



# Old Kingdom, New Perspectives

Egyptian Art and Archaeology

2750–2150 BC

edited by

Nigel Strudwick and Helen Strudwick

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## 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

## *zšš w3d* scenes of the Old Kingdom revisited

Alexandra Woods

In Old Kingdom tomb and temple decoration, representations of the king, queen or tomb owner in the marshlands of Egypt can be grouped into five major scene types. These include the major figure on a pleasure cruise, fowling, spearing fish, or in rare cases hunting hippopotami, as well as being engaged in an activity labelled the *zšš w3d*.<sup>1</sup> Although depictions of the king engaged in a hippopotamus hunt or spearing fish can be traced back to the Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods,<sup>2</sup> the earliest preserved scenes of the major figure in a marsh theme date to the fourth dynasty. Queen Meresankh II<sup>3</sup> appears in a pleasure cruise scene, while Meresankh III [1]<sup>4</sup> and Hetepheres are depicted in a *zšš w3d* scene.

A *zšš w3d* scene typically represents a male or female figure standing on a papyrus boat above a band of water with a papyrus thicket positioned either directly in front of the figure or forming a 'wall' of stems stretching behind

the figure. Usually the scene contains only one major figure, although two are depicted in the scenes in the tombs of Meresankh III [1] at Giza and Mereruka [16] at Saqqara.<sup>5</sup> Female major figures can be shown grasping a stem from the papyrus thicket without detaching it at the base,<sup>6</sup> whereas male figures are normally represented in a striding posture, holding one papyrus stem in the thicket and a 'detached' stem above their head.<sup>7</sup> In contrast to the spear-fishing and fowling scenes that are commonly attested in elite tombs, the major figure in a *zšš w3d* scene is rarely depicted in the Old Kingdom.<sup>8</sup> A total of twenty-two scenes are attested in royal and elite contexts dating from the late fourth dynasty to the early sixth dynasty in the Memphite cemeteries of Giza, Saqqara and Abusir South in addition to the provincial cemeteries of el-Hammamiya, Sheikh Said

<sup>1</sup> For the classification of marsh scenes see also G. A. Reisner, *A History of the Giza Necropolis I* (Cambridge MA 1942), 353–358; Y. Harpur, *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom: Studies in Orientation and Scene Content* (London 1987), 140–141; PM III<sup>2</sup>, 903–905. For a recent study of marsh scenes found in royal reliefs and elite tombs dating to the Old Kingdom see A. Woods, 'A Day in the Marshes: A Study of Old Kingdom Marsh Scenes in the Tombs of the Memphite Cemeteries' (PhD thesis, Macquarie University 2007), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> A. Behrmann, *Das Nilpferd in der Vorstellungswelt der Alten Ägypter* (2 vols, Frankfurt-Bern 1989), I, Docs. 9a, 21, 22a, 24f, 25a, 34, 53a–b, 54a–b. For a survey of surviving royal reliefs that represent marsh pursuits see A. Ćwiek, *Relief Decoration in the Royal Funerary Complexes of the Old Kingdom: Studies in the Development, Scene Content and Iconography* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw 2003), 218–223.

<sup>3</sup> W. S. Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom* (London 1946, reprint New York 1978), 168, fig. 63.

<sup>4</sup> All Old Kingdom tombs containing a *zšš w3d* scene are referred to with a number in square brackets and listed in a table appended to the article (Table 1). The assigned dates have been formulated by the writer and abbreviated to follow the king's reigns after Harpur, *Decoration*, 34.

<sup>5</sup> The latter example shows his wife, Seshseshet, as an active figure at the front of the boat with Mereruka standing behind her holding a staff and a small figure of his mother, Nedjet-em-Pet, kneeling on the deck in between the two major figures. See P. Duell, *The Mastaba of Mereruka* (OIP 31 and 39; Chicago 1938), II, pls 127–129.

<sup>6</sup> See for example, Meresankh III [1], Iufi [20], Seshseshet [16] and Ankhnes-Meryre II [17]. The only instance of a male figure shown grasping stems from the thicket can be seen in the tombs of Seneb [3] at Giza and Ti [13] at Saqqara.

<sup>7</sup> See the tombs of Nebemakhet [2], Kaher-Ptah [4], Khaef-Khufu II [6], Itisen [7], Kaiedua [8], Kaiemankh [10], Iasen [11], Khuwerwer [12], Weririeni [21]. The stem has been often confused as a type of spear or stick. See for example, Smith, *History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting*, 178; S. Hassan, *Excavations at Giza V: 1933–1934* (Cairo 1944), 267; E. Feucht, 'Fishing and Fowling with the Spear and Throw-stick Reconsidered', in U. Luft (ed.), *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt Studies presented to László Kákossy by friends and colleagues on Occasion of his 60th Birthday* (Studia Aegyptiaca 14; Budapest 1992), 160.

<sup>8</sup> Although the scene type is represented in temples of the New Kingdom and Late Period, the composition and orientation of the scene appears to differ significantly. For an outline of the inscriptional and artistic evidence in all periods see W. Wuttengel, 'Zu den Darstellungen des Papyrusraschelns', *SAK* 19 (1992), 323–338.

and Deir el-Gebrawi (Table 1).<sup>9</sup> In order to gain a clearer understanding of the possible function and importance of the scene's inclusion in an Old Kingdom temple or tomb, an overview of the hieroglyphic inscriptions, artistic principles of representation and previous interpretations of the scene type will now be presented.

In an attempt to understand the action represented, scholars have examined either the accompanying hieroglyphic inscriptions or the artistic conventions employed by the artist to compose the scene. The inscriptions associated with several examples describe the action as zšš wꜥd,<sup>10</sup> the translation of which has caused some debate in the literature with the following having been presented: 'sorting out' / 'tearing out' / 'pulling out' or 'rattling papyrus'.<sup>11</sup> The inscriptions in several tombs are extended to mention the goddess Hathor, zšš wꜥd n ḥwt-ḥr or zšš wꜥd n ḥwt-ḥr m phw-w, which has caused some to propose that the scene represents some form of ceremony, ritual or rite of passage dedicated to Hathor. While the function of the event is uncertain, several scholars have suggested it was to guarantee the tomb owner's fertility,<sup>12</sup> to ensure a pleasurable experience in the afterlife,<sup>13</sup> or as a 'rite of passage' undertaken after the so-called 'call to Hathor' (that is, the pleasure

cruise).<sup>14</sup> In contrast, the potential religious symbolism in the scene has also been highlighted, suggesting the scene's inclusion has erotic overtones,<sup>15</sup> symbolises rebirth and rejuvenation,<sup>16</sup> and is linked to the mythical primordial swamp.<sup>17</sup> However, it should be noted that many of these interpretations are based on textual and artistic evidence dating to periods later than the Old Kingdom.

Equally, a utilitarian function has been proposed by Vandier who stresses a direct link between zšš wꜥd scenes and traditional fowling scenes, where the posture of the figures suggest they are shaking the papyrus to cause fowl to fly out of the thicket in preparation for a bird hunt.<sup>18</sup>

The artistic conventions utilised by the artists have also been considered in an attempt to understand the posture of the major figure, with some scholars suggesting the ceremony involved the complete removal, tearing out or throwing of the papyrus stems from the thicket.<sup>19</sup> Such an interpretation is based on examples of male tomb owners like Nebemakhet [2], Khaef-Khufu II [6], Iasen [11] who are shown holding a 'detached' stem above their head. However, examination of modern examples of papyrus (*Cyperus papyrus*), a perennial aquatic plant found along the banks of streams and shallow bodies of water, has highlighted the difficulty of disassociating the stem from the thicket's extensive root system.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, interpreta-

<sup>9</sup> Two scenes have been added to the list compiled in the *Oxford Expedition to Egypt: Scene Details Database* available at <http://www.oxfordexpeditiontoegypt.com/>, namely those of Kaher-Ptah [4] and Kapi [9] at Giza. The dating of the tombs of Kaher-Ptah, Seneb and Kaiemankh have been revised. For a discussion of the dating of the latter two tombs, see A. Woods, 'A date for the tomb of Seneb at Giza: Revisited' in A. Woods, A. McFarlane, and S. Binder (eds), *Egyptian Culture and Society: Studies in Honour of Naguib Kanawati* (2 vols, Cairo 2010), II, 301–331; A. Woods, 'Contribution to a controversy: A date for the tomb of Kaiemankh at Giza', *JEA* 95 (2009), 161–174.

<sup>10</sup> For the scenes with specific descriptions see the tombs of Meresankh III [1], Seneb [3], Fetekta [19], Iasen [11], Khenut [14] and Hemre/Isi I [22].

<sup>11</sup> See also the zšš wꜥd entry in *Wb* III, 486; R. Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch*, I: *Altes Reich und Erste Zwischenzeit* (KAW 98=HL 4; Mainz am Rhein 2003), 1243–1244. For an excellent discussion of potential translations see Wettengel, *SAK* 19 (1992), 326–328; H. Altenmüller, 'Der Himmelaufstieg des Grabherrn: Zu den Szenen des zšš wꜥd in den Gräbern des Alten Reiches', *SAK* 30 (2002), 4–7.

<sup>12</sup> A. Hermann, *Altägyptische Liebesdichtung* (Wiesbaden 1959), 15–19; Wettengel, *SAK* 19 (1992), 333.

<sup>13</sup> Y. Harpur, 'zšš wꜥd Scenes of the Old Kingdom', *GM* 38 (1980), 57–59. See also P. Montet, 'Hathor et les Papyrus', *Kēmi* 14 (1957), 104–105; T. Säve-Söderbergh, *The Old Kingdom Cemetery at Hamra Dom (El-Qasr wa Es-Saiyad)* (Stockholm 1994), 67; M. Baud, *Famille royale et pouvoir sous l'Ancien Empire égyptien* (2 vols, BdE 126; Cairo 1999), I, 132–134; L. Störk, 'Erotik', *LÄ* II, 7; P. Munro, *Der Unas-Friedhof Nord-West I: Topographisch-historische Einleitung: Das Doppelgrab der Königinnen Nebet und Khenut* (Mainz am Rhein 1993), 111–114.

<sup>14</sup> J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne IV: Bas-Reliefs et Peintures: Scènes de la vie quotidienne* (Paris 1964), 738–740; P. Montet, *Scènes de la vie privée dans les tombeaux égyptiens de l'Ancien Empire* (Strasbourg 1925), 328–330; Montet, *Kēmi* 14 (1957), 102–108; Munro, *Unas-Friedhof* I, 95–118.

<sup>15</sup> Störk, *LÄ* II, 4–11; P. Derchain, 'La perruque et le cristal', *SAK* 2 (1975), 55–74. On the erotic overtones of the scenes refer to P. Derchain, 'Symbols and Metaphors', *RAIN* 15 (1976), 8–10; L. Manniche, *Sacred Luxuries: Fragrance, Aromatherapy, and Cosmetics in Ancient Egypt* (New York 1999), 103–106.

<sup>16</sup> Such an interpretation is based on the scene's close association with the funerary procession and the occurrence of the phrase zšš wꜥd in PT 388a. See Harpur, *GM* 38 (1980), 57. The link with the funerary procession is also emphasised by Montet, *Kēmi* 14 (1957), 102–108. For a discussion of the Pyramid Text entry, see Wettengel, *SAK* 19 (1992), 334–336.

<sup>17</sup> G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt* (London 1993), 187–189; Wettengel, *SAK* 19 (1992), 323–338; P. Germond and J. Livet, *An Egyptian Bestiary: Animals in Life and Religion in the Land of the Pharaohs*, (London 2001), 99–101; H. Altenmüller, 'Nilpferd und Papyrusdickicht', *BSEG* 13 (1989), 9–21.

<sup>18</sup> Vandier, *Manuel* IV, 745, fig. 418g. See also H. Balcz, 'Zu den Szenen der Jagdfahrten im Papyrusdickicht', *ZÄS* 75 (1939), 32–38; D. Dunham, 'A "Palimpsest" on an Egyptian Mastaba Wall', *AJA* 39 (1935), 304.

<sup>19</sup> Harpur, *GM* 38 (1980), 57; K. Sethe, 'Das Papyruszepter der ägyptischen Göttinnen und seine Entstehung', *ZÄS* 64 (1929), 6–9; H. Junker, *Giza IV: Die Mastaba des Kjm'nh (Kai-em-anch)* (DAWW 71/1; Vienna 1940), 77–81.

<sup>20</sup> Hermann, *Altägyptische Liebesdichtung*, 15–19; P. Kaplony,

tions centred on the major figure completely removing stems from the thicket (that is, 'tearing out, pulling out or throwing papyrus') may not be as likely as a ritual of 'sorting out or rattling papyrus' dedicated to Hathor. Such an interpretation may also be supported by the associations between the sound of the rustling or rattling papyrus stalks and that of a naos-shaped sistrum (*zšš-t*), which was closely linked to the goddess Hathor even in the Old Kingdom.<sup>21</sup>

The geographical location of the proposed *zšš wꜥd* ceremony dedicated to Hathor remains rather elusive and the texts accompanying the scenes of Meresankh III [1], Iasen [11] and Khenut [14] only state the activity occurred in the *phw-w* 'marshlands'.<sup>22</sup> However, inscriptions in the tomb of Fetekta [19] at Abusir South provide an insight into the location of the marshlands.<sup>23</sup> On the west wall of Fetekta's chapel are four large river-going vessels as well as a smaller one perhaps bringing supplies. Due to the placement of the scene on the west wall, the actual direction of the boats can be determined: the two vessels to the left are shown to have their sails down and therefore travelling north, which is supported by the accompanying inscriptions *iwt-t m ḥdī r zšš wꜥd ḥw-t-ḥr nfr-t* 'Coming downstream to *zšš wꜥd* for the beautiful Hathor', while the two vessels to the right have their sails up and are accordingly travelling south, which is

confirmed by the associated texts *iwt-t m ḥsft m-ḥ-t zšš wꜥd ḥw-t-ḥr nfr-t nb(t) nh-t* 'Coming upstream after *zšš wꜥd* for the beautiful Hathor, Mistress of the Sycamore'. The texts and positioning of the sails indicate the forward journey is to the north to perform the so-called *zšš wꜥd* ceremony or ritual, while the vessels took advantage of the north wind on the return journey south to Memphis.<sup>24</sup> Lashien has recently examined the orientation of the *zšš wꜥd* scenes and the few named destinations, such as those in the chapel of Fetekta [19] mentioned above, to propose a direct connection between representations of the ceremony and voyages by ship to the Delta region.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Lashien proposes that the *zšš wꜥd* ceremony formed an integral part of a pilgrimage to the Delta, which was undertaken only once by certain individuals, involving the inspection of their funerary estate (*pr-dt*) in the north and concluding with a visit to the cemetery to view the arrival and placement of their funerary equipment in the tomb.<sup>26</sup> The possibility that the inclusion of the *zšš wꜥd* ceremony in a tomb recorded *one specific event* in the life of a restricted group of individuals is certainly intriguing and deserves further consideration.

The following paragraphs will investigate the individuals who appear to have performed the *zšš wꜥd* ceremony and accordingly depicted the event in their tomb. The tomb owner's gender, position within the Egyptian administration and/or priesthood, family background and placement of the scene in the decorative programme where preserved will now be considered.

### 1. Gender and representation of the major figure

Over two hundred and fifty examples of marsh scenes are attributed to the Old Kingdom, yet there are only fourteen preserved scenes depicting a female major figure. The majority of marsh scenes are found in tombs belonging to male officials, although this may be due to the limited number of preserved tombs belonging to women in this period.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, women are only shown engaged in certain marsh activities, namely, the *zšš wꜥd* ceremony and a pleasure cruise.<sup>28</sup> Distinct differences in the representation of each

<sup>21</sup> 'Der Schreiber, das Gotteswort und die Papyruspflanze. Mit neuen Untersuchungen zum unterägyptischen Königtum', *ZAS* 110 (1983), 159–165; Montet, *Kémi* 14 (1957), 102–108. For a discussion on the Egyptian artist's unique method of representing the papyrus thicket, see L. Evans, *Animal Behaviour in Egyptian Art: Representations of the Natural World in Memphite Tomb Scenes* (ACE. Studies 9; Oxford 2010), 43–44.

<sup>22</sup> Balcz, *ZAS* (1939), 32–38; F. Daumas, 'Les objets sacrés de la déesse Hathor à Dendera', *RdE* 22 (1970), 63–78; C. Ziegler, 'Sistrum', *LÄ* V, 959–963; M. Reynders, 'ššš-t and šhm: names and types of the Egyptian Sistrum', in W. Clarysse, A. Schoors and H. Willems (eds), *Egyptian Religion: The Last Thousand Years. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur* (OLA 84; Leuven 1998), 1013–1026. The earliest evidence of a connection between the sistrum and Hathor dates to the sixth dynasty, as seen in the alabaster sistrum dedicated by king Teti to Hathor (C. Ziegler, 'Sistrum Inscribed with the name of King Teti' in Do. Arnold (ed.), *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids: Metropolitan Museum of Art Catalogue* (New York 1999), 450–451 (182); N. de G. Davies, 'An Alabaster Sistrum Dedicated by King Teti', *JEA* 6 (1920), 69–72; R. A. Gillam, 'Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance', *JARCE* 32 (1995), 227–231). For an analysis of the sistrum's meaning and connection to Hathor in the Old Kingdom and later see H. G. Fischer, 'The Cult and Nome of the Goddess Bat', *JARCE* 1 (1962), 14–15; L. Manniche, 'The Cultic Significance of the Sistrum in the Amarna Period' in Woods, McFarlane and Binder (eds), *Egyptian Culture and Society* II, 13–26.

<sup>23</sup> Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch* I, 468–469, 1243–1244, 1281–1282.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of this scene, see M. Bárta, *Abusir V: The Cemeteries of Abusir South I* (Prague 2001), 80–85, fig. 3.12, pl. 81.

<sup>25</sup> Also suggested by Harpur, *GM* 38 (1980), 58.

<sup>26</sup> M. Lashien, 'The so-called Pilgrimage in the Old Kingdom: its destination and significance', *BACE* 20 (2009), 87–106.

<sup>27</sup> Lashien, *BACE* 20 (2009), 102–103.

<sup>28</sup> Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 164–166; V. G. Callender, 'A contribution to the burial of women in the Old Kingdom', in F. Coppens (ed.) *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2001, Proceedings of the Symposium, Prague, September 25th–27th, 2001* (Archiv Orientalní 70/3 (2002)), 337–350.

<sup>29</sup> For a complete list, see the female entries in Table 1 and the pleasure cruise scenes in the following tombs: Meresankh II (Smith, *History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting*, 168, fig. 63); Iufi (A. El-Khouli and N. Kanawati, *The Old Kingdom Tombs of El-Hammamiya* (ACE Reports 2; Warminster 1990), 46–47, pls 50–51); Hetepet (W. Wresinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* I [Leipzig 1923],

gender in a zšš w3d scene are also apparent. For example, female major figures are only ever shown grasping stems from the thicket whereas male major figures often hold one papyrus stem in the thicket and a 'detached' stem above their head.<sup>29</sup> Male figures are predominantly depicted in a *striding* posture (with their front foot flat on the boat deck and their back foot raised to the ball of the foot),<sup>30</sup> while females in a zšš w3d scene are represented wearing a tight fitting dress standing with their legs placed firmly together.<sup>31</sup> However, it should be conceded that it is difficult to assess whether these specific modes of gender representation indicate any difference in the zšš w3d ritual for male and females or is simply evidence of decorum in Egyptian art.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. Position in the administration and priesthood

The offices held by individuals with zšš w3d scenes in their tomb decoration range considerably and include those related to the priesthood of various king's pyramids and pyramid towns, the governance of the palace precinct and to the service of the king as well as high administrative positions. Certainly, there is no correlation between the inclusion of this scene and a position within the priesthood of Hathor, with only Meresankh III [1] and Iufi [20] possessing such titles. Where males are the principal figure in the scene, their wives are designated as *hm-t-ntr hwt-hr* and are frequently depicted (at a reduced scale) accompanying their husbands.<sup>33</sup>

## 3. Family background

Many zšš w3d scenes are encountered in tombs of individuals who are of royal descent, particularly in those dating from the late fourth to the mid-fifth dynasty at Giza and

el-Hammamiya. All six female major figures engaged in the zšš w3d ritual can be directly connected to the royal family and are referred to as one of the following: *mw-t nsw-t*,<sup>34</sup> *hm-t nsw-t*<sup>35</sup> or *st nsw-t n(t) h-t=f*.<sup>36</sup> Equally, several male officials shown undertaking this activity are of royal background and are designated as *st nsw-t n(y) h-t=f*, such as Nebemakhet [2], or can be linked to the royal family through examination of their parental lineage.<sup>37</sup> Certainly, after the reign of Niuserre in the mid-fifth dynasty all the officials with this scene in their tomb appear to be of non-royal background, which coincides with the introduction of spear-fishing and fowling scenes in elite tombs at Saqqara and Giza.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, the zšš w3d scenes in the tombs of Meresankh III [1] at Giza and Mereruka [16] at Saqqara are the only representations in the Old Kingdom showing two major figures in a marsh scene. In Meresankh III's [1] scene, her mother Hetepheres, clearly of royal descent as she is described as *st nsw-t bt-ty hwtw=f*, is an *active figure* and grasps two stems from the thicket. This is in contrast to Mereruka's [16] passive role where he is shown standing and holding a staff, while his wife princess Sesheset is the active figure grasping two stems from the thicket. Mereruka's apparent exclusion from the activity may indicate that the zšš w3d ritual was particularly associated with royal women (wives, mothers or daughters of the king), even during the early sixth dynasty.

## 4. Placement of the scene

The unique nature of the event may also be reflected in the placement of each example in the tomb's decorative scheme. The zšš w3d scene is often located near elements highlighting royal descent such as titles (such as *hm-t nsw-t*) or adjacent to scenes showing strong royal iconography such as a throne. In addition, zšš w3d scenes appear to have been separated

pl. 376); Nebet (Munro, *Unas-Friedhof* I, 53–56, pl. 11); Khenut (Munro, *Unas-Friedhof* I, 52–53, pl. 34); Khuit (Z. Hawass, 'Recent Discoveries in the Pyramid Complex of Teti at Saqqara', in M. Bárta and J. Krejčí (eds), *Abusir and Saqqara in the Year 2000* (Prague 2000), 430, fig. 11); Neferti (T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Hamra Dom*, 63–67, pls 48b, 49).

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of the postures of the figures see also Altenmüller, *SAK* 30 (2002), 14–23, 35–36.

<sup>30</sup> See the examples in the tombs of Iyimery [5], Itisen [7], Kaiemankh [10], Iasen [11] and Khuwerwer [12] at Giza.

<sup>31</sup> For distinct differences in the representation of male and female figures, see the tomb of Ihy at Saqqara, which provides an interesting insight into the alterations made to the scene's composition when Ihy's figure was erased and Sesheset/Idut's was incorporated into the existing tomb decoration. See N. Kanawati and M. Abder-Raziq, *The Unis Cemetery at Saqqara, II: The Tombs of Iyefert and Ihy (reused by Idut)* (ACE Reports 19; Oxford 2003), particularly pls 53d, 54.

<sup>32</sup> J. Baines, 'Decorum', in J. Turner (ed.), *The Dictionary of Art*, IX (New York 1996), 796.

<sup>33</sup> See the tombs of Nebemakhet [2], Seneb [3], Iyimery [5], Khuwerwer [12], Kaiemankh [10] at Giza, Mereruka [16] at Saqqara and Hemre/Isi I [22] at Deir el Gebrawi.

<sup>34</sup> See Ankhnes-Meryre II [17] at Saqqara.

<sup>35</sup> See Meresankh III [1] at Giza as well as Khenut [14] and Nebet [15] at Saqqara.

<sup>36</sup> See Meresankh III [1] and her mother Hetepheres at Giza. This title has been erased from the inscriptions belonging to Kaiekhenet I [20] and less carefully in the case of his wife, Iufi, at El-Hammamiya. See El-Khouli and Kanawati, *El-Hammamiya*, 17–18; E. Martin-Pardey, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Provinzialverwaltung bis zum Ende des Alten Reiches* (HÄB 1; Hildesheim 1976), 22, n. 3, 87; N. Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms in Old Kingdom Egypt* (Warminster 1980), 115.

<sup>37</sup> See for example Khaef-Khufu II [6] (Baud, *Famille Royale* II, 541 [180]) and Iyimery [5] (K. R. Weeks, *Mastabas of Cemetery G6000* (Giza Mastabas 5; Boston 1994), 5–8); Kaiedua [8] (Baud, *Famille Royale* I, 27, n. 105); Ti [13] (Baud, *Famille Royale* I, 20).

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion of the architectural and artistic innovations in the reign of Niuserre, see M. Bárta, 'Architectural innovations in the development of the non-royal tomb during the reign of Nyuserre', in P. Jánosi (ed.), *Structure and Significance: Thoughts on Ancient Egyptian Architecture* (DÖAW 33; Vienna 2005), 105–125, pls 1–11.

from the (presumably) more commonly represented and frequently undertaken activities of the tomb owner spearing fish, catching birds or on a pleasure cruise. For example, the tombs of Ti [13], Kaiemankh [10] and Mereruka [16] all include several marsh themes in their tomb, but in each instance the *zšš w3d* scene is placed in a separate room.

### Summary

Many scholars have attempted to interpret the significance of *zšš w3d* scenes with varying opinions and conclusions. The inscriptions associated with the scene and the iconography seem to indicate that the *zšš w3d* ritual probably involved the 'sorting or rattling of papyrus' rather than 'tearing out, pulling out or throwing papyrus' in the Nile Delta for the goddess Hathor. The ritual may have formed part of a pilgrimage to several sites in the Delta region followed by

a visit to the necropolis to view the introduction of funerary equipment to the tomb, and potentially represent one specific event in the lives of these individuals. While the ceremony was performed by the elite of Egyptian society, it was not exclusive to members of Hathor's priesthood, and appears to be associated with royal women (mothers, wives, and daughters of the king) as well as several male individuals of royal descent until the mid-fifth dynasty. Curiously, the inclusion of a *zšš w3d* scene in elite tomb decoration showing the major figure drops out of favour after the sixth dynasty and is frequently attested in royal temple decoration in later periods, perhaps indicating that the significance of the ritual and the purpose of including the scene in Old Kingdom temple and tomb decoration was fundamentally different.

Table 1: List of tombs depicting a *zšš w3d* scene dating to the Old Kingdom

	Tomb Owner	Major figure's Gender	Assigned Date	Cemetery	Reference
[1]	Meresankh III	Female	IV.4–6	Giza	D. Dunham and W.K. Simpson, <i>The Mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III: G7530–7540</i> (Giza Mastabas 1; Boston 1974), 9–10, fig. 4.
[2]	Nebemakhet	Male	IV.4–6	Giza	LD II, pl. 12b.
[3]	Seneb	Male	V.2	Giza	H. Junker, <i>Grabungen auf dem Friedhof des Alten Reiches bei den Pyramiden von Giza V</i> (DA WW 71/2; Vienna 1941), 65–67, fig. 15.
[4]	Kahef-Ptah	Male	V.M	Giza	T. Kendall, 'An unusual Rock-cut tomb at Giza', in W.K. Simpson, W.M. Davis (eds), <i>Studies in Ancient Egypt, the Aegean and the Sudan: Essays in honor of Dows Dunham on the occasion of his 90th Birthday, June 1, 1980</i> (Boston 1981), 107, fig. 11.
[5]	Iymery	Male	V.6	Giza	K.R. Weeks, <i>Mastabas of Cemetery G6000: G 6010 (Neferbaupth); G 6020 (Iymery); G 6030 (Ity); G 6040</i> (Giza Mastabas 5; Boston 1994), 41, fig. 33.
[6]	Khaef-Khufu II	Male	V.6	Giza	W.K. Simpson, <i>The Mastabas of Kawab, Khafkhufu I and II</i> (Giza Mastabas 3, Boston 1978), 24–25, fig. 47.
[7]	Itisen	Male	V.6–	Giza	S. Hassan, <i>Excavations at Giza V</i> (Cairo 1944), 267–268, pl. 37.
[8]	Kaiedua	Male	V.6–	Giza	S. Hassan, <i>Excavations at Giza VI [III]</i> (Cairo 1950), 99–100, fig. 80.
[9]	Kapi	Male	V.6–7	Giza	A.M. Roth, <i>A Cemetery of Palace Attendants, including G 2084–2099, G2230 + 2231 and G 2240</i> (Giza Mastabas 6; Boston 1995), 101, fig. 156.

[10]	Kaiemankh	Male	V.8–9E	Giza	N. Kanawati, <i>Tombs at Giza I: Kaiemankh (G4561) and Seshemnefer I (G4940)</i> (ACE Reports 16; Warminster 2001), 39–40, pl. 36.
[11]	Iasen	Male	V.8L–9	Giza	W. K. Simpson, <i>Mastabas of the Western Cemetery, Part I: Sekhemka (G 1029); Tjetu I (G 2001); Iasen (G 2196); Penmeru (G 2197); Hagy, Neferjentet, and Herunefer (G 2352/53); Djaty, Tjetu II, and Nimesti (G 2337 X, 2343, 2366)</i> (Giza Mastabas 4, Boston 1980), 20–12, fig. 30.
[12]	Khuwerwer	Male	V.9	Giza	LD II, pl. 43a.
[13]	Ti	Male	V.6–8	Saqqara	L. Épron and F. Daumas, <i>Le Tombeau de Ti: Fascicle I: Les approches de la chapelle</i> (Cairo 1939), pl. 46.
[14]	Khenut	Female	V.9	Saqqara	P. Munro, <i>Der Unas-Friedhof Nord-West. Topographisch-historische Einleitung. Das Doppelgrab der Königinnen Nebet und Khenut, I</i> (Mainz/Rhein 1993), 52–53, pl. 33.
[15]	Nebet	Female	V.9	Saqqara	P. Munro, <i>Der Unas-Friedhof Nord-West</i> , 53–56, fig. 1, pl. 10.
[16]	Mereruka: wife Sesheshet as the major figure	Female	VI.1M–L	Saqqara	P. Duell, <i>The Mastaba of Mereruka</i> (OIP 31 and 39; Chicago 1938), II, pls 127–129.
[17]	Ankhnes-Meryre II	Female	VI.2	Saqqara	J. Leclant, A. Minault-Gout, 'Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan (1998–1999)', <i>Orientalia</i> 69 (2000), 245, pl. 17 [8]
[18]	Horemheb Fragments	Male	VI	Provenance: Saqqara	H. D. Schneider, <i>The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Commander-in-Chief of Tufankhamun. II: A Catalogue of the Finds</i> (EES Memoir 60; London 1996), 85, pl. 91.
[19]	Fetekta	Male	V.6–	Abusir South	M. Bárta, <i>Abusir, V: The Cemeteries of Abusir South I</i> (Prague 2001), 80–85, fig. 3.12, pl. 81.
[20]	Kaiekhenet I: wife Iufi as the major figure	Female	V.E–M	el-Hammamiya	A. El-Khouli and N. Kanawati, <i>The Old Kingdom Tombs of El-Hammamiya</i> (ACE Reports 2; Warminster 1990), 35–36, pls 35–37.
[21]	Weririeni	Male	V.9	Sheikh Said	N. de G. Davies, <i>The Rock Tombs of Sheikh Said</i> (ASE 10; London 1901), 23, pls 11–12.
[22]	Hemre/Isi I	Male	VI.1L–2E	Deir el-Gebrawi	N. de G. Davies, <i>The Rock Tombs of Deir el Gebrawi II</i> (ASE 12; London 1902), 22–23, pl. 17.

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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.

Containing papers presented at a conference at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge in May 2009, this book continues a series of publications of the latest research presented at previous meetings in Paris, Berlin and Prague.

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