

Abstract #: 3097

SOCIAL NETWORKS, INEQUALITY, AND THE HOUSING STOCK OF POMPEII

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Over the last few years, there has been significant interest in using the architectural characteristics of domestic structures, such as the total footprints, the numbers and diversities of rooms, and the interior decoration of residential units within Pompeii and Herculaneum as a proxy for social and economic inequality, revealing a much larger group of middling consumers than has usually been acknowledged. One of the problems with this approach, however, is that it has tended to ignore the wider social networks of the inhabitants of these structures. In this talk, I will use a combination of recent theoretical work on urban systems and existing empirical data to re-evaluate the evidence for the housing stock of Pompeii. This reveals previously unrecognized patterns, which not only raise interesting questions about the interrelationship between social networks, systems of patronage, and domestic architecture, but also complicate the latter's use as a proxy for living standards and inequality.

Keywords

Social networks, Inequality, Housing, Pompeii

Note/comment