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Site Record Sheet for Season 2015

Country:

Italy

Superintendency:

Soprintendenza Speciale di Pompei Ercolano e Stabia

Region:

Campania

Province:

Napoli

Comune:

Pompei

Site name (e.g. Colosseum, Macchiagrande, Casa del Marinaio):

Stabian Baths (VII 1, 8)

Locality (e.g. Rome, Veii, Pompeii):

Pompeii

Ancient site name:

Pompeii

Coordinate Lat:

N 40.749946 / 40°44'59.8"N

Coordinate Long:

E 14.487473 / 14°29'14.9"E

Type of evidence(s):

Baths

Chronology:

550-300BC; 300-80BC; 80BC – AD79

Research director(s) with Institution (as many as necessary):

Prof. Dr. Monika Trümper (Freie Universität Berlin)

Field Director(s) with Institution:

Prof. Dr. Mark Robinson (Oxford University); Dr. D. Esposito (Freie Universität Berlin); Dr. C. Rummel (Freie Universität Berlin)

Team members with Institution and role in the project:

Simona Arrabito (Palermo - archaeologist); Florian Birkner (Freie Universität Berlin - archaeologist); Clemens Brünenberg (Technische Universität Darmstadt - architect); Johnathan Cook (Oxford University - archaeologist); Daniel Fallmann (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg - historian); Jennifer Hagen (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg - architect); Thomas Heide (Freie Universität Berlin - archaeologist); Rebecca Henzel (Freie Universität Berlin - archaeologist); Katie Hiscocks (Oxford University - archaeologist); Alexander Hoer (Freie Universität Berlin - archaeologist); Catello Imperatore (Pompei – archaeologist/ small finds); Cleopatra Lawrence (Oxford University - archaeologist); Sebastiano Muratore (Palermo - archaeologist); Jennifer Robinson (Oxford – finds assistant); Theresa Schelling (Technische Universität Darmstadt - architect); Rosanna Sheehan (Oxford University - archaeologist).

Research Institution(s):

Institut für Klassische Archäologie - Freie Universität Berlin, Fabeckstrasse 23-25, D-14195 Berlin, Deutschland

Funding bodies:

TOPOI Excellence Cluster 264

Year:

2015

Summary (300-500 words) with the author(s):

In 2015, a new research project under the direction of Monika Trümper, “Bathing Culture and the Development of Urban Space: Case Study Pompeii”, was initiated within the research framework of the TOPOI Excellence Cluster 264. The project focuses on the Republican Baths (VIII 5,36) and the Stabian Baths (VII 1,8).

In September 2015, rooms Q, R and N1-4 of the Stabian Baths were cleaned and all surface debris that had accumulated since the last excavations by Hans Eschebach removed. The aim of this work was to verify Eschebach’s hypothesis that a Greek type balaneion existed in the NW part of the Stabian baths during an earlier period. Reopening of Eschebach’s trenches made it possible to gain some impression of the state of preservation of intact contexts and to reinterpret these. In the NE corner of room Q, it was possible to identify a context interpreted by Eschebach as an Archaic street level, which actually is a simple level of natural soil, cut by the construction of two channels dating to the late Hellenistic period. These channels are overlain by four levels of consecutive opus signinum pavements. The lowest of these appears to belong to the same phase as the canals, while the uppermost and therefore latest, preserved in the NW corner and, above all, in the SE corner of the room, belongs

to the latest period of use of room Q as part of the Stabian Baths in the form visible today. The penultimate (third) pavement was cut by a lead pipe that served the nearby *natatio*. The second pavement appears to be contemporary with a strip sloping towards the channels from W to E that was paved with terracotta tiles. Eschebach saw this feature as belonging to the baths, but it appears actually to have been part of an earlier Hellenistic atrium or peristyle house, also identified by Eschebach in this part of the site.

Cleaning of room R uncovered a lavapesto pavement and part of an opus incertum wall running in a NE to SW direction. Based on its orientation, this also appears to belong to the Hellenistic house. Eschebach noted remains of an opus incertum wall running in an E-W direction. As it contained pappamonte pieces, he dated the wall to the Archaic period. Cleaning showed, however, that this wall was not constructed from pappamonte, but contained traces of lava and therefore is not Archaic in date.

The situation in rooms N1 and N4 is even more problematic: Eschebach identified these spaces as bathing cells with hip-bathtubs, dated to the 5th century BC, which would have been transformed into individual immersion baths during the 4th or 3rd century BC. Cleaning of the rooms showed no traces of any of the structures listed by Eschebach, with the exception of balustrades that separate off parts of the rooms. These, however, show no traces of any waterproofing whatsoever; nor is such material found anywhere in the rooms. Therefore, the interpretation as individual bathing spaces can no longer be maintained.

Authors: Monika Trümper; Mark Robinson; Domenico Esposito; Christoph Rummel

Bibliography on the Project:

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- Dickmann, J.-A. – F. Pirson 2005. Il progetto ‘Casa dei Postumii’: un complesso architettonico a Pompei come esemplificazione della storia dell’insediamento, del suo sviluppo e delle sue concezioni urbanistiche, in: Guzzo, P. G. – M.P. Guidobaldi (eds.), *Nuove ricerche archeologiche a Pompei e Ercolano, Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Roma 28-30 Novembre 2002*, 156-169.
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- Fagan, G.G. 2001. The Genesis of the Roman Public Bath: Recent Approaches and Future Directions, *AJA* 105.3: 403-426.
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Trümper, M. in preparation. *LACONICUM. A Reassessment of Graeco-Roman Sweat Baths from a Cross-Cultural Perspective.*

Link(s):

<https://www.topoi.org/project/c-6-8/>

<http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/kllassarch/projekte/pompeji/index.html>

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