAST THE ATRIUM HOUSE

The classic domestic image of the high empire is the multiple-occupancy *insula* on many floors of robust brick-clad concrete. Was Pompeii heading in the same direction when its evolution was interrupted, and were the days of the *atrium* house already numbered? Perhaps so, but the thesis of an such an "evolution" starting at Pompeii and ending at Ostia attributes too much importance to the casual survival of evidence from two sites, each unique in its own way. Pompeii betrays no sign of developing brick and concrete multi-floor *insulae*—although the single example in Herculaneum in the Palaestra complex (*Insula Orientalis* II) shows that the model was already known beyond Rome, where it had probably developed by the late first century BC. The key factor behind such construction is population pressure, expressed in rising rents that permit capital outlay.

By the early first century AD, there was some growth of population associated with commercial prosperity, and a fairly active rental market developed at Pompeii. While the Ostian-type *insula* is not favoured, the *atrium* house could be adapted to multiple occupancy—again, the "*atrium* house" is not a single model of construction, but a set of paradigms that allowed many different expressions. A model of multiple occupancy is the *Insula Arriana Polliana* (VI.6), thanks to the *dipinto* that in AD 79 was advertising the availability for rent of shops with upper rooms (*tabernae cum pergulis*), up-market apartments (*cenacula aequitria*), and houses (*domus*) (cf. Pison, Ch. 29).<sup>28</sup> The plan of the *insula* (Map 3) shows how the construction of a particularly magnificent *atrium*-peristyle house, the House of Pansa (Figure 18.1), did not exclude rental activity, but positively encouraged it. The house occupies the core of the plot, leaving room around the edges for a penumbra of lesser properties, shops in the main façade, and to the side, small residences built around a courtyard nucleus, while staircases direct to upper apartments appear occasionally between the other units. The size (and implicit wealth) of the House of Pansa left little room for rival owners in the block, and enabled it to exploit the rental potential of the land spared by its own architecture.

All three types of rented unit, *tabernae*, *cenacula* and *domus*, seem to be widespread in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Shops incorporated in the façades of larger houses are likely to have belonged to them more often than not. Three possibilities are common: the shop independent of the main house with stairs up to a room above (Figure 8.14), the shop linked directly to the *atrium* behind, and the independent shop beneath upper rooms accessible from within the *atrium*. The last two of these types normally imply letting; the first type also may have been let, though we cannot prove it.

Rented *cenacula* are most easily recognised from separate staircases accessible directly from the street. It is reasonable to infer that inhabitants of such apartments had a strictly commercial relationship with the owners of the whole property. But we cannot exclude the possibility that the upper rooms accessible from staircases internal to the *atrium* could also be let.<sup>29</sup> Just as it would be difficult to trace archaeologically the presence of lodgers in a modern family house, we should not assume that the *atrium* house was always the sole preserve of a family group.

### CONCLUSION

The history of domestic form at Pompeii and Herculaneum is one of constant change and adaptation. We should beware the picture of a steady, unilinear evolution. One house that can be traced through in-depth excavation is the House of Amaranthus (I.9.12; Figure 19.1).<sup>30</sup> At first sight it seems an early example of a "limestone period" *atrium* house, constructed with Sarno stone in *opus quadratum* and *opus Africanum*. Yet excavation suggests it was built no earlier than the second century BC, and possibly later. It further reveals that the *impluvium* set axially between *fauces* and *tablinum* was no more than a flowerbed with a raised border, placed to mimic a rainwater basin. A compluviate roof can be excluded; instead, like other row houses in the area, it was constructed around an open court. At some point, the *tablinum* was raised by half a metre, and its back wall demolished, to open directly on a newly organised peristyle. Simultaneously, the side bedroom, previously accessible to the *atrium*, was turned round to face the peristyle. These changes may seem typical of second-century BC Hellenisation, but they are archaeologically datable to the mid-first century AD, when Fourth-Style decoration was applied.

In the adjoining house at no. 11, we have a clear example of an upper floor installed for *cenacula*: the brick columns of the colonnade are blocked in to sustain the weight of an upper storey, and new latrines are installed at both levels. Simultaneously, a narrow opening on the street is created for a stairway that leads directly to these rooms. But while such upper rooms were attributed by Maucci to the "commercialisation" of the city in the aftermath of the earthquake of AD 62/63, in this case it is clear that they were installed some decades earlier. By the last years of the city, the upper floor collapsed, probably from seismic activity, and the door to the external stair was blocked in. In the same period, the *atrium* of the linked house 12 was reduced to a storage area for the bar at no. 11, and its front room changed to a donkey stable.

The persistence of the *atrium* form may be attributed above all to its adaptability. The same basic pattern serves the magnificent public reception area of the House of the Faun or the basic front courtyard of the House of Amaranthus, with its *amborae* and its donkey. Certainly by the early imperial period when Vitruvius is writing, the *atrium* house may be seen as the symbol of an authentic Roman style. Yet the use and ideology of domestic space changed constantly through time, and it is dangerous to project the same ideology back onto a remote past, even if it remains plausible that predecessors of the same form had a long history. The fact that the empire brought new social and economic pressures does not mean that the *atrium* house became irrelevant, giving way to a new architecture shaped around the needs of landlords maximising rental income. The Pompeii of AD 79 shows that the old forms were entirely capable of adapting to these needs.

### NOTES

1 A. Mau, *Pompeii: in life and art*, (transl. and ed. by F. W. Keelsey), rev. edn, London, 1902, p. 245. The present text was last revised in 2002. Much has been published subsequently that bears on the questions discussed, notably the excavation of F. Conelli's group. See F. Conelli and F. Pesando (eds), *Ritrovare Pompei: I. L'insula 10 della Regio VI*, Studi della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei no. 12, Rome, 2006.

- 2 W. Becker, *Gallus, oder Römische Szenen aus der Zeit Augusti*, Leipzig, 1838. An English translation was printed by J. W. Parker of London in 1844.
- 3 C. F. Mazois, *Le palais de Sévère*, Paris, 1819; C. F. Mazois, *Les ruines de Pompéi dessinées et mesurées pendant les années 1809-1810-1811*, 4 vols, Paris, 1824-38.
- 4 Gallus had gone through nine editions by 1888. J. Marguardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer, in Handbuch der römischen Alterthümer*, Band 7 (2 vols), Leipzig, 1879-82; A. Mau, *Führer durch Pompéi*, Naples, 1893; Mau, *Pompéi*.
- 5 The (modern) term refers to its frequency in North Africa, where it dates back to the Punic period. It originated as a drystone construction with a framework of large blocks laid in alternate vertical and horizontal layers, holding together a rubble infill of smaller blocks of the same stone.
- 6 Mau, *Pompéi*, p. 280.
- 7 Mau, *Pompéi*, pp. 41-3.
- 8 A. Maiuri, "Saggi nella 'Casa del Chirurgo' (Reg. VI, Ins. I, n. 10)", *NS*, 1930, pp. 381-95, reprinted in: A. Maiuri, *Alla ricerca di Pompei preromana*, Naples, 1973, pp. 1-13.
- 9 The more extensive investigations of the Anglo-American project of R. Jones and D. Robinson *et al.* have recently confirmed the down-dating of this house (cf. Ch. 23). For the general picture, see C. Chiaramonte Treci, "Sull'origine e lo sviluppo dell'architettura residenziale di Pompei sannitica", *Atene*, 1990, vol. 43, pp. 5-34; A. D'Ambrosio, and S. De Caro, "Un contributo all'architettura e all'urbanistica di Pompei in età ellenistica. I saggi nella casa VII, 4, 62", *AIÖN*, 1989, vol. 11, pp. 173-215.
- 10 M. Bonghi Jovino *et al.*, *Ricerche a Pompei. L'insula 5 della Regio VI dalle origini al 79 d.C. I* (campagne di scavo 1976-1979), 2 vols, Rome, 1984; those results have now been modified by I. P. Carafà and M. T. d'Alesio, "Lo sviluppo urbanistico di Pompei alla luce delle recenti scoperte. Considerazioni preliminari in margine alle nuove ricerche nelle Regioni VIII e VII", *RSPomp*, forthcoming; A. Carandini, "Nuovi progetti, nuove domande, nuovi metodi", in P. G. Guzzo (ed.), *Pompei. Scienza e società*, Convegno Internazionale, Napoli 25-27 novembre 1998, Milan, 2001, pp. 127-9.
- 12 See below, and n. 30.
- 13 On the importance of mud walls and the links with Fregellae, see F. Pesando, "Forme abitative e controllo sociale: la documentazione archeologica delle colonie latine in età repubblicana", in *Habitat et société*, Actes des Rencontres 22-23-24 octobre 1998, Antibes, 1999, p. 247; P. G. Guzzo, "Alla ricerca della Pompei sannitica", in *Studi sull'Italia dei Sanniti*, Milan, 2000, p. 109.
- 14 Magisterially documented by R. Ling, *The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii*, vol. 1, Oxford, 1997. See also now Corelli and Pesando, *Ritigere Pompei*.
- 15 See my discussion in "Rethinking the atrium house", in R. Laurence and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds), *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and beyond*, JRA Suppl. Ser. no. 22, 1997, pp. 219-40.
- 16 This is rightly questioned by J.-A. Dickmann, *Domus frequentata: Amphibolus Welwan in pompeianischen Stadthaus*, Munich, 1999, pp. 53ff. For a recent study of the design of the House of the Faun, see E. Dwyer, "The unified Plan of the House of the Faun", *JSAH*, 2001, vol. 60-3, pp. 328-43.
- 17 Varro, *Ling.* 5.161, *Turcinium ditum a Turis, postquam illorum cum actum simulare coepit, atrium appellatum ab Arriantibus Turis: illuc enim exemplum sumptum*.
- 18 On the excavations of archaic houses on the Palatine, see A. Carandini and P. Carafà (eds), *Palatium e Sacra Via I*, Bollettino di Archeologia, 1995 (2000), vols 31-34.
- 19 G. Colonna, "Urbanistica e architettura", in M. Pallottino *et al.*, *Roma: Storia e civiltà degli Etruschi*, Milan, 1986, pp. 371-530; G. Sassarelli, *La città etrusca di Marzabotto*, Bologna, 1989.
- 20 L. Donati, *La Casa dell'impluvium: architettura etrusca a Roselle*, Rome, 1994.
- 21 See Carandini and Carafà, *Palatium e Sacra Via I*.
- 22 N. Terrenato, "The Auditorium site and the origins of the Roman villa", *JRA*, 2001, vol. 14, pp. 5-32.
- 23 F. Corelli and P. G. Moni (eds), *Fregellae I. Le fonti, la storia, il territorio*, Rome, 1998.