necessarily, and elements do not appear to contribute much to the argument, such as the structural outlines (pp. 49, 81, 121) and text-critical discussions. The manuscript also contains many typographical errors, some of which are confusing, for example, “compliment” and “complement” (p. 67).

Iwuamadi makes a relatively uncontroversial argument and provides generally solid exegesis from a grammatical-historical perspective. Syntactically, he makes use of the modal participle, inceptive aorist, the “parental genitive” (p. 33), the explicative conjunction, the “totalizing” use of the article (p. 92), and so forth. Sometimes he presses the language. Based on a word study of eiden (“saw”) at Mark 1:16, Iwuamadi claims “it may be said that the mission which the disciples will be given is already in the mind of Jesus at the moment he sees them for the first time” (p. 23). Yet this reader found the grounding of points in a careful, grammatically informed reading of Scripture refreshing.

Iwuamadi does take sides on a few disputed matters. He argues against the dative of disadvantage at 6:11 (p. 99). Taking a postresurrection perspective on the hinge of Mark’s presentation, Peter’s confession, and Jesus’ first passion disclosure (8:27–38), he claims genea (“generation”) should be “understood as referring to the contemporary society before which the follower finds himself” (p. 138).

The study reflects a solid knowledge of the secondary literature on Mark, in multiple languages, but makes little use of Evangelical scholarship, with the exception of Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach, by J. F. Williams. Strikingly absent is interaction with Eckhard Schnabel’s Early Christian Mission. Yet Iwuamadi has provided additional grounding, along with Schnabel and now Michael Bird (Jesus and the Origins of the Gentile Mission), for the claim that early Christian mission goes back to the historical Jesus: “The mission of the Twelve is an enlarged, universal and unlimited mission” (p. 89).

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Peter Oakes, Greenwood Lecturer in New Testament (University of Manchester), builds on recent archaeological study of ancient Pompeii and seeks to make this relevant for NT study. The relevant aims are (1) to refine our understanding of the social make-up of typical house churches and (2) to explore how an NT text (Romans 12) might sound to such a typical group in Rome.

To accomplish the first aim, Oakes takes a close look at the archaeological finds in one section of Pompeii, a block known as the Insula of the Menander (chap. 1). This insula consists of a large number of dwellings, workshops, gardens, and so on, all of varied size, two-storied in some places, and home to people of varied wealth and social status. Maps and pictures help orient the reader. Oakes reconstructs four of the dwellings and their inhabitants, creating with considerable imagination and detail four households. The reader meets, for example, Iris the barmaid, a slave whose work also involves providing sexual
favors to bar guests, and Sabina the freedwoman and impoverished stoneworker. Oakes then asks (chap. 2) what we might learn from this insula as to the typical social make-up of early Christian communities. A common reconstruction, against which Oakes argues, envisions poor believers meeting in the home of a wealthy elite. Instead, Oakes proposes a space-distribution model which relies more on the potential size of dwelling space to reconstruct social status. At least two results will be important to NT scholars. First, it is doubtful we would find many (if any) of the truly elite of the Greco-Roman world in such groups, nor would early Christians meet in such elite homes (against Theissen, et al.). Instead, second, there was quite a diversity among the allegedly undifferentiated mass of the poor in Greco-Roman society. There were, of course, the slaves, the destitute, those who lived on the bare edge of survival. But there were also poor craftworkers, such as Holconius the cabinet maker, with some means and space enough for a meeting of 30–40 people.

Chapter three makes the leap from Pompeii to Rome. Oakes acknowledges the differences—Holconius, for example, could not afford quite as large a space in Rome—but argues convincingly that the types of poor individuals and households, and their relationships to one another, theorized in Pompeii are what we would also expect in Rome. Through the eyes of this model Roman craftworker house church, Oakes then takes us briskly through Rom 12. The craftworking family of Holconius “would appreciate the truth of the interdependence of the household members” (“just as in one body we have many parts, and not all the parts have the same function,” 12:4). However, the sort of interdependence, even between slave and master, heard in “we who are many are one body in Christ and . . . parts of each other” (12:5) “challenged the most fundamental conceptual structures of the household” (p. 103). The allocation of gifts by God (12:6), rather than by the highest-status householder, would disrupt the normal social expectations of the group. “Showing mercy” (12:8) would have strong economic meaning for this economically challenged group (cancel debts, defer repayment; p. 106). I found particularly interesting Oakes’s reflections on what all of this might mean to an outsider, some of whose slaves or household members participated in the house church of another householder (stolen allegiances?).

In chs. five and six, Oakes then explores how various members of the house church might have heard certain themes in Romans. Primus, the bath-stoking slave, would likely have heard dikaiosyne as “justice” (so also N. T. Wright) rather than the more theologically freighted Jewish “righteousness.” Endurance and eternal life would have carried great significance for many of the barely surviving members. Paul’s thoughts on Jews and Jewish matters would have occasioned surprise (and some consternation) to a better-off nonelite. “To a Roman such as Holconius, it would sound rather topsy-turvy for a Jew to talk of going about bringing the nations to obedience. This was more what Rome did” (p. 152).

My initial hesitation—What can Pompeian archaeological remains have to do with reading Romans?—was overcome through this delightfully well-written book. Only in parts of ch. one did I feel a bit overwhelmed by the archaeological detail. This could be a helpful ancillary text in a course on Paul’s letter to the Romans, both to introduce students to the potential value of social-
historical readings of the letter and to stimulate their thinking about what Paul's words would have meant to Roman hearers "at ground level." The text prompts a basic hermeneutical question: should an interpreter try to "get inside Paul's head," that is, try to discern the apostle's intent, or listen "at ground level" with a theorized audience? Oakes largely does the latter.

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This study was originally a 2007 Loyola University Chicago doctoral dissertation supervised by Thomas Tobin. Readers were Urban von Wahlde and Pauline Viviano. Toney is currently adjunct assistant professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. Toney's primary goal is to emphasize how "Paul's inclusive ethic in Rom 14–15 reflects a concern for internal unity in the Roman community and serves to promote an outward concern for mission among unbelieving Jews and Gentiles" (p. 1).

Chapter 1 surveys previous scholarship and argues that, prior to the rise of historical-critical methods, scholarship generally viewed the strong and the weak to be Gentile and Jewish Christians, respectively, who were divided by the weak's adherence to the Jewish Law. Following Sanday and Headlam, scholarship began to move in the direction of understanding the weak and the strong in terms of their behavior, rather than their ethnicity. Toney’s argument follows this trend.

Chapter 2 argues that the weak are largely Jewish Christians (with some Gentile Christians) who are identified with the Jews through their practices, and the strong are largely Gentile Christians (with some Jewish Christians) who understand that the gospel transcends Jewish requirements, thus giving them freedom from Jewish practices. As his title suggests, Toney argues that Paul's advice reflects an inclusive ethic that allows Jews and Gentiles to worship freely together in unity.

Chapter 3 argues further that, while this call for an inclusive ethic does promote inward unity, it also turns the Roman church toward outward mission. This inclusive ethic is demonstrated by encouraging the strong to welcome the weak and their practices in community gatherings. Thus, "Paul's inclusive ethic prepares the Romans for participating in a wider mission because it eliminates prejudice, which can hinder the acceptance of outsiders" (p. 198).

In ch. 4, Toney raises the question of why Paul would ask the Gentile Christians to allow for Jewish practices. He answers the question by appealing to Rom 11, where Paul argues that Gentile Christians are indebted to the Jews in that they were included in God's promises to Israel, culminating in Jesus, a Jew, fulfilling those promises on their behalf. He argues, "Paul sees his Gentile mission as also being a mission for unbelieving Israel, and he believes that the converted Gentiles serve as a catalyst for God to save unbelieving Israel"