

Introduction

'My first noble deed was in establishing for myself a tomb'.¹

'Those who love their life and who hate death, they will say one thousand of bread, beer, oxen and fowl for Khnumhotep'.²

These words, which are inscribed in the tomb of the noble Khnumhotep II (3 UC) at Beni Hassan, convey the immense weight placed upon one's preparation for death and the afterlife in ancient Egypt. As it was believed that in the Hereafter the deceased would require the same sustenance he enjoyed during life, it was imperative to prepare a tomb that would adequately provision him for eternity.³ Each tomb owner desired to establish a mortuary cult that would provide the required offerings, but it was feared that this would not continue perpetually. Consequently, several safeguards were implemented in the construction and decoration of the tomb in an attempt to ensure eternal nourishment. Artistic representations formed a significant contribution to this process as it was believed that what was depicted would magically come into existence.⁴ Consequently, funerary artworks were not simply decoration but served a specific, practical function.

During the late Old Kingdom to the end of the Middle Kingdom, two principal types of representation are dominant in the elite funerary record: wall scenes and funerary models. The two artistic media exhibit many similarities in design, with several of the same themes represented. Consequently, scholars have regularly labelled funerary models duplicates or substitutes of wall scenes. This designation implies that the two media served the same purpose in the tomb. However, there are several notable differences yet to be acknowledged. Only a comprehensive comparative analysis can determine the extent of these differences and the impact they have on the purpose of each medium, and this is undertaken here for the first time. Ascertaining the unique features of funerary models and identifying the reasons for these distinctions will reveal the three-dimensional medium's precise relationship with wall scenes and whether it did in fact serve a unique function in the tomb.

1.1 Wall Scenes and funerary models

Wall scenes comprise two-dimensional representations painted and/or carved in relief on tomb walls.⁵ This form

of funerary artwork became established in the 3rd Dynasty and remained prevalent throughout the Pharaonic Period.⁶ The themes most commonly portrayed have been divided by Kanawati into seven main categories: the tomb owner and his family; rural life; fishing, fowling and the desert hunt; professions and industries; sport and recreation; funerary rites; and the afterlife.⁷ The creators of these scenes, who will be termed scene-artists in this book, were bound by the strict rules of the Egyptian artistic canon, resulting in a consistent, characteristic appearance.⁸

From the Old Kingdom to the end of the Middle Kingdom, the repertoire of the above-ground tomb-chapel was primarily concerned with conveying so-called 'scenes of daily life'. In these scenes, subsidiary figures are engaged in arrested movement as they conduct a wide range of activities that would have regularly occurred on earth.⁹ Not only did these scenes provide the deceased with his desired supplies for the afterlife, they also publicly proclaimed his superior status and personal achievements to any visitors to the tomb, perhaps further encouraging the presentation of offerings.¹⁰ Additionally, the scenes may have had a symbolic function that sought to ensure the deceased's successful rebirth in the afterlife through conveying symbols associated with fertility and the triumph of order over chaos.¹¹ There was a careful selection process for the themes represented, with some motifs consistently adopted by tomb owners, others rarely attested, and some large sequences of activity reduced to a single stage. While it is highly likely that scenes were

throughout this book in order to create a clear distinction between wall scenes and the completely three-dimensional sculptural forms of models.

⁶ Robins, *Egyptian Painting*, 11; Taylor, *Death and Afterlife*, 149-50; Altenmüller, in *Egypt*, 81.

⁷ Kanawati, *Tomb and Beyond*, 83-112.

⁸ Spencer, *Death*, 65; Robins, *Egyptian Painting*, 11.

⁹ Taylor, *Death and Afterlife*, 150; Robins, *Art of Ancient Egypt*, 53, 102; Altenmüller, in *Egypt*, 79. Some scholars have alternatively proposed that scenes of daily life do not reflect everyday society, but rather are a projected ideal for the afterlife. Bolshakov, *Man and his Double*, 265-67, 279-80; Dodson & Ikram, *Tomb in Ancient Egypt*, 77. This interpretation, however, does not need to exclude the other. It is possible for the scenes to depict experiences from everyday life that the tomb owner would have hoped to reoccur in the afterlife.

¹⁰ Robins, "Problems in interpreting", *DE* 17, (1990), 47-48; Kanawati, *Tomb and Beyond*, 115-16; Shedid, in *Egypt*, 124; Swinton, *Management of Estates*, 12-14.

¹¹ The leading discussion on the symbolic interpretation is found in Kamrin, *Cosmos of Khnumhotep II*, 167-68, where it is argued that the scenes reflect the ancient Egyptian understanding of the cosmos and the tomb owner's contribution to maintaining cosmic order.

¹ Line 170, autobiography of Khnumhotep II (3 UC), south wall of tomb at Beni Hassan. Kanawati & Evans, *Beni Hassan. Volume I*, 35.

² North entrance thickness of the tomb of Khnumhotep II (3 UC) at Beni Hassan. Kanawati & Evans, *Beni Hassan. Volume I*, 30.

³ Spencer, *Death*, 70-72; Kanawati, *Tomb and Beyond*, 1; Taylor, *Death and Afterlife*, 92-95; Ikram, *Death and Burial*, 132.

⁴ Hayes, *Sceptre of Egypt. Part I*, 80-81; Dodson & Ikram, *Tomb in Ancient Egypt*, 15; Teeter, *Religion and Ritual*, 4-5.

⁵ Although it is recognised that the use of relief makes the scenes three-dimensional, the medium will be referred to as two-dimensional

multi-functional,¹² representations of daily life certainly provide insight into ancient Egyptian society and show the production of essential commodities that would have been of immense significance to the tomb owner's well-being in the afterlife.

Funerary models consist of small three-dimensional sculptures that depict people and animals engaged in activities of everyday life. The first examples comprise individual limestone statuettes that were housed in serdabs of 4th and 5th Dynasty tombs, but a transformation occurred in the late Old Kingdom. From the late 6th Dynasty to the end of the Middle Kingdom, the figures were fashioned of wood as group models and were typically interred in the burial chamber alongside the body of the deceased.¹³ While the subterranean chamber was the most popular location for wooden models, the sculptures were occasionally positioned in other parts of the tomb, including in the shaft and sealed niches cut into the superstructure.¹⁴ What is common about all of these locations, is that they remained inaccessible to the living.

There is significant variation in the style and quality of funerary models, with those of the 6th Dynasty often larger and more finely crafted than those of the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom, presumably due to the smaller number of examples and the limited number of figures incorporated into each sculpture.¹⁵ The quantity and distribution of models as well as the range of themes represented reached a climax in the early Middle Kingdom, but manufacture rapidly declined in the late 12th Dynasty, with models disappearing from elite funerary assemblages by the New Kingdom.¹⁶ The creators of these three-dimensional representations have been designated model-artists in this book in order to distinguish them from the makers of wall scenes while maintaining their status as artists.¹⁷

¹² For a discussion on the multi-functional nature of daily life scenes, see van Walsem, in *Proceedings of the Seventh ICE*, 1205-213; Hartwig, *Tomb Painting and Identity*, 49-52; Swinton, *Management of Estates*, 127; Lloyd, *Ancient Egypt*, 273-80; Hartwig, in *Artists and Painting*, 28-56.

¹³ Breasted, *Egyptian Servant Statues*, 2-3; Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. Volume I", 1-4; Roth, "Meaning of menial labor", *JARCE* 39, (2002), 103, 117-18.

¹⁴ Unusually, some of the model assemblage of Nakhti from Asyut was uniquely placed in the chapel where the sculptures could be seen by the living. Roth, "Meaning of menial labor", *JARCE* 39, (2002), 107; Tooley, in *Oxford Encyclopedia*, <<http://www.oxfordreference.com>>; Eschenbrenner-Diemer, in *Company of Images*, 176-79.

¹⁵ Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. Volume I", 18-19.

¹⁶ Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. Volume I", 59; Doxey, in *Secrets of Tomb 10A*, 50, 56; Eschenbrenner-Diemer, in *Company of Images*, 166-67.

¹⁷ Difficulties were encountered in this study when determining the appropriate terminology for the creators of models. The term 'craftsman' was avoided as individuals of this rank were not highly trained and would have only completed the preliminary sculptural tasks. While 'sculptor' may seem more appropriate, sculpting was required in the creation of both models and reliefs and so the term would not have created an accurate distinction. Similarly, as painting was utilised in the production of both scenes and models, the term 'painter' for scene-artists could cause confusion. Consequently, the designation 'artist' was selected for both, with the individual medium specified for clarification. Kanawati & Woods, *Artists in the Old Kingdom*, 20-21.

The themes commonly represented by models have been divided by Tooley into five principal categories: agriculture and animal husbandry; food preparation; industrial processes; offering-bearers; and boats.¹⁸ There are certainly many parallels between this classification and that of the two-dimensional medium, but there are also some notable differences. However, it is the similarities that are persistently focused upon in scholarship, with statements regularly asserted that presuppose the nature of the relationship between the two media. Taylor, for example, notes that scenes were "augmented" by models whereas Schäfer writes that the content of wall scenes was transformed into three-dimensional form.¹⁹ Similarly, Tiradritti states that models were a "three-dimensional transposition" of scenes while Malek goes further by labelling the models "three-dimensional equivalents" of tomb scenes.²⁰ Even Tooley who devotes an entire publication to models asserts that the sculptures were "designed to replace or supplement painted scenes".²¹ Not only do such statements over-emphasise the similarities between the two media, they also create the assumption that models fulfilled the same purpose in the tomb as wall scenes.

Although funerary artistic representations have been extensively examined in scholarship, the vast majority of studies are devoted to wall scenes. Entire books are dedicated to the two-dimensional medium, with each focusing on a specific aspect of the representations or utilising a particular approach,²² whereas funerary models are very rarely the subject of whole publications. Similarly, in broader art-historical studies, wall scenes form a large basis of the discussion while funerary models are only briefly summarised if even mentioned at all.²³

¹⁸ Tooley, in *Oxford Encyclopedia*, <<http://www.oxfordreference.com>>.

¹⁹ Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 38; Taylor, *Death and Afterlife*, 99-100.

²⁰ Malek, *Egyptian Art*, 146; Tiradritti, *Egyptian Wall Painting*, 173-74.

²¹ Tooley, *Egyptian Models and Scenes*, 8.

²² Vandier, in his series *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, focuses primarily on the themes represented, with volumes five and six dedicated to the repertoire of private tomb scenes of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. Similarly, Montet structures his publication *Les scènes de la vie privée dans les tombeaux égyptiens de l'Ancien Empire* according to the themes represented but focuses principally on the use of inscriptions. Harpur also addresses the themes of Old Kingdom elite tomb scenes in her *Decoration in Egyptian Tombs of the Old Kingdom: Studies in Orientation and Scene Content*, but rather seeks to outline their precise location and orientation in the chapel. Alternatively, Schäfer presents a technical analysis of the compositions in his 1919 *Principles of Egyptian Art*, a work that remains preeminent in this area of study. Although this publication is principally concerned with two-dimensional representations, a chapter is included at the end of the work that briefly examines the rendering of figures in three-dimensional sculpture. While some comparison between two- and three-dimensional media is achieved, it is particularly restricted in its scope: it is exclusively concerned with formal statues; it examines modes of construction rather than themes represented; and it forms a cursory chapter at the end of the work instead of the primary discussion.

²³ One of the leading publications in this area of study is Robins' *The Art of Ancient Egypt* which presents an expansive chronological survey of royal and private architecture, reliefs, paintings and sculpture from the Early Dynastic Period to the Ptolemaic Period. Although a range of artistic forms is discussed, the extensive time period covered causes only limited detail to be presented for some types of representation, including funerary models. Similarly, Smith interweaves his chronological overview of artistic representations and architecture with a brief examination of the

When greater attention is devoted to three-dimensional sculpture, preference is typically given to formal statues of the king or tomb owner over representations of serving figures.²⁴

Indeed, very few studies are dedicated entirely to the funerary model. In 1948, Breasted published *Egyptian Servant Statues* which largely comprises a catalogue of known models and provides the first classification of themes for the medium. Most models are merely given a brief descriptive summary and only a succinct history of model production is presented, but the publication remained the principal work on models until Tooley's dissertation in 1989 entitled "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs: A Study of Wooden Models and Related Material". In this work, Tooley presents a revised examination of the three-dimensional medium, observing the types of models found and trends in their geographical distribution and regional characteristics. However, only the themes of granaries, funerary boats, offering-bearers, offering-trays and soul houses, and 'concubines' are examined in greater detail. This discussion remains the foundational work on funerary models, with other studies on the medium focusing only on specific model assemblages or one particular theme.²⁵ Funerary models are beginning to receive more scholarly attention, and there are a small number of recent publications devoted to particular aspects of model production.²⁶ While these studies have given models increased visibility in scholarship, there are still significant gaps in our understanding of the precise role of the three-dimensional medium in the tomb.

Only one Egyptological study has been conducted that comprises a comparative analysis between two- and three-dimensional artworks, namely *The Representations of Statuary in Private Tombs of the Old Kingdom* by Eaton-Krauss. This, however, consists of a comparison between formal statues of the tomb owner and their representation

in wall scenes, once again reflecting the bias towards the elite in scholarship. While the sources examined in Eaton-Krauss' publication differ from those that form the basis of the present study, the work demonstrates the value of conducting comparative analysis. Eaton-Krauss examines the intricate details of the sculptures such as posture, costume and hairstyle in order to determine whether scene-artists replicated specific statues in their representations. Indeed, it is the minute details that convey some of the most important points of similarity and difference. The present study has likewise chosen to examine the intricate details of wall scenes and funerary models and to observe the differences between the media which are consistently overlooked by scholars. Therefore, an innovative comparative analysis of funerary models and wall scenes is conducted here in order to attain a more precise conclusion regarding the relationship between the two media and the specific role of the funerary model.

1.2 Historical and geographical context

For an effective, detailed comparison to be conducted, certain parameters needed to be put on the extensive corpus of artistic material. This was primarily achieved through a restriction in sites, with only the representations from Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan examined. These three sites form the cemeteries of the 14th-16th Upper Egyptian nomes and are situated in Middle Egypt. This region experienced significant economic development during the late Old and Middle Kingdoms, and the nomarchal tombs exhibit supreme wealth in their construction and decoration.²⁷ Moreover, Middle Egypt specialised in woodcraft during the early Middle Kingdom, with the development of local styles and workshops, which encouraged the production of numerous wooden items, including funerary models.²⁸ A rich body of both two- and three-dimensional artistic representations is therefore preserved from the three sites, enabling a comprehensive analysis.

The governing officials of the 14th Upper Egyptian nome were first buried at the site of Quseir el-Amarna on the east bank of the Nile. These officials served as overseers of priests in the temple of Hathor who had a major cult centre in the province.²⁹ However, the site was soon abandoned, with Pepyankh the Middle (D2) the first to construct his tomb at Meir on the west bank during the reign of Pepy II.³⁰ It has been demonstrated that this move was governed by a desire for a more geographically suitable location, as

historic periods in his pioneering publication *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*. Even though funerary models were prominent in the artistic record for a relatively expansive time period from the late Old Kingdom to the end of the Middle Kingdom, only exceptionally brief remarks are made on the sculptures. Alternatively, in his *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom*, Smith devotes almost equal attention to two- and three-dimensional representations, but keeps the two forms quite distinct, with no attempt to compare them.

²⁴ For example, Harvey presents a comprehensive catalogue of all extant private wooden statuary of the Old Kingdom and provides criteria for more reliable dating, but focuses solely on representations of the tomb owner without any mention of the statuettes of serving figures from the same period. Harvey, *Wooden Statues*.

²⁵ These publications include Winlock's *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Re' at Thebes* which examines the assemblage of Meketre from Thebes, and the edited volume *The Secrets of Tomb 10A: Egypt 2000 BC* which includes an assessment of the models of Djehuty-nakht (R-10A) from Deir el-Bersha. Among the themes represented by models, boats are most commonly examined by scholars, with the publications of Reisner and Merriman leading among them. Reisner, *Models of Ships*; Merriman, *Egyptian Watercraft Models*.

²⁶ Kroenke has analysed the chronological development of the three-dimensional medium through a detailed examination of the model corpus of Naga ed-Deir, while Eschenbrenner-Diemer has conducted a technical and stylistic analysis of models that has led to the identification of four production phases. Kroenke, "Provincial Cemeteries of Naga ed-Deir"; Eschenbrenner-Diemer, in *Company of Images*, 133-91.

²⁷ A modern study has demonstrated that the land between the 9th and 20th Upper Egyptian nomes is the most productive in the country. Although caution must be taken when applying the conditions of modern times to ancient landscapes, it seems reasonable to conclude that this region was likewise agriculturally productive in the late Old and Middle Kingdoms: supreme wealth is on display in the nomarchal tombs and there is an emphasis on agriculture and animal husbandry in the representations. Fisher, *Middle East*, 523; Kanawati, *Governmental Reforms*, 8-10; Lashien, *Nobles of El-Qusiya*, 3-4; Moreno Garcia, "Trade and power", *JArchRes* 25.2, (2017), 94.

²⁸ Eschenbrenner-Diemer, in *Middle Kingdom Palace Culture*, 133-36.

²⁹ Kanawati, in *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 208.

³⁰ Kanawati, in *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 213-14.

the topography of Quseir el-Amarna was far less suitable for the construction of rock-cut tombs.³¹ The cemetery of Meir remained the burial place for the Cusite officials throughout the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom, although no decorated tombs from the First Intermediate Period have been found.³² The tombs of the governing administrators are cut into the high cliffs, with five distinct areas designated A-E by Blackman [fig. 1.1], while their courtiers were typically interred in shaft-tombs down the slopes below.³³ The last decorated tomb at Meir belongs to the governor Ukh-hotep III (C1) who may be dated on stylistic grounds to the reign of Senusret III.³⁴

In the Hare nome, the site of El-Sheikh Said was the favoured burial place for the ruling elite during the Old Kingdom, but by the First Intermediate Period this had been replaced by Deir el-Bersha. This vast site is located on the east bank of the Nile and began to be used consistently by the governing officials of the 15th Upper Egyptian nome from the 6th Dynasty onwards.³⁵ Several regions of the cemetery can be distinguished from the First Intermediate Period onwards, with each section devoted to a different level of society.³⁶ It was during the Middle Kingdom that the cemetery reached its greatest expansion, with the monumental tombs of the nomarchs excavated into the high north hill, all along the same plateau.³⁷ The extensive use of the different elevations of the cemetery indicates that not only were the governors and their families buried there, but their courtiers and a large part of the local population were as well.³⁸ This came to an end during the 12th Dynasty, with Djehuty-hotep (N-2), dated to the reigns of Senusret II and Senusret III, the last nomarch buried at the site.³⁹

The ruling elite of the Oryx nome were buried at Zawiyet el-Maiyitin in the Old Kingdom before moving to Beni Hassan in the First Intermediate Period, a decision made by a new ruling family.⁴⁰ The cemetery of Beni Hassan, which is located on the east bank of the Nile, is divided into two sections: the Upper Cemetery which contains the tombs of the nobility, and the Lower Cemetery which houses almost 900 burials of the lower administrative elite and the

family of the provincial governors. Of the 39 tombs in the Upper Cemetery, only 12 are decorated with scenes and inscriptions, and all date to after the Old Kingdom.⁴¹ These tombs are positioned in a north-south row along the terrace and occupy a commanding view of the Nile [fig. 1.2]. The Lower Cemetery was first occupied in the Old Kingdom and was used continuously until at least the mid-12th Dynasty.⁴² The burials housed here largely comprise small shaft-tombs without above-ground structures.⁴³ Khnumhotep II (3 UC), who served as overseer of the Eastern Desert during the reigns of Amenemhat II and Senusret II, was the last to construct a monumental decorated tomb at Beni Hassan, while his son and successor, Khnumhotep III, held a career in the capital and was buried at Dahshur in the mortuary complex of Senusret III.⁴⁴

The abandonment of provincial cemeteries during the mid-12th Dynasty was previously thought to be a deliberate action taken by Senusret III in an attempt to curb the power of these officials, but it has more recently been shown to have been a gradual process. The provincial governor's title of 'great overlord' had already begun to disappear during the reign of Senusret II, and tombs of provincial rulers are still known in some nomes into the reign of Amenemhat III.⁴⁵ It seems that the authority of the nomarchal governors was not removed by force, but rather through sending their sons for training in the capital where they were integrated into the highest elite of the residence.⁴⁶ The timeframe for this study is therefore restricted to the period from the late Old Kingdom to the end of the Middle Kingdom, as it was during this time that the three cemeteries were actively used and that both models and wall scenes feature prominently in the funerary artistic record. These restrictions in time period and geographical region have enabled a substantial body of evidence to be examined in great detail, facilitating a thorough and worthwhile comparative analysis.

1.3 Excavation history and preservation

Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan are comparatively well-preserved and well-published, which has allowed

³¹ Kanawati, in *Perspectives on Ancient Egypt*, 208; Lashien, *Nobles of El-Qusiya*, 49-50.

³² Willems, *Chests of Life*, 86.

³³ Blackman, *Rock Tombs of Meir. Volume I*, 5; Willems, *Chests of Life*, 83.

³⁴ Grajetzki, *Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt*, 109; Kanawati, "Wekhhotep III of Meir", *BACE* 26, (2016-2018), 37.

³⁵ The earliest funerary remains that have been identified at Deir el-Bersha date to the end of the 2nd Dynasty. The cemetery remained in use until the beginning of the 4th Dynasty, and during this time it contained simple burials of the local peasant population. Robinson, in *Bersheh Reports I*, 3; De Meyer, in *Old Kingdom, New Perspectives*, 42-49; Willems, in *Djehoutihotep*, 131-33.

³⁶ Willems, in *Djehoutihotep*, 133-36.

³⁷ Willems, *Chests of Life*, 68.

³⁸ Robinson, in *Bersheh Reports I*, 3; Willems, *Dayr al-Barshā. Volume I*, 4.

³⁹ Evidence of burials from the Second Intermediate Period is known, but these individuals re-used existing tombs. Willems, *Chests of Life*, 77; Sykora, in *Djehoutihotep*, 25-26.

⁴⁰ Orel, "Chronology and Social Stratification", 28-29; Kanawati & Woods, *Beni Hassan*, 8.

⁴¹ There is some debate in scholarship regarding the date of the earliest Upper Cemetery tombs, with propositions ranging from the First Intermediate Period through to the 11th Dynasty after the re-unification. Spanel, "Beni Hasan", 32-37; Grajetzki, *Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt*, 112; Kanawati & Woods, *Beni Hassan*, 6; Bommas, "First Intermediate Period tombs at Beni Hassan", *SAK* 41, (2012), 44-45.

⁴² Orel, "Chronology and Social Stratification", 485-86.

⁴³ Orel, "John Garstang", *KMT* 8.1, (1997), 58; Snape, *Ancient Egyptian Tombs*, 161-62.

⁴⁴ Grajetzki, *Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt*, 115; Allen, "Historical inscription of Khnumhotep", *BASOR* 352, (2008), 29; Nelson-Hurst, in *World of Middle Kingdom Egypt. Volume I*, 261.

⁴⁵ Franke, in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 51-67; Grajetzki, *Court Officials*, 114-18; Picardo, in *Secrets of Tomb 10A*, 35-36; Willems, in *Ancient Egyptian Administration*, 389-92.

⁴⁶ Alongside administrative reform, the changes evident in the use of provincial cemeteries should be attributed to a shift in the distribution of wealth and transformations in funerary beliefs. Trigger, et al., *Ancient Egypt*, 111-12; Franke, in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, 63-64; Grajetzki, *Court Officials*, 118-20; Snape, *Ancient Egyptian Tombs*, 156; Willems, in *Ancient Egyptian Administration*, 389-92; Tallet, in *Sesostris III*, 23-25; Morfisse, in *Sesostris III*, 214-15.



Figure 1.1. Section A of the cemetery of Meir. Photograph by the author.

for a relatively comprehensive corpus of sources to be obtained for analysis. All three sites were the subject of expeditions commissioned by the Egypt Exploration Fund (now Society) during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Blackman directed the survey at Meir over five seasons between 1912 and 1950 while Newberry directed the expeditions at Deir el-Bersha in 1891-1892 and Beni Hassan in 1890-1892.⁴⁷ These expeditions focused on the tombs of the nobles and produced quite detailed records of the scenes and inscriptions, including line-drawings, photographs and facsimiles.

The initial publications produced by the Egypt Exploration Fund have long remained the primary documentation of the scenes, but current expeditions are producing updated records which include minute details and whole scenes that had not previously been identified. The Australian Centre for Egyptology under the directorship of Kanawati has been re-recording the tombs of the nobles at Meir since 2008 and Beni Hassan since 2010.⁴⁸ At Deir el-Bersha, a

brief season was undertaken in 1990 by a joint expedition of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Leiden University and the University of Pennsylvania which highlighted some previously unidentified motifs on tomb-chapel walls.⁴⁹ However, the entire cemetery is now being examined by Willems and a team from the Katholieke Universiteit (KU), Leuven, a project which includes providing updated records of some of the nobles' tombs.⁵⁰

While this documentation has enabled a detailed analysis of numerous wall scenes at the three sites, the full corpus of two-dimensional representations cannot be known due to damage to the tombs caused by quarrying, earthquakes and gradual degradation. This is especially problematic at Deir el-Bersha where the excellent quality limestone enticed quarrying activities in the New Kingdom and Late Period. The cliffs have thus been weakened, causing masses of rock to fall, crushing and concealing many chambers and shafts.⁵¹ The tombs suffered further damage from earthquakes where some chapels and their scenes have been almost completely destroyed.⁵² Moreover, since

⁴⁷ Newberry, *Beni Hasan. Parts I-II*; Newberry, *El Bersheh. Part I*; Newberry & Griffith, *El Bersheh. Part II*; Blackman, *Rock Tombs of Meir. Volume I-Part IV*; Blackman & Apton, *Rock Tombs of Meir. Parts V-VI*.

⁴⁸ Kanawati, *Cemetery of Meir. Volume I*; Kanawati & Evans, *Cemetery of Meir. Volumes II, IV*; Kanawati, et al., *Cemetery of Meir. Volume III*; Kanawati & Evans, *Beni Hassan. Volumes I, III-IV, VI*; Lashien, *Beni Hassan. Volume II*; Lashien & Mourad, *Beni Hassan. Volume V*.

⁴⁹ Silverman (ed.), *Bersheh Reports I*.

⁵⁰ Willems, *Dayr al-Barshā. Volume I*.

⁵¹ Fraser, "Mr G. Willoughby Fraser's report on the survey of the Wady Der en-Nakhleh", in Newberry & Griffith, *El Bersheh. Part II*, 58; Kaper, van Walsem & Willems, in *Bersheh Reports I*, 41.

⁵² Newberry & Griffith, *El Bersheh. Part II*, 2-3; Terrace, "Entourage of an Egyptian governor", *BMB* 66.343, (1968), 5-6.

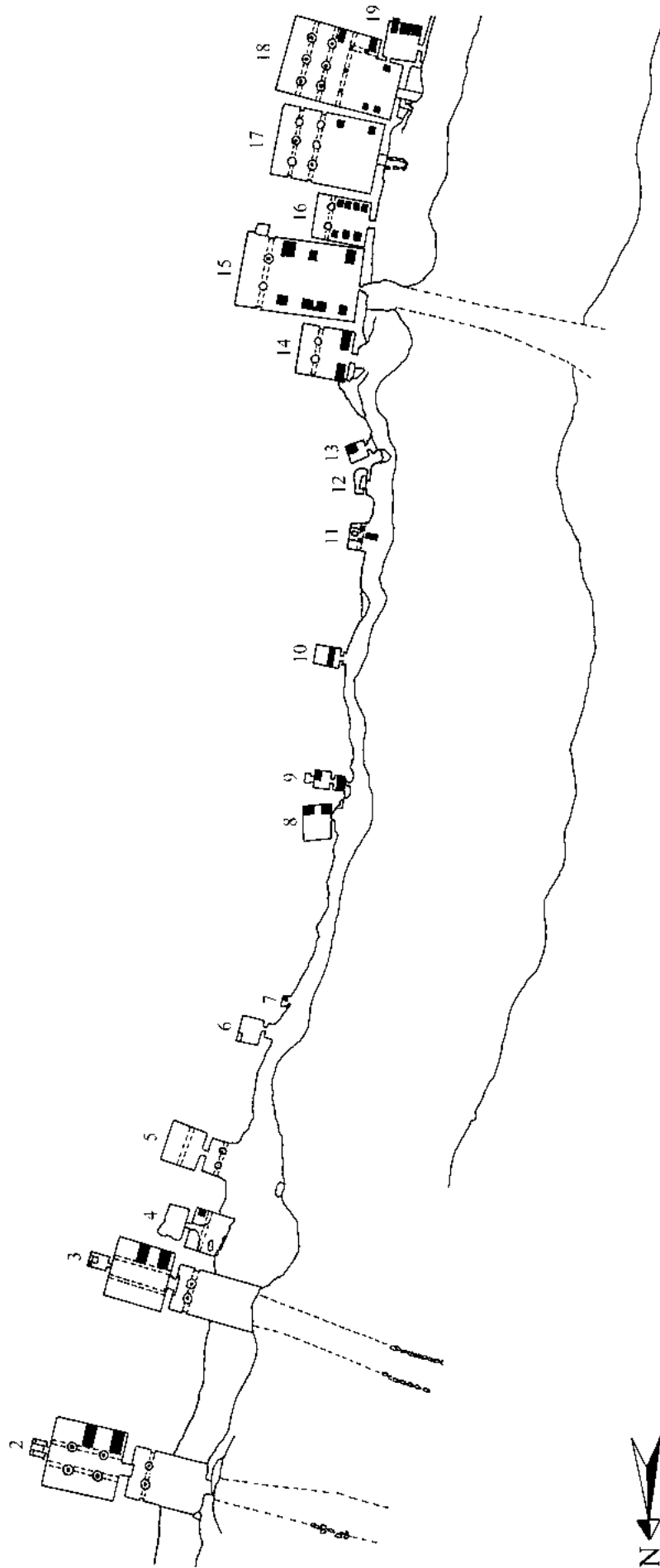


Figure 1.2. Section of the site plan of Beni Hassan showing tombs in the Upper Cemetery. Kanawati & Woods, *Beni Hassan*, fig. 1; courtesy of the Australian Centre for Egyptology.

the re-opening of the tombs, gradual deterioration has occurred from the effects of the weather. When considering the complete repertoire of the two-dimensional medium, it must therefore be remembered that some motifs and themes that were originally represented will never be known.

The burials of the lower administrative elite, on the other hand, have not received the same attention as the tombs of the nobles. Archaeological expeditions of the 19th and early 20th centuries were more concerned with acquiring pieces of 'art' than methodically recording all finds.⁵³ Accordingly, the documentation of funerary models and their findspots, which are almost exclusively known from the lower status burials, is regularly not sufficient. This is especially problematic at Meir and Deir el-Bersha. The only excavation of the tombs of the lower officials at Meir was undertaken by Kamal in 1910-1914, but his documentation is lacking important details in provenance.⁵⁴ At Deir el-Bersha, similar work was conducted by Daressy in 1897 and Kamal in 1900-1902 which likewise produced limited documentation.⁵⁵ In 1915, Reisner led a joint expedition from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Harvard University to Deir el-Bersha and discovered the elaborately furnished burial of the governor Djehuty-nakht and his wife (R-10A), but unfortunately no report was ever published.⁵⁶ Alternatively, Garstang's publication of his 1902-1904 excavation of the Lower Cemetery at Beni Hassan is quite exceptional for the period.⁵⁷ Although it suffers from a lack of detail and several inaccuracies, it provides important information on a vast collection of artefacts that may have otherwise been lost.⁵⁸

Poor documentation has also caused the current whereabouts of many models to remain unknown. After excavations were completed, the finds were distributed across the globe to the institutions and private individuals who had financially supported the expeditions, sometimes with individual tomb assemblages divided.⁵⁹ For Garstang, this also involved advertising the sale of artefacts in national and international newspapers, firstly to museums in the United Kingdom and the colonies, and secondly to other public institutions. This venture subsequently

became more commercial when he established division parties in which archaeological finds were allocated to patrons through lottery-style games.⁶⁰ Other excavations were instigated with the express purpose of gathering artefacts for sale. Sayed Khashaba *Pasha*, an Egyptian merchant and collector, contracted Kamal to excavate various sites in Egypt on his behalf, including Meir. Some of the objects acquired were destined for Khashaba's personal museum, and the collection was gradually sold over time, with the pieces now scattered in various public and private collections.⁶¹

Unfortunately, the journeys of these artefacts were not always documented and so it is difficult to ascertain where all of the models are currently housed. Distribution lists regularly lack important identification details, with entries simply documenting the transport of 'models' or 'groups'.⁶² Such vague documentation makes it very difficult to determine the total number of models distributed to each museum and the specific components of each sculpture. Further research is needed into unpublished archival documents produced by early archaeological expeditions to acquire additional information on the provenance of the artefacts and their modern-day journeys. When assessing the complete repertoire of the three-dimensional medium, it must therefore be considered that the preserved examples do not constitute the entire original corpus.

A comprehensive understanding of the three-dimensional repertoire is further hindered by issues of preservation. As most models were constructed of wood, a material that is particularly susceptible to destruction, many examples have presumably not survived. Moreover, as each model was fashioned of several different components which were typically attached with pegs, in many cases individual elements have become separated and lost. This is particularly significant for loose elements such as linen skirts for human figures, pieces of thread for rigging on boats or leashes for animals, and actual grain stored in granaries. Damage to models also occurred during tomb robbery. Models were regularly housed on top of the coffin, causing them to be tossed across the chamber when thieves searched for valuable items.⁶³ It is therefore important to remember that some whole models remain unknown due to poor documentation or destruction, while other models are not preserved in their entirety. However, the quantity of remaining artworks is satisfactorily extensive to be considered relatively representative of the original corpus.

1.4 Problems in interpreting ancient Egyptian art

In addition to the issues of preservation and documentation discussed above, there are several aspects that must be considered when analysing ancient Egyptian art. Those

⁵³ Bommas, "First Intermediate Period tombs at Beni Hassan", *SAK* 41, (2012), 43; Willems, *Historical and Archaeological Aspects*, 2.

⁵⁴ Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées", *ASAE* 11, (1911), 3-39; Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées", *ASAE* 12, (1912), 97-127; Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles", *ASAE* 13, (1914), 161-78; Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées", *ASAE* 14, (1914), 45-87; Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées", *ASAE* 15, (1915), 198-206; Willems, *Chests of Life*, 82.

⁵⁵ Daressy, "Fouilles de Deir el Bircheh", *ASAE* 1, (1900), 17-43; Kamal, "Fouilles à Déir-el-Barsheh", *ASAE* 2, (1901), 14-43; Kamal, "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées", *ASAE* 2, (1901), 206-22; Kamal, "Fouilles à Deir-el-Barché", *ASAE* 3, (1902), 276-82; Willems, *Chests of Life*, 68; Robinson, in *Bersheh Reports I*, 7.

⁵⁶ Willems, *Chests of Life*, 68; Robinson, in *Bersheh Reports I*, 7-8.

⁵⁷ Garstang, *Burial Customs of Ancient Egypt*.

⁵⁸ Orel, "Chronology and Social Stratification", 3; Bommas, "First Intermediate Period tombs at Beni Hassan", *SAK* 41, (2012), 47-50; Willems, *Historical and Archaeological Aspects*, 2.

⁵⁹ Orel, "John Garstang", *KMT* 8.1, (1997), 62-63; Killen, in *Egyptian Museum Collections. Volume I*, 645.

⁶⁰ Stevenson, *Scattered Finds*, 11-13.

⁶¹ Hagen & Ryholt, *Antiquities Trade*, 48, 260-61.

⁶² Serpico, in *Unseen Images. Volume I*, 109.

⁶³ D'Auria, et al., *Mummies and Magic*, 112; Doxey, in *Secrets of Tomb 10A*, 50.

that are of prime importance for this study may be categorised as two main problems: modern interpretation and modern intervention.

When interpreting artistic representations, it is essential to consider the principles that governed image production. Art was functional in ancient Egypt, so its system of representation was designed to enable the images to successfully serve their intended purpose.⁶⁴ In two-dimensional art, the Egyptian artist did not portray what he saw, but what he knew. Accordingly, each component was depicted in its most characteristic aspect, often combining multiple viewpoints. Depth was not utilised in these representations. Instead, composite images were created which combined multiple perspectives.⁶⁵ All motifs were arranged in a series of registers, a system that was not intended to convey spatial or temporal relationships, but to give order to the scene.⁶⁶ The ancient viewer was familiar with such conventions and could thus decode meaning from the representations, identifying each component and the function of the scene.⁶⁷ It is important not to assume that a modern understanding of the ancient images is the same as how they were perceived by the original audience.⁶⁸ Scenes could contain multiple meanings and an interpretation must seek to determine and understand these in their original context.

This study considers the unique capabilities of the two- and three-dimensional media as well as their specific technical restrictions. For interpretation, it is important to situate these in the context of the conventions and principles governing ancient Egyptian art. While the distinguishing properties of each medium are described in this book as ‘advantages’ and ‘disadvantages’, this is not intended to be a critique of the ancient artists. Rather, these terms are employed to make it clear to the modern audience what scene- and model-artists could each achieve within the technical capabilities and conventions of their medium.

One major example of this, which is discussed at length in this study, is the media’s contrasting use of perspective. Scene-artists created their designs as flat, not only because they operated on a two-dimensional surface, but also because depth was not employed in the Egyptian artistic canon.⁶⁹ In contrast, model-artists were able to utilise their three-dimensional perspective and create a holistic representation which enabled all components to remain in view no matter where they were positioned on the baseboard. This distinction between the media is regularly referred to in this study as a difference in ‘realism’. The use

of this term is not designed to impose a modern expectation on the ancient artwork. Rather, it is employed to make clear what the observable distinctions are between the two media in relation to their arrangement of components and use of perspective.

For interpreting funerary models, an understanding of modern intervention is also essential. During the early 20th century, models were a highly prized possession for museum collections. As such artefacts were destined for public display, it was desired that they would be obtained as completed sculptures.⁷⁰ Consequently, model components that had become loose or separated were in many cases re-attached either by the excavators themselves or upon arrival at the museum.⁷¹ While this may restore the original composition, it is also possible that individual components may be positioned in the wrong place on the baseboard or re-attached to a completely different model, thus creating pastiche representations. Some caution is therefore necessary when analysing the current arrangements of models. In this study, five examples were identified in which the modern intervention has clearly created an incorrect assemblage, and consequently, these models could not be accurately classified as a particular theme.⁷² For examples where modern intervention is

⁷⁰ Serpico, in *Unseen Images. Volume I*, 109-10.

⁷¹ Serpico, in *Unseen Images. Volume I*, 111-12.

⁷² A model said to be from Asyut, although more recently shown to originate from Meir, displays six figures oriented towards a large seated man within an open court. The figures are crafted at different scales and exhibit a variety of postures, giving the impression that they originated from different model types. While the current arrangement displays some similarities with the rendering of accounts theme, the absence of any direct parallels in the three-dimensional medium increases the probability that this is not the original composition. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon: 1969-404. Amoros, et al., “Study and identification”, *Hathor* 1, (2012), 11-29; Barker, “Classification of a funerary model”, *JARCE* 55, (2019), 5-13. One model from Deir el-Bersha, which is today housed in the Ashmolean Museum, depicts 14 figures engaged in a variety of tasks on a large rectangular baseboard enclosed by low walls with an opening in each side. The figures’ activities are difficult to identify as the men are either not associated with any equipment or their postures do not indicate any particular action, but it seems most likely that they can be broadly classified as food preparation. A large canopy resides in the middle of the model with four vessels and two vaulted chests placed underneath. Such features are unknown from models of food preparation but are more commonly found on funerary model boats. In addition to the different scales utilised for the figures, this unusual combination of elements suggests that the model is a pastiche of at least two different sculptures. Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford: AN1922.71. In another model from Deir el-Bersha, three standing and three seated figures are arranged on a large baseboard. While many of the activities and objects represented are enigmatic, some may be identified: a baker beside a slab oven; a man adopting the stance of a ploughman but without his tools or animals; two authority figures; and trapezoidal baskets probably from offering-bearers. The model is almost certainly a pastiche, combining elements from several models of different themes. National Museum of Denmark: 5492. A small rectangular baseboard said to be from Deir el-Bersha displays one seated and three standing figures which are basic in their rendering. The model is today housed in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden where it has been broadly classified as brewing. Each figure is associated with a distinct object, although only one can be identified with certainty: the figure on the right holds a bucket for measuring grain. The occurrence of this motif outside of the granary is unusual and may suggest a modern assemblage of components from different models. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden: F 1939/1.8. Five seated figures are closely spaced on a rectangular baseboard in another model said to be from Deir el-Bersha. Their appearance is typical of male figures apart from their yellow skin. They do not appear to perform any particular

⁶⁴ Spencer, *Death*, 65-67; Malek, *Egyptian Art*, 131.

⁶⁵ Weeks, in *Egyptology*, 68-69; Robins, *Egyptian Painting*, 11; Kanawati, *Tomb and Beyond*, 77.

⁶⁶ Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 193; Robins, *Proportion and Style*, 6; Kanawati & Woods, *Artists in the Old Kingdom*, 31.

⁶⁷ Baines, “Status and purpose”, *CAJ* 4.1, (1994), 68; Robins, *Art of Ancient Egypt*, 21.

⁶⁸ Davis, *Canonical Tradition*, 61; Baines, “Status and purpose”, *CAJ* 4.1, (1994), 67-68.

⁶⁹ Schäfer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 81; Robins, *Proportion and Style*, 1-3.

only minor or has not significantly impacted the themes and motifs represented, the sculptures were incorporated into the comparative analysis. Any impact this may have on interpreting the themes and motifs represented is considered in the discussion.

1.5 Classification of themes

The repertoires of the two- and three-dimensional media provide great insight into what was considered most important to the ancient Egyptians in the preparation of their tombs for eternity. Therefore, this study is centred on the themes represented by the two media. To establish the repertoire of each medium at Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan, all known two- and three-dimensional representations were collected. As the repertoire of funerary models is not as expansive as that of wall scenes, the three-dimensional artworks were collected first. This set the parameters on the range of themes that would form the basis of the comparative analysis.

The process of collecting funerary models involved an extensive examination of numerous museum catalogues as well as all published excavation reports from Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan. This successfully achieved an extensive list of models, but some difficulties were encountered during this process: not all institutions have their collections available online, and among those that do, photographic documentation suitable for the close analysis required in this study was not always available. Contact was therefore made with the museums directly who in many cases were able to provide more sufficient access to their collections. Additionally, the author visited some of the institutions that house a significant number of models from the three sites under investigation in order to closely examine the minute details not clear in the available photographs.⁷³

Although theme classifications for the model repertoire have been previously proposed in scholarship by Breasted and Tooley,⁷⁴ a new categorisation was developed in this study. This revised system consists of four themes, namely food

action and the model does not retain any equipment. While there are five pegs protruding from the baseboard, there is little empty space to allow for the attachment of other components. It is unusual for a model to be interred in the burial without providing any particular service for the owner, so it is quite possible that this is not the original assemblage. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden: F 1939/1.10.

⁷³ In particular, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the British Museum in London, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford were all visited during this project.

⁷⁴ Breasted's division of themes is quite elaborate, encompassing all of the following categories: production and storage of food; preparation and processing of food; industries; servants carrying supplies for the deceased and funeral scenes; servants providing transport; entertainment; concubines and other groups of retainers; and servant figures performing unidentified tasks. Tooley, alternatively, presents a more condensed classification of five principal themes: agriculture and animal husbandry; food preparation; industrial processes; offering-bearers; and boats. While this categorisation is quite succinct, it describes the activities performed rather than focusing on the result of production. Breasted, *Egyptian Servant Statues*, 6-106; Tooley, in *Oxford Encyclopedia*, <<http://www.oxfordreference.com>>.

production and preparation, transport, animal husbandry, and craft production, with a fifth 'miscellaneous' category for those few sculptures that do not easily align with any particular overarching classification. These designations focus on the end result of the activities performed by the three-dimensional figures and consequently convey their intended benefit for the tomb owner's afterlife rather than simply providing a description of the tasks, as is typically achieved for classifications of daily life wall scenes. This prevents the assumption that the model repertoire simply reflects that of the two-dimensional medium.

Initially, fertility figurines, paddle dolls, offering-trays and soul houses were also collected as these three-dimensional representations are quite often included among discussions of funerary models in scholarship.⁷⁵ However, after a close analysis of the model repertoire, it was determined that these sculptural forms constitute a type of representation distinct from funerary models. All of the themes of models are concerned with conveying at least one human figure engaged in activity,⁷⁶ whereas each of the other forms does not convey a particular action, but rather serves a unique purpose among funerary equipment.⁷⁷ Consequently, figurines that simply depict single animals were likewise excluded from this study as they do not convey any interaction or particular activity.⁷⁸ Rather, only animals depicted in combination with at least one human figure have been considered funerary models. Moreover, fragmentary remains were not examined as they regularly do not provide sufficient material for comparison and the original composition can be difficult to identify. Instead,

⁷⁵ In Tooley's pioneering dissertation on models, each of these categories is included in her discussion. Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. Volume I", 249-368. Similarly, 'concubines' are incorporated into Breasted's catalogue of models. Breasted, *Egyptian Servant Statues*, 93-96.

⁷⁶ There are, however, a small number of sculptures without human figures that are still classified as funerary models in this study: a few granaries and boats exclude human figures, but as they depict places that involve human activity and form part of categories that regularly portray human participation, they have still been understood as models.

⁷⁷ While the term 'concubine' has long been used in scholarship to describe three-dimensional figures of naked women, Pinch has more recently proposed the designation 'fertility figurine' in order to reflect their purpose more accurately. The figures have a much more prolonged period of use than funerary models, ranging from the Predynastic Period to Graeco-Roman times, and they have also been found in non-funerary contexts. Although much discussion has occurred regarding their function, Pinch has convincingly argued that they were concerned with protecting and promoting fertility, a purpose that would have been significant in both life and afterlife. Pinch, *Votive Offerings*, 225-26. For some alternate conclusions see, for example, Hornblower, "Predynastic figures of women", *JEA* 15.1/2, (1929), 29-47; Desroches-Noblecourt, "Concubines du mort", *BIFAO* 53, (1953), 7-47; Ucko, "Prehistoric anthropomorphic figurines", *JRAI* 92.1, (1962), 38-54. Tooley describes offering-trays as being imitations of the stone altars placed in tomb-chapels for the presentation of offerings and pouring of libations in the mortuary cult. She argues that the soul house developed out of the offering-tray but had the additional function of serving as a substitute chapel. Both types of sculpture were often placed on the surface of the grave or beside the mouth of the shaft in the chapel and therefore were involved in the cult practised by the living. Moreover, examples have also been found in non-funerary contexts. These sculptural forms are therefore clearly different in both location and function to funerary models. Tooley, "Middle Kingdom Burial Customs. Volume I", 249-53, 302-03.

⁷⁸ Miniaci, in *Art-facts and Artefacts*, 69.

only complete or almost complete models were collected and assessed.

Subsequently, all wall scenes that exhibit the themes represented by models were collected. This process involved an examination of all published reports of the three sites, including the initial documentation of the Egypt Exploration Fund as well as the records produced by current expeditions. Additionally, the author visited the sites of Meir and Beni Hassan in order to clarify any minute details not clear in the published reports. This thorough examination enabled all details that have at one time been preserved to be identified and documented. All two- and three-dimensional representations were then organised in a database according to theme. Line drawings, photographs and facsimiles of the representations were added to the database for examination.

During analysis, one theme was examined at a time, with each two- and three-dimensional representation studied in close detail. All of the major and minute features were documented, including the architectural structures represented, the specific movements and gestures of the figures, the objects depicted, the materials utilised, the spatial relationships between the components, and the order of steps portrayed. Observations were also made about the themes, motifs and details present in one medium but excluded from the other. Table 1.1 records the total numbers of funerary models and wall scenes analysed for each theme from Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan. Although the artworks examined are restricted to those from the three sites, examples from other cemeteries were drawn upon when further comparison was needed. Additionally, archaeological remains were considered for interpretation where possible, particularly for the architectural structures represented by models.

This book is structured according to the revised classification of themes proposed above for the model repertoire. Only the themes portrayed by both media are discussed in a detailed comparative analysis, while those specific to a single medium are assessed in chapter 7. One chapter is dedicated to each theme and divided into sections according to the sub-themes of the category: chapter 2 is devoted to food production and preparation, and includes land preparation, storing grain in granaries, bread-making, brewing beer, hand-feeding cattle, slaughtering cattle, cooking meat, and fishing and fowling; chapter 3 to transport, comprising boats, offering-bearers, and beasts of burden; chapter 4 to animal husbandry, including calving, milking and nursing, cattle in procession, and dogs; chapter 5 to craft production, with spinning and weaving, carpentry, and leatherwork all addressed; and chapter 6 to miscellaneous themes, which consists of the military and foreigners. In each of these chapters, the distinguishing features of the two- and three-dimensional representations are identified and discussed. Chapter 7 provides a survey of all differences observed throughout the comparative analysis and assesses the additional distinctions of period of use, location in the tomb, repertoire, technical properties, construction, and accessibility between the media as well

as the potential risks each tomb owner had to consider in his choice of representation. Finally, the precise purpose of the funerary model and its relationship to the wall scene is proposed in the conclusion.

All artworks examined in this study are compiled in two appendices: appendix 1 for funerary models and appendix 2 for wall scenes, and the representations are referred to by their catalogue number in [] throughout the book. In each appendix, the representations are ordered chronologically, but it should be noted that there are many difficulties in dating. After careful consideration of any dates previously proposed in scholarship and the evidence presented for each one, the most likely date has been adopted, with general dates regularly given. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide revised dates, but any margin of error, if present, should not adversely affect the examination of chronological trends.

Throughout this book, the name and tomb number of the original owner of each representation is cited where

| Theme | Number of Funerary Models | Number of Wall Scenes |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Land preparation | 5 | 12 |
| Storing grain in granaries | 22 | 8 |
| Bread-making | 31 | 8 |
| Brewing beer | 24 | 7 |
| Hand-feeding cattle | 11 | 1 |
| Slaughtering cattle | 9 | 29 |
| Cooking meat | 5 | 13 |
| Fishing and fowling | 3 | 28 |
| Boats | 144 | 12 |
| Offering-bearers | 31 | 63 |
| Beasts of burden | 5 | 11 |
| Calving | 3 | 5 |
| Milking and nursing | 3 | 7 |
| Cattle in procession | 5 | 40 |
| Dogs | 1 | 39 |
| Spinning and weaving | 3 | 4 |
| Carpentry | 1 | 7 |
| Leatherwork | 1 | 4 |
| Foreign women | 1 | 4 |
| Military | 3 | 4 |

Table 1.1. Total numbers of representations examined through images from Meir, Deir el-Bersha and Beni Hassan for each theme.

known, but there are a number of instances, especially for funerary models, where the precise burial was never documented. At Deir el-Bersha, there are unfortunately several difficulties in tomb numbering as each expedition instigated a new system. In order to avoid confusion in this study, the initial of each leading excavator has been positioned before the tomb number, i.e. the tomb numbering system of Newberry is transcribed as N-, that of Reisner as R-, those of Daressy and Kamal as D- and K- respectively, and that of the KU Leuven team as L-. For the numbering of tombs at Beni Hassan, those located in the Upper Cemetery are designated UC while those positioned in the Lower Cemetery are labelled LC. At Meir, the tombs of the nobles are numbered according to Blackman's A-E designations. Tomb numbers are all referred to in () after the name of each tomb owner throughout the book.

* * *

While funerary models and wall scenes do exhibit many similarities at first glance, studying the representations in close detail will highlight the major and minute differences between them. It will convey the unique technical properties of each medium and how these impacted the choice of designs as well as which themes and motifs were considered essential and supplementary to each type of representation. Such a comparative analysis of the two- and three-dimensional media has not previously been undertaken but is essential for accurately determining the relationship between them and the factors that contributed to the choice of medium to be included in each tomb. It is the unique characteristics of the funerary model, which are identified for the first time in this study, that will convey whether the three-dimensional medium did indeed have a distinct role from the wall scene in the tomb.