

Summary

Ancient construction techniques from the el-Alamein area

The ancient remains in the Marina el-Alamein area are unique for a number of reasons. Their proximity to Alexandria means that at present they are probably the only place that allows such intensive and extensive study of the relics of architecture under its direct influence. The impossibility of fully studying the ruins of Alexandria, which have been destroyed over the years with the development of the great modern metropolis, creates an opportunity to search for answers to researchers' questions precisely at el-Alamein. Studies of architectural detail have brought us closer to the appearance of Alexandria's buildings. At the same time, work on the remains of houses discovered at el-Alamein now presents the largest group of excavated Greco-Roman-type residential buildings in Egypt. As the study of the relics of the settlements at el-Alamein progressed, the need arose to bring together the building techniques discussed in fragments so far into one comprehensive study. This was able to happen due to the author's unique opportunity to undertake parallel archival studies and field work. In 2018 and 2019 were the last activities of the conservation mission of the Wroclaw University of Technology at the Marina el-Alamein site. Starting in 2021, on the other hand, the first such work at the Marina el-Alamein site, El Darazya. In addition, the work makes use of a site visit and documentation of the Qassabat el Gharbiya tomb kiosk located about five kilometers from the seacoast, south of the el-Alamein railroad station.

The main part of the work is a collective discussion of the ancient construction techniques observed in the el-Alamein area, so the dissertation has been organized to make the most of the material acquired. At the outset, the author presents the research problem, the need for the study and the methodology adopted in the course of the work. This is followed by a presentation of the historical period and the situation of the ancient settlements of the el-Alamein area. Subsequent chapters start from a broad research horizon to finally focus on the region under study. The core of the work is a discussion of construction techniques done in the order of the building process. Archival materials, published excavation reports and thematic studies, and the author's work in the field became the starting point for the study. The traditional presentation of groups of techniques is accompanied by analyses using modern research methods. Each chapter attempts to provide a simple typology of the solutions used and the extent of their use. Finally, the author also conducts a search for the provenance of the construction techniques described. The work is crowned with a summary of current knowledge. The author draws preliminary conclusions about the workshop of the inhabitants of el-Alamein and presents it against the background of the period.

The effect of the work is mainly to fill a gap in the current knowledge of provincial construction in Greco-Roman Egypt. The uniqueness of the study undertaken consists in the full presentation of structural solutions in architecture of a small, everyday scale. Such a study was made possible thanks to the multiple relics of buildings discovered and excavated, which formed the starting point for the research undertaken. Getting familiar with the issue made it possible to define new research problems. The author analyzes what the structural solutions used can tell us about the inhabitants - the builders. A parallel path of research is the question of the influence of the course of the construction process on the current reconstructions of the studied reality.