Nothing certain is known about the owners of the Casa del Fauno, which was the richest Pompeian mansion of its period. On the basis of inscriptions found in the house the ownership has been attributed either to the old Campanian family of the Satrii, or to a family with the Roman name Cassia\(^1\). De Vos thinks that the size of the house and its sumptuous decorations suggest that the owner was not a local aristocrat, but a person of the status of a Marius or C. Papius Mutilus. One of her arguments is the presence of the Latin inscription HAVE in the pavement at the front entrance, which seems to date from before 80 B.C. However, this does not necessarily suggest Roman ownership because the inscription is not an official one and Latin was widespread in Campania in the 2nd cent. B.C.; in any case Pompeii had been a Roman ally since long\(^2\). Although Roman ownership cannot be excluded it is legitimate to ask why the owners should not have been a Campanian aristocrat with interests in Pompeii. The second largest house in Pompeii, the Casa di Pansa, belonged to the Pompeian branch of the Arrii, a Sabellian *gens* which is also known from Rome. In this respect one could, for example, compare the Puteolan Granii, a family which boasted a stepson of Marius. It had wide commercial interests, among other places in Delos, and also possessed a branch at Pompeii. Another possibility is that the owners belonged to a prominent Praenestine family, like the Oppii or the Saufei, members of which are attested in Rome, Delos and Pompeii\(^3\). The ownership of the Casa del Fauno by a Praenestine family would offer an easy explanation for the connections which we have recognised between the house’s mosaics and

\(^{1}\) See for these below nn. 11, 13 and nn. 6, 7, 9 respectively.

\(^{2}\) See De Vos 1984, 134, and for the inscription Pernice 90, pl. 42,1.

\(^{3}\) For the Arrii see Castrén 137, no. 42. For the Granii see Ch. V, nn. 29, 35, 37; Castrén 172, no. 187; Plutarch, *Marius* XXXV 6; cf. also the villa of Marius at Misenum, see Ch. V, n. 41. For the Oppii and the Saufei see Ch. V., n. 48; Castrén 39, n. 6; 200, no. 290 and p. 217, no. 358; for the Oppii see also below in this appendix.
those from Palestrina\textsuperscript{4}. However, Praenestine ownership is by no means necessary for these connections, it is just as likely that both Praenestine and Pompeian clients ordered mosaics from the same workshop, a workshop which was possibly established in the Italian port of Puteoli\textsuperscript{5}.

There is further evidence from the Casa del Fauno which must be considered in this respect. In the tetrastyle atrium the body was found of a woman, apparently a victim of the eruption of A.D. 79, wearing rich jewelry, including a ring with the inscription \textit{Cassia}. In addition, there was a graffito reading \textit{M. Cassius} on a column in the Doric peristyle. These indications led, as early as the last century to the idea that the owners of the house were the Cassii\textsuperscript{6}. However, the Cassii are attested at Pompeii only in the Imperial period\textsuperscript{7}. The inscription on the ring may indicate only that the woman herself belonged to the \textit{gens} Cassia. Her relationship to the family which owned the house, may simply have been one of marriage\textsuperscript{8}. Some inscriptions on the façade of the Casa del Fauno mentioning a Cassius are in fact arbitrary reconstructions by Della Corte\textsuperscript{9}. The most that we can deduce is that the \textit{gens} Cassia may have been related to the owners of the Casa del Fauno in the period preceding the disaster of 79 A.D.\textsuperscript{10}.

More important evidence from the pre-Roman period is provided by two Oscan inscriptions discovered in house. The first one appears on a fragment of travertine which was found in the atrium near the entrance of the \textit{tablinum}. It measures 81 cm in length, and 27 cm in height; its depth is not recorded but according to a reproduction of the fragment may be estimated 6–8 cm. It has a heavy moulding on the lower part which takes up about 1/3 of the height. The inscription reads: \textit{v sadiris v. aïdil}, which may be translated into Latin as \textit{V(ibus) Satrius V(ibi f.) aedilis}\textsuperscript{11}. The

\textsuperscript{4} See Ch. VI, n. 5 and App. 18.
\textsuperscript{5} See Ch. VI, n. 40.
\textsuperscript{6} See G. Fiorelli, \textit{Descrizione di Pompei} (1875) 152 ff.; Della Corte on various occasions (see Fuhrmann 334, n. 6) and lastly Della Corte 97.
\textsuperscript{7} See Castrèn 150, no. 105.
\textsuperscript{8} See already Fuhrmann 173 ff.
\textsuperscript{9} See Fuhrmann 173 ff.; and for this habit of Della Corte, Castrèn 26.
\textsuperscript{10} See M.L. Gordon, The Ordo of Pompeii, \textit{JRS} 17 (1927) 165 ff., esp. 167; Fuhrmann 173, 194.
\textsuperscript{11} See R.S. Conway, \textit{The Italic Dialects} (1879) I, 65, no. 53; E. Vetter, \textit{Handbuch der italischen Dialekte} (1953) 53, no. 20; Fuhrmann 183; Castrèn 42 f.; a reproduction in I. Zvetaieff, \textit{Sylloge Inscriptionum Oscarum} (1878) 46, no. 68.