

EDEL, ELMAR

Hieroglyphic Inscriptions of the Old Kingdom

[“Hieroglyphische Inschriften des Alten Reiches”]

(Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Band 67)

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The present volume is a contribution to the constitution and restoration of the inscriptions of the Egyptian Old Kingdom. It deals chiefly with the tombs in al-Qaṣr waṣ-Ṣayyād and in Ṭihna, and with various inscriptions from Saqqāra and al-Ḥagārisa.

Once again Elmar Edel demonstrates the old sleuth-hound's mastery in tracking down clues and supplementing the most fragmentary of texts. Even unimportant texts acquire lustre from the way in which they are treated: how much more, therefore, the texts with interesting contents, the interpretation of which is thus placed for the first time on a solid foundation. The documentation of the finds, in particular the drawings of reconstructions, is exemplary and a pleasure to use. In short, the work is a “genuine Edel”, characterized by the schematic presentation of material individual to him, his painstaking love of detail and the tone of delight and pride of discovery in his reporting.

Among the contents one should single out for mention the analysis of the regulations for the funerary cult, from the Ṭihna tombs, which offers a philologically sound basis for specialists in jurisprudence (pp. 38–65), together with the essays on prosopography and the formation of personal names (index of personal names, p. 97). The linguistic specialist will find contributions to Egyptian lexicography (index of words, also p. 97).

We know that Edel has other texts of greater importance in his files; inscriptions recorded during his work on the Qubbat al-Hawā near Aswān. May he soon be in a position to lay them before the scientific world as well.

Professor Dr. Wolfgang Schenkel