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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL FOREWORD . . . . .	I
PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE EL-'AMARNA EXPEDITION, 1980 . . . . .	Barry J. Kemp . . . . . 5
THE ANUBIEION, NORTH SAQQÂRA, PRELIMINARY REPORT, 1979-80 . . . . .	H. S. Smith and D. G. Jeffreys 21
TWO OLD KINGDOM TOMBS AT GÎZA . . . . .	Y. M. Harpur . . . . . 24
THE CONCLUSION TO THE TESTAMENT OF AMMENEMES, KING OF EGYPT . . . . .	John L. Foster . . . . . 36
A REAPPRAISAL OF TOMB 55 IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS AN EIGHTEENTH-DYNASTY LINEN IN THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON . . . . .	C. N. Reeves . . . . . 48
EGYPT, SAMOS, AND THE ARCHAIC STYLE IN GREEK SCULP- TURE . . . . .	John McDonald . . . . . 56
DJEDĤOR THE SAVIOUR, STATUE BASE OI 10589 . . . . .	Whitney M. Davis . . . . . 61
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SILVER . . . . .	Elizabeth J. Sherman . . . . . 82
	N. H. Gale and Z. A. Stos-Gale . . . . . 103
QUELQUES ASPECTS DU MARIAGE DANS L'ÉGYPTE ANCIENNE THE PYRAMIDS OF SNOFRU AT DAHSHÛR. THREE SEVEN- TEENTH-CENTURY TRAVELLERS . . . . .	S. Allam . . . . . 116
THE REVEREND DR ANTHONY J. ARKELL . . . . .	Kathleen M. Pickavance . . . . . 136
EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES ACQUIRED IN 1979 BY MUSEUMS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM . . . . .	H. S. Smith . . . . . 143
TWO PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH NEW KINGDOM TOMBS IN THE MEMPHITE AREA . . . . .	Janine Bourriau . . . . . 149
	Jaromír Málek . . . . . 156
BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS: Notes on two tomb chapels at Gîza, <i>by</i> Henry G. Fischer, p. 166; Two linen dresses from the Fifth Dynasty site of Deshasheh now in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London, <i>by</i> Rosalind M. Hall, p. 168; Middle Egyptian <i>smꜣyt</i> , 'archive', <i>by</i> W. A. Ward, p. 171; Abnormal or cryptic writings in the Coffin Texts, <i>by</i> R. O. Faulkner, p. 173; A note on <i>Shipwrecked Sailor</i> 147-8, <i>by</i> D. B. Redford, p. 174; Two inscribed objects from the Petrie Museum, <i>by</i> W. V. Davies, p. 175; A Bes amulet from the Royal Tomb of Akhenaten at El-'Amarna, <i>by</i> J. R. Ogdon, p. 178; Nefertiti's regality: a comment, <i>by</i> Aidan Dodson, p. 179; The Heb-sed robe and the 'ceremonial robe' of Tut'ankhamûn, <i>by</i> John Larson, p. 180; 'Love' in the love songs, <i>by</i> Michael V. Fox, p. 181; Generation-counting and late New Kingdom chronology, <i>by</i> David Henige, p. 182; A non-existent epithet of Memphite Ḥaḥor, <i>by</i> J. Málek, p. 184; A statuette of the god Kek at University College London, <i>by</i> Robyn A. Gillam, p. 185.	
REVIEWS . . . . .	PAGE
BEATE GEORGE, <i>Frühe Keramik aus Ägypten</i> . . . . .	Reviewed by Janine Bourriau . . . . . 188
DOWS DUNHAM and WILLIAM KELLY SIMPSON, <i>The Mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, G7530-7540</i> . . . . .	Geoffrey T. Martin . . . . . 189
H. S. SMITH, <i>The Fortress of Buhen. The Inscriptions</i> . . . . .	J. J. Clère . . . . . 189
WOLFGANG HELCK, <i>Wirtschaftsgeschichte des alten Ägypten im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend vor Chr.</i> . . . . .	Schafik Allam . . . . . 192
K. A. KITCHEN, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical</i> . . . . .	M. L. Bierbrier . . . . . 195

## CONTENTS

HERMAN DE MEULENAERE and PIERRE MACKAY, <i>Mendes II</i> . . . . .	Helen Jacquet-Gordon . . . . .	195
J. D. COONEY, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, IV. Glass</i> . . . . .	D. B. Harden . . . . .	197
R. D. ANDERSON, <i>Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, III. Musical Instruments</i> . . . . .	W. J. Tait . . . . .	201
OSCAR WHITE MUSCARELLA, Ed., <i>Ancient Art: The Nor- bert Schimmel Collection</i> . . . . .	Geoffrey T. Martin . . . . .	202
G. Clerc, V. Karageorghis, E. Lagarce, and J. Leclant, <i>Fouilles de Kition, II</i> . . . . .	Geoffrey T. Martin . . . . .	203
A. H. MOUSSA and L. T. DOLPHIN, <i>Applications of Modern Sensing Techniques to Egyptology</i> . . . . .	A. J. Spencer . . . . .	204
Other books received . . . . .	. . . . .	205

## LIST OF PLATES

PLATE I	Anthony J. Arkell	<i>facing p. 143</i>
	( <i>at end</i> )	
PLATES II-III	El-'Amarna Expedition, 1980	
PLATES IV-XI	The Conclusion of the <i>Testament of Ammenemes</i>	
PLATE XII	Chapters of the Book of the Dead	
PLATES XIII-XIV	Djedhor the Saviour	
PLATES XV-XVI	Museum Acquisitions, 1979	
PLATES XVII-XVIII	New Kingdom Tombs in the Memphite Area	
PLATES XIX-XX	Linen Dresses from the Fifth Dynasty Site of Deshasheh	
PLATE XXI	Two Inscribed Objects from the Petrie Museum	
PLATE XXII	A Bes Amulet from the Royal Tomb of Akhenaten A Statuette of the God Kek	

Petrie's sequence dates which are quoted in the entries without comment. No reference is made to Kaiser's chronology, which is based on a careful analysis of the horizontal stratigraphy at Armant, although his work is noted in the introduction to the catalogue. If we draw on Kaiser's study, it seems that some of the vessels (for example, 116, 118, and 131) may date from the transition period between Kaiser's Naqada III and the First Dynasty.

The limitations of the catalogue lie not simply in the format, but in the author's approach to her subject, which is to consider the motifs of decoration in a vacuum unrelated to the pottery on which they occur. The techniques of application, the quantitative and geographic distribution of the ware, function, and the relation between shape and decoration are some of the factors which may influence the interpretation of motifs. Moreover the technical description of the ware in the introduction is the weakest part of the monograph. Fabric, surface colour, surface treatment, and methods of manufacture are dealt with summarily and curiously without reference to Hans-Åke Nordström's detailed description of both the fabric and the ware group in 'Neolithic and A-Group sites', *SJE* 3 (1972), 54-5 and 66-7. One can only regret that the opportunity was not taken to make a more useful contribution to our understanding of Predynastic Egyptian pottery.

JANINE BOURRIAU

*The Mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, G7530-7540.* By DOWS DUNHAM and WILLIAM KELLY SIMPSON.

Based upon the excavations and recording of the late George Andrew Reisner and William Stevenson Smith, Museum of Fine Arts—Harvard University Expedition. Giza Mastabas, edited by W. K. Simpson, 1. 344 × 272 mm. Pp. v + 26, col. frontis., 20 pls., map, plans, 16 figs. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1974. Library of Congress C.C. No. 73-88232. Price £24.00.

This volume is the first in a series which will make accessible Reisner's unpublished Giza tomb material. The decision has been taken, doubtless rightly, to publish a series of individual monographs on the mastabas, rather than to edit Reisner's bulky manuscript. The present volume is concerned with the tomb of Mersyankh (more familiarly Meresankh) III, daughter of Prince Kawab (son of Cheops), and wife of Chephren. Her mastaba lies in the great cemetery east of the Cheops Pyramid, not close to that great monument but several streets from it. Compared with some of the other mastabas in the same cemetery her tomb is not noticeably large, but contains features of great interest, quite apart from the exceptional state of preservation of its painted chambers. The role of the female *noblesse* of the Old Kingdom is emphasized to an unusual degree. From the architectural point of view the unique location of the tomb chapel (in the substructure rather than in the superstructure) and its series of rock-cut statues, are noteworthy.

It is sobering to recollect that, despite the number of inscribed and decorated mastabas of the Old Kingdom freed from the encroaching sand since the middle of the last century, comparatively few have received *definitive* treatment from the scholarly point of view. The volume under notice fulfils the four major *desiderata* of a tomb publication, even in these times of severe financial stringency: accurate facsimile line-drawings of the scenes and inscriptions, a selection of photographs to convey an impression of the style and quality of the reliefs (especially if these have not been caught adequately in the facsimiles), notes and plans of the salient architectural features, and a succinct commentary on the scenes and texts, with grammatical exposition where necessary. One cannot ask for more, except to see the completion of this admirable series as rapidly as possible (other volumes have since appeared).

GEOFFREY T. MARTIN

*The Fortress of Buhen. The Inscriptions.* By H. S. SMITH, with assistance from †W. B. EMERY, B. J. KEMP, G. T. MARTIN, and D. B. O'CONNOR. *Excavations at Buhen*, directed by †Walter B. Emery, Vol. II. The Egypt Exploration Society, Forty-Eighth Excavation Memoir. 320 × 260 mm. Pp. xii + 255, pls. 84. Egypt Exploration Society, London, 1976. ISSN 0307-5109. Price £39.00.

Sur la jaquette qui recouvre le volume un dessin montre, habilement reconstitué, un secteur caractéristique des massives murailles qui protégeaient la forteresse de Bouhen. C'étaient d'imposantes constructions de brique crue, équipées de remarquables ouvrages défensifs, dont on pouvait encore voir des vestiges il y a peu d'années, mais que, hélas! le Sadd el-'Aly — le Haut Barrage qui a formé le 'Lac Nasser' — a