

A Monograph by a PhD Candidate of the Czech Institute of Egyptology Coming Out Soon in Oxford

Archaeopress is an Oxford-based publisher of archaeological literature, and the monograph *Old Kingdom Copper Tools and Model Tools* by Martin Odler (Czech Institute of Egyptology) is due to come out soon as the fourteenth volume in its series *Archaeopress Egyptology*. It is the first book-length treatise about the Old Kingdom copper alloy tools and model tools in Egyptian archaeology.

The Old Kingdom of Egypt (Dynasties 4–6, c. 2600–2180 BC) is famous as the period of the builders of the largest Egyptian pyramids. It is generally acknowledged that the evidence concerning the use of copper alloy tools from this era is scarce. Martin Odler gathers textual, iconographic and palaeographic evidence and examines Old Kingdom artefacts in order to revise this view of the use of copper alloy tools and model tools. Furthermore, he provides updated definitions of tool classes and tool kits, together with the context of their use. The most frequent types were artisan tool kits (chisels, adzes, axes, saws, and drills), cosmetic tool kits (mirrors, razors, etc.), weaving tool kits (needles, awls), and tool kits for hunting and preparation of food (knives, fish-hooks, and harpoons).

Apart from rare specimens of full-size tools, the largest corpora of the material have been preserved in the form of model tools in the burial equipment of the Old Kingdom elite. These were most probably symbols of their power to commission and fund craft-work. Moreover, the size and elaboration of the model tools were probably connected to the social status of

the buried persons. The long-standing division in Egyptological literature between full-size tools and model tools is questioned. The ancient sources also enable us to show that the preservation of material culture from the Old Kingdom was largely dependent on a conscious selection made within the past culture, with completely different settlement and funerary contexts and a conspicuous absence of weapons (although we know about their existence from iconographic sources).

The volume also contains four co-authored case studies. The first is on archaeometallurgy of selected Old Kingdom artefacts in the collection of the Egyptian Museum of Leipzig University and was written by Jiří Kmošek (Institute of Chemistry and Technology, Prague) and Martin Odler. The second case study is on morphometry of Old Kingdom adze blades and it is the first time when this method has been applied in Egyptian archaeology. The study was written by Martin Odler and Ján Dupej (Faculty of Science, Charles University). The finds of stone and ceramic vessels associated with the findings of so-called Old Kingdom model tools are discussed by Lucie Jirásková (Czech Institute of Egyptology) and Katarína Arias Kytnarová (Czech Institute of Egyptology).

The monograph is the main outcome of the Charles University Grant Agency project no. 526112: *Ancient Egyptian Copper Objects up to the End of Middle Kingdom*. The case studies are outcomes of the international Charles University Grant Agency project no. 38715: *Early Copper Metallurgy in Ancient Egypt – a Case Study of the Material from Ägyptisches Museum der Universität Leipzig*. The first phase of the project was discussed in the Czech issue of *Prague Egyptological Studies* (with English summary). A poster about the second phase of the project received honorary mention at the 41st International Symposium on Archaeometry in Greece.

The book can be ordered via Archeopress website.