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Excavations in the Tomb-Palanka of Sultan Suleiman in Szigetvár (2015-2017)

by

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Dept. of Architecture, Middle East Technical University

Monday, April 2, 2018 7:00 p.m.

Reşat Aktan Lounge at

Turkish American Association/Türk Amerikan Derneği

Cinnah Caddesi No:20 Kavaklıdere, Ankara

Archaeological excavations initiated and continued with the intention to find the lost tomb of Sultan Suleiman began in a site named Zölöhegy (Vine Hill) in the suburb named Türbek close to Szigetvár, southern Hungary. Turkish and Hungarian excavation teams unearthed the tomb, the mosque and the tekke (convent) of the *palanka* (redoubt) buildings in collaborative work. The work in the site covered three consecutive excavation periods in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Among the findings, the tomb (türbe) was built in the site where Sultan Suleiman died in his royal tent on the 6th of September, 1566 during the siege of Szigetvár. His internal organs were buried during embalmment of his body and later this türbe was constructed over them. The exact date of the construction is unknown. Sokollu Mehmed Pasha added a mosque and a tekke for dervishes next to the tomb and surrounded the buildings with a palisade that also housed janissary rooms. Later a small town named Türbek became formed outside the palanka at the end of the sixteenth century. Habsburgs destroyed this town together with the türbe in 1689. During the excavation season in 2015, the tomb was unearthed, in the following year in 2016, the mosque entirely and the tekke partially excavated (4 rooms). In 2017, the work in the tekke revealed 8 new rooms in the north-west, and at the end of this season we have totally 12 rooms of the building became cleared of earth. The excavations done until today provided sufficient information to draw the architectural scheme of the palanka, which greatly confirms historical and geophysical information we collected before the excavations began.