
One hundred years of landscape archaeology in the Fayum, Egypt

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Résumé

While the archaeological remains in the Fayum were known to archaeologists since the nineteenth century, archaeological research began in earnest with the work of Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner in the 1920's. This work is now almost one hundred years old, yet still remains relevant for the interpretation of the Fayum and the early and middle Holocene occupation of the area. The approach they employed was one of the first collaborations between archaeology and geology in Egypt, and the work of Gardner is considered one of the first examples of geoarchaeology and arguably landscape archaeology. Since the early twentieth century further work has been carried out adopting both landscape and site-based approaches. Most recently the URU Fayum Project has adopted a landscape approach to archaeological research in the Fayum and integrated the previous work of Caton-Thompson and Gardner to enhance the understanding of the area. Attention is paid to the formation of the archaeological record and how this influences interpretation of past human behavior. In this paper we discuss the history of landscape archaeology in the Fayum and implications for our understanding of socio-economic change in the Holocene.

Mots-Clés: Landscape archaeology, formation, settlement pattern, Fayum, Egypt

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