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latter, then, must have found its earliest expressions at least some years before 46 B.C.. This tallies with Stročka's date of Phase II A (c.50-30 B.C.), on the one hand, and, on the other, with the double row of sturdy-looking pillars supporting a ceiling rendered in perspective, still very close to their counterparts in Phase I except for their ornamentation.¹³¹

The new *terminus post quem* of 59 B.C. for Phase I C of the Second Style, the assignment of two of its major complexes in the Vesuvian area to the 50s B.C., and that of the Phase II A Odyssey paintings in Rome to shortly after 50 B.C., bring considerable gain. As to the history of Roman wall-painting, the validity of Beyen's allegedly over-subtle subdivisions is confirmed by external evidence. Stročka's slight update of Beyen's "Stufen" in absolute terms shows how such a model can be modified and ameliorated in the light of new evidence without losing its internal coherence and plausibility. Stročka's findings fit in strikingly with the new absolute dates derived from Oettel's and Coarelli's research.

But there is also a perspective opening up for social history, which can only be roughly outlined here. The influx of new settlers bringing in new money must have given a vital impulse to the economy of the cities under Vesuvius, and must have had considerable impact on social life too, though not as trenchant as two decades earlier with the Sullan colonization.¹³² Once again the region's ties with Rome appear to be very strong.¹³³ It is probable that high-ranking veteran officers built conspicuous *villae rusticae* like those at Boscoreale and Oplontis.¹³⁴ The villas enable us to reconstruct some aspects of the lifestyle of these new grandees, eager to display their wealth resulting from booty and retirement-bonuses. Points in case are the wall-paintings. The fact that they can be classified as "Phase I, Stufe C" shows that they were something very new and stunning at the moment, and may have been executed by workshops brought in from Rome and working for the capital's élite; and a detailed examination of their highly differentiated wall-schemes reveals the full extent to which this peculiar type of advanced Second Style wall-painting was used to underline social hierarchies in the new élite's domestic space.

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Comments on this paper, written by B. Bergmann and C. Hallett, are printed here and on p. 414.

Houses of cards Bettina Bergmann

We have reached an important moment in the study of the Roman house. The past 20 years have been extremely active, with scholars approaching domestic space down different disciplinary and methodological avenues. Since the important essay on Campanian houses by A. Wallace-Hadrill in 1988, new excavations and scores of books and articles have changed the picture of Pompeii and, with it, that of the Roman house. Theoretical archaeologists have taken the lead, approaching Pompeii as an "archaeological laboratory" in which, armed with the interpretative tools of spatial and statistical analysis, they attempt to recover ancient behavioral patterns. The interdisciplinary picture that emerges is complex and inevitably contradictory. There is so much new information and such a tangle of perspectives that it is time to consider what we have learned and what kinds of interpretative tools we might best employ. Without doubt this is an exciting time in

131 Beyen II, 267: "Das Gebälk wird hier wie auch oft während der ersten Phase ... getragen von einer doppelten Reihe schlanker, aber doch kräftig aussehender Stützen"; but, as Beyen subsequently points out, their ornamentation unequivocally betrays their belonging to Phase II A. Cf. also J. Engemann, *Architekturdarstellungen des frühen zweiten Stils* (Heidelberg 1967) 142-46, esp. 142-43: "... stehen die Odysseelandschaften ... deutlich in der Tradition der architektonischen Durchblicksdarstellungen des frühen II. Stils".

132 The Sullan colonization was compulsory, and very much at the expense of the inhabitants of the *ager Pompeianus*, whereas Caesar's laws of 59 B.C. provided for the acquisition of land on a voluntary basis.

133 D'Arms (supra n.56) is still the classic study.

134 "Like those": the identity of the original builders of these specific villas is unknown.