

At Home in Roman Colonies: Identifying Activity Areas in the Domestic Architecture of Cosa

Since the earliest explorations of the Bay of Naples, Roman domestic architecture has been interpreted as a reflection of the relationship between the elite heads of households and visitors to the house. The Roman house has been defined as an important element in maintaining and displaying power in the public and political spheres, as well as an organizing force in the private sphere. Recent scholarship has attempted to broaden this approach to include households of varying architectural plans, however, the focus has remained on the well-preserved archaeological evidence in Campania. This paper attempts to broaden this discussion by addressing the diverse examples of domestic architecture that is preserved in a colonial setting and focuses instead on the excavated examples of houses that are thought to be non-elite. Further, the paper will frame the archaeological evidence through the examination of the behaviors of the household, facilitating comparison across differing colonial contexts and highlighting the activities of the lower-class inhabitants of Roman colonies, the traditionally understudied members of Roman society.

The Latin colony of Cosa, in modern Ansedonia, Italy, preserves a number of fully and partially excavated houses that are of a central importance to the historical narratives of the lifecycle of the colony established by early excavators. This paper utilizes legacy data to analyze the multifunctional spaces of the row houses through the identification of activity areas. The archaeological record will be contextualized within architectural spaces in order to examine the behaviors of craft and food production utilizing spatial analysis. The study of domestic production within the colony is of particular importance to the understanding of the daily life of a colonist due to the site's lack of any available water source, therefore the collection and sharing

of resources within domestic spaces are examined. Further, the functions of the spaces are considered in separation from their previously published room labels, particularly important for domestic spaces that do not fit the established plan of an atrium style house.

The paper will begin with an overview of the excavation history of the site and the related challenges to the interpretation of the spaces themselves, including the production housed within them. The evidence for production that is identified within the *tabernae* of the atrium style domestic structures surrounding the forum will be addressed due to the central importance of the interpretation of these structures to the political center of the colony. The activity areas that are able to be identified in the housing a few blocks downslope from the forum is addressed through the comparison of the evidence preserved in two separate houses. The paper concludes with a discussion of how the evidence from the row houses changes the understanding of the daily activities within a Roman colony and how they compare with the types of production are attested in the Ager Cosanus, the surviving environs of Cosa.

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