

Acquedotto Augusteo della Campania: speco sotto l'Anfiteatro Flavio di Pozzuoli

Augustan Aqueduct in Campania: channel under the Flavian Amphitheater in Pozzuoli (Naples, Italy)

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RIASSUNTO

L'Anfiteatro Flavio di Pozzuoli è rinomato per gli ambienti sotterranei sotto l'arena, particolarmente ben conservati. Dal livello sotterraneo si dirama verso NNE una galleria in salita che passa sotto la cavea, esce dall'area archeologica e si collega ad un acquedotto ipogeo. Nel 2011 è stato possibile documentare tale acquedotto ed esplorarne un tratto inedito e molto impegnativo. Le informazioni così acquisite in sito sono state quindi integrate con le ricerche svolte altrove sui sistemi idraulici flegrei, fino a formare un quadro complessivo preliminare delle conoscenze. Recentemente, grazie ad una convenzione di studio fra il Parco Archeologico dei Campi Flegrei e l'Associazione Cocceius, le ricerche speleo-archeologiche all'Anfiteatro Flavio sono riprese e sono state estese ai sistemi di drenaggio delle acque piovane. Il lavoro presenta lo stato attuale delle conoscenze sull'acquedotto ipogeo dell'Anfiteatro Flavio e tratteggia le linee di ricerca future.

Parole chiave: Acquedotti romani, anfiteatri romani, arceo-speleologia, ipogei antichi, idraulica antica.

ABSTRACT

The Flavian Amphitheatre in Pozzuoli is renowned for its system of underground spaces located under the arena, which are particularly well preserved. From the underground level, a slightly raising tunnel branches off to the NNE, crossing under the cavea, still underground, exiting the archaeological area and connecting to an underground aqueduct. The presence of the connection tunnel was evident since the first nineteenth-century excavations of the Amphitheatre. It was emptied of deposits and its descriptions are present in the main archaeological publications about the monument. On the other hand, only part of the aqueduct was cleared and its descriptions are less accurate. Since 2010, cavers now belonging to the Cocceius Association have been carrying out research on the underground hydraulic systems of the Phlegraean Fields. In 2011, cavers documented the aqueduct under the Flavian Amphitheatre and explored an unpublished and very challenging section of it. The information thus acquired on site was then integrated with research carried out elsewhere on the Campanian Aqueduct and the Phlegraean section of the Augustan Aqueduct of Campania (AAC – Aqua Augusta), to form a preliminary knowledge framework about locations, aqueduct course, channel sizes, masonry, digging techniques, sinter deposits. Recently, thanks to a research agreement between the Phlegraean Fields Archaeological Park and the Cocceius Association, we resumed speleo-archaeological research at the Flavian Amphitheatre and investigated also the rainwater drainage systems. The paper presents the current information about the underground aqueduct at the Flavian Amphitheatre and outlines future research lines. In more detail, the paper reports about previous literature on the Amphitheatre underground and it provides a detailed description and measurements of the connection tunnel and left (NW) and right (SE) aqueduct branches. Comparisons among channel measurements in some other AAC sites in the Phlegraean Fields are provided. Channel size and sinter height data help in figuring a rough estimation of daily water flow, as compared to other AAC channels in the Phlegraean Fields. The provided data show that the Pozzuoli Amphitheatre channel represents quite an important water provision to the Amphitheatre area. Since the channel shows elevation, shape, size, masonry