

Report to the Supreme Council of Antiquities on a brief season at Medinet el-Gurob, 5-9 April 2011

Abstract: This article presents a preliminary (end-of-season) report on the April 2011 season of survey and finds study undertaken by the University of Liverpool at the site of Medinet el-Gurob in the Faiyum region, and at the magazine at Kom Aushim. The principal tasks accomplished were (1) checking the overall condition of the site as a whole, (2) study of small finds from previous seasons held in a study collection at the Kom Aushim magazine, (3) cleaning of the granite object GU10/127, and (4) making preparations for our main excavation season in 2011, which is scheduled for September/October.

Introduction

The April 2011 team consisted of five members: Dr Ian Shaw (University of Liverpool, UK), Jan Picton (University College London), Ivor Pridden (University College London), Dr Elizabeth Jones (University College London) and Dr Ibrahim Abd el-Baset Ibrahim (Faiyum University). I would like to thank Dr Zahi Hawass and the Permanent Committee, Dr Ahmed Abd-el Aal (the director of the Faiyum branch of the SCA), Dr Mohammed Ismail in the SCA Documentation Centre, Cairo, and our inspector Saber Dowib for their assistance and advice in our work at Gurob in 2011.

Site survey

Our principal aims in the April 2011 season of survey at Gurob were simply to spend a day (April 5) field-walking the site in order to check that there had been no new agricultural incursions into the archaeological zone, and no disturbances to the archaeological remains themselves. We are pleased to report that we found no obvious indications of either of the above.



Figures 1-2: Field-walking at Medinet el-Gurob, April 5 2011

Study of small finds stored as a study collection at Kom Aushim

During the 2005-2010 seasons, small finds were either collected from the surface (in 2005-2009) or excavated from two excavation squares (in 2010). The surface finds had their provenances recorded in three dimensions using the total station, while those from the excavations were recorded primarily in terms of context (since many were found through sieving). These small finds are currently stored at the Kom Aushim magazine, in the form of a study collection, and a small number of registered objects. We spent two days (April 6-7) studying, photographing and re-organising the objects in the study collection.

Cleaning of registered granodiorite object from the 2010 season

At the request of our inspector, a granodiorite object GU10/127 (discovered during the 2010 season, in the cultivation to the east of the main site, in association with the site of our drill core AS10, and in the vicinity of a sheikh's tomb and cemetery) was cleaned, for possible inclusion as an exhibit at the Museum of Civilization. Our conservator, Ivor Pridden, was responsible for this work, which took place on April 9.



Figures 3-4: Granodiorite object GU10/127, after cleaning.

Preparations for the September/October excavation season

We were also able to make preparations for our September/October excavation seasons, including preliminary discussions with local SCA officials and a local civil engineer concerning the possibility of constructing a workroom and store-room at Gurob, for which we will be submitting an application to the SCA Permanent Committee.

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