

Mapping Micro-communities in Ancient Pompeii

Too often, ancient cities are thought to have been a single, continuous community defined only by their walls. But, such a view neglects the micro-communities that influenced social, political, and potentially economic networks within them. Through new digital mapping technology, it is now possible to triangulate such micro-communities within ancient Pompeii and use these micro-communities to integrate a wider demographic into our understanding of patronage networks. Additionally, this paper will explore how women helped define micro-communities.

To triangulate micro-communities I have charted businesses in Pompeii that focused on daily consumables, namely bars and bakeries. Most individuals living in urban centers would not have had access to cooking fires due to concerns of conflagration in shoddily constructed apartment buildings. Thus, bars and bakeries became hubs for information exchange and community development. Against the map of bars and bakeries, I have also charted the extant *programmata* – political campaign posters – present within the city. Bars and bakeries will be viewed through Robust Network Theory to explore the intersection of social and political networks. Additionally, I argue that the micro-communities that arose may have aided the financial credit market for average Roman citizens. Although this paper focuses heavily on uncontested space within Pompeii, two distinct areas of contention are present and the consequences of contested space in urban communities will be discussed.