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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK AT GEBEL EL-NOUR AND IN THE AREA OF WADI GHAYADA (MIDDLE EGYPT) IN THE SEASON 2025

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Резюме. The article presents preliminary results of the third field season of the Egyptian-Russian Gebel el-Nour Archaeological Project, conducted in November–December 2025. The work comprised excavations; archaeological, topographic, and geophysical surveys; investigation of the Wadi Ghayada cultural landscape; and conservation of architectural remains. Late Roman and Byzantine buildings, a kitchen complex, pottery, and a coin from early in Diocletian's reign, found west of the temple, show that the local temple of Isis had been substantially dismantled by the late third century AD. The space before it was subsequently replanned and occupied by domestic and economic buildings. In the northern necropolis and quarry zone, 59 new features and groups of features were recorded, including rock-cut tombs, traces of stone extraction, and anthropoid burial recesses. In the southern necropolis, ground-penetrating radar detected 26 major anomalies. Investigation of one, first identified in 2024, revealed a new tomb (hypogeum GN 6020). Completion of excavations in chambers GN 6012 and GN 6013 of tomb GN 6010 provided new evidence for local Roman-period funerary practices, including ceramic and painted wooden coffins, funerary masks, and mummification. The regional survey in Wadi Ghayada area clarified the present condition of its cultural landscape. It documented traditional caravan routes, a possible chert-cobble extraction site, and two caravan stations on the route to the travertine quarries in Wadi Muathil. The new evidence demonstrates the long and complex development of the cultural landscape on the east bank of the Nile south of Beni Suef and provides a foundation for future research and preservation of the region's archaeological heritage.

Ключевые слова: Greco-Roman Egypt, Middle Egypt, Gebel el-Nour, settlement, necropolis, temple, cultural landscape

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Abstract. *The article presents preliminary results of the third field season of the Egyptian-Russian Gebel el-Nour Archaeological Project, conducted in November–December 2025. The work comprised excavations; archaeological, topographic, and geophysical surveys; investigation of the Wadi Ghayada cultural landscape; and conservation of architectural remains. Late Roman and Byzantine buildings, a kitchen complex, pottery, and a coin from early in Diocletian's reign, found west of the temple, show that the local temple of Isis had been substantially dismantled by the late third century AD. The space before it was subsequently replanned and occupied by domestic and economic buildings. In the northern necropolis and quarry zone, 59 new features and groups of features were recorded, including rock-cut tombs, traces of stone extraction, and anthropoid burial recesses. In the southern necropolis, ground-penetrating radar detected 26 major anomalies. Investigation of one, first identified in 2024, revealed a new tomb (hypogeum GN 6020). Completion of excavations in chambers GN 6012 and GN 6013 of tomb GN 6010 provided new evidence for local Roman-period funerary practices, including ceramic and painted wooden coffins, funerary masks, and mummification. The regional survey in Wadi Ghayada area clarified the present condition of its cultural landscape. It documented traditional caravan routes, a possible chert-cobble extraction site, and two caravan stations on the route to the travertine quarries in Wadi Muathil. The new evidence demonstrates the long and complex development of the cultural landscape on the east bank of the Nile south of Beni Suef and provides a foundation for future research and preservation of the region's archaeological heritage.*

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