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Resurrection Machines: An Analysis of Burial Sites in Ancient Egypt’s Valley of the Kings as Catalysts for Spiritual Rebirth

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RESURRECTION MACHINES:
AN ANALYSIS OF BURIAL SITES IN ANCIENT EGYPT’S VALLEY OF THE KINGS AS CATALYSTS FOR SPIRITUAL REBIRTH

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In Ancient Egyptian tombs, processes associated with sympathetic magic acted as a direct catalyst for resurrection. Sympathetic magic, defined as an action, object or depiction whose effect resembles its cause, is reflected in royal tombs constructed during Egypt’s New Kingdom (1550-1069 BCE) in the Valley of the Kings. However, sympathetic magic has rarely been applied to Ancient Egyptian topics in an explicit fashion. As a result, the tombs of Amenhotep III (KV22), Seti I (KV17) and Ramesses IX (KV6) are analyzed as case studies of this phenomenon. Change and continuity evident in each tomb’s architectural structure, decoration, and physical burial are linked to change and continuity in Egyptian religious beliefs during the New Kingdom. Further, the case studies show how the Egyptians designed their burial practices to gain control over their immortality. Such case studies allow for narrowly focused research in a discipline that often emphasizes a broad overview of the Valley.

“Among no people ancient or modern has the idea of a life beyond the grave held so prominent a place than for the Ancient Egyptians.”

James Henry Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (1999: 42)

INTRODUCTION

Of all the world’s shared cultural traits, death is the most pervasive. No matter one’s religious beliefs, political views, race, culture, or history, every human being dies. Throughout human history, societies have developed complex rituals to deal with the looming prospect of death. A study of Ancient Egypt, one of the world’s first unified states, contributes much to the rich tapestry of funerary rituals, and the link of religious ritual to the maintenance of society.
Ancient Egypt is frequently depicted as a society “obsessed with death”. Indeed, discoveries of their elaborate tombs and golden grave goods, combined with the embellishments of twentieth century Hollywood, have created an inaccurate and convoluted image of one of history’s earliest civilizations. Those who dismiss Egyptians as fixated on the world beyond fail to grasp the pivotal role religion played in every aspect of Egyptian culture. Why did the Ancient Egyptians devote such resources and manpower to prepare for the afterlife? Why did their religion place far more emphasis on the next life than the present one? Most significantly, why did the Egyptians believe they had the power to produce resurrection? For the answer to these questions, we will focus on the Egyptians’ tombs and the contents within them, utilizing the approaches of history and anthropology.

Ancient Egyptian burial occurred long before there was ever a pharaoh. However, by Egypt’s New Kingdom period (1500-1070 BCE – see Figure 1), royal burial practices were well established and highly developed. Comprising Egypt’s 18th, 19th, and 20th dynasties, the New Kingdom represented the apex of pharaonic rule. During this period, Egypt witnessed the greatest economic security, the most abundant resources, and the greatest conquest of land in its history (Shaw 2000: 272). As a result, the Egyptians possessed the manpower, resources and ideology required to create the elaborate tombs of the Valley of the Kings. These tombs functioned as far more than mere repositories for the dead. They were also machines, whose construction, decoration and physical burial acted as a catalyst for the resurrection of the pharaoh in the afterlife, the Fields of Aaru. This occurred through a process known today as sympathetic magic.

Sir James Frazer, in his seminal 1924 work The Golden Bough, defined sympathetic magic as follows: “first, that like produces like, that an effect resembles its cause; and second,
that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance, after physical contact has been severed” (Frazer 1924: 11). In other words, the effect of an action has a direct and discernible relationship to its cause (Frazer 1924: 11). In modern times, the Catholic practice of transubstantiation is an example of sympathetic magic. Many Catholics believe that the blessing of the communion wafer and wine allow the substances to spiritually transform into the body and blood of Christ. In this instance, the effect (the transformation) directly resembles its cause (the blessing). Frazer’s second argument, called the Law of Contact, states that an object that has been in contact with another object or person will continue to affect them (Frazer 1924: 12). This extends the cause-and-effect relationship, for the object can affect someone even after it has come out of contact with him. In Ancient Egypt, this idea is commonly seen in tombs when lists of offerings are left on tomb walls, or through physical offerings left at specially designed tables. The act of listing was believed to sustain the deceased with eternal offerings, long after the physical offerings left in the tomb decayed (Hamilton 2006: 66).

The Ancient Egyptians utilized rituals described today as sympathetic magic in many aspects of their daily life, including architecture, art and material culture. Nowhere in Ancient Egypt is sympathetic magic more prominent than tombs. The pharaoh had access to the greatest manpower and resources, and could therefore be ensured the state’s fullest illustration of religious ritual. Further, royal tomb preparation had direct links to the maintenance of society.

The use of sympathetic magic proved especially important to protect the deceased pharaoh from chaos. Chaos threatened Egypt in many different ways. The Egyptians lived in the middle of harsh desert conditions, on the only fertile strip of the land the country had to offer. They depended on the successful flooding of the Nile for survival, and when the Nile failed to
offer its bounty, civil unrest ensued which threatened to tear apart the kingdom (Shaw 2000: 129-30). There were also persistent threats of foreign invasion from cultures across the Sinai Peninsula and the Nubians in modern day Sudan, despite the blessings of natural obstacles which shut out many other potential invaders (Hamilton 2006: 17). The constant reality of disease also loomed over Egypt. Despite their remarkable knowledge of medicine for the time, doctors found themselves powerless to treat many diseases (Hamilton 2006: 73). The Egyptians considered sympathetic magic vital for controlling chaos, by overpowering the malevolent forces responsible for bringing it about.

Royal burials in Egypt’s New Kingdom utilized sympathetic magic to symbolically produce the pharaoh’s resurrection. This occurred most prominently in the tomb’s architectural features, decoration, and the physical burial of the body. The architectural features consist of three main components: first, the individual chambers of a tomb; second, the features inside these chambers (including pillars, thresholds and ceilings); third, the orientation of the tomb itself, which changed over time and had direct links to the daily cycle of the sun.

The decoration of New Kingdom royal tombs is entirely theological in content, and includes a wide array of depictions that developed over the course of the period. These depictions included scenes of the pharaoh with several deities, scenes of deities performing vital roles to ensure resurrection, and fully illustrated afterlife “books” which depicted the journey of the pharaoh’s soul through the netherworld, symbolically guiding him through the many obstacles standing in the way of resurrection. These books, prominent in royal tombs by the mid-18th dynasty, display a great degree of personalization. The inscriptions that accompanied decoration are equally important. Inscriptions included offerings to nourish the pharaoh’s soul,
and hymns to deities praising the pantheon; the hymns could also represent divine approval of the pharaoh’s behavior in life.

The physical burial includes mummification, internment in a sarcophagus, and the associated grave goods. Mummification was already highly developed in the New Kingdom, but it continued to evolve as religious ideas changed and economic resources became scarcer (Shaw 2000: 363-64). However, the act of mummification shared the same goal in all periods of Egyptian history: prepare the deceased for the afterlife. Internment in the sarcophagus also played a key role in the resurrection process. More than merely a vessel for the body, the construction, design and placement of the sarcophagus linked the god of the underworld, Osiris (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09).

The associated grave goods are also important for understanding how sympathetic magic drove resurrection. In the New Kingdom, three types of grave goods were most prominent: the shabti figurine, canopic jar, and ka statue. Shabtis were remnants of the Old Kingdom practice of sacrificing important officials after a pharaoh’s death, in order to serve him in the afterlife. Perhaps due to the strain these sacrifices placed upon administering the state, human shabtis replaced human sacrifice by the New Kingdom (Shaw 2000: 72). The canopic jar is a second vital grave good for resurrection. Canopic jars housed the pharaoh’s internal organs, removed from the body during mummification in order to preserve them. Much like mummification, the Egyptians viewed the preservation of organs as necessary to ensure an intact body in the afterlife (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 412-13). A third grave good is the ka statue, the home of the pharaoh’s spiritual double, who was responsible for guarding the tomb from intruders and who housed one part of the pharaoh’s soul (Shaw 2000: 107).
For a detailed analysis of the driving force sympathetic magic played in resurrection, it is necessary to turn to Egypt’s most famous burial ground, the Valley of the Kings. The Valley offers the most detailed examples of Egyptian sympathetic magic in a funerary context. Although each pharaonic tomb could serve as a fine example of this process, three tombs will be used as case studies: Amenhotep III (1390–1352 BCE, 18th Dynasty), Seti I (1294-1279 BCE, 19th Dynasty), and Ramesses IX (1126-1108 BCE, 20th Dynasty) (Shaw 2000: 481). An analysis of these three tombs will reveal several aspects of tomb development throughout the New Kingdom, in the areas of architecture, decoration and physical burial. These three tombs offer a fascinating snapshot of religious belief and funerary ritual in Egypt’s most prosperous period.
BACKGROUND

When pharaohs of the early 18th dynasty began planning their tombs in the Valley of the Kings, 2,500 years of tomb development in Egypt had already occurred. Originating in the predynastic subcultures that inhabited Egypt before the kingdom’s first unification (Shaw 2000: 44), tracing tomb development over several periods of predynastic and dynastic Egypt reveals the development of complex resurrection beliefs which reached their apex by the New Kingdom.

While Egyptian burials date from 52,000 BCE, the first significant burials to show evidence of afterlife belief come to us from 4000 BCE, about a millennium before the first unification (Shaw 2000: 25). Representing the Naqada I culture, burials consisted of the deceased “in a contracted position, lying on the left side with the head…looking towards the west…sometimes the head rested on a pillow of straw or leather” (Shaw 2000: 47). The grave itself, a pit lacking internal complexity, shows a conscious desire to ritually assemble a place of burial. The positioning of the body foreshadows similar positioning in the New Kingdom, as the head of the deceased often faced west, where the Egyptians believed the path to the netherworld began. The act of clothing the corpse and providing for its comfort also points to a potential belief in an afterlife; otherwise the comfort of a deceased being would prove irrelevant (Shaw 2000: 47).

Graves also contained several forms of pottery, palettes, combs, spoons, and knives, items of a domestic nature that may represent a desire for continued use in an afterlife (Shaw 2000: 44). Another common form of grave good was the offering. The act of providing offerings of food and drink further supported an early belief in an afterlife, for it shows a conscious desire to provide for the deceased’s sustenance (Shaw 2000: 45-8). Artistic representations on the offerings suggest an early belief in zoomorphic deities. The animals
depicted on funerary pottery, frequently hippopotami and crocodiles, were linked to the Nile, being the aquatic animals that normally dwelled there. (Shaw 2000: 48). Such depictions show a conscious effort to invoke the power of such deities or simply associate the deceased with them. Some scenes depicted the deceased, beginning a common decorative theme in funerary art (Shaw 2000: 48-9). Similar scenes in later Egyptian tombs represented activities the deceased hoped to perform in the afterlife. Such scenes ensured, through sympathetic magic, that those activities would occur in the afterlife. Indeed, the pottery of the Naqada I period may represent an early form of sympathetic magic.

After the unification of Egypt, architects experimented with the pyramid form. After much trial and error, the Step Pyramid was completed around 2648 BCE, which led to the world famous Giza Pyramids of the Fourth Dynasty (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 46). Debate rages on the meaning of the pyramids, but Jan Assmann (2002) provides a valuable overview of a pyramid’s solar and resurrection significance, and with that a roadmap to later New Kingdom tombs. Referencing the height of the Great Pyramid, Assmann states that the “elevation makes it a pointer to the heavens” (Assmann 2002: 58). The Great Pyramid, whose Egyptian title translates as Akhet [Horizon] of Khufu, “refers to a region of the heavens where the sky meets the earth and the sun god ascends from the underworld in the morning and returns in the evening” (Assmann 2002: 58). Assmann describes the akhet as a boundary region between the earth and the cosmos, representing the point of sunrise. Therefore, the pyramid acted as a machine which the pharaoh used to ascend to heaven, in the same fashion that “the sun god ascends…the akhet and appears in the sky” (Assmann 2002: 58). Indeed, pyramids represent the first true resurrection machines in Egyptian history.
However, building of tombs on such a monumental scale created intense economic pressure, and crippled the economic vitality of the Old Kingdom (Shaw 2000: 116). After emerging from a century of anarchy, the Egyptians built pyramids on a much smaller scale. However, by the New Kingdom several hundred years later, pharaohs and architects realized another significant challenge posed by pyramid construction: a sepulcher of such shape and size, while symbolically important, did nothing to conceal the tomb from robbers, who had disturbed the dead since predynastic times (Shaw 2000: 116). A new strategy needed to be devised that would conceal the tombs while still retaining the symbolic importance of pyramidal structure.

For the answer, architects turned to the tombs of nobles. The Egyptians buried nobles in rock-cut tombs beginning in the Old Kingdom (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 218) and continuing through the intermediate periods and Middle Kingdom. Rock-cut tombs continued to be the archetype for tomb construction into the New Kingdom, complete with “a pyramid sometimes upon a base or a building, and a pyramid with portico”, a smaller, shorter form of a pyramid which imitated the royal structures of the Old Kingdom (Badawy 1968: 375). Since New Kingdom Egyptians were concerned with concealment, royal architects did away with the pyramid superstructure, and instead designed elaborate tomb interiors which imitated aspects of pyramid symbolism. This will be further explored in the case studies (Badawy 1968: 377).

New Kingdom pharaohs decided on the desolate Valley of the Kings, a group of dangerous, rocky outcroppings across harsh terrain. C.N. Reeves and Richard H. Wilkinson claim that the Valley was “the perfect location for a royal necropolis…for practical and symbolic reasons” (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 16). The Valley itself resembled the hieroglyph for horizon, known as the akhet, a particularly powerful symbol in Ancient Egypt linked with the daily cycle of the sun (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 16-7). The akhet symbol played such a
prominent role in Egyptian mythology, that it was even depicted at the entrances to major temples. The Valley, “sit[s] at the center…the horizon point, as it were – of the topographical akhet (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 17). Secondly, the Valley faces west towards the setting sun, which orients the necropolis towards the netherworld. Thirdly, many scholars have hypothesized about a peak called el Qurn (the Horn), which sits atop the Valley. Reeves and Wilkinson noted its peculiar pyramid-like shape, and have suggested that this resemblance is partly responsible for the choice of the Valley of the Kings as the new royal necropolis (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 17). The Egyptians may have seen el Qurn as a natural structure with similar symbolic potency to a pyramid. The overall significance of el Qurn to the choice of the Valley is hard to determine conclusively, but its resemblance to a pyramid and its associated symbolism likely played a significant role (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 17).
THEORY

Four anthropological theories form the framework of analysis over the course of this project. It is now necessary to briefly outline these theories.

Arnold Van Gennep’s most famous work, *Rites of Passage*, is especially valuable in an analysis of New Kingdom burial customs. Van Gennep’s rites of passage hinged upon the liminal state. Liminal, from the Latin word *limen* (meaning threshold), means to sever a member of society from its counterparts (Davies 2002: 18). Death is one instance when liminality occurs, and it causes a serious threat to social order. Van Gennep identified three key stages of liminality: separation, transition, and reincorporation (Davies 2002: 18). Separation occurs when a society isolates a dying person from the rest of the group. Transition occurs when the person physically died (Van Gennep 1960: 11). This is the most important liminal state in van Gennep’s view; when a member of society dies, burial rituals must be performed to ensure that the deceased reaches the afterlife (Huntington and Metcalf 1979: 12). Reincorporation occurs when members of society perform rituals that help to maintain society by returning it to the status it had before separation (Van Gennep 1960: 11). The author argues that the Ancient Egyptians entered a prolonged state of liminality every time the pharaoh died, and only through the completion of funerary rites could society regain the order lost by the death of the pharaoh.

Anthropologist Robert Hertz elaborated on van Gennep’s second phase, transition. Hertz argued that “death destroys the social being and strikes at society in the very principle of its life, in the faith it has in itself” (Pearson 2001: 22). Hertz asserted that the death does not merely threaten the social order in some civilizations, it challenges the continual order of the cosmos itself (Davies 2002: 14). In this study the pharaoh’s death creates just such a challenge, as “death is not simply some problem of a philosophical or rational kind but reaches deep into
the…social nature of human beings” (Davies 2002: 13). Therefore, the body is transformed through funerary rites and transcends to the afterlife. As a result, the balance in society is restored. As we will see, the process of Egyptian burial represents a unique form of transition.

In what other ways do societies respond to death as a threat to social order? In Ancient Egypt, as in many cultures, language was another key response. Language most often took the form of holy texts, which contained spells and instructions for the proper burial of a human being and the maintenance of society. Ancient Egypt had several examples of these texts, including the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom, the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom, and the Books of the Afterlife that predominated New Kingdom theology (Hornung 1999: 1, 7, 26). These texts formed a continuation of religious ideas, and expanded on them as the culture evolved.

Anthropologist Douglas Davies, in his 2002 book *Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites*, refers to the potency of language in funerary ritual as “words against death.” Davies (2002: 1) argued that language represents, “the medium through which humans obtain a sense of self-consciousness.” As a result, words are one way that humans react to death. This most commonly comes in the form of religious scripture, which foretells of an afterlife and provides instruction for how to reach it. Scripture allows humans to gain a sense of power over their own mortality. Davies’s theory can be distilled into three main ideas:

1. “Language is the key medium of self-consciousness.”
2. “Death is…a challenge to self-consciousness.”
3. “Language…is the crucial response to this challenge.” (Davies 2002: 1-2)

In Ancient Egypt, using words against death meant that the world could remain intact after facing the gravest threat to survival: the death of the pharaoh. The pharaoh was god on Earth, and played a vital role in the daily rising and setting of the sun (Seidel and Schulz 2006: 210). Although the Egyptians could not stop the pharaoh from dying, they utilized religious
rituals to ensure that the world would continue functioning. As we will see, this assurance proved vital to a society whose very way of life revolved around the worship of the sun.

All of the previous theories are general frameworks for the study of funerary rituals, and are easily applied to Ancient Egypt. However, theories of meaning have also been crafted for Ancient Egypt specifically. Jan Assmann’s (2002) seminal work, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, is a magnum opus of how the Egyptians constructed forms of meaning in their society. Assmann looks at Egyptian history through the guise of traces, messages and memories (Assmann 2002: 8). He defines traces within the context of archaeological inquiry, which “studies the temporal sequence of and spatial extensions of formations and artifacts” (Assmann 2002: 9). In the present study, the tomb construction and physical burial represent Assmann’s archaeological traces.

Assmann defines messages as the information gleaned from epigraphic and iconographic sources. The pictures and texts which make up Egyptian tomb decoration are symbolic signs that “stem from a cultural semiotic system” (Assmann 2002: 9). For instance, Assmann notes that writing is a system of symbols which all fit a conventionalized code (Assmann 2002: 9). The same is true for Egyptian art. In Ancient Egyptian tombs, funerary art fits a highly developed conventionalized code, whose sole purpose is to provide for the deceased’s sustenance and ensure that the pharaoh reaches the afterlife intact.

Lastly, Assmann explains that memories are primarily mythological and historical. Assmann challenges the Ancient Egyptian scholar to ask, “in what form are a particular time modeled and recalled? (Assmann 2002: 10). When we analyze the way in which the Egyptians viewed their own history, and the vital role religion played in shaping that history, we will develop a richer understanding of why the Egyptians employed their particular funerary rituals.
Ultimately, Assmann argues that mythology plays a role in forming “collective memory”, which reinforces religious ideas across vast spans of time (Assmann 2002: 10). The main mode of this collective memory was the construction of tombs, temples, and other architecture which Assmann claims created a “monumental discourse” (Assmann 2002: 65-6). Indeed, collective memory played an important role in the continuity of religious ideas and the administration of the Egyptian state for nearly three millennia.

The components involved in the burial of a pharaoh are myriad and complex. This project should be understood as an analysis of just one component of afterlife preparation for New Kingdom Egyptians (the completed royal tomb), and the symbolism inherent in that funerary practice. While the funerary customs across all periods of Egyptian history are important for a full understanding of their resurrection beliefs, analyzing all of these aspects falls outside the scope of this project.
METHODS

To explore aspects of Egyptian resurrection beliefs, two broad areas of research are available: literature review and artifact analysis. Literature review encompasses sources dating back to antiquity, during the construction of the tombs themselves. Turning to ancient sources produces a pang of trepidation with many scholars, as this evidence is often scant and out of archaeological context. As a result, it is often difficult to determine the accuracy of such sources with veracity. However, some sources of antiquity, if analyzed with a sound understanding of Egyptian funerary practices and an equal amount of caution, actually prove quite useful. Sources include the funerary equipment of the New Kingdom pharaohs including in this study, as well as the funerary equipment of their pharaonic contemporaries. Sketches on ostracon (limestone flakes often used for practice drawings) of the 20th dynasty, which served as maps for tomb construction and records of completed work (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 591). The careful cataloging of pharaonic mummies and coffins ordered by the priest-kings of Egypt’s twenty-second dynasty are also utilized.

The sources of early Egyptology are also valuable assets. After the Napoleonic expedition of 1798-1801 ignited a scientific interest in Ancient Egypt, explorers of favorable and ill repute descended upon Egypt. They came with the goal of unlocking ancient Egyptian society and hungered for antiquities to whet the public appetite (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 486). As such, the records of these earliest “excavations” are scant, lack consistency, and provide readers with simplified conclusions. This includes the colorful recollections of Giovanni Battista Belzoni, who discovered the tomb of Seti I (KV17) in 1817 (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 136). Despite their shortcomings, these records provide valuable descriptions of tomb components, which are
useful to the modern scholar facing the unfortunate reality of crumbling tombs, deteriorating paintings, and a maze of artifacts scattered in museums and private collections around the globe.

With the creation of the Supreme Council of Antiquities in the mid-19th century, the first truly scientific excavations began in Egypt. This led to three decades (1898-1922) of major discovery and excavation, and rediscovery of previously known tombs in the Valley (Agnese and Re: 42-3). The tomb of Amenhotep III (KV22) were discovered during this archaeological renaissance, and the first thorough excavation of the tomb of Ramesses IX (KV6), open since antiquity, was also performed during this time (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 110, 168). Their systematic excavations provide a clear picture of how tombs were constructed and allow modern scholars a framework to study the tombs further. However, as C.N. Reeves (1990: 283) notes in Valley of the Kings: Decline of a Royal Necropolis, these excavations did not receive extensive publication. This makes the collection of archaeological records a delicate and complex task, which scholars such as Reeves have excelled at compiling. (Reeves 1990: 285).

Beyond the extensive literature review, analyses of tomb artifacts are also valuable. Research was conducted on *shabti* of the aforementioned pharaohs from the collections of the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago. Although all artifacts were discovered outside archaeological context, they provide insight into the afterlife beliefs of the New Kingdom, and the vital role material culture played in the pharaoh’s resurrection. Visual observation and metrics were performed on all artifacts, and photographs of many artifacts are available in the figures section.
ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURE OF VALLEY TOMBS

Tomb Orientation, Symbolism, and the Link to Dung Beetles

The first significant aspect of New Kingdom royal tombs is their orientation. Tombs were often oriented from east to west, to follow the course of the sun. The sun was symbolically born in the morning by rising in the east, and symbolically died in the evening by setting in the west. The netherworld lay in the west, where the sun god Ra died each evening. The orientation of a royal tomb followed this belief by orienting the entrance of the tomb along an east-west axis, proceeding through the tomb until reaching the burial chamber (Weeks 2001: 113).

Religious symbolism is maintained in nearly every aspect of the tomb structure. Indeed, Egyptologist Kent R. Weeks, director of the Theban Mapping Project, notes that “the plan of a royal tomb might be seen as a road map from this life to the next, its texts and scenes a guidebook to the journey” (Weeks 2001: 121). Although tomb architecture witnessed considerable variation in the number of chambers and their position within the tomb, the same basic chamber layout can be observed in the early New Kingdom tomb of KV22, and in the later tombs of KV17 and KV6 (See Figures 2, 3, and 4).

The inner chambers of Egyptian tombs have been compared to the tunnels dug by dung beetles (Hanski 1988: 34). The Ancient Egyptians were keen observers of nature; as a result, their studies of animal and plant behavior contributed greatly to the appearance of gods in their pantheon and the roles they assigned them. The dung beetle played a vital role in Egyptian resurrection beliefs as the embodiment of the rising sun (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 227). It is has been noted that the head of the dung beetle scarabaeus sacer resembles the sun as it rises in the
east. Scarab beetles rolled balls of dung, which they retrieved from cow pats in the morning, across considerable distances and buried them in premade chambers in the sand (Hanski 1988: 34). The Egyptians equated this rolling with the path of the sun as it rose in the morning and set in the evening, and believed that the scarab god Khepri symbolically buried the sun. Dung beetles laid their eggs inside the dung pats, and after the eggs gestated, the newborn beetles eventually emerged from the dung-like sun. Indeed, the origin of the name Khepri is kheper, an Egyptian word which means, “to come into existence” (Hanski 1988: 34). The subterranean chambers used by the dung beetles to bury their eggs greatly resemble familial burials from Egypt’s Old Kingdom. It has been posited by entomologists that Egyptians received inspiration from these subterranean chambers for their own inner tomb construction, with their curving pathways and several sidechambers (Hanski 1988: 34).

Well Shafts/Chambers in KV22, KV17, and KV6

One room with symbolic importance to resurrection which appears in each tomb of this study is the well shaft, later called the well chamber. The well shaft first appeared in the tomb of Tuthmose III, the grandfather of Amenhotep III. The well shaft is a wide, horizontally descending passage which often has its own sidechamber cut at the bottom. Tomb builders included the well shaft beginning in the mid-18th dynasty, as the symbolic burial place of Osiris, thereby associating the pharaoh with the god of the underworld (Theban Mapping Project, accessed 1/5/10).

Egyptologists have suggested two further theories for the inclusion of well shafts in royal tombs. One theory suggests that builders designed the shaft as a deterrent for tomb robbers, who would find it impossible to cross such a wide chasm and gain access to the treasures in the
deeper chambers (Theban Mapping Project, 1/5/10). If this was a motive for construction, it was not very effective, as robbers plundered many royal tombs in antiquity. If the builders intended the well shaft to deter crime, and Egyptian officials saw proof that the deterrence was not working, why would well shafts continue to be built into the 20th dynasty? Indeed, in the tomb of Ramesses XI, the well shaft shifted location, now placed in the burial chamber, behind the sarcophagus (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 173). In this new location, the well shaft offered no means of preventing looting. If tomb builders constructed well shafts for crime prevention, then this motive clearly served a secondary purpose to the symbolic nature of the room (Theban Mapping Project, accessed 1/5/10).

Another theory states that tomb builders designed the well shaft to capture floodwater which could enter the tomb and cause damage to the decoration and artifacts (Theban Mapping Project, accessed 1/5/10). The well shaft may well have performed this purpose in antiquity, this was an intention for the construction of the well shaft, its purpose was most assuredly secondary.

The tomb of Seti I also contains a well shaft, without a sidechamber. As the shaft has not been fully cleared, it is difficult to determine whether the builders ever intended to build a sidechamber. Erik Hornung (1999: 16-7) suggests that the well shaft of Seti I allowed “direct access to the depths of the earth, which were connected with the region of Sokaris in the Amduat decoration of the third corridor.” Hornung is referencing the fourth and fifth hours of one highly significant Book of the Afterlife, which will be discussed further in the decoration section.

After Seti I, only Ramesses II and Merenptah, his two immediate successors, and Ramesses III later in the 19th dynasty included a well shaft in their tombs (Weeks 2000: 46-7, 50-1, 64-5). Otherwise, the shaft disappears completely until its inclusion in the last tomb built in the Valley, that of Ramesses XI in the 20th dynasty (Weeks 2000: 30-1). In many tombs built
between Merenptah and Ramesses XI, the shaft is replaced by a simple chamber, as in the tomb of Ramesses IX. The tomb builders lowered the descent of the floor in this chamber, possibly to retain some form of symbolism with Osiris, but more likely in a continued effort to streamline the transportation of the sarcophagus into the burial chamber (Weeks 2000: 42-3). However, resurrection symbolism remains potent in the well chamber of Ramesses IX, as the Opening of the Mouth ceremony is depicted on its walls.

Magical Brick Niches

In the burial chamber itself, four niches contained magical bricks, each with an amulet containing specific instructions. These bricks were aligned with the four cardinal directions. In the north, the magical brick contained a mummiform amulet, who “casts down the caster-down and pushes aside the pusher-aside,” a direct compensation for any form of evil that may befall the deceased (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 122). In the east, the magical brick contained an amulet with an Anubis jackal, who “repels the anger and rage of an inimical [hostile] figure” (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 122). In the South, the magical brick contained a reed amulet, which “prevents sand from choking the secret chamber,” which referenced the burial chamber (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 122). Finally, in the west, the magical brick contained a djed-pillar amulet, which “keeps off the one whose steps are backwards and whose face is hidden.” (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 122).

Roth and Roehrig (2002) form a very intriguing theory linking the use of magical bricks in the burial chamber to bricks used during childbirth. When an Egyptian woman was in labor, she squatted down and her feet were supported by two bricks, decorated with protective deities and spells to ensure a successful delivery; this process proved especially important in a society
that undoubtedly witnessed a high infant mortality rate (Szpakowska 2008: 24-5). The child was then placed upon the birthing bricks, where the god Thoth recorded his or her fate (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 138). It is fascinating to observe that, from the moment of childbirth, the Egyptian baby is associated with Thoth, for the god will also be the one to record whether the Egyptian’s heart weighs the same as the feather of truth, known as *ma’at*, in the afterlife (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 138). Indeed, the final judgment is described as a test of whether the Egyptian lived, “according to the measure of his term of life that Thoth wrote for him” (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 137). Roth and Roehrig (2002: 137) put the intention of this judgment best: “the social position into which a person was born, decreed by birth and determined by the presence of a birth brick…was taken into consideration by the judges in determining whether sufficient good deeds had been done to justify admission into the afterlife.” At birth and after death, the birth brick plays a key role in the fate of an Egyptian.

Roth and Roehrig (2002: 129) further assert that the magical bricks in New Kingdom royal tombs were literal representations of these birth bricks, although they were probably not the actual bricks that the pharaohs were born on. They argue that magical bricks were one of many artifacts placed in the tomb to ensure resurrection, by linking the idea of the pharaoh’s childbirth to his rebirth in the afterlife (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 129). The two bricks used in childbirth represented the goddesses Nut, Tefnut, Isis and Nephthys, who each played a role in the creation myth of Heliopolis (Roth and Roehrig 2002: 131).
DECORATION IN THE TOMBS OF AMENHOTEP III, SETI I AND RAMESSES IX

Decoration in the Tomb of Amenhotep III

Only three chambers in KV22 were decorated. This scarcity in decoration is typical of 18th dynasty tombs, when many New Kingdom decorative schemes were first developed. In a walkthrough of KV22, the first decoration can be seen in the well chamber. Continuing an architectural formula that dates back to the pyramids of the Old Kingdom, the ceiling is decorated with a yellow star pattern on a blue-black background. The star ceiling represented the cosmos, which played a very important role in Egyptian theology. The sky goddess Nut, one of the deities present at the creation of the world according to a myth from Hermopolis, was believed to hold up the “firmament which separated the earth from the encircling waters of chaos out of which the world had been created” (Wilkinson 2003: 160). Egyptologist Ronald Wells, as summarized by Richard H. Wilkinson, argued that Nut came to symbolize the Milky Way, as the Egyptians saw the Milky Way in the predawn hours as a “stretched out figure with arms and legs touching the horizon” (Wilkinson 2003: 161). Nut was also the mother of Osiris, and the Egyptians believed that they would become one of the stars in Nut upon their resurrection, reunited with the divine mother just like Osiris (Wilkinson 2003: 161). The presence of the stretched across all chambers, Tomb architects depicted the star ceiling, stretched across all chambers, in the belief that the deceased Egyptian could then find the firmament and join Nut.

Below the star ceiling in the well shaft, bordering the top of the walls, are multiple depictions of the vulture goddess Nekhbet, whose wings protectively drape over individual depictions of Amenhotep III with several deities. Nekhbet, the goddess of Upper Egypt (where the Valley of the Kings was located), offers Amenhotep III an ankh and shen from her talons.
(Wilkinson 2003: 213). The *ankh*, the Ancient Egyptian symbol is one of the most common elements of Egyptian art, and is one of the most frequently depicted aspects of Egyptian belief in their tombs. In paintings, raised reliefs and statues, the god or goddess places the *ankh* in their hand and offers it to the human, thereby symbolically giving the deceased the “vital force” (life). The *ankh* symbolized the sunrise and, likewise, resurrection --- the *ankh* had the power to renew life (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 584).

The *shen* hieroglyphic symbolized eternity, and was depicted as a looped rope. The looped rope had the power to encircle objects, and indeed encircled the pharaoh’s names and titles in the form of a cartouche. The *shen* was uniquely connected to the *ankh*: while the *ankh* renewed life, the *shen* eternalized it. Finally, The *shen* allowed the pharaoh to be forever dominant over his kingdom in life and in death (Wilkinson 1992: 193, 195). Nekhbet, in her role as the goddess of Upper Egypt, was an important protective deity for the pharaoh, whose ability to maintain the unity of Egypt’s regions of Upper and Lower Egypt was vital to the civilization’s stability (Wilkinson 2003: 214). Her outstretched wings were a common maternal symbol of protection in Ancient Egypt. This is consistent with the Egyptian view of Nekhbet as the mother of the king, although this seems more a symbolic maternity than a mythological link like the goddess Nut (Wilkinson 2003: 214).

Directly below Nekhbet are several instances of Amenhotep III before a deity (see Figure 5). From left to right, Amenhotep III stands before Hathor, Anubis, the Western Goddess and Osiris. Hathor, the first goddess from the left, was the patron goddess of Thebes, and as a result she played an important protective role for the pharaoh and those who worked in the necropolis (Wilkinson 2003: 143). As Wilkinson (2003: 143) notes, the Egyptians believed that Hathor “receive[d] the dying sun each evening. Since the sun began the resurrection journey after
setting, it was a desire of the deceased to be ‘in the following of Hathor.’” As seen in Figure 5, Hathor wears regalia on her head signifying the West, the direction where Egyptians believed heaven lay. Also, dating from the Pyramids Texts of the Old Kingdom, The Egyptians saw Hathor as the Eye of Ra, and played a key role in generating, “the king’s daily rebirth with the sun” (Wilkinson 2003: 140). This may explain why she is often depicted wearing a red dress, the color associated with the setting sun in Egyptian theology (Wilkinson 1994: 107).

Next to Hathor, Amenhotep III receives life from Anubis. Anubis was Egypt’s primary afterlife deity before the cult of Osiris replaced him by the Middle Kingdom. However, Anubis retained importance in funerary rituals as the symbolic embalmer of the dead (Wilkinson 2003: 188). The Egyptians believed Anubis guided the deceased through the netherworld, and weighed their heart against the feather of truth before a seated Osiris. Due to the vital role Anubis played in afterlife mythology, tomb depictions often showed bringing favor upon the deceased. Using sympathetic magic, the Egyptians ensured that Anubis looked favorably on the pharaoh (Wilkinson 2003: 189). For instance, on the north wall of the well chamber, Anubis lifts the ankh to Amenhotep’s mouth so that it will open and receive life, a sign of Anubis’s approval of Amenhotep. The hands of Anubis and Amenhotep are also interlocked, an important gesture in New Kingdom tombs. When the pharaoh held hands with a god, fingers interlaced, this signified a three dimensional representation of the hieroglyph for “embrace” (Wilkinson 1992: 51). According to Richard H. Wilkinson (1992: 51), this depiction illustrated the personal relationship the pharaoh had with the god. The embrace also signified that the gods favored the pharaoh. Depicting the embrace magically allowed for such an embrace to occur in the afterlife, where the gods would bestow their favor upon the pharaoh and approval of his actions during life.
embrace hieroglyphic is not limited to Anubis, and Amenhotep III can be seen in an embrace gesture with each god depicted in his tomb.

The walls of the burial chamber are decorated with the first afterlife book used during the New Kingdom, known as the Amduat (Book of What is in the Afterlife) (Hornung 1999: 26). As Erik Hornung (1999: 26) notes, the Amduat was the first completely illustrated book in world history. Like the earlier Pyramid Texts, only pharaohs could use the Amduat in their tombs. We will now explore why this important distinction existed (Hornung 1992: 26, 30). The Amduat and later afterlife books were limited to royalty because of their content. All New Kingdom afterlife books, except for the Book of the Dead, depicted the nightly, twelve-hour journey of the sun god Ra through the netherworld. The Egyptians believed that the deceased pharaoh joined Ra on his solar barque, and make the perilous journey through many nocturnal obstacles (including inhospitable deserts and lakes of fire) to defeat a series of enemies so that the sun (Ra) would rise again the next morning, spiritually resurrected along with the pharaoh (Hornung 1999: 27-41).

Afterlife books like the Amduat were also significant for society at large, crafting an “ordering and creative principle for spaces in the hereafter” (Hornung 1999: 27). The Amduat allowed the Egyptians to conceptualize the afterlife, and the vital role their deceased pharaoh played in the daily rising of the sun. By depicting afterlife books on their tomb walls, this conception was made a reality through sympathetic magic.

The Amduat appeared in full or summarized form in all the tombs included in this study. Amenhotep III had the complete Amduat depicted in his burial chamber (Hornung 1999: 28). The Amduat illustrates what the Egyptians expected to happen after the burial of the pharaoh in this chamber was complete. It was believed that the pharaoh’s ba, or soul, would ascend from
the sarcophagus in the form of a bird, and began a journey at sunset through the twelve hours of the night to achieve his resurrection (Hornung 1999: 34). In the Amduat, the pharaoh and the sun god Ra are one in the same.

The Amduat is divided into twelve distinct scenes, each corresponding to one hour of the night. A full summary of the Amduat is unnecessary for the purposes of this project; however, three of the Amduat’s hours have particularly vital implications both for the pharaoh and the world at large. In the sixth hour of the Amduat (midnight), the pharaoh has reached the depths of the netherworld. The sun god’s soul unites with the body of Osiris in the presence of deceased pharaohs of Egypt. This act of unification is the most important event in the Amduat, for it is the first moment that the pharaoh’s body and soul have united since his death. This meeting also creates the first new light in the netherworld (Hornung 1999: 37-38).

As Erik Hornung (1999) notes, the seventh hour of the Amduat poses “a moment of grave danger.” Indeed, in the seventh hour, the sun god meets the biggest challenge to resurrection, a serpent called Apophis. Apophis wishes to stop the sun from continuing its journey toward the morning. However, a group of deities, including Isis, spring to the sun god’s aid and subdue Apophis. Next, Ra is crowned as “Horus of the netherworld”, and is responsible for ensuring that the stars maintain a proper course. Therefore, Ra and the deceased pharaoh provide for the regular course of the cosmos and prevent chaos from reigning (Hornung 1999: 38-39).

After a series of additional trials, Ra reaches the last hour of the Amduat. The solar bark is pulled through a giant, benevolent snake known as World-Encircler, where the deceased “enter the serpent’s tail old and frail, weakened by age, and emerge from the mouth as [a] newborn [babe]” (Hornung 1999: 41). Then the final step in the journey through the netherworld occurs, where the newborn sun is embraced by the air god Shu, who places it in the sky. With the
afterlife journey complete, the deceased pharaoh is resurrected along with the new day sun (Hornung 1999: 41).

Decoration in the Tomb of Seti I

KV17 is the most completely decorated tomb in the Valley. The trend of decorating each chamber began in KV17, as the Egyptians utilized every wall space for depictions of the pharaoh’s resurrection. The appearance of many deities and gestures from the tomb of Amenhotep III continue here, and several additional gods are also depicted alongside Seti I. However, as such decoration is so abundant that several books have been written on the topic, this section will focus only on a key afterlife book depicted in the tomb, the Book of Gates.

The Book of Gates appears in the Valley of the Kings for the second time in KV17, after first being depicted in the tomb of Seti’s direct successor, Horemheb (Hornung 1999: 55). In KV17 it appears in segments in chambers in Pillared Chamber F and the Burial Chamber, and in full on Seti’s alabaster sarcophagus (Hornung 1999: 55). The Book of Gates has many parallels to the Amduat, its 18th dynasty predecessor. Both afterlife books detail the twelve-hour journey of the sun through the netherworld and its eventual resurrection at sunrise. However, there are key differences which make the Book of Gates a distinctly post-18th dynasty work.

The first hour of the Book of Gates is nearly identical to the Amduat. The first hour exists as a transitory realm between the living world and the netherworld, as the sun sets in the western sky (Hornung 1999: 59). However, while the solar bark of the Amduat is characterized by an entourage of deities, only two deities flank the sun god in the Book of Gates. These two deities, Sia and Heka, represent the creative force which existed at the beginning of time, and the divine knowledge required for creation respectively (Wilkinson 2003: 130, 110). The Egyptians
believed that these two elements were as essential for resurrection as they were for creation, another fascinating example of the Egyptian creation/resurrection duality. Another significant difference between the Book of the Gates and the Amduat was the importance placed on deceased individuals. The deceased are present in several hours of the Amduat, but they do not play any significant role --- the sun god merely initiates their resurrection. In the Book of Gates, however, they illustrate important divisions which exist in the Netherworld (Hornung 1999: 56-9).

This is best reflected in the second and third hours of the Book of Gates. The second hour features two separate divisions of the dead. In the uppermost register, the blessed dead reside, “who have spoken ma’at and now live on ma’at (Hornung 1999: 59). In the lowest register, the damned are depicted, bound and guarded by gods. The damned cannot subsist on ma’at, as they did not personify it in life (Hornung 1999: 59, 67). The Book of the Gates is the first New Kingdom afterlife book to vividly illustrate the fate of the dead in the netherworld. In the third hour of the Book of Gates, mummies are awakened in the uppermost register as Ra passes through the hour (Hornung 1999: 60). This register also contains a lake of fire, which nourishes the blessed dead but burns the damned that touch it. At the conclusion of the hour, Ra receives a shroud of white linen, symbolizing the regeneration he provides for the dead (Hornung 1999: 60).

Later, in the fifth hour, Ra gives the blessed dead the rewards of space and time. Space allowed the deceased Egyptians to harvest fields of grain so abundant that the stalks towered over the Egyptians. Time ensured that eternal resurrection continued unthreatened (Hornung 1999: 62). Before the sixth hour of the Amduat, a separate scene appears, depicting the Judgment of the Dead. This depiction of the final judgment is far more abbreviated than its
original appearance in the Book of the Dead. The Book of Gates shows the deceased standing before the scales of truth, presided over by Osiris. Unlike its depiction in the Book of the Dead, however, the deceased is flanked by an Ennead (Hornung 1999: 62). Ennead, a Greek term denoting a group of nine, is used to describe the nine deities present at the creation of the world (Wilkinson 2003: 78-9). In this judgment scene, we witness a further duality of creation and recreation. The forces present at the creation of the world support the deceased, who is hoping to be recreated in the afterlife. As in the Amduat, the sixth hour witnessed the unification of the ba and the corpse with identical symbolism (Hornung 1999: 62). In the twelfth hour of the night, the sun rises, and a new day has dawned (Hornung 1999: 66).

Decoration in the Tomb of Ramesses IX

The wall of Corridor D contains what Egyptologists call “enigmatic” decoration, i.e. mysterious or inscrutable (Hornung 1999: 110). The left section of the first register shows a series of upside down black figures each enclosed inside a dotted circle, with a smaller circle directly below. These figures are above the familiar solar bark, making its nightly journey through the afterlife. The bark rests on the back of the evil snake Apophis (Hornung 1999: 110).

This curious illustration has no direct parallel in any New Kingdom royal tomb. How does this relate to Egyptian resurrection beliefs? The elements of the solar bark and Apophis remain prominent, showing that afterlife beliefs witnessed some continuity into the late 20th dynasty. Modern investigation of the enigmatic wall and its accompanying cryptographic hieroglyphs have revealed a tantalizing theory of its meaning, as revealed by John Coleman Darnell’s (2004) excellent study, The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity. Darnell argues that the enigmatic wall “shows the struggle and ultimate triumph of the sun at
the…commencing the sunrise” (Darnell 2004: 282). This continues the early 18th dynasty drama of the sun’s battle through the night.

This depiction offers a completely opposite view of the conflict. Normally, the act of depicting afterlife books ensured the resurrection of the pharaoh and the successful sunrise through sympathetic magic. However, in the tomb of Ramesses IX, the enigmatic book reveals the chaos that will occur if the journey is not successful. This is the purpose of the dark figures enclosed in red and yellow circles. These deities are divided into two groups of four, and Darnell (2004: 285) identifies them as “Lords of the netherworld.” He suggests that their position on the wall may represent the eastern and western halves of the netherworld, continuing a theme of duality seen in many different aspects of Egyptian tombs (Darnell 2004: 282). Darnell also makes a novel suggestion of the color symbolism: the first four deities, each enclosed in a single ball of emanating light which obscures their appearance, are yellow like the setting sun in the sky, and face toward the tomb’s entrance in the east (Darnell 2004: 282-83). The second set of four deities, also enclosed in balls of light, are red like the rising sun, and face toward the burial chamber and the netherworld in the west (Darnell 2004: 282-83). The stars “accompany the bark in the underworld but…must be set upright” (Darnell 2004: 280). This is the job of the figure to the left of the stars, also obscured in darkness. No one is certain of this figure’s identity, though Darnell suggests that the figure echoes Horus from the seventh hour of the Amduat, where he maintained the stars’ “upright position in the netherworld” (Darnell 2004: 280).

The stars, however, are not upright in this depiction. Indeed, the figures are upside down. The position of these eight stars in the sky has been disrupted by an accident on the solar bark. The bark has been “delayed on the spiny sandbank of [Apophis]” (Darnell 2004: 278) unable to
move past him and into the next hour of the night. If the bark cannot break free, then Apophis will succeed in his plan and the “catastrophic inversion of the blessed dead” will result, throwing the underworld into utter chaos (Darnell 2004: 285). Indeed, the stars depict this chaos: they are falling out of the sky, and the bark is prevented from continuing its journey (Darnell 2004: 285).

This raises an important question: after centuries of painting scenes so they will literally occur, why would the Egyptians suddenly depict chaos reigning on the walls of their royal tombs? The enigmatic wall reflects the chaos in which the late 20th dynasty found itself. The 20th dynasty was characterized by the crumbling authority of the pharaoh and the increasing influence of the priesthood of Amun, whose domination of resources and state religion would made them the de facto leaders of Upper Egypt three decades after the death of Ramesses IX (Shaw 2000: 235). Although the depiction of chaos may seem counterproductive on the surface, this artistic strategy actually continues a long tradition in Egyptian art. The depiction of chaos, whether on a tomb wall, amulet, temple wall or stele granted the Egyptians power to control and conquer that chaos (Assmann 2002: 143).

Moving further down the wall, the next full register depicts a large, reclined Osirian figure, described by Darnell as, “Ramesses IX as the image of the unified Re-Osiris at the root of the eastern horizon” (Darnell 2004: 334). The Egyptians depicted several pharaohs as a unified Re-Osiris throughout the New Kingdom, as a reference to the sixth hour of the Amduat (Darnell 2004: 334). This mummified image of Ramesses IX reclines on a sand covered hill, “supporting himself on the horizon” (Darnell 2004: 348). The figure is ithyphallic, reflective of the fertility required for regeneration in the afterlife (Hornung 1999: 110). The mummified Ramesses raises his arm to the sky, embracing the scarab beetle, who drags the sun disc behind him. A benevolent snake curls itself around the mummy (Darnell 2004: 348). The position of Ramesses’s arms and
feet represent the two regions of the afterlife, order and chaos, as the hieroglyphic inscription explains: “His arm is in the upper region, his feet in the place of destruction” (Darnell 2004: 343). The upper region represents the harmony in the Fields of Aaru, the Egyptian afterlife. The “place of destruction” is the chaotic realm inhabited by the captive figures who line the bottom of the wall. The mummified Ramesses’s feet are plunged in chaos. Therefore, he has not been completely resurrected, continuing the theme of images with chaotic undertones (Darnell 2004: 343). The accompanying hieroglyphic text, however, explains the purpose for the depiction:

It is in this cavern, at the birth of [Re]  
He calls Osiris; and Osiris calls to him…  
He shines at the birth of Re.  
[Re], may you place Horus,  
who has appeared in Thebes,  
together with you (Darnell 2004: 343).

At the birthplace of Re, Osiris is called, and the body and soul of the deceased unite. The snake acts as a protector of Ramesses, creating a physical barrier between Ramesses and the captives, who are eternally condemned to the chaotic realm below (Darnell 2004: 348). The sun disc provides further protection over Ramesses, and, receiving the sun disc in his hand, Ramesses joins the sun as it is resurrected in the morning, and the nightly cycle is complete (Darnell 2004: 348).

Directly to the right of the Osirian figure is a familiar depiction in an enigmatic context. On the rightmost wall, Ramesses IX is dressed in full pharaonic regalia, complete with a triple plumed atef crown flanked by two sun-crowned uraei (singular uraeus), atop a sun disc bordered with ram horns (Hornung 1999: 110). The pharaoh offers a small figure of the goddess Ma’at, which is in the shape of the hieroglyphic for “god” crowned with the feather of truth, the iconic symbol of the goddess (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 577). The pharaoh offers ma’at to Ptah, who
stands behind the physical goddess Ma’at. The presence of Ma’at in this scene is very significant, she embodies the harmony which represents “the triumph of light and order over darkness and chaos.” (Darnell 2004: 358).

In the offering image, Ptah represents the creative aspects of the sun god Re. Darnell (2004) describes the offering of ma’at to Ptah and the physical presence of the goddess Ma’at before Ptah, as a form of “reciprocal creation” (Darnell 2004: 359). Ptah recreates the essence of the pharaoh, and the pharaoh creates the truth and harmony embodied in ma’at for the afterlife (Darnell 2004: 359). Erik Hornung takes this theory a step further, asserting that the offering of ma’at to Ptah represents “a symbol of communion with the sun…[which ensures] the rising of the sun” (Darnell 2004: 359). This scene can be understood as a counterpart to the ithyphallic figure of Osiris. As Darnell explains, both scenes offer an image of victory over chaos: “In one scene, victory is achieved through the offering of ma’at, in the other, victory is expressed through the mystic union of Re and Osiris” (Darnell 2004: 360).

Although these scenes are enigmatic, the text accompanying them is taken directly from the Book of the Dead. Spell 106 is written above the offering scene (Darnell 2004: 359) and provides Ramesses IX with the necessities for sustenance in the afterlife:

O Great One, Lord of provisions…O You who are above, who give bread to Ptah… may you give me beer, may I eat of the shin of beef together with the roasted bread (Faulkner 2006: 101).

Ramesses IX receives divine provisions for the afterlife, similar to Amenhotep III and Seti I. As a result, his resurrection is assured.
PHYSICAL BURIAL IN THE TOMBS OF AMENHOTEP III, SETI I AND RAMSES IX

The physical burials of Amenhotep III, Seti I and Ramesses IX show the most purposeful and potent uses of sympathetic magic by the Ancient Egyptians. For this project, physical burial shall be defined as the mummified remains, sarcophagus, and grave goods buried with or near the pharaoh, in his burial chamber or in a separate tomb. This definition is purposely broad, and is designed to encompass the many unique circumstances surrounding the physical burials of these pharaohs.

To elaborate further, it is necessary to briefly visit the three burials in situ, or as they were discovered, in the 19th century. KV6, KV17, and KV22 were all plundered in antiquity, and the mummies themselves were brutalized in the search for grave goods (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 110, 137, 168). The early explorers and Egyptologists who discovered these tombs were left with nothing but scattered, fragmentary grave goods and defiled remains. However, scholars have been able to reconstruct a remarkable amount from this scant evidence.

KV22, the tomb of Amenhotep III, may have been known to 18th century travelers, but it was not formally discovered until the Napoleonic Expedition of 1799 (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 110). The engineers who first explored the tomb found no occupant inside, for the missing pharaoh was transported in antiquity to a sidechamber in the tomb of Amenhotep II. There Amenhotep III rested for 3,000 years with several other pharaohs to be protected against further defilement (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 199). The Napoleonic explorers were left with a small, tantalizing fragment of the sarcophagus lid, the first of the New Kingdom to be made of red granite. Proper excavation of the tomb did not occur until the mid 1910s, when Howard Cater performed clearance of the tomb (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 110-11). The condition of the
grave goods were appropriately described by Wilkinson and Reeves as “lamentable,” and included canopic equipment, *shabti* figurines, ritual couches, model boats, jewelry, sandals, and pottery vessels, amongst numerous other fragments (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 113-14).

KV17, the tomb of Seti I, was discovered by the circus strongman-turned-Egyptologist Giovanni Belzoni and his team in 1817. Belzoni described their remarkable discoveries in his famous *Narratives of the Recent Discoveries in Egypt and Nubia*. This continued the rapidly mounting “Egyptomania” sweeping Europe ever since the first sketches of the Napoleonic Expedition (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 137). Like the explorers of KV22, Belzoni did not discover Seti I’s mummy, but they did discover an intact, fully decorated sarcophagus like none Europe had ever seen. Belzoni transported the sarcophagus to London, where it still resides today in the Sir John Soane Museum (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 138). Seti’s mummy was discovered in 1881 in the famed DB320 cache, along with many other members of the Ramesside royal family (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 194). KV17, like nearly all Valley tombs, was plundered in antiquity and yielded only fragmentary grave goods for Belzoni and the archaeologists who came after. These included *shabti* figurines, several pottery fragments, two wooden *ka* statues, and a curious mummified bull in one of Seti’s sidechambers (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 137).

KV6, the tomb of Ramesses IX, is the only tomb in this study open since antiquity. The first formal excavations in the tomb were performed by Edward Aryton in 1907 (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 168). Like the two previous tombs, the body of Ramesses IX was nowhere to be found; he was discovered along with Seti I in the DB320 cache (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 194). The construction of the burial chamber was similar to other late 20th dynasty burials and therefore did not require a full sarcophagus. Rather, architects cut a deep recess into the burial
chamber floor, requiring only a lid to cover the body. However, the lid is missing to this day (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 170) As a result, the sarcophagus of Ramesses VII will be analyzed in place of the missing lid as a general model of lid design and decoration of this period.

The grave goods are, not surprisingly, scarce in KV6. During the reign of Ramesses IX, the most extensive looting occurred in the Valley, organized by a crime ring whose membership went as high as the mayor of Thebes (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 193). Consequently, the tombs of the late 20th dynasty were quickly looted. Although Ramesses IX put a stop to the crime ring, his tomb and the burial sites of his successors suffered the same fate. The grave goods left behind from KV6 include shabti figurines, several fragmented ostraca, and ka statues similar to those in the tomb of Seti I (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 168)

The Grave Goods of Amenhotep III

The effects of tomb robbing prohibit thorough analyses of the grave goods from KV22, simply due to the lack of grave goods left behind. However, when appropriate, artifacts from other tombs of the same period will be used to illustrate the resurrection symbolism of pharaonic burial equipment.

One of the most common artifact in KV17, and indeed all the tombs in this study, is the shabti figurine (see Figure 6). The shabti (see Figure 7) was designed to come alive in the afterlife in order to do the pharaoh’s bidding; Spell 6 of the Book of the Dead commanded this: “…therewith as a man at his duties, you shall detail yourself for me on every occasion of making arable the fields, of flooding the banks or of conveying sand from east to west; ‘Here I am’ you
shall say” (Faulkner 2006: 36). The *shabti* reveals how the Egyptians conceptualized tasks in the afterlife, and reveals those tasks to be quite similar to daily tasks performed in Egypt.

Each *shabti* followed a decorative scheme which remained fairly constant throughout the New Kingdom. A typical *shabti* is shown in Figure 7. On the front, *shabti* generally wore the pharaonic *nemes* headdress. Their faces were decorated with the Eye of Horus. Proceeding downward, the arms are crossed in the image of a pharaonic mummy, and the *shabti* wears bracelets around its wrists. Instead of the traditional crook and flail, the *shabti* usually holds hoes, perhaps for tilling the fields in the afterlife. On the legs of the *shabti* a series of horizontal registers contain Spell 6 of the Book of the Dead, along with the pharaoh’s titles, protected in the ropelike cartouche (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 434). The pharaonic titles identify the *shabti* as the servant of the pharaoh only. On the back of the *shabti*, the *nemes* headdress continues, draping the figurine to the shoulders. Underneath the headdress, a rope is slung on the back in order to carry three baskets, which may have been intended for the collection of seed in the afterlife (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 434). The horizontal registers containing Spell 6 curl around the legs to complete the back decoration.

The canopic jar was another vital grave good, no matter one’s social status. These jars preserved the intestines, lungs, liver and stomach of the pharaoh for use in the afterlife (Brier 1994: 84-5). The heart was not removed from the body, as the Egyptians believed that it acted as the center of thought and emotion. Indeed, Salima Ikram refers to the heart as the center of every Egyptian’s essence (Ikram 2003: 24). Most importantly, the heart had to remain in the body so it could be weighed against the Feather of Truth (*ma’at*) before the divine tribunal (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 404). Each jar was protected by one of the Four Sons of Horus: Qebechsenuef, a falcon, protected the intestines; Imsety, a human protected the liver; Hapy, a baboon, protected
the lungs; and Duamatef, a jackal protected the stomach (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 412-13). The Egyptians believed that the Four Sons of Horus were watched over by four goddesses, who were each aligned with one of the four cardinal directions. This alignment created a form of harmonious “spatial totality” within the tomb (Wilkinson 2008: 76). The heads of the Four Sons of Horus formed the stoppers atop each jar. The heads of the four sons are another instance of sympathetic magic: the act of depicting their heads atop the jars ensured that the pharaoh would receive their protection in the afterlife.

The canopic equipment of Amenhotep III was found in fragments; therefore the jars of his mother-in-law, Thuya (who was also buried in the Valley of the Kings) will be used an example. The jars were made from Egyptian alabaster (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 42). In this instance, the stoppers have been depicted in the image of Thuya, instead of the Four Sons of Horus. This is a fairly common occurrence among royalty, and represents a great divergence from popular practice. In the case of pharaonic jars, the stoppers are designed to resemble the deceased in association with Osiris, instead of the Four Sons (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 413).

The Egyptians placed canopic jars into large chests, which acted as a form of burial. Made of Egyptian alabaster from the time of the early New Kingdom (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 42), the chest was shaped like a three dimensional kar hieroglyph. The kar was a style of shrine adapted from a much earlier Egyptian model (Wilkinson 1992: 141). This earlier shrine, known in Egyptian as Per-wer, symbolized Upper Egypt, one of the “Two Lands” over which the pharaoh ruled (Wilkinson 1992: 141). By the Middle Kingdom, the Egyptians developed the kar as a smaller, more portable version of the Per-wer, which they then used in royal tombs to “symboliz[e] the divine status of the deceased king” (Wilkinson 1992: 141). A tetrad of goddesses watched over the Four Sons of Horus, flanking the cardinal points of the chest, their
arms outstretched in protection. The depiction of the tetrad allowed for such protection to occur over the viscera in the afterlife (Wilkinson 1992: 141).

Amenhotep III’s canopic chest was lined two rows of uraei topped with sun discs, symbolic of the goddess of Lower Egypt, Wadjet (Wilkinson 2003: 227). The important role Wadjet played in the life of the pharaoh was establish very early in Egyptian history, when Wadjet acted as the protector of Horus (Wilkinson 2003: 227). As the living embodiment of Horus, the pharaoh is offered the same protection, and the Egyptians believed that Wadjet “spat flames in defense of the king” (Wilkinson 2003: 227). Such flames would provide an efficient defense from the chaotic forces who dared to harm the pharaoh. Due to the fragmentary nature of the KV22 grave goods, it is difficult to discern how closely the canopic equipment of Thuya resembled that of Amenhotep III. However, her grave goods establish a general model for the canopic equipment utilized by pharaohs of the mid 18th dynasty.

The Grave Goods of Seti I

KV17 continues the trend of fragmentary grave goods in the Valley. The author performed research on several shabti from the tombs of Seti I and Ramesses IX at the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago (see Table 1 for a summary of artifact measures).

Each figurine with an upper torso held two hoes in their hands, similar to the figurines in KV22. The shabti also had seed baskets depicted on their back, generally two to three depending on the figurine. The shabti continue the decorative scheme of the nemes headdress, Eyes of Horus, and false breads. The shabti of Seti I from the Oriental Institute were all made of faience. Faience, a commonly used material for small objects in Ancient Egypt, can be generally defined as, “a white, coarse, gritty and granular core material covered with a lustrous blue glaze” (Noble
Depending on the composition of the materials used during its firing, faience can also appear in several other colors (Perrot 1883: 369). Faience had an important symbolic use. The Egyptians associated faience with light, and “the Egyptian word for faience, ‘tjehenet’, means that which shines” (Global Egyptian Museum, accessed 8/16/09). Faience enters the kiln colorless and without quality, and emerges after the baking as vibrant and whole. Faience had a direct link to resurrection, since the pharaoh entered his tomb equally colorless and lacking vitality, and was resurrected in the afterlife as a whole being (Global Egyptian Museum, accessed 8/16/09). As the shabti needed to spring to life in order to do the deceased’s work, this would explain why faience was so frequently used on shabti figurines throughout the New Kingdom.

Besides the figurines, several broken jars were found throughout the tomb, which may once have contained embalming refuse (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 138). Jars of paint and paintbrushes were also left in the tomb, presumably by the builders upon completion. Miniature versions of these items were buried in foundation deposits outside of the tomb, where they protected the tomb against damage (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 138). If the paintings should be damaged, either by natural or manmade sources, the presence of the paint materials symbolically renewed those paintings. Foundation deposits were common throughout Egypt and their symbolic power was not limited to tombs (Shaw 2000: 103).

The most peculiar grave good of KV17 was a mummified bull, in sidechamber Je, branched off of the burial chamber (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 137). The veneration of bulls occurred from the beginnings of the Egyptian state, as bull gods possessed important attributes of power and strength which the pharaoh hoped to utilize (Wilkinson 2003: 170). However, KV17 is the sole instance of a bull burial in the Valley of the Kings. Belzoni briefly described the bull
in his post-discovery report. The bull was mummified in a substance known as asphaltum, a black substance which probably had a similar afterlife connotation as bitumen (see the discussion of Ramesses IX grave goods) (Brian 2002: 113). Beyond this description, Belzoni does not elaborate further on the appearance or condition of the bull mummy (Belzoni 1822: 365).

It is probable that the bull belonged to the cult of Apis. Sacred to the god Ptah, the Egyptians venerated bulls with unusual physical characteristics as divine incarnations of the deity. These characteristics included a white, diamond shaped marking on the forehead, a scarab-like bulge on the tongue, and wing-like markings on the back (Wilkinson 2003: 170). The bull may have played a function in the sed-festival. The sed-festival occurred thirty years into a pharaoh’s reign, when he had to revitalize his strength and prove his continued legitimacy (Dodson, in Ikram 200: 74). The pharaoh completed a series of rigorous physical challenges, in which the bull may have taken part (Dodson, in Ikram 2005: 74). The importance of the bull to pharaonic power is even reflected in the royal titulary of Seti I, wherein he is called Kanakht Kaemwaset-Seankhtawy, “the strong bull, rising in Thebes” (Digital Egypt for Universities, accessed 9/27/09).

The death of an Apis bull further illuminates why the Egyptians included a bull in Seti’s tomb. The mummified Apis received a formal funeral complete with mourners (Dodson, in Ikram 2005: 73). Upon his burial, the bull became associated with the god Osiris and was sometimes called his ba (Wilkinson 2008: 171). The bull was mummified like Osiris and buried in a tomb so that he, too, could rise to the afterlife with Seti. Some also suggest that the Apis bull “was said to thresh the grain in the afterlife,” a task not dissimilar to shabti figurines (Wilkinson 2008: 171); this may explain why the mummified bull in KV17 was placed in the
same chamber as Seti’s shabti. Indeed, the bull represents a unique and powerful symbol of pharaonic power in New Kingdom royal tombs.

The Grave Goods of Ramesses IX

Tomb robbers left very few grave goods in the tomb of Ramesses IX. Therefore, a typology consistent with the previous two tombs is nearly impossible. However, as previously noted, the shabti figurine was one of the most common grave good in all tombs of this study.

The British Museum and the Oriental Institute Museum both have prominent shabti collections, with figures from KV6 among them. The British Museum purchased a shabti figurine from Egyptologist Henry Salt, made of sycamore fig wood and coated with bitumen (The British Museum, accessed 8/18/09). The use of fig wood is unremarkable, but the bitumen coating has potent resurrection symbolism. Bitumen is a sticky, black substance which was used during the mummification process to help the corpse “[harden] to an almost glass-like substance” (Brier 1994: 280). Egyptians linked bitumen to the netherworld, as its black color resembled the Nile silt that emerged when the river flooded each year (Brian 2002: 113). Silt represented fertility and rebirth, and the Egyptians coated certain grave goods in bitumen in order to associate them with the netherworld. For instance, statues were frequently coated in bitumen, which magically made associated that figure with the afterlife as a result (Brian 2002: 113).

Another, much larger shabti of Ramesses IX was observed by the author in the collections of the Oriental Institute Museum (see Figure 8). Like the previously described shabti, the hoes and baskets are present on the front and back of the figurine. However, the string which held the seed baskets over the back of the shabti is more clearly seen. This shows that the Egyptians had a clearly defined idea for how the shabti would work in the afterlife, and
based it on the agricultural techniques used in their own culture. This imitation of life provides further proof that while the afterlife offered a much better existence, it resembled their first lives in many vital ways (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 434).

Special emphasis should also be placed on the unfinished state of the *shabti*, which reflects the unanticipated death of Ramesses IX (again, see Figure 8). The red outline of the *shabti* indicates that Ramesses IX died before it could be completed, and walls in the early chambers of the tomb were also left unfinished (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 169). This raises an important question of Egyptian theology: if the *shabti* (or, incidentally the tomb wall) was unfinished before the death of the pharaoh, would it still retain its power through sympathetic magic? No one knows conclusively, but is the answer is very likely yes. Consider the *shabti*: the mere depiction of hoes and baskets was enough for the *shabti* to play its servant role in the afterlife. The same reasoning can apply when considering why tomb walls were often left in various states of completion. Pharaohs frequently died before the walls could be completely decorated, but the initial stages of decoration were enough for sympathetic magic to occur.

Another form of sculpture, the *ka* statue, appeared all three tombs in this study. The *ka* statue of Ramesses IX was made simply from wood covered in bitumen, proof of the economic stagnation that encumbered Egypt in the late 20th dynasty (The British Museum, accessed 8/18/09). Curators at the British Museum further suggest that the arms, now missing, once grasped a mace and staff like the famous statues in the tomb of Tutankhamun (The British Museum, accessed 8/18/09). The *ka* was part of the Egyptian soul and is not fully understood by modern scholars. Scholars suggest that the *ka* was closely linked to the personality, and some have gone so far to identify it as the pharaoh’s “vital force” (Oakes and Gahlin 2003: 89). Further, the *ka* served an important resurrection role in the tomb as “the bearer of generative, life
giving forces…[which] came into existence at the birth of a person and continued to exist after his death” (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 588). Most importantly, the existence and placation of the *ka* ensured that the pharaoh’s immortality would occur in the afterlife (Seidel and Schulz 2005: 588). The statue was placed in the tomb as a home for the *ka*, who symbolically guarded the contents of the tomb from intruders (Global Egyptian Museum, accessed 1/5/10). These statues are examples of Egyptian grave goods whose purposes were twofold: to provide for the protection and resurrection of the pharaoh.

Finally, KV6 contained numerous ostraca. (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 168). The British Museum houses many of these painted limestone fragments from KV6. One such ostraca depicts the god Amun accepting offerings (The British Museum, accessed 8/18/09). The inclusion of such an ostraca in the tomb of Ramesses IX may be another attempt by the tomb builders to provide for the favor of the gods in the unfinished tomb. Egyptologists conclude that ostraca were used for practicing rough sketches which would then be painted or carved onto tomb walls and temple surfaces (Global Egyptian Museum, accessed 1/5/10). This depiction of Amun may have been intended for a wall in KV6, stopped by Ramesses’s unexpected death (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 169). According to the principles of sympathetic magic, the unusual inclusion of the Amun ostraca in KV6 may have been a replacement for the wall decoration, and ensured that Amun received offerings from Ramesses IX upon welcoming him into the afterlife (The British Museum, accessed 8/18/09).

*The Sarcophagus of Amenhotep III*

A lid fragment was all that remained of the sarcophagus of Amenhotep III. (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 113). Despite the fragmentary nature of the sarcophagus, archaeologists have
been able to reconstruct what the burial equipment of Amenhotep III would have looked like. The lid fragment found in situ is made of red granite, marking the first time a sarcophagus was constructed out of this color and material together (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 113). The new red granite design deserves further exploration. In terms of material, granite is a “hard igneous rock…used extensively in building, for sarcophagi and for some statues and small objects” (Wilkinson 1994: 87). In terms of color, red is one hue in which granite appears naturally, so the color of Amenhotep’s sarcophagus may simply be a product of the material. However, it is incredibly rare that the color of an Ancient Egyptian artifact, painting or carving does not have a specific symbolic connotation (Wilkinson 1994: 87).

What symbolism, then, did the use of red contain in the sarcophagus of Amenhotep III? For the answer, we must analyze the use of red pigment in other aspects of Egyptian culture. Red had specific resurrection connotations, in the daily setting of the sun. The sun had a distinctly blood red hue at sunset, which helped solidify the idea of the sun’s symbolic death each night. By coloring their royal sarcophagi red, the Egyptians associated their deceased pharaoh with the dying sun, so he could join Ra on the journey through the netherworld (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 106-107).

Inside the red granite sarcophagus, Amenhotep III’s mummy would have been encased in a series of nested shrines. Both the lid and a small coffin fragment show evidence of the sarcophagi design. The innermost coffin, containing the body of Amenhotep III, would have been mumiform, and would have been decorated in the typical Osirian scheme of the period, with the nemes headdress, protective uraei snakes lining the headdress, and false beard of Osiris (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 113). A small coffin fragment was found decorated with the rishi design, whose overlapping stones create a feather pattern in order to symbolically link the
pharaoh with Horus. The Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was the living embodiment of Horus. (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 114). Lastly, a cobra head of the style which would have adorned the top of gold pharaonic mummy masks. All fragments point to elaborate and luxurious burial equipment, which would have been normal for pharaohs of the 18th and 19th dynasties (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 114).

The Sarcophagus of Seti I

When KV17 was discovered by Giovanni Belzoni in 1817, he found a mostly intact calcite sarcophagus which once contained the mummy of Seti I (Ikram 2003: 118). The sarcophagus of Seti I reveals much about the role sympathetic magic played in the physical burial of 19th dynasty royalty. Seti’s sarcophagus was the first made of calcite (Ikram 2003: 118) which began an important trend among New Kingdom sarcophagi. Known in ancient times as Egyptian alabaster, the construction of sarcophagi out of calcite created a “luminous white stone that invoked purity and light” (Ikram 2003: 118). The act of burying the deceased pharaoh in a vessel synonymous with purity bode well for Seti’s soul when he faced final judgment before the divine tribunal. Belzoni described the ethereal quality of the stone, noting that it was “transparent when a light is placed inside it” (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 59).

The decoration of the sarcophagus further shows its importance to Egyptian resurrection beliefs. The exterior lid of the sarcophagus is mummiiform, depicting Seti I in association with Osiris (Budge 1908: 11). Seti sports the classic pharaonic regalia of the nemes headdress topped with a uraeus. Seti also wears the long beard, completing the Osirian imagery on the lid of the sarcophagus. The chest area of the lid displayed further protective elements, including the depiction of a ram-headed hawk wearing the sun disk, emblematic of the morning sun (Budge
By depicting the ram-headed hawk on the chest of the sarcophagus, the Egyptians created an association with the resurrected form of the sun, to ensure the success of Seti’s own afterlife journey. In his talons, the hawk holds two shen, emblematic of eternity, which the pharaoh sought in the afterlife (Budge 1908: 11).

As Reeves and Wilkinson (2008: 138) note, the coffin exterior is “incised with scenes and texts from the Book of Gates picked out in powered blue frit.” Blue frit was a common material used for decoration in Ancient Egypt, dating back to the Old Kingdom (The Book of Gates, accessed 7/14/09). The color blue was symbolically linked to birth and resurrection (Wilkinson 1999: 112). First, blue represented the heavens, which the Egyptians saw as “cosmic waters…existing above the earth”; this gave blue a symbolic link to the Nile, the place from which all life sprung in the creation mythology of Hermopolis (Wilkinson 1999: 112). This association with the Nile’s creative powers also gives the color blue an express link to fertility. The link to fertility, in turn, has Osirian undertones, as Osiris originated as a god of agriculture and was still seen as integral to the fertility of crops in the New Kingdom (Wilkinson 1999: 116).

All of these symbolic aspects come together in the use of blue on Seti’s sarcophagus, where it forms the backdrop to the Book of Gates. This use of blue associates Seti with the cosmos and the ultimate goal of resurrection. The sarcophagus of Seti I marked the first time that artists depicted a full version of the Book of Gates in an Egyptian tomb (The Book of Gates, accessed 8/14/09). The positioning of the book around the sarcophagus creates further resurrection symbolism, as the text is incised “in a continuous sequence, resulting in the concluding scene occurring directly behind the head of the deceased” (The Book of Gates, accessed 8/14/09). The final scene of the Book of Gates featured the resurrected sun, lifted into
the sky over a new Egyptian day, and in turn completed the pharaoh’s resurrection (Hornung 1999: 90). Depicting this result will in turn cause it to occur through sympathetic magic.

The coffin interior provides further examples of divine protection for Seti I. On the top of the interior lid, the sky goddess Nut stretches out over the entirety of the lid, amid a starry backdrop representing the cosmos (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 137). The Egyptians believed that the deceased pharaoh would be swallowed by Nut at sunset, and travel through her body in a journey through the netherworld, where they would emerge out of her placenta in the morning resurrected (Budge 1908: 12-13). The text on Seti’s coffin expresses his prayer for Nut’s protection during his afterlife journey:

“O goddess Nut, support thou me, for I am thy son. Destroy thou my defects of immobility, together with those who produce them” (Budge 1908: 14).

In response, Nut answers Seti’s prayer and ensures his protection:

“The goddess Nut…saith: this is my son Osiris, the King, the Lord of the Two Lands…whose word is ma’at.” (Budge 1908: 14).

By identifying Seti as her divine son and endorsing his maintenance of ma’at while pharaoh, Nut seals her promise of protection. Clearly, the Egyptians used sympathetic magic to a dramatic extent in their sarcophagi, utilizing the religious symbolism of decoration and funerary texts to act as a catalyst of resurrection. Indeed, as the text on the sarcophagus interior summarizes most emphatically: “thou are in [Nut’s] arms, and thou shall never die” (Budge 1908: 15).
The Sarcophagus of Ramesses VII

The tomb of Ramesses IX contained no sarcophagus (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 170). However, the sarcophagus pit cover of Ramesses VII can be analyzed for its qualities of sympathetic magic, as it is similar to the pit design seen in KV6. The sarcophagus of Ramesses VII likely bore stylistic similarity to the one originally housed in KV6, as there are only five years in the historical record between the reigns of Ramesses VII and IX (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 9). The tomb of Ramesses VIII, the director successor of Ramesses IX, has yet to be identified.

The sarcophagus of Ramesses VII reflects the economic turmoil and political unrest of the late 20th dynasty. Instead of the large, elaborately decorated sarcophagi known from previous dynasties, the pharaohs of the late 20th dynasty were laid to rest in simple rock-cut pits in their burial chambers, large enough to house their mummified remains and perhaps a small series of grave goods (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 164, 166, 168, 173). This pit would then be covered, as in the case of Ramesses VII, with a “massive, roughly cartouche-shaped block of stone, actually an inverted sarcophagus box” (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 166). This attempt at a cartouche shaped sarcophagus, last seen in the tomb of Ramesses IV, accented the royal status of Ramesses VII, and the magical protections the cartouche provided as the guardian of the royal titulary (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 163). Indeed, the depiction of a cartouche “magically ensured that the name of the deceased would endure throughout eternity” (Ikram 2003: 120). The sarcophagus block is decorated with images of Isis, Nephthys and Selkis, three protective female deities commonly seen flanking the sides of sarcophagi. The Four Sons of Horus also flank the bottom of the sarcophagus block (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 167).
Like the sarcophagus of Seti I, the decoration is incised, but is now applied in green. The use of green carried very potent resurrection symbolism: as Richard Wilkinson notes, “to do ‘green things’ was a euphemism for positive, life producing behavior” (Wilkinson 1994: 108). This symbolism is vividly illustrated by its use on sarcophagi. Another possible explanation for the use of green was the Field of Malachite. As early as the Pyramid Texts, the Egyptians believed that the afterlife contained the Field of Malachite, a strong association of green with afterlife imagery (Wilkinson 1994: 108). Green symbolized the fertility of crops, and so the Egyptians also saw fertility as a vital component of resurrection (Wilkinson 1994: 108).

This is a further instance of the link between fertility and resurrection, previously seen in the discussion of the reclined Osirian figure on the enigmatic wall of Ramesses IX (see Decoration in the Tomb of Ramesses IX). Lastly, green was associated with the Nile, whose waters sometimes have a green appearance based on the direction and level of sunlight. The sarcophagus of Ramesses VII, then, may be symbolic of the life giving Nile, just like the blue frit on the sarcophagus of Seti I (Wilkinson 1994: 114).

A Short History of Egyptian Mummification

The elaborate mummification rituals of the Ancient Egyptians are well known, perhaps as much for the mummy’s liberal use in Hollywood B-movies as for the factual treatments of such practices. By the New Kingdom, Egyptian mummification reached its apex, as this period produced some of Egypt’s best preserved members of the royal class.

A brief summary of the development of mummification will reveal the major advancements in technique and technology by the New Kingdom. Beginning in the Old Kingdom, religious beliefs in centered on the deceased’s ability to be recognized in the afterlife.
When the Old Kingdom mummy was wrapped, Salima Ikram (2003: 60) notes that plaster was incorporated into the linen in order to create a hard outer shell for the corpse, “transforming the body into an image of itself.” This careful maintenance of the mummy’s overall appearance reflected the wholeness of body that the Egyptians believed the deceased would require in the afterlife. This idea remained integral to mummification throughout Egyptian history (Ikram 2003: 60).

During the Middle Kingdom, mummification developed further. Unlike the Old Kingdom, when vital organs were removed, embalmers of the Middle Kingdom normally kept such organs inside the body, and attempted preservation by stuffing the body with bags of natron (Brier 1994: 89). Natron, a naturally occurring substance made of sodium bicarbonate and sodium chloride (Harris and Weeks 1973: 82) was incredibly effective for preservation, for it “remove[d] from the body any liquids that may hasten decomposition” (Harris and Weeks 1973: 82). In addition, when abdominal incisions were made, the body was often packed with a material that would keep the body’s normal shape over time, such as straw (Brier 1994: 89).

The New Kingdom marked the first period when brain removal was a common occurrence (Ikram 2003: 63). The Egyptians viewed the brain as a curious and useless organ, and removed it by stuffing a hook-like instrument through the deceased’s nasal passage, breaking the ethmoid bone so that the brain could be drained out through the nose (Brier 1994: 91). Embalmers coated the mummy wrappings with a resinous material, which kept the body firm over time. They also placed linen in the eye sockets so they would remain closed (Harris and Weeks 1973: 86). The resin was heated in an effort to eliminate bacteria and “form an airtight seal to preserve the soft tissues”, further protecting the body from exterior decay (Harris and Weeks 1973: 86). Finally, royal mummies were buried with their arms crossed at their chest.
extensively during this period (Ikram 2003: 63), in association with Osiris, the god of the underworld (Brier 1994: 91).

*The Myth of Osiris and Isis*

An overview of the elaborate nature of Egyptian embalming begs the question: why would the Egyptians go to such lengths to ensure that sympathetic magic played a role in ensuring the afterlife of the deceased? The symbolism of mummification originates in the Myth of Osiris and Isis, perhaps the single most important story in the pantheon of Egyptian literature. The myth provides the origin and justification of mummification and associated grave goods, and guided Egyptian religious thought for three millennia (Ikram 2003: 23). Although no native Egyptian version of this myth remains, modern audiences know of the myth from the Greek writer Plutarch, who visited Egypt in 100 CE and copied down a version of the story (Brier 1994: 20).

As Plutarch wrote, there was once a Golden Age of Egypt, during which the gods of the Egyptian pantheon ruled (Ikram 2003: 32). Osiris, the king of gods, was well loved, for he taught the Egyptians how to farm and raise cattle (Brier 1994: 21) and gave them their first code of laws (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). Osiris then traveled the world to spread his wisdom to other kingdoms, and left his wife, Isis, to administrate the fields (Brier 1994: 21). The wisdom of Osiris and his subsequent popularity elicited the jealousy of his brother, Seth, who devised a plan to unseat Osiris and take his place as ruler of Egypt (Ikram 2003: 32).

Seth had a chest made whose measurements matched the body of Osiris exactly. Then he invited 72 gods, including Osiris, to a banquet (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). Seth
offered the chest as a gift to anyone who could fit inside it. Osiris, of course, fit inside perfectly, and Seth’s accomplices shut Osiris in the box, locking it (Ikram 2003: 33). Seth then poured molten lead over the lock to keep it sealed (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). This chest was the first Egyptian sarcophagus, built to the form of the man placed inside it, just as sarcophagi were built during dynastic rule (Ikram 2003: 33).

This sent Isis into a great period of mourning. While mourning, she learned that her deceased husband accidentally copulated with her twin sister, Nephthys, the wife of Seth. Nephthys later had a child, but was forced to abandon it out of fear of Seth’s wrath. Isis searched for the missing child, guided by a pack of dogs (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). She found the child and named him Anubis. Anubis became Isis’s bodyguard and was said to, “protect the gods as dogs protect men” (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). The important role Anubis played in this myth led to his equally important role in the resurrection of the pharaohs.

Isis later heard a rumor that Osiris’s casket washed up on the shores of Byblos (modern day Lebanon), into the branches of a heather tree, whose trunk grew so large, it covered the casket within it (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). Isis journeyed to Byblos to retrieve, becoming the wet nurse to the queen’s child. Eventually, she was granted permission to cut up the trunk, whose wood had been made into a pillar on the king’s orders, without any knowledge of the coffin inside it (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09).

Isis cut up the pillar, and tore the coffin open to reveal Osiris’s body. Here Plutarch describes a very moving moment of grief:
Then the goddess threw herself down upon the wood with such a dreadful wailing that the younger of the king’s sons expired on the spot. …[I]n the first place where she found seclusion, when she was quite by herself, they relate that she opened the chest and laid her face upon the face within and caressed it and wept (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09).

She then sailed back to Egypt with Osiris’s body in tow. Upon her return, Seth discovered the body of Osiris and dismembered it into forty two parts, spreading them throughout Egypt (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). The forty two parts match the number of Egyptian administrative districts. Salima Ikram (2003:33) thus argues that the entire land of Egypt was seen as the body of Osiris.

Isis and Nephthys, learned of Seth’s scheme, and sailed down on the Nile on a papyrus boat to recover Osiris’s body parts (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). This mythical papyrus boat may be the origin of the bark seen in many of the Egyptian Books of the Afterlife. The two goddesses collected each of Osiris’s body parts save one: his phallus, which was missing. Isis magically created one for him, and reassembled his body magically (Plutarch: Isis and Osiris, accessed 8/19/09). Isis then wrapped Osiris in linen, making him the first mummy. Finally, Isis spread her wings to turn herself into a bird, and used magic words to resurrect Osiris (Brier 1994: 21).

Isis proceeded to mate with Osiris, and they produced a son, Horus, who was born and raised in the Nile Delta in order to protect him from Seth (Ikram 2003: 34). Hathor was responsible for Horus’s safety, and became the symbolic mother of the pharaoh as a result (Ikram
2003: 34). This maternal symbolism is seen in the discussion of Amenhotep III’s tomb decoration. Once Horus became an adult, he fought a series of battles against his Uncle Seth in order to avenge the death of Osiris. Horus defeated Seth after several decades, taking his rightful place as heir to Osiris and pharaoh of Egypt. As a result, each subsequent pharaoh was viewed as the living embodiment of Horus (Brier 1994: 27). The Myth of Osiris and Isis thus provides the basis for divine rule, mummification, and the resurrection beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians. By replicating the events of the story, the Egyptians ensured that they too could enjoy the resurrection of Osiris and join him in the afterlife.

*The Mummified Remains of Amenhotep III*

The mummified remains of Amenhotep III, Seti I and Ramesses IX are three fascinating examples of the development of embalming techniques in the New Kingdom, and the resurrection symbolism of those practices. Discovered in a sidechamber in the tomb of Amenhotep II, Amenhotep III (see Figure 6) was reburied in a coffin whose bottom was produced for Ramesses III and whose lid was produced for Seti I (Brier 1994: 267). Modern investigators assume that the body contained inside the coffin is that of Amenhotep III, as an inscription was added to the lid with that pharaoh’s name (Brier 1994: 267). Grafton Elliott Smith, an Egyptologist at the turn of the 20th century, made the first scientific analysis of Amenhotep III and the mummies of several other prominent New Kingdom Egyptians (Brier 1994: 123-24). Smith laid the groundwork for future investigations of Egyptian mummies, and several Egyptologists still reference his research. Smith unwrapped the mummified remains of Amenhotep III on September 23, 1905, recording the results of his study in a book entitled *The Royal Mummies* (Smith 2000: 46).
Smith first noted the elaborate bandaging of the body. He began with a bandage the embalmers wrapped around the left foot. They continued by winding the bandage around Amenhotep’s ankle, proceeding up the leg where it connected to another bandage and was wrapped until it covered the pelvis (Smith 2000: 47). For the upper torso, Smith noted that, “a small sheet was wrapped under the upper three-fourths of the body, and was tied [to another bandage] around the head,” in order to completely encircle the mummy (Smith 2000: 47). These descriptions clearly show that the practice of bandaging reached a very specific and established protocol by the New Kingdom. This protocol was vital to keep Amenhotep III whole for his trip through the netherworld.

The chief method of preservation employed by Amenhotep’s embalmers body was the use of resin coated linen (Smith 2000: 49). Resinous material was stuffed “under the skin of the legs, arms, neck and perhaps other parts of the body…when it set, the members of the mummy consisted of masses of stony hardness with a covering of skin” (Smith 2000: 49). Harris and Weeks assert that embalmers would have used the resinous linen to mold the skin and restore a lifelike appearance to limbs (Harris and Weeks 1973: 143). Based on this mummification technique, Grafton Elliott Smith concluded that such work must have been performed on Amenhotep III during the 18th dynasty, and not during the conservation process supervised by priests of the Third Intermediate Period (Smith 2000: 49).

The body of Amenhotep III was badly damaged by robbers in antiquity. Due to this damage, Amenhotep’s age at death is difficult to determine with confidence. However, Harris and Weeks estimate that Amenhotep died between forty and fifty (Harris and Weeks 1983: 142). Harris and Weeks describe Amenhotep’s appearance as suggestive of a “fat, diseased, sedentary man…who doubtless was in considerable pain from dental problems” (Harris and Weeks 1973:
Indeed, Amenhotep’s teeth contain several abscesses and evidence of tartar buildup, and Bob Brier suggests that Amenhotep III suffered from severe periodontal disease (Brier 1994: 177). Brier (1994: 177) points to the sand often found in Egyptian bread as a possible culprit, which would have caused significant wear on every Egyptian’s teeth.

As a result of plundering, the head of Amenhotep III has completely broken off (Smith 2000: 49). The same phenomenon will be seen in the mummy of Seti I, and this consistency may be due to necklaces that were once around the necks of the pharaohs, where careless plunderers paid no heed to the condition the body was left in. The pharaoh’s face took an ellipsoid shape (circular with its widest point near the middle) after the cheeks were packed with resin (Smith 2000: 50). The nose contained, “small pads of cloth, saturated with some gummy material” after the Egyptians finished removing the brain (Smith 2000: 51). These cloth pads were designed to help the nose keep its shape, although now all but a cavity remains (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 114).

Robbers destroyed the entire front wall of the body, perhaps in search of amulets that would have been placed inside the body after the removal of the internal organs (Smith 2000: 49). When Smith investigated the remains of the front wall, he found a curious array of bones awaiting him, including “the leg bone of a fowl and another bird’s limb bone, a human great toe, an ulna and a radius” (Smith 2000: 49). Smith suggests that these may be mummified food offerings, placed inside Amenhotep’s body cavity to sustain him in the afterlife (Smith 2000: 49). While this is one possible theory, assorted bones often served as replacements for those that were missing or damaged on mummies when necropolis officials checked tombs for signs of robbery in the Third Intermediate Period (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 206). The Egyptians
believed that the act of providing substitutes for missing bones (including animal bones) would act as replacements in the afterlife, a further example of like causing like (Smith 2000: 49).

Amenhotep’s arms remained intact, and exhibit the classic Osirian pose. As Smith reported: “the right arm is placed in front of the left and is almost horizontal; the right hand is tightly clenched, with the thumb extended” (Smith 2000: 50). This pose directly associated the deceased with Osiris as a result of sympathetic magic. The clenched hand held either a crook, an agricultural implement, or a flail, a ceremonial symbol of pharaonic office. Both associated Amenhotep with power, status and the honored dead, potent symbols of authority which the pharaoh would carry with him to the afterlife through sympathetic magic (Wilkinson 2003: 120).

*The Mummified Remains of Seti I*

The mummy of Seti I (see Figure 7) was first unwrapped by Gaston Maspero on June 9, 1886. Grafton Elliott Smith performed further investigations on Seti for his *Royal Mummies* publication (Smith 2000: 57). It has been determined that the pharaoh died between the ages of forty five and fifty, similar to Amenhotep III (Janot 2008: 117). The body was covered in a large yellow shroud (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 138). Underneath, the entire body was covered with resin-coated bandages except for the head (Janot 2008: 117). The head of Seti I was broken off at the neck and separated from the body, perhaps how Amenhotep III’s head was severed --- by tomb robbers in the act of theft (Smith 2000: 57). Smith noted that the face, although ellipsoid in life, was molded into a far more ovoid shape after the effects of mummification (Smith 2000: 58). Underneath fairly prominent eyebrow ridges, Smith concluded that no packing material was inserted underneath the eyelids, unlike some of Seti’s predecessors (Smith
Seti’s teeth fared far better than Amenhotep, as they were “only moderately worn” with damage present mostly on the molars (Harris and Weeks 1973: 153).

Embalmers stuffed Seti’s chest with resin-soaked cloth which, as Smith observed, allowed the left side to reach a “stony hardness” (Smith 2000: 57). This helped the body to maintain its form and protected it from further decay; Smith further notes a mass in the chest, which he could not investigate intrusively, that may be the heart surrounded by a “considerable quantity” of resinous linen (Smith 2000: 58). Francis Janot agrees, adding that the heart’s unusual position can be explained by the Third Intermediate Period embalmers, who were only concerned with conservation and “placed the heart back in the thoracic cavity without bothering about is true anatomical position” (Janot 2008: 117). Clearly, the preservation of the heart far outweighed whether it maintained the proper physical position. This shows the continuation of the Egyptian belief regarding the heart’s importance as the center of thought and feeling.

Proceeding down Seti’s body, further evidence of defilement can be observed. The anterior wall of the abdomen was completely smashed in, continuing the trend previously noted in the mummy of Amenhotep III (Smith 2000: 57). The same hypothesis can be applied to Seti I: tomb robbers busted the abdomen in order to get at valuable amulets and other artifacts (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 138). The frequency of damage to Egyptian royal mummies raises an important question: if Egyptians mummified their dead to preserve their bodies for the afterlife and associate them with Osiris, how, if at all, would their resurrection be affected by bodily destruction? Further research on this topic would prove invaluable to a fuller understanding of Ancient Egyptian beliefs.

The position of Seti’s arms reflects changing beliefs regarding burial in the 19th dynasty. Seti’s arms are folded in front of the chest in the classic Osirian pose, with each arm set just
below the opposite shoulder; however, unlike his predecessors, Seti’s hands are open instead of clenched (Harris and Weeks 1973: 153). As Francis Janot noted, this indicates that Seti was very likely buried without holding the crook and flail which had been standard in pharaonic tombs. Janot further suggests that the crook and flail may have been buried inside the coffin instead (Janot 2008: 117). It is unknown why such a dramatic change occurred, as this went against the classic image of Osiris still used in statuary and painting during the 19th dynasty (Janot 2008: 117). Perhaps this was done in an effort to conceal these valuable implements from tomb robbers. Whatever the reason, the Egyptians clearly felt that the Osirian association was not affected, for the pose became standard for 19th dynasty pharaohs (Janot 2008: 117).

Although robbers thoroughly defiled the mummy of Seti I, X-rays performed by the University of Michigan in the late 1960s reveal that an important artifact was missed. In the X-ray, an Eye of Horus amulet is amongst the bandages covering the left arm (Janot 2008: 117). The Eye of Horus was believed to endow its wearer with the strength of Horus, whose eye was cut off by Seth in battle (Janot 2008: 117). Janot notes that the Eye of Horus also “had the power…to grant abundant mortuary offerings of every kind to the spirit of the deceased,” making the amulet a vitally important catalyst of sympathetic magic (Janot 2008: 117).

*The Mummified Remains of Ramesses IX*

Grafton Elliott Smith never analyzed the remains of Ramesses IX, and no modern Egyptologist has performed a formal study. As a result, little is known of the mummy, including the position of his arms or the contents of his wrappings. However, with the increasing use of CT scans, Egyptologists have learned a great deal about mummification (Middleton 2009, CNN). They would do well to submit Ramesses IX to the same tests.
The author, however, will now make a cursory overview of the mummy (see Figure 8). As seen in the figure, his facial features have survived in relatively good condition, except for the nose, which has broken away. The skin of the head has flaked considerably, and the head has completely broken away from the rest of the body. Hopefully Ramesses IX will soon be submitted to CT scans, so more thorough research can be performed.
CONCLUSION

The twentieth century represented an apex of Egyptological research. As our knowledge of Egyptian practices grew, so did the avenues of research into this fascinating culture. However, the theory of sympathetic magic is rarely applied to Egyptian tombs in an explicit fashion, although it paints a very illuminating picture of Egyptian afterlife beliefs.

Sir James Frazer’s theory of sympathetic magic is especially important in the context of Egyptian royal tombs. Several Egyptologists have made passing references to sympathetic magic in their analysis of mortuary structures, but the theory has not been explicitly applied as the centerpiece of research. This study has viewed three royal tombs in Egypt’s Valley of the Kings in a new light, analyzing how the Egyptians used their own unique form of sympathetic magic in their architecture, decoration and physical burial. The researcher hypothesized that the Ancient Egyptians utilized sympathetic magic as the primary catalyst for the spiritual resurrection of their dead. By designing their tombs with chambers that associated the deceased with the gods and the heavens, by decorating walls with depictions of what they believed would happen in the afterlife, and by mummifying their dead and equipping them with the necessary materials for the afterlife, these acts ensured that resurrection would occur.

This study also analyzed why such elaborate preparations were necessary for a successful resurrection. The pharaoh faced many challenges during the nightly journey to the afterlife, and most importantly, he was responsible for the successful sunrise the next morning (Darnell 2004: 282). Indeed, the author argues that the Egyptians’ solar theology played a key role in their motives toward tomb architecture and decoration. The Egyptians were also keen observers of
their environment: they saw firsthand how bodies decayed, and their belief that the body must remain whole for resurrection to occur necessitated a method to prevent decay (Ikram 2003: 60).

In the New Kingdom, the practice of sympathetic magic in royal tombs changed greatly. Practices were fairly consistent within the dynasties themselves, but not always across them. First, in the 18th dynasty, royal tombs were smaller and narrower in size, containing fewer chambers (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 90-131). The tombs were sparsely decorated, shifting to a fuller decorative scheme as a variety of afterlife books developed (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 37). In terms of mummification, embalmers removed the brain extensively for the first time (Ikram 2003: 63) and experimented with new resinous materials on the mummy wrappings to preserve the mummy for its afterlife journey (Brier 1991: 94). The 18th dynasty also marked the first time when the Osirian pose became commonplace for mummies (Ikram 2003: 63).

The 19th dynasty saw a conventionalization of royal tomb design. Builders produced a series of large, wide sepulchers with decoration in nearly every chamber as a potent form of sympathetic magic (Reeves and Wilkinson 2008: 134-57). Mummification reached its apex in the 19th dynasty, as linen was placed behind the eye sockets and resin became heated in order to stop the formation of packets of bacteria (Weeks and Harris 1973: 86). As a result, in the opinion of the author, 19th dynasty mummies retain the most lifelike appearance of any period in Egyptian history.

The 20th dynasty witnessed the smallest, often unfinished tombs, reflective of a disastrous economy, weak pharaonic authority and the frequent threat of foreign invasion which eventually spelled the end of the New Kingdom (Shaw 200: 310). Decoration reflected Ancient Egyptian anxiety, as afterlife books deliberately depicted the failure of the sunrise and attempted to provide safeguards against such a reality (Darnell 2004: 285). Mummification techniques
deteriorated significantly in this period, as the economy forced embalmers to use replacement materials without great success (Brier 1991: 91).

This study has analyzed how sympathetic magic reflected Egyptian afterlife beliefs at a single period of their history, surrounding the burial of a single class of Egyptian, the pharaoh. Preparations for death encompassed far more than sympathetic magic and stem from thousands of years of highly evolved theology. As a result, the theory of sympathetic magic should not be viewed as the single, all encompassing method through which the Ancient Egyptians prepared for the afterlife. Rather, it is a new framework through which we better understand Egyptian burial practices. Using sympathetic magic as a centerpiece, new avenues of research abound. In the future, research could be performed on tombs of the nobles and lower classes across Egyptian history, to form a comprehensive explanation of how the use of sympathetic magic changed, and the reasons for this evolution. Sympathetic magic could also be applied to other structures such as temples and palaces. This study is intended to help the scholar appreciate the cultural history of Ancient Egypt in new ways.

Ancient Egypt remains a civilization shrouded in mystery. These mysteries have endured since antiquity, and will continue to fascinate the world for centuries to come. This brings us to the final question: why has Ancient Egypt endured in the public consciousness? The answer lies in the fact that although their culture was vastly different from our own, many aspects of the Ancient Egyptian people remind us of ourselves. Like us, they hoped for an eternal afterlife free of strife. Like us, they believed it was possible for humans to reach this idyllic plane of existence. Like us, they came to terms with life’s starkest reality: all humans die. In the end, across time, place, and culture, human beings are undeniably connected.
Figure 1
Chronology of the New Kingdom (1500-1070 BCE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18th Dynasty (1550-1295 BCE)</th>
<th>19th Dynasty (1295-1069 BCE)</th>
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<td>Ahmose</td>
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<td>Amenhotep I</td>
<td>1525 – 1504</td>
<td>Seti I</td>
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<td>1504 – 1492</td>
<td>Ramesses II</td>
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<td>Horemheb</td>
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After Ian Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*
Figure 2

Map of the Tomb of Amenhotep III (KV22)
Figure 3

Map of the Tomb of Seti I (KV17)
Figure 4

Map of the Tomb of Ramesses IX (KV6)
Figure 5

Amenhotep II before Hathor and Anubis (Well Chamber, KV22)
Figure 6

Seti I *shabti* decorative scheme – Front and Back
Figure 7

Spell 6 of the Book of the Dead, *Seti I Shabti*
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Figure 8

*Shabti* of Ramesses IX – Front and Back
Figure 9

Head of Amenhotep III
Figure 10

Head of Seti I
Figure 11

Head of Ramesses IX
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