Old Kingdom, New Perspectives
Egyptian Art and Archaeology
2750–2150 BC

edited by
Nigel Strudwick and Helen Strudwick
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Contents

Foreword
  Timothy Potts  v

Introduction
  Nigel Strudwick and Helen Strudwick  vii

1 Recent work in the tomb of Nebkaubhor at Saqqara
  Abdou el-Kerety  1

2 A new Old Kingdom rock-cut tomb from Abusir and its Abusir-Saqqara context
  Miroslav Bárta  9

3 Mastaba core structure: new data from fourth dynasty elite tombs at Abu Rawash
  Michel Baud and Eric Guerrier  22

4 The art of Egyptian hieroglyphs as seen by the Akhmim painters
  V.G. Callender  33

5 Two cemeteries for one provincial capital? Deir el-Bersha and el-Sheikh Said
  in the fifteenth Upper Egyptian nome during the Old Kingdom
  Marleen De Meyer  42

6 Blocks from the Unas causeway recorded in Černý's notebooks
  at the Griffith Institute, Oxford
  Andrés Diego Espinel  50

7 A spatial metaphor for chronology in the secondary cemeteries at Giza
  May Farouk  71

8 The decorative programmes of the pyramid complexes of
  Khufu and Khafre at Giza
  Laurel Flentye  77

9 Reading the Menkaure Triads: Part II (Multi-directionality)
  Florence Dunn Friedman  93

10 The death of the Democratisation of the Afterlife
  Harold M. Hays  115

11 A new specific tomb type in Abusir?
  Jaromír Krejčí  131

12 An afterworld for Netjerykhet
  Kamil O. Kuraszkiewicz  139
13 Re-examining the Khentkaues Town
Mark Lehner, Daniel Jones, Lisa Yeomans, Hanan Mahmoud and Kasia Olchowska

14 Searching for an undistorted template (digital epigraphy in action)
Jolana Malatkova

15 The ‘Reserve Heads’: some remarks on their function and meaning
Massimiliano Nuzzolo

16 The evidence of images: art and working techniques in the mastaba of Mereruka
Gabriele Pieke

17 The concept of hprr in Old Kingdom religious texts
Joanna Popielska-Grzybowska

18 Twisted Kilts: variations in aspective representation in Old Kingdom mastaba chapels
Ann Macy Roth

19 And where are the viscera...? Reassessing the function of Old Kingdom canopic recesses and pits
Teodozja I. Rzeuska

20 Fixed rules or personal choice? On the composition and arrangement of daily life scenes in Old Kingdom elite tombs
Nico Staring

21 Village, town and barracks: a fourth dynasty settlement at Heit el-Ghurab, Giza
Ana Tavares

22 An Old Kingdom bakery at Sheikh Said South: preliminary report on the pottery corpus
Stefanie Vereecken

23 Why was the Fifth Dynasty cemetery founded at Abusir?
Miroslav Verner and Vladimír Brúna

24 The economic connection between the royal cult in the pyramid temples and the sun temples in Abusir
Hana Vymazalová

25 The Ancient Egypt Research Associates settlement site at Giza: the Old Kingdom ceramic distribution
Anna Wodzińska

26 zīs wed scenes of the Old Kingdom revisited
Alexandra Woods
Foreword

There can be no academic subject for which the general public has such an inexhaustible appetite as Egyptology, and no period more so than the age of the pyramids. But the popular writings in this area are notoriously variable. While there is no shortage of reliable and accessible surveys by leading scholars in the field, neither does one have to look far on book lists to find an abundance of ‘pyramidology’ and other nonsense which also finds a wide audience. It was therefore a very welcome opportunity that arose when Helen Strudwick proposed that the 2009 Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology conference be held at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge so as to coincide with our annual Glanville Lecture on Egyptology, thus bringing the fruits of recent excavation and research by leading scholars to a wide general audience. The resulting event, held on 20-23 May 2009, consisted of a three-day meeting of specialist researchers, followed by a day of talks by some of the foremost experts in the Old Kingdom, to which the public was also invited, all culminating that evening in the Glanville Lecture delivered by Dr Jaromir Malek on ‘A city on the move: Egypt’s capital in the Old Kingdom’. This volume publishes all but three of the twenty-seven papers presented at the conference, plus one additional offering.

The Fitzwilliam Museum is fortunate to have one of the most important collections of Egyptian antiquities in the UK and thus provides a very appropriate setting for the OKAA conference. The earliest Egyptian object to arrive—a very fine Third Intermediate Period coffin set—was given in 1822, only six years after the bequest of Viscount Fitzwilliam created the museum, and a quarter century before the building erected to house its collections first opened its doors. Since then the Museum’s Egyptian collection has grown to nearly 17,000 objects, of which some one thousand are on display. The Egyptian galleries were refurbished in 2006 and remain the most popular in the museum.

Stephen Glanville, after whom the lecture is named, was Professor of Egyptology at Cambridge (1946–1956), as well as being Chairman of the Fitzwilliam’s Syndicate and Honorary Keeper of Antiquities. Glanville saw it as essential that the Museum’s Egyptian collections were actively used in teaching—as is still the case today—and that they continue to grow through acquisition. His commitment to engaging the public in the fascinating discoveries of professional Egyptologists has been continued by the Museum by the holding of a lecture bearing his name since 1977. We were delighted that Jaromir Malek accepted the invitation to give the 2009 lecture; and that so many distinguished scholars of Old Kingdom Egypt were able to attend the conference with which it was paired.

Special thanks are due to Helen Strudwick, at the time Senior Assistant Keeper, Antiquities, and Nigel Strudwick, the organisers of the conference, who have also edited the papers published here.

Timothy Potts
Director
The Fitzwilliam Museum
Cambridge
Introduction

This volume presents twenty-five of the twenty-seven papers presented at the 2009 Conference Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology, generously hosted by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. The history of these Old Kingdom meetings was admirably summarised by Miroslav Bárta in his Foreword to the proceedings of the 2004 conference, held in Prague, and it would be superfluous to repeat it here.

The contents of the present volume show the wide range of subjects which this research group now embraces, from the Pyramid Texts through site reports, from the analysis of statue orientation to attempts to study the spatial arrangement of Old Kingdom cemeteries. Some of the papers are substantially the same as those presented at the meeting, but the editors have encouraged authors, where they feel it is necessary, to expand upon their ideas and to take them beyond the limited range of material which can be presented in a twenty-minute talk. One further paper which could not be presented at the conference is also included.

We were delighted to welcome to Cambridge colleagues from all over the Egyptological world, and they fairly represent where the Old Kingdom is studied most. We are delighted to be able to include the paper from Abdou el-Kerety (better known to his friends and colleagues as Hatem); visa problems meant that he was regrettably unable to be present at the conference, despite our best efforts with the UK authorities, but his contribution was read and appreciated in his absence. The paper of Gabriele Pieke could not be presented at the conference but we are happy to be able to include it. The longest paper presented here is by Mark Lehner and his co-authors and is a report on progress of his excavations at Giza; this has turned into a substantial publication and analysis and it is a great pleasure to be able to include it in this volume.

The final day of the conference was open to the public, focusing more particularly on papers relating to the archaeology and monuments of the Memphite region. This, and indeed the conference as a whole, formed a precursor to the thirty-third Stephen Glanville Memorial Lecture. This annual event, hosted by the Fitzwilliam Museum, has been an important fixture in the Cambridge and UK Egyptological calendar since 1977. In 2009, the Lecture was given by Dr Jaromir Malek on the subject 'A city on the move: Egypt's capital in the Old Kingdom'.

The editors would like to thank many persons without whose help and assistance the 2009 Old Kingdom Art and Archaeology meeting could not have taken place. First and foremost, we are deeply indebted to Dr Timothy Potts and all the staff of the Fitzwilliam Museum for enabling the events to take place so successfully, and for ensuring the efficient operation of everything from computer projectors through to the teas and coffees which sustained us. We also thank our colleagues whose enlightening papers and discussion made the meeting the success it was, and we acknowledge their efforts in enabling the completion of the manuscript just over two years since the meeting.

We are delighted to acknowledge the help and assistance offered by Oxbow Books in taking this publication into their archaeological series. To our editor, Clare Litt, and the head of production, Val Lamb, go our profound thanks for their advice and support.

Nigel Strudwick
Helen Strudwick
A spatial metaphor for chronology in the secondary cemeteries at Giza

May Farouk

Although both of the two main excavators of Giza, Reisner\(^1\) and Junker,\(^2\) produced a different scenario for the development of the Giza cemetery, they both differentiated clearly between two main building phases: the original state-planned phase which included six nucleus cemeteries\(^3\) and the later phase which included the smaller tombs built in the large spaces of unoccupied land left among and around the nucleus cemeteries. These later tombs were used either for members of the family of the owners of the larger mastabas or for their \textit{ka}-priests. Clustering around the large older mastabas, these minor mastabas formed gradually what Reisner described as the secondary cemetery of Giza. A considerable number of those smaller tombs in the Eastern Cemetery and the Western Cemetery are uninscribed and are difficult to pinpoint precisely in time in the absence of artefacts or inscriptions. The present article is an attempt to use the options of Geographical Information System (GIS) software to produce a tentative global dating for such areas of tombs.\(^4\)

In attempting to find a spatial metaphor for chronology which could be used to recognise different building areas in the secondary cemetery, it was assumed that areas of higher tomb density are of later relative date than those of lower density. In other words the building sequence in each cemetery can be traced in the direction of the decreasing distance between tombs. Higher density of tombs in one area is formed by two factors: the decreasing distance between tombs and their small sizes. Reisner assumed that mastabas of larger size are earlier because large mastabas could only have been made when large spaces were still clear between the independent mastabas. To test this hypothesis, the tombs of several small cemeteries were examined.

By applying a point density tool to the tombs of cemeteries G 1000 and G 1100 (Fig. 2), it became clear that the density of tombs increases in the study area from south to north and from west to east. The most occupied area is the north-east corner, suggesting that it is the latest area in the cemetery, and this agrees with the dating of Reisner for those tombs based on their types.\(^5\) Thiessen polygons\(^6\) were drawn around the main cores of this cemetery\(^7\) (G 1221, G 1109, G 1020, G 1044, G 1024, G 1101—Fig. 2). The largest number of tombs are those which are located in the north-east corner within the dominance area of G 1044. That later group of tombs has obviously lost the connection to the centre and was extended independently to the north-east. The same tendency of tombs to extend towards the

\(^{1}\) For his dating of the Giza cemetery, see G. A. Reisner, \textit{A History of the Giza Necropolis 1} (Cambridge, Mass. 1942), 13–15, 73–84; Reisner, Chapter 15 of \textit{Giza Cemetery Volume 2}, an unpublished manuscript kept in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, passim.


\(^{3}\) The main cores in the Eastern Cemetery, cemetery G 1200, G 2100, G 4000, Cemetery En Echelon and cemetery GIS.

\(^{4}\) The present article is a part of a PhD thesis in which a geodatabase for the whole Giza cemetery was constructed with the means of ArcGis 9.3 software.


\(^{6}\) Thiessen polygons are polygons drawn around each point in a given space so that each polygon encloses only one point. This method attaches areas of space to the nearest centre in its vicinity. It deals with all centres equally, regardless of their size and hierarchy. For more information about Thiessen polygons see: C. Renfrew and P. Bahn, \textit{Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice} (5th edition; London 2008), 159.

\(^{7}\) Those which Reisner designates as early or on independent sites.
north-east can be noticed in cemeteries G 1400, G 1600 and G 3000 (Fig. 3). Here again the number of tombs increases towards the north-east corner.

The sequence of building suggested by the density maps for cemeteries G 1000, G 1100, G 1400, G 1600 and G 3000 is also supported when the visibility factor is taken into consideration. It was always the wish of tomb owners to locate their chapels on the eastern face of the mastaba to be visible to visitors and passers-by. Plate 3 demonstrates that the constant tendency to build towards the east caused older tombs in this cluster to have less share of visibility, if any. To acquire the best possible view on the plateau might have been also a competitive element which governed the expansion of the cemetery. When a viewshed analysis was made for two tombs no more than 50 metres apart (Plate 5 and Plate 6) the range in view difference between both was very wide, demonstrating the significant change of visibility according to the location of the tomb.

The situation in cemeteries G 2000 and G 2200 was more complicated. Not only was their growth limited by their position between mastaba G 2000 and cemetery G 2100, but also an outcrop of bad rock happens to be located in the centre of its building area. According to their types, the earlier tombs are those situated in the eastern border of the cemetery. Later tombs extended from east to west as far as the eastern wall of G 2000, blocking access to its chapel. When the land in that direction was consumed, another building ground to the north was initiated, avoiding the area of bad rock in the middle. In this case too growth extended from east to west, using the land adjacent to G 2000 as the last alternative. The point density map of this cemetery (Fig. 4) reflects the same development scenario.

The growth of cemetery G 6000 was also limited by natural features (the Schiaparelli quarry) and by the existence of earlier cemeteries (the Steindorff cemetery). The area of higher density in G 6000 is at the north-west corner, where it meets with the adjacent Steindorff cemetery. The area where they meet in particular has a higher density of tombs than both cemeteries which might indicate their simultaneous growth in opposite directions (Fig. 1).

That these dense areas of tombs are of later date is better demonstrated by the Cemetery En Echelon (CEE). There, two secondary cemeteries developed: one to the east of the three original lines of the cemetery, and one to their north. The density map of the first cemetery indicates its growth towards the north until it was stopped by the existence of the sndm-ib complex. The north cemetery on the other hand grew towards the west extending beyond the earlier line of tombs G 2440-G 5280, and turning later to the south-west, which was the latest part of the cemetery. Distribution of the names of kings within the two cemeteries supports the same growth tendency. Names of kings of the fifth and sixth dynasties occur more often in the high density areas than in less occupied parts where the name of king Khufu is more in evidence (Plate 1).

The same principle can be applied to the central area of the western cemetery, on which little research has been done, to propose a general scenario concerning the development of the area. The line of tombs adjacent to the cemetery G 4000 (D 110–D 118) is certainly the earliest, not only because the area has a lower density of tombs, but also according to Junker, who estimated the dating to be between the end of the fourth dynasty and the beginning of the fifth. The density map gives the impression that the cemetery developed from outside to inside, from west to east, the latest areas being thus those in the centre of the cemetery. Visibility also plays an important role here, this time as a motivator for the earlier builders to build their tombs as close as possible to the outer borders of the block, the inner tombs being much less visible (Plate 4).

Taking into account the lines of direction created by the density map, it is overwhelmingly evident that the Great Pyramid had little if any spatial weight during the later phase of the Western Cemetery development. Local considerations and topographical features on the other hand played a greater rule in the organisation of tombs.

Secondary tombs around the main cores of the nucleus cemetery indicate their chronological position in another manner. Those tombs which are built in a position to impede access to the older mastabas or to block the streets of the cemetery should in general be considered later than the secondary tombs which respected the layout of the cemetery. To recognise tombs of the first type, a selection by location was applied to all secondary tombs within 80 cm distance of the main cores, the minimum space to maintain traffic between two tombs. The outcome of selection demonstrates that the largest number of intrusive tombs was located around the main cores of G 4000. A point density map shows however that the most occupied area was around the cores of G 2100. This area of high density continues through the density map of the central area of the Western Cemetery (WCE, the area marked with a circle

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8 A viewshed is an area that is visible from a specific location based on elevation values of a Digital Elevation Model (DEM). For further reading about the viewshed analysis: Y.-H. Kim, S. Rana and S. Wisc, 'Exploring multiple viewshed analysis using terrain features and optimization techniques', *Computers & Geosciences* 30 (2004), 1019–1032.

9 Or by the mastabas which antedated the complex in the same location, as Reisner believed that G 2570 replaced older constructions (G 2371, G 2372, G 2373). See E. Bravarski, *The Senedjemib Complex*, Part I (Giza Mastabas 7; Boston 2001), 111–113.

10 H. Junker, *Giza VI. Die Mastabas des Nfr (Nefer), Kdjjf (Kedfi), KAhjff (Kahfj) und die westlich anschliessenden Grabanleghen* (Vienna and Leipzig 1943), 4.
in Plate 2). It is difficult however to claim that either the secondary tombs cores around G 2100 or the central area in the Western Cemetery were an extension of the other, since tombs around the main cores are associated with a different context of family relations and funerary service.

**Conclusion**

Secondary cemeteries tended to have higher density as they grew, but this factor alone cannot be used to determine the chronological development of the necropolis. Local factors such as topographical features and the existence of larger earlier mastabas had also an influence on the final shape of the necropolis. Access to earlier structures was preserved as long as possible, and only blocked when building land in each cemetery became scarce. To answer the question whether the preservation of access was out of conventional morality or genealogical ties, more detailed research for each case would be required. Higher areas of density should in general be interpreted as later parts of the cemetery, and often as a meeting area between two simultaneously growing cemeteries.

Striving for the best visibility conditions influenced the expansion direction of secondary cemeteries and the urge to see and to be seen was no less fierce than the competition for an area of land.

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**Fig. 1:** Point density of cemetery G 6000 and the central part of the Western Cemetery
Fig. 2: Point density and Thiesen polygons of cemeteries G 1000 and G 1100
Fig. 3: Point density and Thiesen polygons of cemeteries G 1600, G 1400 and G 3000

- Main cores in G 1400, G 1600, G 3000
- Graves_FeatureToPoint7_Creat2
Fig. 4: Point density of cemeteries G 2000 and G 2100
Plate 1: Point density of the Cemetery En Echelon with occurrence of names of kings (Farouk)

Plate 2: Point density of secondary intrusive tombs in the Western Cemetery (Farouk)
Plate 3: Line of sight of several observer points in cemeteries G 1100, G 1400, G 1600 (Farouk)
Plate 4: Line of sight of several observer points in the central area of the Western Cemetery (Farouk)
Plate 5: Viewshed analysis of G 1674 (Farouk)
Plate 6: Viewshed analysis of G 3092 (Farouk)
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Recent research on all aspects of the Old Kingdom in Egypt is presented in this volume, ranging through the Pyramid Texts, tomb architecture, ceramics, scene choice and layout, field reports, cemetery layout, tomb and temple statuary. The contributions also show how Egyptology is not stuck in its venerable traditions but that newer forms of technology are being used to great effect by Egyptologists. For example, two papers show how GIS technology can shed light on cemetery arrangement and how 3D scanners can be employed in the process of producing facsimile drawings of reliefs and inscriptions.

The authors cover a wide range of sites and monuments. A large part of the work presented deals with material from the great cemeteries of Saqqara and Giza of the Old Kingdom capital city of Memphis but all the smaller sites are discussed. The book also includes a paper on the architecture of mastabas from the lesser-known site of Abu Roasch. The provinces are by no means overlooked, with articles on material from Deir el-Bersha, el-Sheikh Said and Akhmim. Between them, the authors discuss material from the milieu of the king right down to that which concerned the tomb workmen and those who supplied their basic needs, such as bakers, brewers and potters.


Helen Strudwick currently works at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Nigel Strudwick has worked at the British Museum and is presently teaching at the University of Memphis. They have carried out fieldwork together at Luxor since 1984 and are the authors of Thebes in Egypt.