

MEN AT WORK

**A Comparative Study Of Workshop Scenes In Tombs Of
The Old Kingdom:
Applying An Anatomisation Approach.**

**A Thesis Presented By
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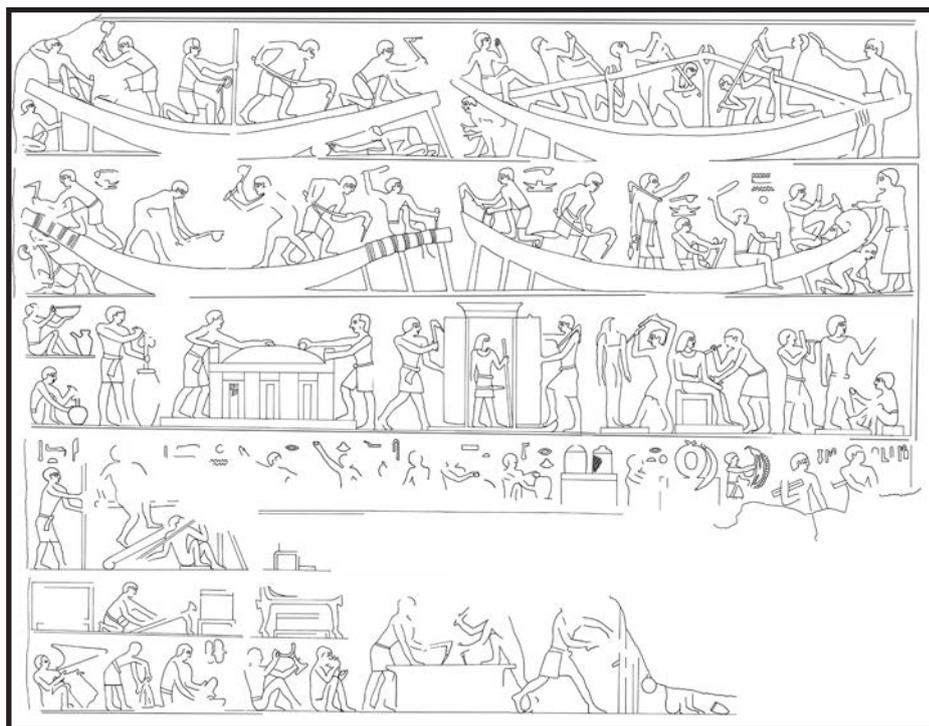


TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME 1: THESIS

1. INTRODUCTION	
Aims, Methodology And Literature Review	13
2. THE SCENES IN CONTEXT	
2.1 Overview Of Corpus	25
2.2 Setting	27
2.3 Correlation Between Scene Types And Content And Tomb Owner Title Sequence	33
2.4 Location of Scenes	38
Large Tables: Tables 2.1.2	45
2.3.2	
2.3.5	
2.4.4	
3. THE SCENES IN FOCUS	
Commentary And Analysis Of Scene Content	
3.1 Boat Building	61
3.2 Carpentry	103
3.3 Jewellery Making	141
3.4 Leatherwork	171
3.5 Metalwork	187
3.6 Sculpture	231
3.7 Stone Vessel Making	271
4. CONCLUSIONS	291
5. APPENDICES	313

VOLUME 2: CATALOGUE

EXPLANATORY NOTES	331
PUBLICATION ABBREVIATIONS	333
CATALOGUE	340
NOTES	453
JOURNAL ABBREVIATIONS	503
BIBLIOGRAPHY	507

ABSTRACT

The tomb paintings and reliefs of ancient Egypt, while occurring in a specific funerary context and reflecting a specific religious intent, constitute a major source of evidence for the historical and cultural reconstruction of the civilisation to which they pertain, hence it is surprising that the compilation and detailed analysis of the iconographic and textual data present in such material within a thematic, chronological and geographical framework remains largely neglected. This thesis attempts to redress the imbalance in relation to the theme of workshop activities, based on a revised catalogue of 162 scenes collated from 55 tombs and 8 unprovenanced fragments dating to the Old Kingdom. It will be argued that the method of documentation devised, specifically an anatomisation approach, can be applied to the study of scene iconography in order to classify and analyse the content featured, determine common representational conventions and isolate geographical, chronological and individual styles. Its effectiveness as an aid to reconstruction will also be demonstrated with the presentation of over 70 new or amended scene identifications.

As a result of the investigation, it will be concluded that the workshop theme was comprised of seven industries. Statistical evidence will show that scenes were dominated by a small core of repetitive actions and images which acted as iconographic abbreviations for each of these industry types, supplemented by a number of secondary depictions, and that defined criteria relating to both placement and content were applied. Expansion of these core motifs with discretionary scenes and procedures was nevertheless an accepted practice, with significant examples of experimentation attempted. This experimentation, it will be argued, was not confined to but was often initiated outside the capital, included the regular use of artistic devices designed to convey a sense of 'process' or a continuum, contrary to the conventional view that scenes of this type are largely episodic, and may be dated as commencing somewhat earlier than usually assumed.

SUBMISSION STATEMENT

I, Michelle Therésa Hampson, hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution. I affirm that the work is my own and that due acknowledgement of all sources consulted, both primary and secondary, has been made.

Macquarie University
31st May, 2012.

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Michelle Hampson

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To Mum and Dad