

“Results of The excavation of El-Tarheelat Police office Site 2010-2012 in Kom El-Dikka, Alexandria, Egypt”.

2010年到2012年，埃及亚历山大“港考姆迪卡地区”“驱逐警察区域”的土地挖掘结果”

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Abstract

The Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities led an archaeological excavation at the site of El-Tarheelat from 2010 to 2012. El-Tarheelat site is one of the most important sites in the Kom El-Dikka neighborhood. It lies about 190m away from the Auditorium, and about 55m far from the Boubastion Temple, discovered at the end of 2009. The excavation in the site of El-Tarheelat has revealed some monuments from Byzantine period like remains of a kiln made of red bricks and limestone, some glass remains, pieces of slag- stone blocks covered with slag, as well as, remains of a water tank, remains of walls and foundations of buildings. After an abandonment period, the area had been reused as a cemetery , probably , in Islamic period, as more than eleven burials were discovered in different spots at the site. The fieldwork yielded also a great number of finds such as worked ivory, bones, worked wood, coins and metal pieces, pottery shards, stamped handles, ostraca, and small statuettes' heads of terracotta. According to these finds, the main occupation in the site dates back to the period from the 4th to 7th century AD.

Key words :Kom El-Dikka, El-Tarheelat, Workshop, Kilns, Glass, Graves.

ملخص

يُعد موقع الترحيلات بمنطقة كوم الدكة الأثرية بالإسكندرية واحداً من المواقع الهامة التي تبعد حوالي ١٩٠ متر تقريباً جنوب شرق المدرج الروماني الشهير. حيث أجرت وزارة الآثار المصرية حفائر علمية منظمة بالموقع منذ عام ٢٠١٠ وحتى عام ٢٠١٢م ولقد أسفرت الحفائر عن ظهور مجموعة من العناصر التي ربما تمثل ورشة لصناعة الزجاج من العصر البيزنطي وكذلك بقايا أرضيات وجدران ربما تمثل أبنية مرتبطة بالورشة، كما أسفرت عن ظهور مجموعة من المقابر التي ربما ترجع للعصر الإسلامي، كذلك ظهور مجموعة من اللقى الأثرية والقطع الفخارية والمشغولات العظمية والعاجية وعدد من العملات، بالإضافة إلى بقايا قطع من الزجاج وخبث الزجاج المنتشر بكثرة في الموقع.

ولقد توقف العمل فجأة بالموقع لأسباب خاصة ترجع لمالك الموقع ولازال الموقع يحتاج إلى استكمال أعمال الحفائر لإلقاء المزيد من الضوء على ما تم كشفه من ناحية ، ومن ناحية أخرى تتبع امتدادات العناصر المكتشفة.

الكلمات الأساسية :

كوم الدكة ، الترحيلات، ورشة، الأفران، الزجاج، المقابر

Introduction

The Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities led an archaeological excavation at the site of El-Tarheelat from 2010 to 2012¹. The site of El-Tarheelat is located at 23 Soliman Yousry Street in the south east of the neighborhood of Kom EL Dikka (fig. 1). It lies about 190m away from the famous archaeological site, Auditorium, and about 55m west of the Boubastion Temple, discovered at the end of 2009 by the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities. The land is a property of the Police Department in Alexandria and the site area is 1051 square meters. The work at the site lasted two seasons, the first was from 14/9/2010 to 9/2/2012²The excavations revealed remains of a workshop from the Byzantine period, probably , for glass making, remains of floors and a part of a wall. And however, the second was from

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²Team work: Mr/ Maged Ahmed El sayed, Dr/ IbtehalAbd El Samad, Mr/ MhamoudAbd El Rahman, Bassam Hassan, Abd El Aziz Saaad, Emad Said and Ibrahim Mostafa.

18/6/2012 to 20/12/2012³. The work was completed on these elements and their extensions were traced and revealed foundations of buildings, remains of floors and a cemetery.

The Historical Topography of Kom EL- Dikka

Kom El-Dikka is one of the few archaeological sites in Alexandria, where ancient topography can be traced in broader urban contexts⁴. It is situated practically in the city center, and it includes two adjoining quarters extending south of street L1, which was the main artery (via canopica)⁵. The topographical importance of this site lies in the fact that, it is situated in the middle of the ancient Ptolemaic city, and to the south of the course of the Canopic road which was, according to Strabo, in the way between the Western Necropolis and the Canopic Gate⁶. The studies and research of Mahmoud El Falaki and Botti have confirmed this opinion. According to Strabo and Mahmoud El Falaki, the Kom El-Dikka district is located in the south of the Soma District, which included Alexander the Great's grave and other Ptolemaic kings' graves. Two secondary streets from the Late Roman Period have been uncovered at Kom El-Dikka: street "R4" with an average width of 4.5m, it crosses the entire site from south to north and the colonnaded street "rue theatrical" averaging 7.5m in width⁷ (fig. 2). El-Tarheelat Site, probably, belongs to the Domestic Quarter.

³Team work: Nagat M. Metwaly, Inas M. Desouky, Ahmed El Sebaay, DoaaZein El Abdien and HanaaMagdy.

⁴Tkaczow, B.(1993), Topography of ancient Alexandria, An archaeological map, Varsovie, p. 42.

⁵ Haas, Ch. (1993), Alexandria's Via Canopica political expression and urban topography from Augustus to "Amrlbn al-As", in: BSAA 45, pp. 123-137.

⁶ Massie R., Blomfield (1904). Alexandria Topography, in: BSAA, 8, , pp. 27- 45; Ahmed Abd El-Fatah,(2009),a preliminary report on the Archaeological works carried out on A Hellenistic site at Kom El Dikka, BSAA,48,P.25-26,Alexandria. Rodziewicz M., Abd el Fatah A., Recent discoveries in the royal Quarter of Alexandria, BSAA 44, pp. 131-15.

⁷Rodziewicz,M. (1960-1984), Reports on Excavations at Kom El Dikka in: BSAA 44, p.1-118; idem (1976), Un Quartiesd'habitation Greco- Romain à Kômel- Dikka, in:ET IX, pp. 169-210.

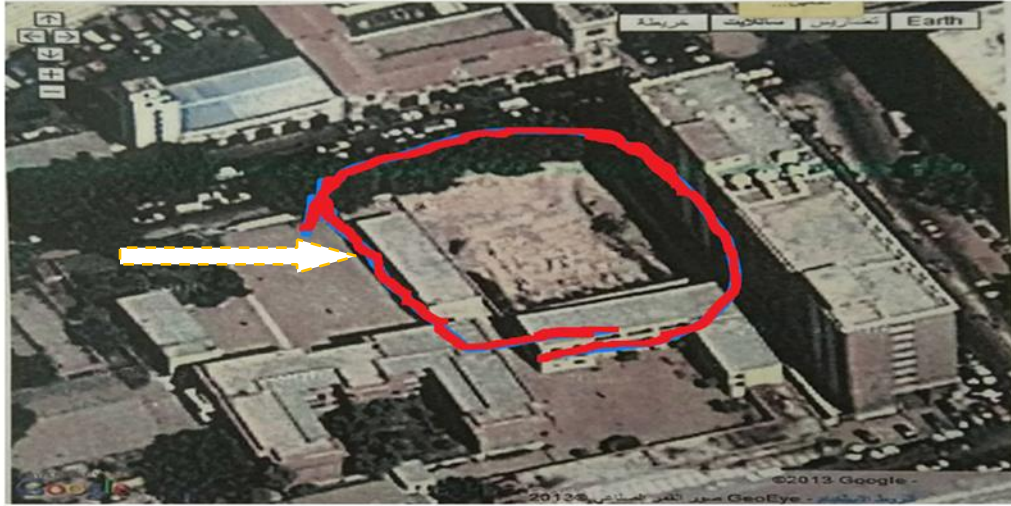


Figure 1. Aerial photo of Location El-Tarhilat Site by Google Earth

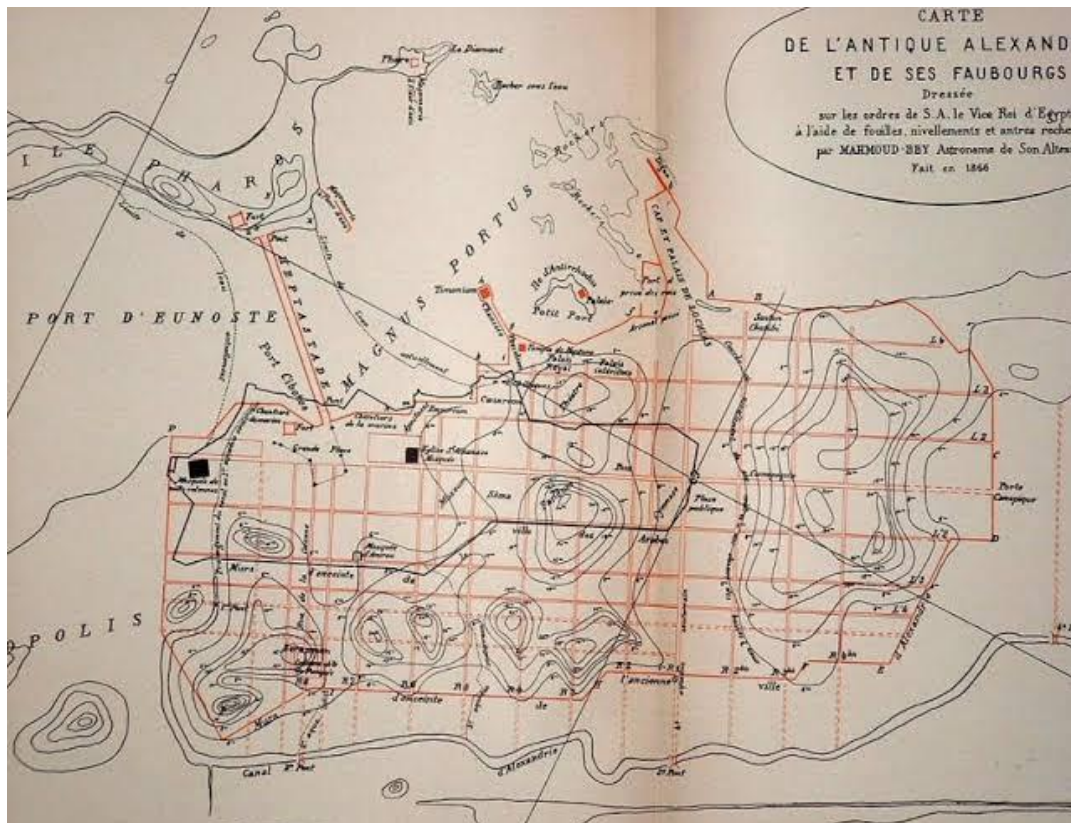


Figure 2. Map of El Falaki (1866) showing the old streets of Alexandria⁸.

⁸Bibliotheca Alexandrina (2015), 'A New vision towards the future, KomelDikka, Alexandria', Initial Survey Report and Preliminary Project, The Alexandria and Mediterranean Research Center, p. 24ff;

El-Tarheelat discoveries

At the beginning of the work, there were great quantities of debris, bushes and rubbish (fig. 3). The upper strata of the site yielded many artifacts such as fragments of pottery and glass, remains of bones, mosaic and limestone, glazed pottery, bottles of porcelain and light brown clay pipe, the thickness of this layer was about 70 cm. However, the excavations revealed that, there several different kinds of occupations in the site of El-Tarheelat (fig. 4), shown as the following phases:

Phase 1: remains of a workshop for making glass, and remains of walls and foundations (Byzantine period).

Phase 2: remains of floors found in different spots in the site at close levels (Byzantine period).

Phase 3: Abandonment period.

Phase 4: Reusing the places as a cemetery .



Figure 3. The Site at the beginning of work in the second season.

Phase 1:

This phase is the earliest occupation discovered in the site and belongs to the Byzantine period. It revealed a workshop for glass making includes the following elements:

a. A water tank

There were remains of a water tank in the south east of the site, probably in square or rectangle shape. It was built with limestone blocks and redbrick. Its dimensions: W.4m, L.3.10m, ASL. 12.44(fig.5, 6).Its inner surface was covered with a hydraulic mortar called "opus Signinum ", which is a mixture of lime, sand and an aggregate of earthenware derived from breaking up construction materials. This mortar was used as a waterproof in cisterns and water tanks.

b. A kiln

To the west of the water tank, there were remains of a circular-domed kiln, it has a side hole for the firing process, and it was built of red bricks, pieces of limestone and pottery shards adhered together with a layer of mortar. Its dimensions: L.2.85m, W.170cm, ASL.12.77m (fig.7, 8).Remains of fish and bird bones were discovered on the outer surface of the kiln. However, parts of tubes made of glass in various colors, fragments of glass and pottery and pieces of slag were found inside the kiln, therefore, it is suggested that this kiln was used for making glass (fig.9).

c. Remains of another kiln?

Near the first kiln from the west side, there were remains of an element in semi-circular shape built of red bricks, fragments of pottery, pieces of limestone and mortar. Its diameter from inside: 127cm, and from outside: 240cm, ASL.12.05 m. This element, probably, is another kiln for making glass (fig.10, 11). Beside this element, there was a block of limestone. Its dimensions: W.36cm covered with a layer of slag, and to the west of the kiln? There were remains of a floor paved with pieces of limestone. Its dimensions: L.240cm, W.95cm, and ASL. 11.77m.

d. The foundations of a lime container?

There was a group of limestone blocks stacked in a semi-circular regular shape, containing lime, lied to the north east of the first kiln. Its dimensions: W. 65cm x L. 60cm ASL.12.16m. There was a passage, probably, related to this element, lied to the north. It is flanked by two rows of limestone. These elements, probably,

belong to the glass workshop as the lime is a basic material mixing with sand for making glass (fig.12, 13).

There is a part of the floor in the north of the first kiln, paved of tile flooring of limestone. Its dimensions: L.180cm, W.1.67cm, and it was cut by the earth drilling rig (fig. 14, 15). To the north west of this floor, there were remains of structure including sections of walls. (fig. 16).

To the north west of the kilns, there were remains of structure including sections of walls (wall 1, 2) (fig. 16).

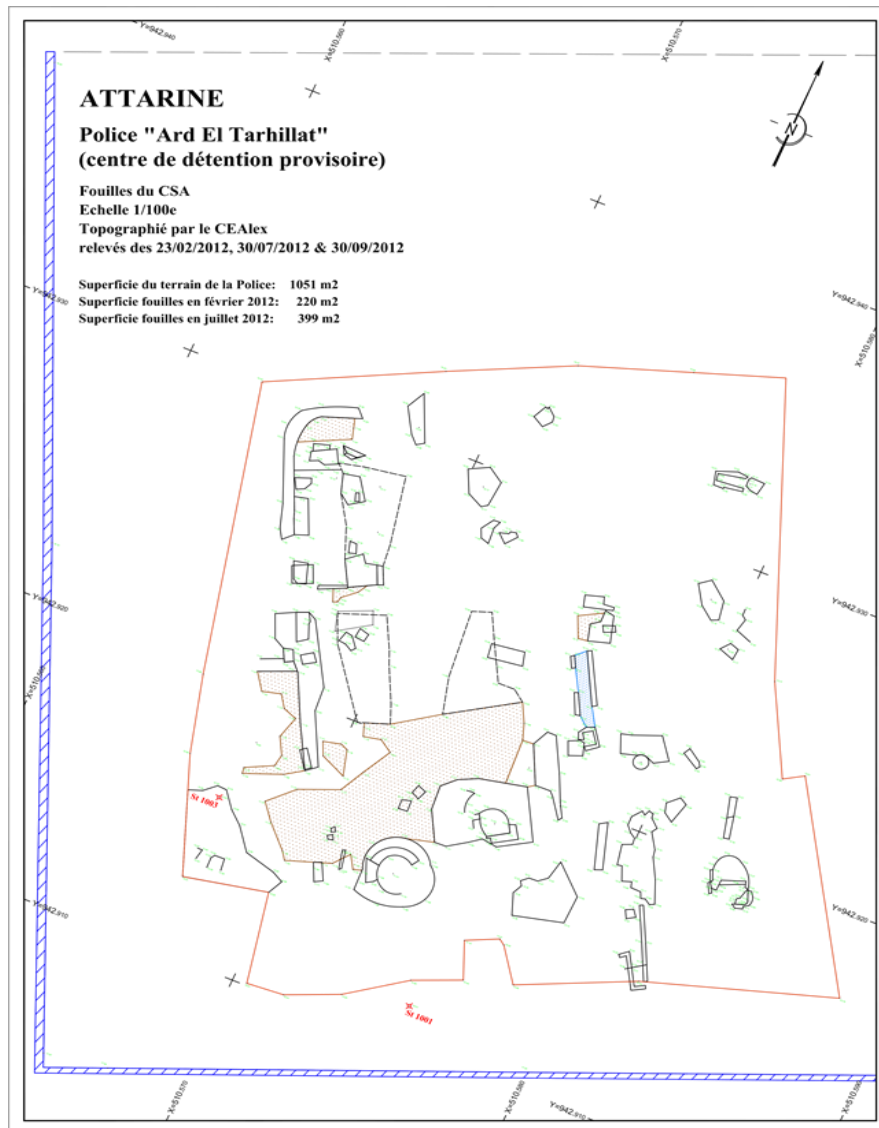


Figure 4. Plan for El-Tarheelat site.



Figure 5.A water tank.

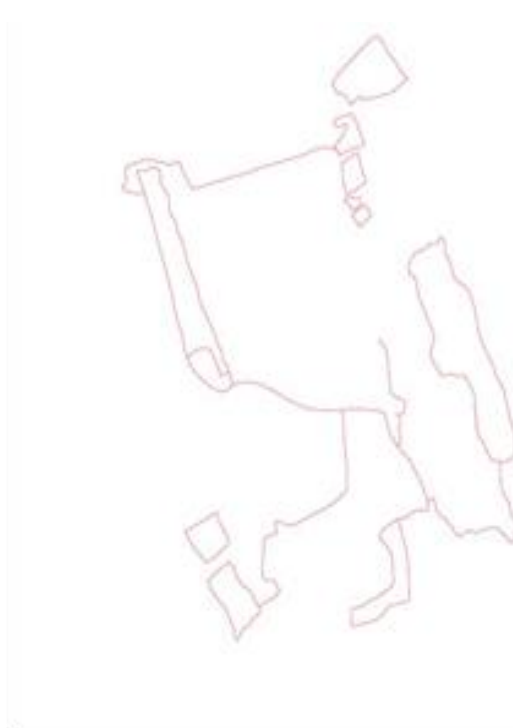


Figure 6.Plan for the water tank.



Figure 7.A Kiln.



Figure 8.Elevation of the Kiln.



Figure 9. . Glass fragments and slag.



Figure 10. Remains of another kiln?



Figure 11. The plan of the remains of another kiln?



Figure 12. The foundations of the lime container?

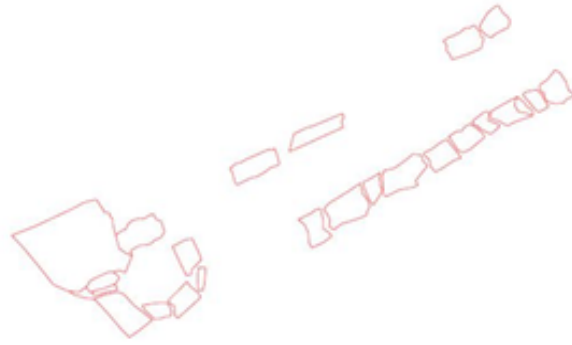


Figure 13. Plan for the foundations of the lime container?



Figure 14. the Part of the floor.

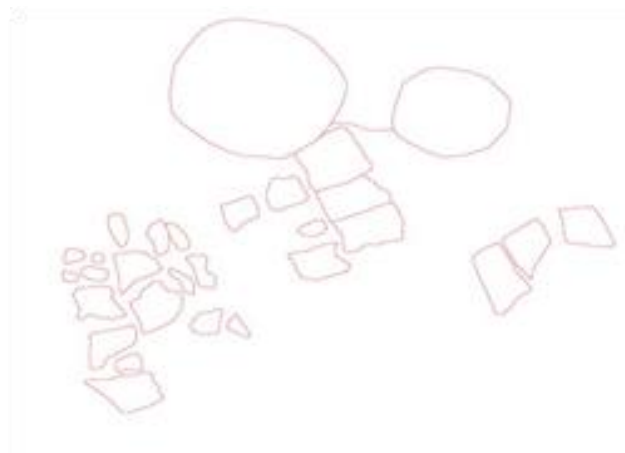


Figure 15. The plan of the Floor.

e. Wall 1

Wall 1 was built of irregular small blocks of limestone, and covered with whitish gray mortar. Its dimensions: L. 5.10m thickness 70cm, ASL. 12.84m (fig.17).

Vertical on Wall 1 and about 275cm to the north of it, there was Row A, built with limestone blocks covered with white mortar. Its dimensions: L. 158cm, W. 46cm (fig.18) (there was a block of limestone covered with slag found beside Row A). There was a part of floor made of soft layer of clay found between Wall 1 and Row A, but unfortunately, it was damaged, probably, because of the foundations of the modern building. These 3 elements could be a part of a room. 90cm to the north of Row A, there was a block of limestone and remains of another row (Row B) vertical on the block directed to the west. 95cm to the north, there was a row of big limestone blocks L. 3.32m was joined by a layer of mortar.



Figure 16. Remains of walls and foundation.



Figure 17. Wall 1.



Figure 18. Elevation of wall 1.

f. Wall 2

Wall 2 is 255cm east of Wall 1, built of small limestone block sand covered with whitish mortar, its dimensions: L.9m, H.90cm, and ASL. 14.20m (fig 19,20). There are some finds found to the east of Wall 2 like, a flask of Saint-Minas, a part of another one, and three heads of terracotta. To the north of Wall 2, there was a part of floor, made by soft layer, it is 180cm x 180cm. To the east of the floor, there was a cut in semicircular shape, contains fragment of pottery, mixed bones, shells, glass also a part of wall appeared in the east side of the cut but it needs a lot of work to be cleared (fig.21). These parts of structure could be related to the workshop as small houses or shops serve the industrial area.



Figure 19. Wall 2.

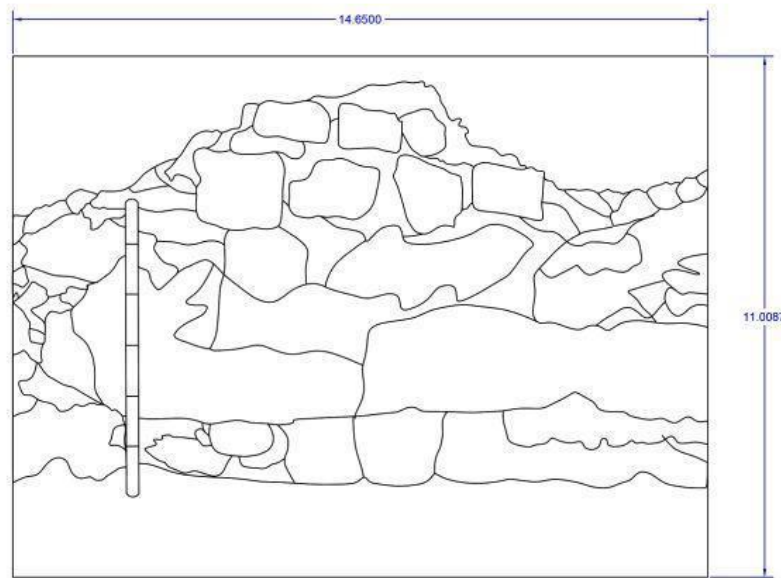


Figure 20. Plan of Wall 2.



Figure 21. Part of the floor in the north of wall 2

Phase 2:

This phase also belongs to the Byzantine period. There was a part of a floor, lies 2.10m to the east of the kiln, long.14m, width.5m and, ASL. 13.41m. This floor is made of a compact layer of mortar and pieces of limestone, probably it is a part of a street (fig.22). There was another part of floor in the southwest of the site, it was built of compact layer of red mortar, its thickness 2cm, ASL.12.91 m (fig.23). In addition, there was a part of another floor in the north of the site in semi-square shape built of limestone. Its dimensions, 90 cm Long, 52cm Wide, its surface is discovered with some tiny blue stones like Mosaic in simple and poor style (fig. 24).



Figure 22. A part of the floor east of the kiln.



Figure 23. A part of the floor in the south west of the site.



Figure 24. A part of the floor in the north of the site is in semi-square shape.

Phase 3:

Abandonment period. These occupations had been abandoned for a period of time and the place was reused for another activity not compatible with the industrial works. As we found a number of graves, some of them were close to the workshop.

Phase 4:

After a period of abandonment, the place was reoccupied as a cemetery perhaps in the Islamic period, that is based on the burying style and the parallel with what had been discovered in the nearby site of the Kom El Dikka Roman Theater, by the polish mission⁹. As there were more than eleven graves in different places on the site. They are all for adult persons, laying on the right side, oriented to the south. Some of them were in a bad state of preservation due to the humidity and the foundation of the modern building. There were two methods of burying in the site.

First one: Burying in shallow pits without any structure as in grave 2,3,9,10,11, which lie in the north and east sides of the site (fig 25, 26).

⁹Majcherek G. (2002), Kom El-Dikka Excavations 2000/ 2001, <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/25192564/kom-el-dikka>, p. 33-34.



Figure 25. Burying in a shallow pit.



Figure 26. Burying in a shallow pit.

Second one: Burying in stone graves with slabs and they have different shapes:

a. Vaulted shape, like in grave 1.

Grave 1: Extended to the south of the site, and extended outside the limit of the excavation. The dimensions: L.110cm, W.80cm, ASL.12.09. There were two rows of stone on the sides of the grave and it included remains of mixed bones (fig.27, 28).



Figure 27. Grave 1.

Figure 28. plan of grave 1

There was a limestone, the two rows, concave hole in the L.35cm, is,probably, a 29).

block of found between it has a surface with a middle, W.30cm. it milestone (fig



Figure 29. piece of limestone

b. Rectangular shape, like in graves 4,5,6,7.

Grave 4: It's 120cm to the north of the kiln. Its cover was scattered (fig. 30).

Grave 5: It lies 50cm to the north of the grave 4. The length of its cover is 180cm (fig. 30).



Figure 30. Graves 4 and 5.

Grave 6: It lies in the northern east of the site, its dimensions; 50cm wide, ASL.12.18m,(fig 31-33).



Figure 31. Grave 6



Figure 32.A burial in grave 6.

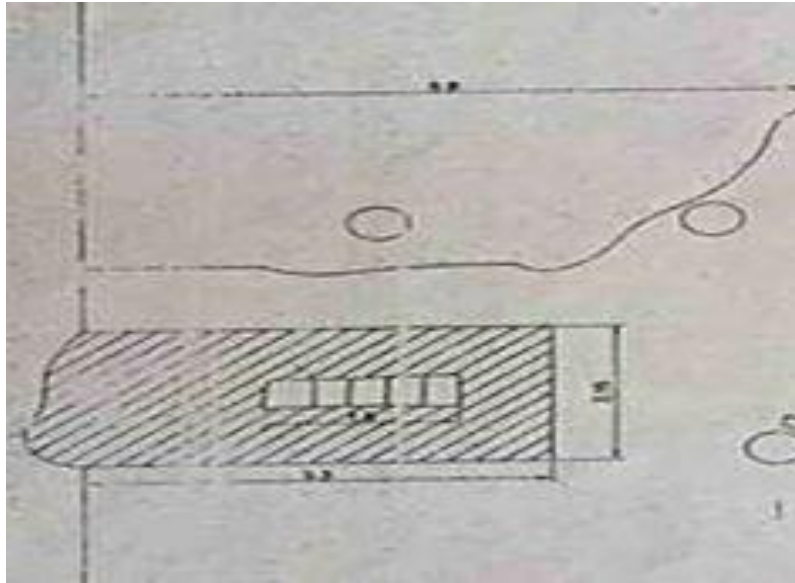


Figure 33. Plan of grave 6.

There was a piece of metal (Bronze) found on the chest of the burial (fig.34, 35).



Figure 34. Piece of metal Before restoration.



Figure 35. Piece of metal after restoration.

Grave 7:It lay in the middle of the site, it was cut in a place, made of a group of layers of red bricks, fragments of pottery, glass, slag and ashes, each layer was on top of each other. This place, probably, used for getting rid of the refuse of the workshop. Its dimension: L .1.45 cm ×w. 53 cm, ASL .12.35 (fig.36-39)



Figure 36. Grave 7.



Figure 37. Plan of grave 7.



Figure 38. A burial inside grave 7.



Figure 39. Plan of grave 7

The burial found in this grave had a metal ring in the middle finger of the left hand (Fig.40).



Figure 40. Metal ring.

There was a part of course built of blocks of limestone under grave 7, its dimensions; L.170cm, W.50cm. It, probably, related to the structures of phase 1 (fig.41, 42).



Figure 41. A part of a course.

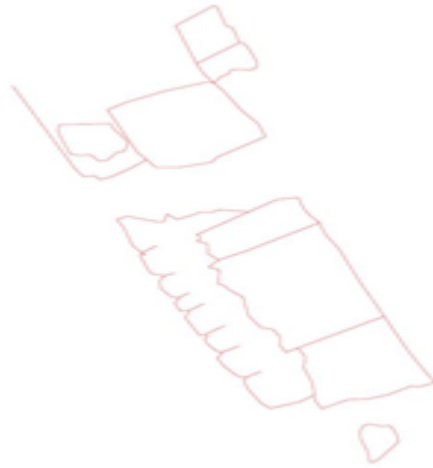


Figure 42. Plan of the course

c. **Sub rectangular shape**, like in grave 8.

Grave 8: It lies in the northern east of grave 7, its dimensions; L.160cm, W. 70cm (fig. 43-45).



Figure 43. Grave 8.



Figure 44. Grave 8.



Figure 45. Plan of grave 8.



Figure 46. These photos include the two methods of burying.

Conclusion

The site of El-Tarheelat is a new contribution of the district of Kom El-Dikka in Byzantine and early Islamic periods. It uncovered some of different activities, which were in the neighborhood, such as, in the Byzantine period, industrial activity represented in a workshop for the manufacture of glass. As well as, residential and commercial activities, as parts of structures like passages and mosaic floors were discovered. The site was abandoned for a period of time and reused again as a cemetery , probably , form the Islamic period , that is based on the burying style, however, all burials were laying on the right side, oriented to the south, and are paralleled with what had been discovered in the nearby site of the Kom El Dikka Auditorium. It is worth mentioning that most of the elements which were discovered in the site had some damage, probably happened during the abandonment period and by the modern buildings. The site still needs more excavations to achieve a comprehensive conception about the sequence of time and activities in the site of El-Tarheelat.