EMIR QURQUMAS MAUSOLEUM IN CAIRO EXCAVATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN YARD, 1992

Tomasz Scholl and Medhat El-Menabbawy

The archaeological excavations carried out in the southern courtyard of the Great Emir Qurqumas funerary complex on the Northern Cemetery in Cairo started on March 24 and continued until the end of April 1992.[1] The objective of this season was to search for the connection between two drains and investigate the remnants of a furnace partly excavated during the previous season.

Work was encumbered by asphalt and a bedding of hard, crushed limestone covering all of the area. Three trenches (X, XI and XII) were complemented by a number of trial pits (A, B, C, D, E and F).

Trench X (11 x 9 m) was set along the western canal. The previously discovered furnace was 2.53-2.49 m in diameter and was enclosed by a contemporary stone wall. Two consecutive layers connected with the use of this structure represent probably the last phase of the occupation of this site. The furnace

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[1] The staff was composed on the Polish side of Mr. Leszek Słoński (engineer), Director of the Mission, Dr Tomasz Scholl (archaeologist), Mr. Jan Burmas (architect) and Mr. Waldemar Jerke (photographer). The Egyptian side was represented by Messrs Medhat El-Menabbawy and Hisham Abdel Latif (archaeologists). The Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission for Islamic Architecture (Ateliers for Conservation of Cultural Property PKZ) would like to express its gratitude to the EAO and the Polish Centre of Archaeology for their support and technical help in the excavations.

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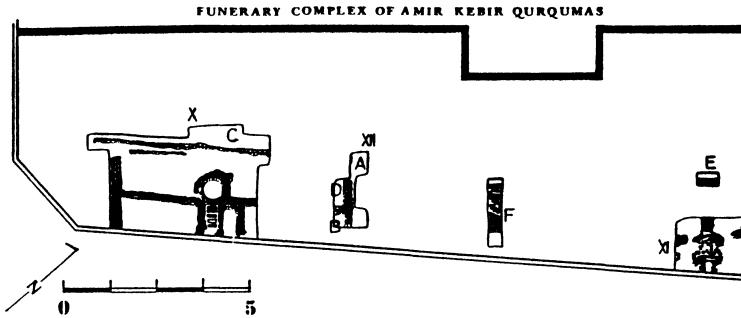

Fig. 1. Layout of the excavations in the Southern Yard. Plan J. Burmas.

was built into the foundations of an older building, partly destroying it. The remnants of walls of this huge structure continue in the direction of the eastern channel and have been partly uncovered in trenches XI, XII and in the trial pits.

Two entrances to a latrine were uncovered in Trench XI (8 x 5 m) which encircled the eastern channel on the west, east and north.

In **Trench XII** (7.50 x 4 m) created by joining trial pits A, B and D, an intersection of four walls was uncovered. The walls were from 1-0.80 m. thick and preserved to a height of 2.10 m.

In **Trial pit C** (3.50 x 3.50 m) the foundations of the northern wall were explored. The width was not established but the height was 2.20 m. In this area a doorway 2.20 m wide was uncovered; it was most probably one of the main entrances of the building.

In **Trial pits E** and **F** fragments of unidentified walls were recorded, running east-west.

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Small finds included one coin (but from a subsurface layer), large quantities of cooking wares and a few glazed sherds, mainly from the Mamluk period.

It seems that in the past in front of the funerary complex of the Great Emir Qurqumas there existed a similarly large building. More investigations in this area are indispensable to define the character and the exact date of this building.

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