



Fig. 48. Macellum. Sampling areas and colour code.

Macellum

“Macellum. Interior. West wall. The reconstructed roof protects a large section of Fourth Style decoration. Also, decoration in space 39 is now completely invisible, but it too was Fourth Style and you can sample there if the Soprintendenza does not want you to sample the west wall. North entrance (space 8). West wall. The plaster here belongs to a post-62 wall and therefore belongs to the Fourth Style period. The decoration, if any, is completely gone, but the plaster itself is partly preserved.”

The *Macellum*, the central market, was built on top of the structure of an earlier building of similar size and arrangement.¹ This roofed building was also a kind of exhibition hall. A vast number of pediments for statues remains as evidence of its sculptural installation. Most of the painted decorations have disappeared.

Plasters and phases

Samples were taken from an area at the north wall in space 39, from the east wall in space 8, and later, from the west walls in spaces 44 and 49, and from the east wall in space 36. Two very similar kinds of plaster, belonging to groups G and H, were used for these decorations. Plaster type G had been used for the original decorations in spaces 39, 8, 44 and 36, and type H was the last phase in spaces 36, 39 and 49. The earliest decoration found in space 36 was partially covered by a plaster type H.

ICVBC analyses show that sample M5 presented similarities to the *arriccio*, i.e. the rough layer, of sample M4. Sample M5 is the early decoration, which is concealed by the later phase M4. According to my observations, these plasters are very similar: the upper however, is “dirtier”.

Discussion and results

All plasters for decoration in this building belong to the 4th style period. I avoid defining late plasters as pre- or post-earthquake, because late plasters used for 4th style decorations, group G, have a sandy look, similar to some “repair plasters”, group H. The last type of plaster I have noted as having been used for entire decorations belong to group G. This is a well-balanced plaster, even though it looks dirty, dark and sandy. Later plasters seem to have been used for repairs. These have been carelessly made, containing large lumps of lime and reused materials, and are most probably post-earthquake.

¹ Maiuri 1973, 86.



Fig. 49. Macellum. Sampling areas M4 and M5. The lower part of the pilaster has most probably been redecorated, due to earthquake damages.

Macellum, Plaster types, groups, locations

Plaster type M 1, group G

A late, sandy plaster with lots of red and yellow particles, of the same kind as the plaster used for the 4th style paintings at the Casa di Amarantus.

Plaster type M 3, group H

This “post-earthquake plaster”, is dirty and contains crushed, reused material, and lumps of lime. Similar plasters were found as in the last phase in the Temple of Jupiter, the Temple of Apollo, the Eumachia and for the repair on the column in the Casa di Pansa.

| Space 8 | Space 36 | Space 39 | Space 44 | Space 49 |
|---------|------------|----------|----------|----------|
| G — | H — G — | G — | G — | H — |

List of examined plaster samples

Macellum

Pompeii Forum 2004-2005

| No | Sample location | Observations, comments | Brief description, plaster | Stucco | Decoration | Type | Group |
|----------|--|--|--|---|------------|------|-------|
| 1 CNR | Space 39, north wall | Upper layer with stucco. Last decoration. Two plaster layers, the upper with extremely fine grains, the lower with lots of very fine grains between fine and a few large. <i>Same group: TAl1, P4; A2, BI9.</i> | Lots of crushed material. Many small red and yellow particles. | Small and medium sized crystals, uncoloured, greyish and yellowish. | | M1 | G |
| 2 | Space 8, east wall, N entrance. | Upper layer with stucco. Last decoration. Same as no. 1, but with cleaner lime. Same stucco. | | | | M1 | G |
| 3 | Space 36 South side of entrance, Pilaster, lower part. | Repair | Very sandy | | | M3 | H |
| 4 | Space 39, west wall pilaster | Late decoration | Very sandy, same as 7 | Small and medium sized crystals, uncoloured, greyish and yellowish | | M3 | H |
| 5 | Space 39, west wall, pilaster | Early decoration | Sandy | Small and medium sized crystals, uncoloured, yellowish | | M1 | G |
| 6 | Space 39, west wall | Early decoration | Sandy | | | M1 | G |
| 7 | Space 49, west wall | Last decoration | Very sandy | | | M3 | H |
| 8 | Space 36, east wall, west side of entrance | Early decoration covered by a later plaster | Sandy plaster, lots of red, very small grains | Small and medium sized crystals, uncoloured, yellowish | | M1 | G |