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Site Record Sheet for Season 2023

Country: Italy Superintendency: Parco Archeologico di Pompei 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:

Team members with Institution and role in the project:

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Funding bodies:

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Year:

2023

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

From February 27 to March 24, 2023, a field season of the project "Bathing Culture and the Development of Urban Space: Case Study Pompeii", was carried out in the Stabian Baths to clarify three questions: a) whether the land in prime urban location was used before the construction of the

baths after 125 BC; b) whether there were any structures (vestibule, service installation) to the north of the large laconicum discovered in the palaestra in 2021; c) whether the plan and chronology of the house to the west of the baths, built around the mid-1st c BC and destroyed after the earthquake of AD 62, can be finalized. Excavations were carried out in 10 areas, both reopening areas investigated by earlier researchers and opening new areas: tabernae 1, Ic, 55, 56; corridors Ia, H' (2 trenches); palaestra (2 trenches); room U. These trenches provided answers to all questions mentioned above. Structures that precede the construction of the house and the baths were found in both buildings, including cisterns, wells, drainage channels, and walls. They cannot be securely dated but for typological reasons were built between the 4th and 2nd century BC. The fragmentary evidence does not allow determining the function and public or private character of the earlier buildings. The most important wall is a north-south running wall made of large blocks of tuff and travertine and built directly on grey ash. This was revealed in two trenches in the palaestra, preserved to a height of 1m. It was reused when the baths were built as the west boundary of the palaestra.

In the palaestra, a second laconicum with a diameter of 3.30m was found in a distance of 11m to the north of the large laconicum. While its walls had been largely destroyed the earth mortar foundation of the walls was well preserved and allowed reconstructing its plan and size. The entrance was most likely in the southeast, to a common space between the two laconica. A small round furnace with a long channel to the east was found in the center of the laconicum and several related pits were cut into its South and East walls. These features cannot have functioned together with the laconicum or the palaestra and must stem from temporary works during the first remodelling of the baths after 80 BC. No evidence of vestibules or service installations was found between the laconica because the area was much disturbed by large pozzolana quarry pits, dug during the third large remodelling of the baths after AD 62. The last palaestra floor, made of thin lime layers, was found intact in large parts of both trenches, running over all quarry pits and razed features in the palaestra. Originally, this must also have covered the razed partition wall between house and palaestra as well as the mosaic floors of the house, but all evidence of this had been removed by H. Sulze in the 1930s/40s.

From trenches dug between 2016 and 2023, the house can now be securely reconstructed as a symmetrically organized atrium-peristyle-house with a surface area of c. 900m². In tabernae 55 and 56, the opus tessellatum floor of an oecus was excavated with a central emblema of 70x70cm. The latter included trompe l'oeil cubes made of white, black, and green tesserae, surrounded by a red band. A similar emblema was found in room 17 of the Casa di Marco Fabio Rufo and connected with a Second Style decoration (80–50 BC). The mosaic threshold of the oecus with intricate black and white geometric patterns opened off to the South portico of the peristyle courtyard that was decorated with a mosaic made of irregularly cut red, green, white, and yellow tesserae. Evidence of the peristyle

was found in the northern trench of corridor H': the earth foundation of the western stylobate and the preparation of the mosaic floor of the North portico. On top of these, remains of an impressive lead pipe were revealed that must have supplied the natatio (D) and northern nymphaeum (G) of the baths after AD 62, but was found cut off and thus did not work in AD 79 when Vesuvius erupted.

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Link(s):

http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/klassarch/forschung/projekte/pompeji/index.html

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