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Word, Object, Image: The Bed as a Sign in New Kingdom Egyptian Art

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Word, Object, Image: The Bed as a Sign in New Kingdom Egyptian Art

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Art History 2013

Abstract
Word, Object, Image: the Bed as a Sign in New Kingdom Egyptian Art
by Elizabeth Ann Cummins

In this dissertation, I examine the bed as word, object, and image in the New Kingdom in order to explore the bed's function within the semiotic structure of Egyptian art. Like many western cultures today, the Egyptians associated the bed with the concepts of sleep, death, and sexual activity, but the conceptual framework in which it was comprehended was quite different from the modern perspective. The connotative meanings (in semiotics, the secondary or cultural meanings) that stem from the sign of the bed must be examined within its ancient framework. In addition to examining the bed within the material culture, I look at the bed in both text and image. Due to the pictorial nature of the Egyptian language, the bed not only appears as a subject of writing but as the writing itself--as a hieroglyph. The fine line between text and image within the Egyptian visual system is brought forward when examining the bed within both spheres.

I have organized much of the material based on the ancient Egyptians' concepts of sex, sleep, and death. These three ideas were intertwined within the Egyptian consciousness as sleep and death were often compared as liminal states and sexual activity in the Egyptians' view led not only to birth in this life but also the next. I argue that the bed signaled to the viewer that the occupant was in a transitional state, with the bed becoming a location to successfully transfer its occupant into the next realm or protect the individual on the uncertain thresholds of sleep or conception. I propose the bed makes its own transformation as well, when it becomes the lion-headed funerary bier, indicating the nature and significance it holds in its funerary functions. The ultimate function for the sign of the bed is that of rebirth for its occupant.

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Acknowledgements

So many people have helped me on my journey that it is difficult to know where to begin. There have been hurricanes, heart attacks, and revolutions, but through it all, I have had one of the best support teams, both personal and academic, that a student could have. First I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Gay Robins, for her unending support through this portion of my life. "My girls" in the Art History department have also been there for me through thick and thin. I love you all. I would also like to thank my family in Atlanta: Nancy Gullickson, Jay Gullickson, and Christy and Dean Norton. Thank you for carrying me through the last and possibly craziest stage of this process. And last but certainly not least are my parents, Linda Bowen and Tommy Cummins, two amazing individuals who made certain the path was clear for me to dream.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

I. Constructing a framework

In New Kingdom Egypt (1550-1070 BC), a bed had a variety of functions for the user. It was primarily a place of sleep but was also used for sexual activities, procreation, and as a resting place for the mummy. Examining actual beds and model beds as well as their two-dimensional representations is important to the understanding of their practical and conceptual functions. On a conceptual level, beds provide insight into the ancient Egyptian views of sex, sleep, and death. Although modern western culture associates the bed with sleep, sex, and to a lesser extent, death, these concepts must be explored within the ancient Egyptian perspective (as much as can be possible) rather than from the preconceived notions of the modern world in order to understand how the bed related to and symbolized these concepts.

I have initially divided the material on the simplest of terms—three-dimensional and two-dimensional representations. The emphasis of this work, however, is on the bed as a sign within the Egyptian worldview and what primary and secondary connotations it held for the viewer (and user). While it is impossible to completely remove the western perspective from this work (as I am certainly a product thereof), the goal is to explore the concepts that were inextricably linked to the bed.

The most compelling element of this study of the bed is the intricate and complex manner in which these connotations connect to one another through the sign of the bed. At the center of all my discussions of the bed stands the sign, which resided in

the Egyptian mind and worldview. The sign serves as the hub of a conceptual wheel where it is the cognitive center of the manifestations that appear in the material record. This dissertation is about the bed as a sign and not just an image—although images are certainly a component of the sign, they are not the only one. Objects, words, and glyphs also lead back to the cognitive perception of the bed.

How does this sign function within the larger landscape? When the ancient Egyptians saw a bed in a tomb scene, as a model in a home, or when they entered their "bedroom" at night, what were their immediate and subconscious connections? After an examination of a large corpus of material, I argue that the bed signaled to the viewer that the occupant was in a transitional state, with the bed becoming a location to successfully transfer its occupant into the next realm or protect the individual on the uncertain thresholds of sleep or conception. I propose the bed makes its own transformation as well, when it becomes the lion-headed funerary bier, indicating the nature and significance it holds in its funerary functions. The ultimate function for the sign of the bed is to aid in the rebirth of its occupant and to signal to the viewer that this is occurring.

Why choose to examine the bed? Most cultures throughout history have had some form of furniture or padding designed to make sleeping more comfortable, even if only available to higher status individuals. Sleeping comfortably is a simple human need that connects humanity. It is safe to say most readers of this dissertation will have his/her own experience with a bed. The similarities between ancient Egyptian furniture and today's designs sometimes cause surprise in viewers, visually bridging thousands of years of time in a second. This connection is one of the main reasons a study of the

bed is a compelling entryway into the mind of the ancient Egyptians and also a way to reflect about our own modern cultures.

Today, the bed is seen as a staple of most households but was this true in ancient Egypt? Who were the occupants of the bed and what did it mean to those who did not have one? The majority of information that still exists from ancient Egypt comes from the elite stratum of society. The elite consisted of royalty, their administrators, scribes, and the priestly class leaving the everyday working Egyptian farmer and his family with little to no access to the temples and palaces of the period. However, the non-elite could visit the aboveground tomb chapels of the elite which dotted the landscape, particularly around Thebes, giving them a glimpse into the coded world of Egyptian art.

Many of the examples of beds as images and objects come from the site of Thebes, in particular Deir el-Medina (Fig. 1.1). Deir el-Medina was established as a settlement site on the west bank of Thebes in the early New Kingdom with textual evidence dating to the reign of Thutmose I (1504-1492 BC). Designed to house the builders and artists of the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and Queens and their families, the site was compact and regulated by the government with houses in a valley and tombs and temples positioned on the facing cliffs. It was located in the desert, allowing for more favorable conditions for the preservations of material culture. Houses, toiletries, food items, utensils, textual material, and funerary objects are just some of the range of items found by archaeologists, and it gives a closer look at everyday life than most sites in the country.

The history of beds in ancient Egypt extends back to at least the Pre-dynastic and Early Dynastic periods where they have been discovered in modern times as part of the collection of funerary goods buried with the deceased. There were two types of furniture included in the tomb goods: specifically designed funerary furniture, which was usually of poorer quality, and well-made furniture that had been used in life and placed in the tomb.[1] Some of the earliest examples were found at the sites of Abydos, Saqqara, and Tarkhan, where Sir Flinders Petrie discovered a collection of bed frames with bovine fore and hind legs.[2] Some fine examples of beds, both two and three-dimensional, come from the Old Kingdom.[3] Scenes depicting the construction of beds appear in the wall reliefs of the mastaba tombs of Saqqara and Giza alongside the construction of other funerary items used by the deceased in the afterlife. Depictions of elaborate furniture including beds can be seen in the tomb of Queen Meresankh III and a three-dimensional example of a gold covered bed was found in the tomb equipment of Queen Hetepheres I.

There are fewer examples of beds dating to the Middle Kingdom but their overall design remains similar to that of the Old Kingdom. The best-preserved beds

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[1] G. Killen, "Furniture," *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt.* ed. by Donald Redford, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 580.

[1] G. Killen, "Furniture," *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt.* ed. by Donald Redford, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 580.

[2] W M. Flinders Petrie, G.A. Wainwright, A.H. Gardiner, *Tarkhan I and Memphis V*, (London: School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1913) and W.M. Flinders Petrie: *Tarkhan II* (London: School of Archaeology in Egypt, 1914).

[3] For the Old Kingdom tomb of Meresankh see, Dows Dunham and William Kelly Simpson. *The mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, G7530-7540* (Boston, Dept. of Egyptian and Ancient Near Eastern Art, Museum of Fine Arts, 1974) and for the funerary equipment of Queen Hetepheres see G. Reisner and W.S. Smith, *A History of the Giza Necropolis*, Vol. II. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955.

come from the royal and elite tombs in New Kingdom Egypt. Killen mentions that there were no beds found within the royal tombs of the twenty-first and twenty-second dynasties, indicating there might have been a change in the religious function of furniture within the tomb.[4] I have chosen to focus this study on the bed in the New Kingdom due to its wealth of examples and supporting material culture, including a number of texts in various genres.

This dissertation is divided into two main sections: the bed as object and the bed as image. I will first examine actual beds, including New Kingdom royal and non-royal examples and their decoration, primarily from the tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu and the beds from the tomb of Tutankhamen. I will then move into the section of the dissertation that examines the bed as an image. Each chapter will focus on one topic: sex, sleep, and death. Objects that highlight these concepts will be examined and, in the conclusion, pulled together to craft a definition of the bed as a symbol in the Egyptian worldview.

By the time the New Kingdom had begun, the form of the bed had been well established. Appearing first in the Predynastic Period, the bed varied little in design through the subsequent periods. The bed could be enhanced with decoration or expensive woods, but the overall construction remained very consistent. As most Egyptians would not have had the money to afford a bed, only the upper levels of society were allowed this luxury. In addition to the upper class, artisans who crafted the beds often made them for themselves or in exchange for other goods. According to

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[4] G. Killen, "Furniture," 585.

texts from the New Kingdom site of Deir el-Medina, the bed was almost as expensive as a coffin and certainly the most expensive piece of domestic furniture. It would not have been acquired without substantial consideration and funding.

The primary evidence of the bed in domestic space comes from the site of Deir el-Medina. Textual evidence of beds from Deir el-Medina appears in the form of lists on papyri and ostraca, which include laundry lists, inventories of households, and costs of items in letters of transaction. I will examine the possibilities of a designated space for the bed within the household and the different types of structures in the domestic sphere that have been referenced as beds, namely the "lit clos," or closed bed, and the bed depicted in the so-called birth arbor scenes.

Beds within a funerary context are also found at Deir el-Medina as the community built their tombs just outside the walls of the settlement. Excavations here give scholars an insight into the examples of non-royal beds, although the settlement was exceptional as it held a population of artisans and craftsmen. Many of the other examples of beds come from a royal context, included in the tomb with their owners. Some of the most elaborate beds are from the tomb of Tutankhamen (KV 62) and the tomb of Queen Tiy's parents Yuya and Tjuyu (KV 46).[5] I will also consider a unique example recently found in an embalming cache in the Valley of the Kings (KV 63).

II. Problems with interpretation

There are problems of interpretation found throughout every discipline but to recreate the ancient Egyptian worldview when most of our material culture comes from

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[5] Although technically non-royal, the tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu reflects their position as the parents of royalty.

the elite class makes this task even more complicated. Gay Robins notes in her article "Problems of Interpreting Egyptian Art," that scenes shown in formal art are an idealized view and not an accurate depiction of the actualities of society. For instance, the king is shown in offering scenes in temples throughout the land, an action that would have been executed by the priests living in the temple. However, in their worldview, the king was the mediator between the earthly realm and the gods, so the art reflected this concept. Robins states, "If the record left by the Egyptians has been tailored to fit their world view, the question arises how far we can use their art as source material for our exploration of their society."[6]

These issues must be kept in mind when looking at the bed. The bed was shown in its idealized and most recognizable form; not all beds had lion-feet or footboards. The image shown was a form of glyph or sign that denoted all the qualities and connotations that were connected to the image of the bed. What elements of the Egyptian worldview were understood when the viewer saw a bed depicted in say, a non-royal Theban tomb chapel or a temple relief?

In the book *On Representations of Hippopotamus Hunting as a Religious Motive*, Torny Säve-Söderbergh discusses images of hippopotamus hunts in tombs and their religious significance.[7] The scenes often show a single man spearing a hippopotamus while his family looks on. However, men probably did not hunt alone or take their families with them, as this was a dangerous endeavor. The scene most likely

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[6] Gay Robins, "Problems of Interpreting Egyptian Art," in *Discussions in Egyptology* 17 (1990): 45.

[7] T. Säve-Söderbergh, *On Representations of Hippopotamus Hunting as a Religious Motive* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1953).

represents a victory of *maat* over chaos. In the Egyptian culture, *maat* was one of the most basic and essential principles of the universe—it has been variously defined as truth, balance, order, and justice. The king's role was to maintain *maat* for the country and keep chaos at bay. Similarly, tomb images functioned to aid the tomb owner in achieving rebirth, which was considering part of maintaining *maat* in the life of the deceased. In the case of the hunting scene, the hippopotamus can be seen as a Seth figure (figure of chaos) with the male hunter/deceased in the role of Horus (maintainer of *Maat*). The tomb owner could therefore be conquering the "sterile forces of death in order to be reborn in the afterlife."[8]

Scholars have studied how tomb scenes use verbal and visual punning to convey concepts that may have been considered inappropriate for tomb walls.[9] Two of the most well-known puns come from the fishing and fowling scenes. In Egyptian, "to throw a throwstick" (as in fowling scenes) was *ḫms*, which could also be translated as "to create, or beget." Additionally, the word *stj*, which was used as the verb in shooting an arrow, spearing fish, or harpooning hippopotami could also be translated "to impregnate" or "to pour" (as in banquet scenes).[10] The complex integration of image

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[8] T. Säve-Söderbergh, *On Representations*, 21.

[9] For more on punning see Derchain, Philippe. "Symbols and Metaphors in Literature and Representations of Private Life." *RAIN* no. No. 15 (1976): 7–10. Robins, Gay. "Problems in Interpreting Egyptian Art." *Discussions in Egyptology* 17 (1990): 45–58; Wolfhart Westendorf, "Bemerkungen zur 'Kammer der Wiedergeburt' im Tutanchamungrab,". *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 94, (1967): 139-150.

[10] Manniche sees erotic/rebirth implications in banquet scenes. See Lise Manniche, "Reflections on the Banquet Scene," in *La Peinture égyptienne ancienn*e, ed. by Roland Tefnin. (Brussels: 1997), 29-36.

and language highlights the Egyptians' ability to express their worldview in a complex and intriguing way.

There are other problems that affect the interpretation of the documentary, archaeological, and representational evidence. The hierarchical structure of Egyptian society placed literate elite males, a very small percentage of the population, at the top of society, so that written records and commissioned works, such as tombs, functioned primarily for the male tomb owner. Also, while the Egyptians presented the ideal in their monuments, this did not necessarily represent the views held by individuals concerning sexuality, sleep, and death. Beds were not slept in by the majority of society so what did they mean as a sign to the general population? How could a so-called "luxury item" stand for some of the most important concepts in the Egyptian world?

Another issue confronting Egyptologists is the tendency to allow modern ideas influence scholarship. For instance, the medical texts of the New Kingdom are some of the most complex ancient works on surgery, gynecology, and pharmacology in existence. Western thought focuses on the bed as a place for recovery but was this true for the Egyptians? While it was probable that if an Egyptian owned a bed, they would make use of it during the recovery process, the medical texts say nothing about the bed as a place for healing or recovery.

From the New Kingdom come some of the most important medical treatises such as the Edwin Smith Papyrus. This papyrus was purchased in 1862 by an American Egyptologist of the same name. It is well-preserved and inscribed on both sides for most of its length. The text is hieratic written from right to left. The papyrus

is dated to approximately the Second Intermediate Period, and addresses the treatment of wounds of the head and torso in a very practical manner. The material is presented in a series of cases where the ailment and then the treatment are discussed.

In the latest translations of the Edwin Smith papyrus by Jim Allen, there are direct references to the bed[11]:

Edwin Papyrus, Case 3, I,18-2,2: Head wound with skull damage: "After [you stitch him, you have to put] fresh [meat] the first day on his wound. You should not bandage him. He is to be put down [on his bed until the time of his injury passes], and you should treat him afterward with an oil and honey dressing every day until he gets well."[12]

(Same case) Edwin Papyrus, Case 3, I,18-2,2: "As for "he is to be put down on his bed," it is putting him on his bed and checking him without making a prescription for him."[13]

Edwin Papyrus, Case 29, 10, 3-8: Treatment for a Neck Wound: "You have to bandage him with fresh meat the first day. Afterward, put (him) down on his bed until the time of his injury passes."[14]

The bed appears to be a place for rest and recovery when the doctor does not make any particular actions in regard to prescriptions or treatments. It was clear that time could heal. However, upon closer inspection, "bed" does not appear to be a term

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[11] J. Allen, *The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005).

[12] J. Allen, *The Art of Medicine,* 73.

[13] J. Allen, *The Art of Medicine,* 74.

[14] J. Allen, *The Art of Medicine,* 91.

used within the papyrus. The direct translation of the phrase where the bed appears is "to moor (him) at the mooring posts."[15] The Smith papyrus actually clarifies this phrase within its own text stating that this was when a doctor would leave the patient to heal on his own with no further prescriptions or instructions.[16] It can be assumed that Allen translates this phrase as "put (him) on his bed until his injury passes" because the bed is perceived as a place of healing and rest within modern western thought. Most patients, however, were unlikely to have a bed in which to recover.

The mooring-post is an interesting concept to link to the notion of recovery. The naval metaphor was strong for the Egyptians. It could stand for something stable and unmovable, and appears within the funerary procession as part of the burial rituals. To moor at the mooring posts meant one had arrived on safe ground away from the turbulence and unpredictability of the Nile. Allen's modern translation is a good example of how the modern notion of the bed can be grafted onto the original intentions.

III. Methodology

Methodologically, I have found a combination of approaches for this project successful. Orly Goldwasser's research on determinatives in the Egyptian language has informed much of my study of the bed as a sign and its placement within the Egyptian worldview. Her books *Prophets, Lovers and Giraffes: Wor(l)d Classification in Ancient Egypt* and *From Icon to Metaphor: Studies in the Semiotics of the Hieroglyphs* as well

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[15] J.H. Breasted, *The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), 134, 432.

[16] "Moor (him) at his mooring stakes," it means putting him on his customary diet, without administering to him a prescription." From J.H. Breasted, *Edwin Smith*, 432.

as her articles, "The Determinative System as a Mirror of World Organization," "Where is Metaphor?: Conceptual Metaphor and Alternative Classification in the Hieroglyphic Script," and "What are 'Determinatives' good for?" all focus on the determinative as metaphor and classifier within knowledge organization.[17]

Through Goldwasser's linguistic work, the discipline of semiotics comes to the forefront. Roland Barthes' seminal work entitled *Eléments de semiology*, Betsy Bryan's article, "The Disjunction of Text and Image in Egyptian Art," and Roland Tefnin's article "Éléments pour une semiology de l'image égyptienne" also inform my approach to examining the bed as semiotic signifier and signified.[18] It is clear that in the case of Egyptian art that text and image do not divide along the lines of Western standards. Egyptian art is certainly not representative of reality but forms a system of signs, which the Egyptians used to understand and communicate the world around them. Therefore, semiotics is an appropriate method by which to examine the non-representational nature of Egyptian art and language. At its most basic level, semiotics concerns itself with the system of representation. This applies not only to the image of the bed within the language but also in what we may consider the "art" of the

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[17] Works by Orly Goldwasser: *From Icon to Metaphor: Studies in the Semiotics of Hieroglyphs*. (Fribourg, Switzerland and Göttingen: University Press and Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1995); *Prophets, Lovers and Giraffes: Wor(l)d Classification in Ancient Egypt*, Göttinger Orientforschungen IV. Reihe Ägypten 38, (Wiesbaden: 2002); Orly Goldwasser and Colette Grinevald, "What are 'determinatives' good for?" in *Lexical semantic in Ancient Egyptian, eds.* Eitan Grossman, Stéphane Polis, and Jean Winand, 17-53. (Hamburg: Widmaier, 2012); "The determinative system as a mirror of world organization." *Göttinger Miszellen* 170 (1999), 49-68; "Where Is Metaphor?: Conceptual Metaphor and Alternative Classification in the Hieroglyphic Script," *Metaphor and Symbol* 20, no. 2 (2005): 95-113.

[18] R. Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1964; Roland Tefnin, "Éléments Pour Une Sémiologie De L'image Égyptienne." *Chronique d'Egypte* 66 (1991): 60–88, and Betsy Bryan, "The Disjunction of Text and Image in Egyptian Art," in *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson*, ed. Peter Manuelian (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1996).

Egyptians. The Egyptians themselves had no word for art, indicating that they did not categorize images in the same manner to which the Western world is accustomed. So all images including those that are considered linguistic or artistic by Western conventions fit comfortably into this methodology.

In this dissertation, I do not adhere strictly to any rigid semiotic guidelines, such as those of Saussure or Barthes, but benefit from the fundamentals of the methodology. A "sign" can be broken down into two categories: the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the form in which the sign manifests: in this case, for instance, it could be the bed in a painted scene or clay model, or as a glyph. The signified is the concept(s) it represents.[19] This dissertation will examine the instances in the language and material culture where the bed appears as a signifier and from this learn about the concepts that it conveyed.

According to Saussure, if there are different signifieds but the same signifiers, this causes the creation of different signs. However, in the case of the Egyptians, we have the unusual opportunity to see how they classified certain concepts through the use of their script, which I will discuss below. This is not to say that the bed could not represent several concepts, thereby causing the emergence of different signs, but upon closer inspection these concepts (for instance, sleep and death) could have been more intertwined than modern Westerners might suspect.

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[19] Daniel Chandler states, "Nowadays, whilst the basic 'Saussurean' model is commonly adopted, it tends to be a more materialistic model than that of Saussure himself. The *signifier* is now commonly interpreted as the *material (or physical) form* of the sign - it is something which can be seen, heard, touched, smelt or tasted. For Saussure, both the signifier and the signified were purely 'psychological.'" D. Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

In semiotic theory, the sign of the bed could be read for its denotative or connotative meanings. The denotative meaning for bed is its literal reading while the connotative reading would encompass any secondary concepts that the viewer would associate with the sign. These connotations of the sign of bed are the focus of chapters 3, 4, and 5 with an examination of sex, sleep, and death. In Georgij Yu. Somov's article "Connotations in semiotic systems of visual art," he states:

> "Connotations of visual artworks are based on fundamental codes and develop their basic text. Representamens of denotations and connotations are interrelated and organized in system-structural formations of signals. Text of a visual artwork directs the actualization of connotations on the basis of its principal meanings and communicative structure. Connotations form semantic fields corresponding to basic meanings and text of artworks."[20]

The Egyptians had a clearly defined system of signs (representamens) by the New Kingdom. Signs are often interpreted within a code, as they cannot be read in isolation. The semiologist Marcel Danesi has suggested "a culture can be defined as a 'macro-code', consisting of the numerous codes, which a group of individuals habitually use to interpret reality."[21] The middle portion of this dissertation is an effort to understand the code by which the Egyptians lived and understood their world. The bed was understood through their own experiences as both individuals and collectively as a culture. In his work on semiotics, Dan Chandler outlines the forms of knowledge which must be present for today's scholars to accurately read signs: "These three types of codes correspond

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[20] G.Y. Somov, "Connotations in semiotic systems of visual art (through the example of worksby M. A. Vrubei)," *Semiotica*, vol. 158 (2006): 147.

[21] M. Danesi, *Understanding Media Semiotics*. London: Arnold, 2002.

broadly to three key kinds of knowledge required by interpreters of a text, namely knowledge of:

1. the world (social knowledge);
2. the medium and the genre (textual knowledge);
3. the relationship between (1) and (2) (modality judgments)."[22]

Issues appear when translating the Egyptian language, especially when focusing on one word outside of its context. It clear that there is never a "fixed viewpoint" for the lexicography of the language and we must keep this in mind as the words are taken out of their context and the word groups with which they are related.[23] That said there is much to be gleaned from looking at the words used for the bed and the translations given to them by Egyptologists. The list is not comprehensive, but a quick glance shows there are many terms that scholars translate as "bed" in the language. The most common terms for beds such as *ꜣẖ.t* and *ḥꜥtj* stand next to words that may appear only once in the written record.[24]

ꜣẖ.t bed; bier (Wb 1, 23.11-12)

ꜣdt to prepare (?) (a bed) (Wb 1, 25.4)

jm.jt-r′ [an implement (?)]; [bed linen (?)] (Wb 1, 74.14)

jsḥnḥn to go to bed (?) (Wb 1, 132.9)

mnm.t bed (Wb 2, 80.13-14)

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[22] D. Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics*, 150.

[23] For further discussion see Stephen Quirke, "Word and Object: Problems of Translation," in *Lahun Studies*, ed. by Stephen Quirke (New Malden: SIA publishing), viii.

[24] I have only included the references for these terms from the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* so that the reader will focus on the variety of terms and their translations.

nmj.t bier; bed (Wb 2, 266.2-5

mnm.t bed (Wb 2, 80.13-14)

nmꜥ to lay out (a bed, with linen); to face (a wall with limestone) (Wb 2, 266.11-13)

ḥnk.t bedchamber (Wb 3, 119.8-13)

ḥnk.yt bed; bed linens (?) (Wb 3, 119.14-120.2)

ḥtꜥ bed (Wb 3, 183)

ḥꜥtj bed (Wb 3, 43.15)

zmꜣ bed (Wb 3, 452.14)

zmꜣ.t bed; dais; throne (Wb 3, 452.10-12)

s.t-ḫt bed (Wb 4, 6.21)

sḏr.yt sleeping place; (state of being) bedridden; intercourse (Wb 4, 392.12-15

sḏr.yt (state of being) bedridden (Wb 4, 392.14)

sḏr.yt intercourse (Wb 4, 392.15)

gsꜣ.t inclined bed (Wb 5, 206.1)

A cursory glimpse reveals that not only are there many words referring to the actual bed, there are also words that indicate connections to sleep and sex. Phrases such as "bedridden," "intercourse," and "sleeping place" are all connected to the word *sḏr* that is shown with the determinative of the bed and mummy (sign list A55 ). This indicates these words were linked to the bed as the place where these actions would occur. Also, by sharing the same determinative, they are all inextricably linked to each

other. I will more specifically address the Egyptian words relating to each concept in their respective chapters.

Middle Egyptian is a non-classifier language recorded in a classifier script.[25] This means that certain signs (or classifiers) that appear within the text are in no way acknowledged or indicated in the spoken language. Determinatives do not appear within the construction of the spoken word but rather as a written visual component of classification. Since the Egyptians did not place spaces between words, determinatives also worked as dividers between where one word ended and another began.

It is important to note that in the words for bed the determinative shown is that of a piece of wood (M3 ) indicating the essence of the object rather than the conceptual values it held. Put simply, a bed is an object made of wood, therefore, the sign is categorized by Alan Gardiner under the heading "Trees and Plants".[26] When one moves to concepts such as sleep and death, rather than show the acts themselves, they are placed with another determinative: the mummy on a bed. The A55 determinative  is categorized under the heading "Man and his occupations" in the sign list of hieroglyphs, indicating the sign is seen (at least by modern scholars) to be in a completely different classification.

Rather than depict these words with multiple classifiers, which happens often in the script, the Egyptians have chosen to use the composite image of the mummy on the bed rather than the male determinative and a bed determinative side by side. The bed

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[25] O. Goldwasser, "Where Is Metaphor?" 95.

[26] For Gardiner's sign list see A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

with the mummy indicates a certain holistic state rather than just a MAN + BED. The Egyptians could have chosen to use only the bed for the determinative but this may not have been sufficient to represent the complex subjects of sleep, sex, and death.

Two theories from Egyptian scholarship help form a foundation for the importance of the A55 determinative:

1. In *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt*, Jan Assmann states, "The thesis that underlies this book can be reduced to an extremely simple formula; death is the origin and the center of culture."[27] It is important to note from the outset of this study that death, and its related terms, were the foundation for the Egyptian worldview. Death was the main culture generator for the Egyptians.

2. Determinatives are actually an elaborate graphemic system of classifiers. "This classifier system is a highly motivated, strictly constrained categorization system that reflects in detail the knowledge organization of the long-lost ancient Egyptian culture."[28]

If we accept these two statements, it would follow that the classifier, or determinative, of the word death is very important and embodies the knowledge of its concept within the image. The A55 determinative would hold a visual key to the way the Egyptians perceived and classified death. Therefore, if this determinative is used with other words it creates a conceptual link between all of the words it classifies. With shared connotations, the words linked to this determinative and their relation to the

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[27] J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 1.

[28] O. Goldwasser, "Where Is Metaphor?" 95.

image of the bed could further refine our understanding of the Egyptians' views on death and rebirth.

My hope for this dissertation is for it to not only be used to look at the bed within ancient Egyptian culture but also used as a methodological tool to examine other objects within the Egyptian worldview. This can be applied to the world of daily life objects, religious items, or any material object, which serves as a sign within the Egyptian visual and textual language.

Chapter 2

The Bed as Object

I. The bed as an object within New Kingdom material culture

The bed was part of the material culture of Egypt long before the advent of the New Kingdom. However, the wealth and diversity of information from this time, particularly from Dynasties 18 and 19 from the Theban area, give an insight into its many contexts. While, the royal tombs of the pharaohs provide examples of the most luxurious domestic and funerary beds, the site of Deir el-Medina provides a look at the bed in a domestic and funerary setting. For less than wealthy individuals, the bed was one of the most expensive items interred with the body, even rivaling the cost of the coffin.[29] Most Egyptians would probably not have had the wealth to afford a bed, but the object was more than likely known to most of the population due to its function within the domestic and funerary realms.

The examination of the bed as an object is the first step in understanding the use of the bed within the Egyptian worldview. [30] The bed's origins can be posited in its use

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[29] J. Janssen, *Furniture at Deir el-Medina*. (London: Golden House Publications, 2009), 16-17.

[30] In Egyptology, the subject of beds has often been approached from a technical and design standpoint of the three-dimensional material, as in Hollis Baker's 1966 *Furniture of the Ancient World*. In his section on Egyptian furniture, Baker primarily addresses the examples of actual furniture but also includes images of beds from the tombs of Hesy-re and Mereruka, both from the Old Kingdom. Geoffrey Killen's *Ancient Egyptian Furniture*, *Vol. I. 4000-1300 BC.* (1980) focuses primarily on furniture found in a funerary context and includes some analysis of the objects with the aid of visual representations taken from tomb drawings. Killen does not address the "funerary" beds of Tutankhamen, which indicates that there is a perceived difference between what might be known as "daily life" beds and "funerary" beds, which I will address later in this work. Other resources on the three-dimensional bed include Winifred Needler's 1963 article, "An Egyptian Funerary Bed of the Roman Period in the Royal Ontario Museum," which discusses a much later bed than those I will examine, but gives a thorough history of the lion bed starting with the Old

as a place to sleep above the ground away from unfavorable conditions (insects, snakes, dusty and uneven ground etc.). After the bed's creation as an object it moves into the realm of images and language, with all becoming part of a larger sign system. I will reconstruct the cultural relationship of this object to the Egyptians and this information will aid in the overall approach of the bed as a signifier and signified.

The fluidity with which beds can move from one context to another makes it difficult to distinguish clear lines for categorical purposes. A bed could follow a person through most of their life, from the domestic realm all the way to the tomb. The function of the bed changes as the individual's needs change but all beds had the inherent potential to represent all of the concepts related to the bed. The following categories are created based on general visual distinctions between the beds rather than their perceived function as determined by their placement in the material record. These descriptions do not intend to cover all examples in detail as some will be addressed later in this chapter and dissertation.

1. Simple frame beds

These beds consist of the most simply designed beds in the archaeological record. The beds lack footboards and have square, plain legs. These beds are often unpainted but are sometimes painted a simple white. An example of one bed from the tomb of Sennedjem is painted with two snakes and inscriptions concerning the deceased.[31] In some instances, they have woven tops or strings, which would have

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Kingdom.[30] Additionally, tomb publications continue to be the main source for material on beds as there have been no comprehensive publications to date on beds.

[31] This bed will be discussed in Chapter 6.

supported linens or some sort of mattress. A bed from Deir el-Medina, now in the Narodowe Muzeum in Warsaw, is a complete example of this type of bed with square plain legs that are rounded on the top (Cat. No. 139068) (Fig. 2.1).[32] The webbing is partially intact and is wrapped around the long rails of the bed and then woven together. This type of bed begins to appear in the Middle Kingdom and continues until the New Kingdom. Its simple, functional nature would have served the owner well in a domestic setting.

2. Beds with a footboard and lion feet

In the New Kingdom, many of the upscale beds found in the tombs of the nobility and royalty had footboards and lion legs (Fig. 2.2). Generally, if a bed had carved lion legs it usually had a footboard in place and vice versa. These additions were minimal but would have required extra labor and material for the legs and footboard. These beds were often crafted with a slight dip in the middle, so the footboard kept the individual's feet and body from slipping down. It also provided a blank canvas on which to place decoration. The range of decoration could differ significantly on these beds but the form has been found in a range of contexts from domestic to funerary as well as represented in bed models, fertility figurines, and tomb images. All of the beds found in the tomb of Yuya and Tjuya and many of those from the tomb of Tutankhamen fall into this category.

3. Beds with a footboard and bovine feet

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[32] Geoffrey Killen, *Ancient Egyptian Furniture*, 31.

The popularity of this type of bed reached its zenith in the Pre-Dynastic Period though the Old Kingdom and there are few New Kingdom examples. However, an example of a bed with bovine feet from the New Kingdom is housed in the British Museum (Fig. 2.3). Originally given to the museum in fragments, the pieces were first identified as belonging to a throne of Hatshepsut. They have since been properly labeled as parts of a bed and reconstructed accordingly.[33] The four legs of the bed are all that remains along with the L-shaped brackets, which attached the footboard to the bed. (The current footboard is a modern reconstruction.) Ebony serpents with silver inlay decorate the brackets and dual serpents of heavy sheet gold decorate the outside of the bed legs. Peter Lacovara has identified this bed as either an import from the Nubian culture of Kerma or certainly heavily influenced by it.[34] The use of this bed in New Kingdom Egypt may have been an archaic use of the form or a return influence from Nubia.

4. Funerary beds

The most obvious examples of funerary beds are those that were actually found supporting the mummy and coffin(s). The beds found in this context do not always resemble the so-called "funerary beds" or biers identified by scholars but rather looked more like domestic furniture. For instance, a very simple bed lacking any decorations could provide a funerary function within the tomb. However, for classification

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[33] There is no real indication that the bed was connected to Hatshepsut in any way. See Catherine H. Roehrig, Renée Dreyfus, and Cathleen A Keller. *Hatshepsut: from Queen to Pharaoh* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven, 2005), 257-258.

[34] P. Lacovara "A 'Kerma bed' from Egypt," *The Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*, vol.33, (2006): 125-128.

purposes, I have defined the funerary bed as a bed which has the heads of animals/gods located above its legs.[35] Beds such as these appear in the royal tombs of the New Kingdom such as the tombs of Tutankhamen and Ay (Fig. 2.4). It is clear these beds were not used during life, including their form and decoration. Beds used in a domestic context do not have animal heads or tails attached to beds.

Another type of bed that falls under this category is that made specifically to go under the coffin of the deceased. In the tomb of Tutankhamen, a low bed with a surface curved to match the bottom of the outer coffin was located within the sarcophagus (Fig. 2.5). A similar bed was found in the tomb KV55 but only fragments remain.[36] Because the form of these beds was crafted specifically with other tomb equipment in mind, they are categorically different than beds made for a possible domestic use.

5. Folding beds

An example of the folding bed is the ingeniously constructed piece found within the tomb of Tutankhamen (Fig. 2.6). It is designed for ease of transportation and is remarkably modern in its design. The lion fore and hind legs are still present although there is no decorative program for the footboard. This bed would have allowed the king to have a bed at all times wherever he traveled indicating his supreme status in society. Literally, it would elevate him from his surroundings as well as the other persons travelling with him on his military campaigns or trips

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[35] For a more complete explanation of the term funerary bed, see Chapter 5.

[36] M. Bell, "An Armchair Excavation of KV 55," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990): 117-118.

throughout the country. This is not the only example of this type of bed found. A small folding bed in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (20.2.13a-c) indicates that the concept of the folding bed was prevalent enough to have models constructed imitating its use (Fig. 2.7).

6. The "lit clos"

The "lit clos" was the name given by scholars to an architectural feature found within the houses of Deir el-Medina. Known in current scholarship as an elevated bed, it was made of mudbrick and found within the front rooms of the houses at Deir el-Medina (Fig. 2.9). While it may not have been a true bed in the sense of a separated object of furniture, its function is still unclear. It was named "lit clos" by Bernard Bruyére due to the physical nature of the feature as it resembled similar "closed beds" from France from the 16th and 17th centuries.[37]

7. Embalming beds

The location for the embalming of the mummy is often called an embalming bed or bier and only a few examples exist. Those discovered vary in their design, making it difficult to place them into specific categories. I have therefore grouped them together under the designation of "embalming beds" which makes this classification different than the others as it is based on function rather than form.

The most elaborate embalming bed datable to the New Kingdom comes from the city of Memphis and was made for a specific individual. The bed is carved of calcite

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[37] Bernard Bruyère first named the "lit clos." See B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1929) Deuxième Partie* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1939), 61.

and is inscribed for Amenhotep, steward of Memphis, who probably lived during the reign of Amenhotep III.[38] The top of the bed is sunk and slanted allowing fluids to collect and pour out of a drainage hole. Other embalming beds discovered have been constructed of wood and discarded in embalming caches near their respective tombs.[39] It is thought that these beds were considered "tainted" but Habachi points out that the bed of Amenhotep would not have been so finely constructed if this were the case.

The main material used in the construction of the bed was wood. Different varieties were used for different qualities of product. Native woods, such as acacia, were used to make furniture but were often too small or of too poor quality to make larger pieces such as beds. The Egyptians turned to imported woods, like ebony from Nubia and cedar from Lebanon, to create finer pieces for the elite and royalty. Limited examinations of wood types have revealed a variety of woods used for various objects such as coffins, beds, throwsticks, and model figurines. Other materials were also used in the construction of the bed. The webbing was often made with woven rush or linen cords which were passed through holes placed into the side rails of the bed. Gold leaf and ivory were used in the decoration of elite beds and many were painted.

The carpentry skills of the Egyptians were well developed and can be seen through a number of examples of furniture. Construction techniques were simple but effective and included joinery methods such as mortise and tenon, scarfjoints with

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[38] Labib Habachi, "An Embalming Bed of Amenhotep, Steward of Memphis Under Amenophis III." *Mitteilungen Des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 22 (1967): 46. There was another Amenhotep, steward of Memphis, from the reign of Ramesses II.

[39] For more on embalming beds see Labib Habachi, "An Embalming Bed."

butterfly cramps, and binding with thick leather straps.[40] Tools such as the adze, axe, chisel, mallet, and bowdrill were all used in various steps of production which can even be seen on tomb walls. In a scene from the tomb of Rekhmire (TT 100) shows not only the final stages of construction but also the initial stages of the preparation and squaring off of timber for its use (Fig. 2.10).

Certain items were inextricably linked to the bed through function and/or proximity to the bed in its representations. Headrests (which will be examined more closely in Chapter 4) are the most connected accessory to the bed and provided the sleeper a place to rest his/her head. Often deemed uncomfortable by western standards, this type of headrest has been used in many non-western cultures such as those in sub-Saharan Africa and Japan (Fig. 2.11). The headrest allowed air to pass under the head, providing a cool neck for hot nights. Headrests have been discovered at all socio-economic levels and may have been used without a bed as well.

Linens were also a part of the accouterment of the bed but due to the nature of the material record many of these have been lost. Linens themselves were easily reusable and were even used to provide the embalmers with mummy bandages. However, in the tomb of Kha and Merit at Thebes, bed linens were found in containers in the tomb giving a better understanding of the completely dressed bed that functioned in the Egyptian domestic environment. The headrest of Merit was also found to be wrapped in linen, which indicates the Egyptians may have used the extra fabric in order to make it more comfortable.[41] The Museo Egizio, Turin has dressed the bed of Merit

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[40] These techniques are examined in detail in Geoffrey Killen, *Ancient Egyptian Furniture*, 8-11.

for visitors to better understand how these beds would have appeared in their original context (Fig. 2.12).

Toiletry items also appear in scenes of the bed, possibly indicating that their storage and use took place in proximity. Mirrors and kohl pots are often depicted around the bed (or rather under it) in scenes from tomb walls. These items were part of the daily beauty regime of both men and women and were often shown with women in toiletry scenes or with fertility figurines.[42] The symbolism of these objects and their connections to the sexual and procreative aspects of the bed will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

The bed appears in a number of documents, which I will address throughout this dissertation. The types of documents range from the works of Egyptian literature to utilitarian documents scribbled quickly on ostraca. In the literature, the bed is seen as a symbol of wealth, security, and civilization. Although originally from the Middle Kingdom, the "Tale of Sinuhe" continued to be read in the New Kingdom. It presents the bed as a symbol of Sinuhe's return to the land of Egypt from his long travels abroad: "I was outfitted with fine linen and rubbed with the finest oil. I passed the night on a bed."[43] The indication here is that Sinuhe has been without these items of luxury (or of the civilized world) while he has been away. He has finally returned home to a bed, or on a larger scale, Egypt.

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[41] Only a few headrests have been found wrapped, indicating this may not have been a method that was used very often.

[42] Fertility figurines and their symbolism will be discussed in Chapter 3.

[43] William Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 66.

Another text originally from the Middle Kingdom, "The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage" was found in only one copy dating to Dynasty 19. Also known as the Admonitions of Ipuwer, it describes the state of a country in chaos, where the positions of the elite have been usurped by the poor. It is thought to describe the country during one of its "intermediate" periods where the rule of the land was in disarray. The bed is mentioned numerous times within "The Admonitions" and represents a symbol of prestige and wealth. *Maat* is maintained when the elite are snug in their beds and all is right with the world:

> Verily, it is good when beds are prepared,
>
> When the headrests of the nobles are well secured,
>
> When all men's wants are satisfied by a couch in the shade,
>
> And a door is shut (to protect) him who used to sleep in the bushes.[44]

But things can turn quickly and, as is often the case in works of this type of pessimist literature, those who once were the established elite are now without:

> [Behold], / those who (once) owned beds (sleep) on the ground,
>
> While he who spent the night in squalor
>
> Is (now) one who spreads a leather mat for himself.[45]

And the poor have now taken over their positions:

> [Behold, ...]
>
> While he who did not have a floor on which to sleep

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[44] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 207.

[45] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 201.

Is (now) the owner of a bed.[46]

The bed itself is also destroyed within this upheaval:

Verily, / ebony caskets are destroyed,

And the costly aromatic wood from the beds is smashed.[47]

The annihilation of the object indicates a complete obliteration of the way of life that had been the foundation for the concept of *maat*. Granted, this is from the elite perspective, as it probably would not have been perceived as a bad thing by the lower classes to take over the homes and beds of the upper classes. However, *maat* is balance and to the Egyptians, if the balance shifts, then so goes the entire world.

II. The bed within domestic space

Beds primarily appear in two contexts: domestic and funerary. While the majority of beds found in the material record were discovered in tombs, it is clear that beds were used in the domestic environment. It is possible that domestic beds were re-used in a funerary context since beds were some of the most expensive items available and it was not cost-effective to buy one for this world and one for the next. In this section I will examine the beds found in a domestic context, primarily at the New Kingdom site of Deir el-Medina.

Various categories of bed were located in a domestic context at the site of Deir el-Medina: the "lit clos," the bed of the birth arbor, and simple beds.

The textual evidence from Deir el-Medina mentions beds in various inventories. Beds were expensive when compared to other pieces of furniture in lists excavated

[46] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 199.

[47] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*. 193.

from the site. A text written on an ostracon which outlines a deal between the carpenter Bakenwerl and the draughtsman Horisheri describes how Horisheri would decorate wooden objects for unfinished items and funerary objects from Bakenwerl:

1 plastered, wooden debet-box	makes 8 deben
1 afdet-box	makes 2 deben
1 coffin, it belonged to me as wood	makes 15 deben
1 small wooden bed, it belonged to me as wood	makes 15 deben
1 small wooden bed, it belonged to me as wood, the ebony belonged to me via his son, Nebnefer	makes 20 deben…."

The decoration that is with the workman Bakenwerl:	
Funerary couch of his mother (?)	makes 12 deben
The outer coffin of An	makes 20 deben
The small coffin of An, given to the builder Paaoemone	makes 10 deben
Again, making another one for her	makes 10 deben
The coffin he gave in exchange for the cloak in Thebes	makes 10 deben
Its inner coffin	makes 4 deben…"[48]

It is clear from this list that beds were the most valuable pieces of furniture and were the equivalent of 10 to 25 deben. The Egyptians did not have currency but rather used a system of weights (often equivalent to silver or copper) to determine the value of items. Also, apparent from this list is that coffins and beds were fairly equal in price.

Another ostracon outlines a list of items left behind in a household and asks the recipient of the text to arrange for someone to watch his belongings.[49] Two beds are included in the list, along with onions, barley, emmer, stools, and a box. Other ostraca have similar lists. There are also bills of sale, which included lists of objects created.

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[48] L. Meskell, *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt*. (Cornell: Princeton University Press, 2002) 129, and A.G. McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs*. (Oxford: University Press, 1999) 81-82.

[49] From Ostracon Cairo 25670. J. Janssen, *Commodity prices from the Ramessid period: an economic study of the village of Necropolis workmen at Thebes.* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 394-396.

In examinations of domestic architecture from the Middle and New Kingdom, it appears that there may have been a room in the house, which was designed as a bedroom. The evidence for this comes primarily from the discovery of slightly raised platforms for a bed, which sometimes held four stones that kept the bed from sinking into the ground. The sites of Tell el-Amarna and Deir el-Medina are our primary sources for this information in the New Kingdom although older sites, such as el-Lahun in the Faiyoum, indicate an evolution of this space in domestic architecture.

Early scholarship of the houses of Amarna by Herbert Ricke break the functionality of the space of the house into three categories: the first part links the house with the public, the second is the main social living quarters for the family, and the third is the private living quarters.[50] The bedroom appears in this third category, which was usually located in the portion of the house furthest from the street. Due to the movable nature of the bed, it is difficult to tell if certain rooms held certain functions during the day and switched at night (similar to modern-day Murphy beds in small apartments). The bed may have functioned as a couch for the family during the day. This might mean that the bedroom could possibly change from the third category to the second category of rooms used for more social purposes.

Objects found within the archaeological context of these possible bedrooms in the houses of the Workmen's Village at Amarna point to the use of the room for the

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[50] L. Borchardt, and H. Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser in Tell el-Amarna*. Unter Mitarbeit von Abel, Breith, Dubois, Hollander, W. Honroth, Kirmse, Marcks, Mark, Rösch. Mit einem Anhang von Stephan Seidlmayer. Herausgegeben von der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Deutschen Archäologischen Institut Kairo durch Volkmar Fritz und Rainer Stadelmann, Berlin, Gebr. Mann, [1980] (portfolio containing: 1 volume [350 p., 44 fig., 28 pl., 2 colour pl.] and 121 loose plans [mostly folding]) = Ausgrabung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, 5 = Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, 91.

storage of items of value. The largest grouping of objects is related to dining equipment such as storage jars, plates, stoppers, and seals.[51] The second largest grouping consists of jewelry, amulets, and figurines. There is evidence that the entrance to a cellar was sometimes located in the bedroom as well, leading to more space underneath for storage of items in a room the same size as the bedroom.[52]

As previously mentioned, the mudbrick structure known as the "lit clos" is located in twenty-eight of sixty-eight houses at Deir el-Medina.[53] Their shape is rectangular, measuring around 1.70m in length, 0.80m in width, and 0.75m in height with three to five steps leading up to the platform.[54] Some of these elevated platforms may have been enclosed all the way to the ceiling, making for a truly private space. They are located in the front room of these houses, indicating that they were probably quite significant for the family members and were immediately viewable by the community upon entering the house.

Since their discovery by Bruyére, these structures have perplexed scholars concerning their use. It has been proposed that the "lit clos" functioned like a traditional bed, as the dimensions could have accommodated an individual.[55] Images

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[51] A. Koltsida, *Social Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Domestic Architecture*. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007), 98.

[52] F. Arnold, "A Study of Egyptian Domestic Buildings", *Varia Aegyptiaca*, vol. 5, no. 2-3, (1989):83. *The Great Hymn to the Aten* may reference this storage space: "One sleeps in chambers, heads are covered, one eye does not see another. Were they robbed of their goods that are under their heads, people would not remark it." Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 280.

[53] B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1929) Deuxième Partie* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institu Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1939), 61.

[54] B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1929),* 56-57.

relating to fertility and the domestic realm were found painted on the walls of the space. Although most are fragmentary and few in number, the iconography gives some indication as to the function of the space. The god Bes, boats in the marshes, and nude women in a possible nursing scene are some of the images found on the walls of the enclosed platforms of houses.[56]

Scholars have conjectured that the "lit clos" was used as a bed, an altar, a chapel, a seating area, a space designated for female use, or a multi-functional space. It is not in the scope of this dissertation to propose a use but current scholarship would indicate that these areas were used as altars for religious worship and were not wholly focused on the female realm of fertility.[57] It is important to remember that the designation of "bed" is a modern one, given by scholars, but the imagery depicted with this structure ties it closely to other instances where the bed appears in the material record.

Although I will examine the birth arbor scenes in more depth in Chapter 3, the birth arbor should be mentioned here in regard to the material finds of Deir el-Medina. The arbor itself was thought to have been constructed on the roof or outside the house as a place for a woman to give birth to a child and convalesce afterward.

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[55] L. Meskell, *Private Life*, 100. Meskell proposes that it was physically possible for the feature to have functioned as a bed. Romano has also suggested that the elevated beds were a 'principle sleeping area of the house' due to their decoration.

[56] According to Michelle Lesley Brooker, A New Approach of Identifying the Function of the Elevated Beds at Deir el-Medina, (Master's Thesis, University of Birmingham) 28. Images of the god Bes were found in houses N.E. X, N.E. XII, N.E.XIII, C.V. and S.O.VI. Also see Bruyère 1939:255, 257, 259, 305, and 330.

[57] See L. Weiss, "Personal Religious Practice: House Altars of Deir el-Medina," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 95 (2009), 193–208.

The bed in the ostraca images almost always is depicted with legs in the shape of Bes, with the figures facing the viewer. Examples of these legs have been found from the Graeco-Roman time, but there is no evidence from New Kingdom sites.[58] However, since images often portrayed the desired result rather than the actual objects themselves, it is unclear if beds were actually constructed with legs in the shape of Bes. There is an interesting example of two bed legs from the museum of the Egyptian Centre in Swansea, Wales, that are constructed in the typical shape of lions' legs but each has a figure painted on the side, of Bes and Taweret, respectively.[59] This may have been another manner of portraying these deities on bed legs, rather than carving the legs in their shapes. The painted figures may not have survived, leaving undecorated legs behind for archaeologists.

III. The bed within a funerary context

The tomb of Kha and Merit (TT 8) was discovered intact and included the burial of a couple, with both of their beds interred within the tomb. These beds are simple in design, painted white with lions' legs. The footboards are divided into three panels divided by two slender papyrus stalks, which extend from the top and bottom of the footboard and meet in the middle. Linens for these beds were found within containers in the tomb and are now displayed on Merit's bed (Fig. 2.12). The headrest for Merit is also wrapped with linens, indicating there may have been methods to make the headrest more "comfortable."

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[58] Rijksmuseum van Oudheden. Inventory no. F 1964/1.3/4.

[59] For the Egypt Centre's entry on these bed legs see http://www.egypt.swansea.ac.uk/index.php/collection/103-w2052

The bed found in the tomb of Sennedjem (JE 27254) was part of a large groupof funerary items discovered in his tomb (TT 1) at Deir el-Medina (Fig. 2.13). While other family members were included in the burial, the only person with a bed was Sennedjem. The bed was painted white and a large snake was painted the length of each long side rail. I will examine this bed in more detail in Chapter 6, but it is important to note here as this bed appears to be one of the few in Deir el-Medina specifically designed for the tomb. Sennedjem is referred on his bed as the "Osiris" clearly indicated his deceased state.

A bed from another tomb, that of Sennefer at Deir el-Medina (DM 1159), was found supporting the coffin of the tomb owner while the coffin of his wife, Neferyit, was found resting on the floor. The use of the bed to support only the coffin of Sennefer could indicate that his status was, literally and figuratively, above that of his wife. Also, due to the cost of beds, it may have only been economical to buy one for the highest-ranking member of the family. Bernard Bruyére created a line drawing of the scene when he discovered the tomb in 1928; this image gives an idea of how the objects and bed in the tomb of Sennedjem may have been arranged (Figure 2.14).[60]

Some of the finest examples of beds found in the Dynasty 18 belonged to members of the royal family—Yuya and Tuyu, the parents of Queen Tiye, wife of Amenhotep III. The discovery of the tomb in 1905 yielded three beds similar in design but with varying decoration. All three beds have carved wooden legs, which represent

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[60] The Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Le Caire, has collected the diaries of Bernard Bruyére and published them online. They hold a wealth of information concerning the excavations of Deir el-Medina, http://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/archives/bruyere/about.

the fore and hind legs of a lion that face toward the head of the bed, where the occupant's head would rest.

The first bed (CG 51110) is constructed of a wood "of an ordinary kind veneered with a superior cabinet-wood, probably imported." (Fig. 2.15)[61] The side rails of the bed are rectangular and have a distinctive dip from the front to the back. The footboard of the bed contains gilded images of the deities Bes and Taweret. Both sides are decorated and are divided into three panels. On the inner panel, which would face the occupant of the bed, the two outside panels show two inward facing images of the goddess Taweret with a frontal image of the god Bes in the center. The central inside panel also contains two inward facing images of Taweret but the central figure is yet another image of Taweret facing to the left.

The outward facing panel of the footboard also holds images of Bes and Taweret with the center panel depicting Bes holding the hieroglyphic symbols of life (the *ankh* hieroglyph), protection (the *sa* hieroglyph), and dominion (the *was* scepter hieroglyph). The outside left panel has an image of Bes with a tambourine with Taweret facing him with her paw on the *sa* symbol and holding a knife. This image is the same on the right side but with an image of Bes replacing Taweret. The *sa* symbol also appears quite frequently on the inside panel of the footboard (Fig. 2.16).

The second bed is constructed of wood and silver and depicts the god Bes in three panels on the side facing the sleeper (CG 51109) (Fig. 2.17). Bes is shown in profile facing inward on each end with a front-facing figure of Bes in the middle. The

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[61] H. Baker, *Furniture in the Ancient World.* (London: The Connoisseur, 1966), 72.

god holds knives for protection as well as the *sa* symbol. The back panels feature a feather pattern divided by five vertical pieces of wood. Silver L-brackets decorate the corners of the bed as well as the toes of the lion's feet. Silver was not used often during the New Kingdom but was symbolically connected to the moon and the gods, who were thought to have bones made of silver. The word for silver in Egyptian, *ḥḍ,* can also mean "bright" indicating the luminosity of deities and celestial bodies.

The third bed (CG 51108) is the most simple in its decoration with three panels of painted squares in imitation of ivory and ebony (Fig. 2.18). Both sides of the footboard are painted in this manner with fine lines of white painted around a square comprising two "ivory" panels and one central "ebony" panel with fine black lines on each side (Fig. 2.19). Although simple, the bed is well executed and its materials can be deceiving seen from a short distance.

It is unclear which bed belonged to which occupant of the tomb, as beds did not often have any indication of their occupant. In his description of these objects in the *Catalogue Generale*, Quibell notes that on the gilded bed the attachment points of the struts were gilt, which would have been metal if the bed had been intended for everyday use.[62] This points to the question of their use in daily activities. The wealthy would have been able to have beds commissioned for the tomb, and in this case, a few if not all, may have been. There are no visible signs of wear on these beds.

The tomb of Tutankhamen provides the richest example of beds coming from one location. Six beds were discovered in the tomb along with what are traditionally

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[62] J.E. Quibell, *The Tomb of Yuaa and Thuiu (Catalogue Generale 43).* (Cairo: Egyptian Museum, 1908), 50.

thought of as three funerary beds, making a total of nine. All of these beds were included in the tomb to accommodate one individual, indicating the role which conspicuous consumption played with regard to funerary items. The range of beds is wide, from simply designed to ingeniously crafted. I will first examine the six beds linked to a domestic function followed by the three funerary beds.

The first bed (JE 62016) is constructed of ebony and gold leaf (Fig. 2.20). The footboard is comprised of three panels, each with a figure of the god Bes in the center with a lion in profile standing on the *sa* symbol on each side. It is an openwork design, with details added in silver and ivory. This bed is similar to the beds found in the tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu, and given that they were possibly the great-grandparents of Tutankhamen, the similarity indicates a New Kingdom trend in design.[63]

The second bed from this tomb (JE 62014) is completely covered in gold sheeting and has a floral decorative program located on the footboard (Fig. 2.21). The center panel holds the *sema tawy* motif, presumably indicating the role of the occupant of the bed as the unifier of Upper and Lower Egypt. The side panels and decorative motifs along the side present papyrus plants and might allude to the location of the marshes. The image of the marsh has been linked to the realm of sexuality and is itself a place of rebirth from which the primordial mound appeared at the beginning of creation. The young Horus was raised in the marsh, far from the eyes of the evil Seth. This would seem appropriate as the bed was also seen as a place of procreation and rebirth. A third bed (JE 62015) is similar in design to this bed and was covered in thin

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[63] The exact lineage of Tutankhamen is unknown but Yuya and Tjuyu were most likely direct relatives.

gold foil rather than gold sheeting (Fig. 2.22). The footboard also features the gods Bes and Taweret.

The fourth bed (JE 62017) is rather plain in comparison with the other beds found in the tomb but is made of quality wood and painted white. The feet are leonine and the center of the footboard is comprised of vertical slats. The bed was found on top of the bull headed funerary couch, where the bed's webbing was pierced by one of its horns. The fifth bed (Carter no. 497) was discovered in pieces with the wood of the bed warped and the footboard completely detached.[64] Finally, the sixth bed is the folding bed (JE 62018) that has been previously mentioned in the list of bed types in Chapter 2.

The funerary beds found within the tomb of Tutankhamen are the three most well known, each depicting the image of an animal: a lion-headed bed, a hippo-headed bed, and the cow-headed bed. The three couches were placed in a line along the west wall of the antechamber facing north (Fig. 2.23). The length of the three beds together spanned the entire wall length. The beds were constructed to be taken apart and reassembled, which Carter took advantage of for their removal from the tomb.[65] Two of the domestic beds were found resting on the funerary beds while the others were found in the annex. All of these beds were believed to be in their original locations according to Carter.[66] Carter uses the term "couch" when discussing these beds as the

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[64] The number of beds found in Tutankhamen's tomb was reported as five by Hollis Baker in *Furniture* but an investigation of the Carter's handlist of the excavation reveals there was an additional bed, which only received a Carter number and never an accession number at the Egyptian Museum.

[65] Howard Carter, Howard and A.C. Mace. *The Tomb of Tutankhamen*. (New York: Dutton, 1972), 112-113.

[66] Carter archive, Griffin Institute notecards stating "in situ". http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakeres.pl?sid=24.240.26.230-1363908956&qno=1&sta=0&qtx=couch

term was more popular in the scholarship at the time when referencing beds with a funerary intention.

There is a bit of confusion when dealing with the identity of the deities depicted as the heads of these beds. The hippo-headed god, Ammut, is not in question. Ammut was part hippopotamus, crocodile, and lioness who ate the hearts of those who failed the weighing of the heart. The other couches, however, may have been assembled incorrectly in the tomb as the cow-headed bed is labeled Isismehtet (a lion-headed deity) while the lion-headed bed is labeled Mehit-weret (the great flood—a cow-headed deity). The confusion may have been precipitated by the use of Mehit/Mehtet in both names. Whatever the case, these beds were created solely for a funerary purpose as Tutankhamen is referred to as the Osiris, indicating his transformation into the god Osiris upon death. Nicholas Reeves connects the cow-goddess bed to the presence of scenes from the Book of the Celestial Cow discovered on the inside of the first shrine surrounding the sarcophagus. Reeves states, this "suggests that the Mehetweret couch was a solar barque which would speed the king from this world to heaven."[67]

There are a vast number of images of lion-beds in two-dimensional art but there are only a few that illustrate either of the remaining two deities depicted on Tutankhamen's funerary beds. One of these comes from Theban Tomb 73, the tomb of Amenhotep, where a very faint image of the head of a cow crowned with a sun disk can be seen attached to the front of a bed (Fig. 2.24). This bed is clearly designed in the same manner as the ones from Tutankhamen's tomb and others, which probably existed

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[67] Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun* (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 148. This concept will be further examined in Chapter 5.

from the time period. In TT 73, this bed is placed among the New Year's gifts for Hatshepsut. In the tomb of Seti I, there are images of beds with different animals heads as well. They appear in side-room N. This room displays the sixth, seventh, and eighth hours of the Amduat but also has images of various furniture pieces located beneath a bench with a cavetto cornice.

A unique bed was found in the embalming cache of KV 63, excavated in 2006 (Fig. 2.25). Found in pieces inside large ceramic jars within the tomb, the bed was reconstructed by members of the excavation team. Once completed, the bed was more like a frame, with three separate fabric-wrapped supports placed underneath. These supports had legs which were also found in the jars and shaped like serpent heads with a flat wide bottom. Two lions' heads were attached to the head end of the bed, much like those found in images of beds from the New Kingdom.

It has been speculated that this bed was used as a mummification bed but its flimsy and unstable nature would only make it possible for use after the body was desiccated and much lighter than the average human body.[68] It may have been used during part of the funerary procession as a place for the mummy to rest or even as a support for the coffin during funerary preparations. Remains of white paint or plaster are evident on the head of one of the lions, indicating the bed may have been unfinished. While it is unclear if this object can even be labeled a "bed," it is interesting to note how the parameters of the definition of a bed are challenged with its appearance. It is certainly of a funerary nature as it was found in a tomb with other

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[68] http://www.drhawass.com/blog/press-release-wooden-pieces-discovered-kv63-prove-be-mummification-bed

items from an embalming cache, but what role did it play in the funeral or embalming process? Further research is needed to examine this object's role in the funerary sphere.

IV. Decorative elements of the bed

The decorative elements that appear on the bed are further windows into the function the bed held for the occupant. While I will address much of the decorative symbolism within the following chapters, it is worth noting here the range of images which appear. The amount of decoration was usually in proportion to the quality and rank of the owner but some simple beds were also decorated to some extent. Beds found in Deir el-Medina were often painted white, a color the Egyptians associated with purity, cleanliness, and sacredness. The simply designed beds of Tutankhamen's tomb were also painted white, as well as the folding bed.

One of the most distinctive decorations on beds consisted of the deities Bes and Taweret. These images were usually placed on the footboard, as can be seen on the beds from the tombs of Tutankhamen and Yuya and Tjuyu. The legs of the bed of the birth arbor could also be depicted in the form of Bes, although in the New Kingdom, this is shown only in two-dimensional representations rather than the three-dimensional forms which appears in later periods.

Examples of two bed legs with the painted images of Bes and Taweret (W2052, Egypt Centre, Swansea) are housed in a collection in Swansea, Wales. These images could have been added at the time of the construction of the bed or possibly later as well. The shape of the bed legs is still in the form of the lion legs, which were

exceedingly popular at the time. This may have even been an intermediary step towards the fully formed Bes legs which appear later in the material record.

Snakes are also depicted on beds. Bes is often shown (both on beds and other objects) holding snakes in either hand which had an apotropaic function for the sleeper. The so-called "Hatshepsut bed" also depicts two snakes on the upper parts of the side rails. Hieroglyphs were also a decorative element of the bed, and sometimes indicated the name of the deceased (in the case of Sennedjem) or the gods depicted (in the case of Tutankhamen's funerary beds).

V. Conclusion

The bed as an object is often the first point of reference of the bed as a sign. The object presumably came into being before it was represented in images and small objects. By looking at the function of the bed in these domestic and funerary settings, the secondary connotations, which can be derived from its signs, begin to come forward. Beyond the connection of the bed to sleep, the bed was seen as a symbol of status and conspicuous consumption. The need for numerous beds in the tomb of only one person is unnecessary—the tomb owner can only use one bed at a time. Also, the objects in the tomb were sealed away from the world and would ideally not be seen by human eyes again, making it pointless to show extreme wealth. However, there was a moment when the funerary items could be viewed during the elaborate funerary procession, which would have been witnessed by the local population. Also, the very presence of the beds themselves would function as a symbol of wealth within the afterlife. The bed in the tomb would aid in the transformation of the location into a domicile for the deceased for eternity. Since the coffins were often placed on top of the

bed, the bed was the locus for the body and the transformation of the body into the hereafter.

As seen in the literature, the bed can also denote *maat*—it is a domestic item which, when destroyed, could symbolize the very destruction of the home and known way of life to the Egyptians. The bed was a substantial financial purchase, and while not everyone had access to one, the bed could function as an abbreviated symbol of the home. Many people would have desired one, and if this was not possible in this life, then one for all eternity was crucial, and rudimentary beds were placed in the tomb to achieve this goal. Beds were therefore a corner stone of domestic life, and represented a well-provisioned household, much like in the western world today.

Chapter 3—Sex and Procreation

I. Introduction

In ancient Egyptian art, sex was rarely depicted explicitly in formal contexts but rather referenced indirectly through other methods.[69] Encoded images and signs represented the sexual world. The rules of decorum dictated whether certain sexual images were shown in a coded manner, but these rules were different for non-royal and

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[69] In modern times, Egyptologists have been late to directly address the topic of sexuality when compared to the field of Classical art and archaeology. Research on sexuality is often embedded within scholarship on related issues such as that of women (Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 1988, and Carolyn Graves-Brown, *Dancing for Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt*, 2010), children (Erica Feucht, *Das Kind im alten Ägypten*, 1995), music (Lise Manniche, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Egypt*, 1991) and even humor (P.F. Houlihan, *Wit and Humour in ancient Egypt*, 2001). Studies on sexuality also appear in more recent works on sex and gender (Deborah Sweeney, UCLA Encyclopdia of Egyptology entry, 2011; Carolyn Graves-Brown, editor, *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt*, 2008). In *Sex and the Golden Goddess I: Ancient Egyptian Love Songs in Context*, by Renata Landgráfová and Hana Navrátilová, the authors not only explore the symbolism and language of New Kingdom love poetry but also the difficulties which come with researching the specific sociocultural elements of the sexual act.

The concept of erotically coded images is key to understanding the Egyptians' view on sexuality. First presented by Wolfhart Westendorf in his 1967 article "Bemerkungen zur 'Kammer der Wiedergeburt' im Tutanchamungrab," the concept of visual and verbal sexual punning was introduced to the field. Philippe Derchain's articles "Symbols and Metaphors in Literature and Representations of Private Life," "La perruque et le cristal," and "Le lotus, la mandragore et le perséa," have remained seminal works on this subject and continue to be referenced by scholars. Gay Robins' article, "Ancient Egyptian Sexuality" stems from Derchain's work and examines the visual/verbal sexual punning present in New Kingdom tomb scenes. Heinrich Schäfer also examines coded sexual imagery in *Principles of Egyptian Art* where he focuses on the sexual elements of an Old Kingdom funerary image of the noble Mereruka and his wife seated on a bed.

Stand-alone works on ancient Egyptian sexuality are rare and include Lise Manniche's book *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*, 1987. David O'Connor's article, "Eros in Egypt" from 2001, gives a popular but thorough short history of the subject beginning with the Old Kingdom and continuing through the New Kingdom. Lynn Meskell examines representations of sex and sexual life in the chapter "Love, Eroticism, and the Sexual Self," from *Private Life in New Kingdom Egypt* (1999) and Carolyn Graves-Brown devotes a chapter to sexuality entitled "Sexuality, art and religion" in *Dancing for Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt* (2010).

Procreation is often included with research on sexuality as it is difficult to distinguish the purposes of the sexual act for purely pleasurable or procreative purposes. Pregnancy and birth are addressed in Jaana Toivari-Viitala's *Women at Deir el-Medina. A Study of the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmen's Community during the Ramesside Period* (2001), Gay Robins' article "Women & children in peril: pregnancy, birth & infant mortality in ancient Egypt" (1994) and Robins' book *Women in Ancient Egypt* (1993).

royal settings, as well as private and public spheres. Although the relationship of the bed with the sexual act also exists in modern cultures, it is important to examine how the bed related to sex in ancient Egypt and not assume it was a signifier of the same concepts as today.

I have divided the material in this chapter into three categories: images of beds in royal settings, images of beds in non-royal settings, and the bed as it appears with reference to sexual life and procreation in New Kingdom literature. The physical evidence appears in both two-dimensional representations, such as tomb and temple decoration, and three-dimensional representations such as clay fertility figurines and model beds. The literary evidence comes primarily from love poetry but also from laundry lists.

Beds relating to sex occur in non-royal contexts. Certain types of fertility figurines of the New Kingdom often depict a nude woman lying on a bed with or without a child by her side or nursing at her breast. Geraldine Pinch discusses these figurines in *Votive Offerings to Hathor* and argues that they can be associated with the dangerous state of childbirth and the critical period shortly thereafter.[70] Since women did not give birth on beds but by squatting on birth bricks, the bed rather symbolizes the place of consummation and fertility and these positive associations (since fertility was successful with the birth of the depicted infant) may have protected the mother and child in this unpredictable and, possibly perilous, phase.

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[70] G. Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor*. (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1993), 220.

While rare, graphic images of sex occasionally emerge from the material record and often use the bed as an element of the setting. In the Turin Erotic Papyrus from Dynasty 19, a series of 12 vignettes depicts an older man (or men) with a young attractive female (or females) in various sexual positions and settings. In the center, a woman lies horizontally on a bed while she leans out to gesture towards a man who has fallen or lies on the ground. The nudity of the female (shown wearing only a hip girdle) implies a relationship to fertility figurines and the highly sexualized nature of their function, while the large phallus of the male accentuates his potency. The artistic technique of the work is skillful and the papyrus was probably made for a member of the elite.

Royal contexts use less explicit sexual imagery due to the implementation of decorum. Among these examples are relief cycles referred to by Egyptologists as divine birth imagery where the myth of the birth of the king is related. In the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahri, Amen-Re and Hatshepsut's mother, Queen Ahmose, are shown seated on a flat surface facing each other, which is raised up by two goddesses, Neith and Selket, who are seated on a bed.[71] Amen-Re holds the *ankh*, or symbol of life, to the nose of the queen and the accompanying hieroglyphs leave little doubt as to the meaning of the scene: this is the moment of conception and the bed is a visual indicator of the unseen sexual element of the moment. These same scenes appear in

[71] When a couple was depicted seated together in Egyptian art, they were shown facing the same direction with the woman located behind the male. This indicated that they were in actuality seated beside each other but couples were rarely shown facing each other.

other reigns, which attest to the significance of this cycle that appears as late as the Ptolemaic and Roman period.[72]

The literary record from Dynasty 19 preserves a genre unknown to earlier Egyptian literature. Love poetry, which probably derived from an oral tradition, expresses an ideal love between a man and woman and includes highly evocative sexual imagery. In these poems, the bed is a locus for sexual union. In one example, an anonymous man and woman have a dialogue concerning their love and how a river and crocodile separate the two lovers.[73] The young man crosses the river because of their love and orders someone to make up a bed for the consummation of their relationship. While notably idealized, this poetry produces an insight into the sexual uses of the bed where the visual and material records remain silent.

In this chapter, I will examine more closely the above examples as well as others that pertain to their genres. I will also compare these examples to those beds found in the material record. The close examination of these images of the bed related to sexuality and procreation will give a clearer picture of the Egyptians' attitudes toward the use of the bed as a symbol of fertility and birth and ultimately rebirth.

It is difficult to trace the history of sex in Egypt due to the rules of decorum governing the presentation of images. However, there are insights that can be gleaned from a variety of media such as literature, ostraca, and tomb and temple decoration.

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[72] The *mammisis*, or birth houses, of Graeco-Roman temples use this same cycle of scenes to represent a birth of a god to two divine parents. For more information on mamissis see François Daumas, *Les Mammisis des temples égyptiens* (Paris, Impr. Nationale, 1958).

[73] Michael Fox, *The Song of Songs and the ancient Egyptian love songs.* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 33.

The attitude of Egyptians towards sex must be teased out of these examples. Egyptologists have assumed that procreation was seen as the ultimate goal of the sexual act but with evidence of the use of birth control, there existed a concept of sex without procreative purposes.[74]

It appears that individuals were not classified based on their sexual preference. The act was seen as something that the person engaged in, and not a defining trait. Sex was commonly seen as an act between a man and woman, which often led to reproduction. Even if procreation was seen as a positive force that contributed to the stabilizing force of *maat,* sex was probably also enjoyed for its purely pleasurable aspects. Marriage consisted of a couple setting up house together and the concept of adultery centered on doubt concerning the legitimacy of children rather than a moral obligation to the marriage bonds.

Little documentation can be found which addresses such subjects as necrophilia, prostitution, polygamy, pedophilia, and sex with animals which current scholarship considers would have been aberrations within the Egyptian worldview. Evidence for this view can be found by the use of these subjects as insults, such as "May a donkey copulate with your wife and children" or the virtue of not committing a homosexual act mentioned in the Book of the Dead.[75] Reproduction could not be achieved through any of these sexual acts, possibly making them products of chaos.

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[74] For evidence for birth control see Dorothea Cole, "Obstetrics for the women of ancient Egypt," *Discussions in Egyptology* 5, (1986): 27-33.

[75] Lise Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 22 -28.

For the Egyptians, the concept of fertility was an integral part of their lives and their gods' lives as well. The fertility of the land, as well as the population, was a crucial factor in the successful continuation of *maat*, and fertility was inherent in many aspects of the culture. Fertility is an aspect of sexuality and procreation that is difficult to isolate but was prominent in the Egyptian worldview. The Egyptians clearly understood that some couples could conceive while others could not or had difficulties. The man was considered to be partly responsible for this inability rather than placing all blame on the woman, yet a woman could be divorced for her inability to reproduce. The desire for successful procreation was strong. Much of the non-royal evidence relating to sexuality, fertility, and procreation can be found in the New Kingdom settlements of Deir el-Medina and Amarna.

In the modern western world, the bed is seen as a location where sexual activity takes place, yet the private nature of the act makes it difficult to know how the bed is used in such activities. For modern Egyptologists, it is difficult not to transfer this assumption to examination of the Egyptian past. Therefore, one must favor the primary texts and material culture in an attempt to pull away from the modern preconceived notions of the use of the bed in regards to sexual activity.

It is clear that not all Egyptians had access to or could afford to own a bed so therefore, more often than not, sex occurred outside of a bed.[76] There are only a handful of visual and literary accounts that actually place the sexual act on a bed. With most people sharing small living spaces, sex most likely occurred when the opportunity

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[76] See Chapter 2.

presented itself.[77] Sex was not primarily designated to any one area of domestic space, like the bedroom of modern times, but the association of sex with the bed becomes apparent after a review of the evidence.

The act of birth did not occur on a bed but rather with the woman squatting on birth bricks.[78] However, there are a number of images depicting a woman seated on a bed with a child at her side (which have been referred to as part of a "Wochenlaube" scene). These "Wochenlaube" scenes typically depicted a woman seated on a bed with a child lying next to her.[79] These scenes have been directly connected to the birth of a child although they do not show the actual birth. Decorum appears again with birth scenes of which there exist almost none, although the determinative of *msj*, "to give birth," depicts a woman giving birth.[80] The bed seems integral to the liminal phase post-birth, where the life of the mother and child were under threat from various factors.

II. Images of the bed in a non-royal contexts

Many of the images and objects in this section come from a domestic context. For the New Kingdom, this inevitably leads us to Deir el-Medina and Amarna, two very unusual sites that might not always accurately reflect the material culture of the larger

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[77] This would have been true in many cultures up until modern times.

[78] For more information on this subject see Josef Wegner, "A Decorated Birth Brick from South Abydos: New Evidence on Childbirth and Birth Magic in the Middle Kingdom," in *Archaism and Innovation: Studies in the Culture of Middle Kingdom Egypt*, ed. David P. Silverman, William Kelly Simpson, and Josef Wegner (New Haven: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Yale University; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2009) 447-496

[79] E. Brunner-Taut, "Die Wochenlaube," *Mitteilungen des Institutes für Orientforschung* 3 (1955): 11-33.

[80] The division between hieroglyphs and larger images is discussed in Chapter 1.

landscape.[81] However, the examples are rich and numerous and give a closer understanding of the Egyptians' attitudes towards sex and procreation in these communities. The range of images is also greater than those in a royal setting: artisans of these communities would craft objects or trade their skills to provide for their own houses and tombs, working outside the official rules of decorum. In the following section, I will cover various images and objects that incorporate the bed within this setting: fertility figurines, model beds, ostraca, and papyri.

One of the most prevalent three-dimensional representations of the bed comes from a set of objects commonly known by scholars as fertility figurines. Certain categories of these figurines depict a nude woman lying on a bed with or without a child by her side or nursing at her breast (Figure 3.1). These figures were often executed in clay but could also be made of wood, faience, or stone, and have been found in temple and tomb contexts as well as in settlements. There are many theories concerning the function of these figurines, which range from their use as toys, concubine figures (providing the tomb owner with a suitable sexual partner in the afterlife), or dolls.[82] Pinch convincingly argues that these objects were connected to fertility and therefore labels them fertility figurines.[83] This term has remained the

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[81] These sites were created for specific purposes: Deir el-Medina as a settlement for artists and Amarna for Akhenaten's capital city.

[82] E. Waraksa, *Female Figurines from the Mut Precinct: context and ritual function* (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 1.

[83] G. Pinch, "Childbirth and Female Figurines at Deir el-Medina and el-"Amarna," *Orientalia* 52 (1983): 405.

primary designation for these objects in recent years, although new scholarship suggests a broader use of these objects.[84]

The beds of these figures are rather rudimentary in their construction, but sometimes have a footboard and stumps indicating bed legs. Longer legs on these beds would have been impractical because they could easily be broken off, and many do not have any legs at all (Pinch refers to them as slabs). The clay examples were sometimes painted in polychrome, and the level of detail varies with some figurines displaying great attention to the full wigs and facial features while others appear simple in execution. The female figure on the bed is often depicted nude with emphasis placed on her breasts and pubic region with painted details. These figurines vary in size and average around 20 cm in length and have been discovered in both private and public contexts from domestic locations to temple environments.[85] They have also been found within a funerary context, which prompted their earlier classification as sexual partners for the tomb owners.[86]

In Pinch's classifications of the different types of fertility figurines, types 6b and 6c depict "figures attached to beds and slabs" and "figures with children attached to beds and slabs."[87] The function of these figures has been examined by looking at context, and these two types do not seem to have a separate use from other types of

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[84] For a new theory see Waraksa, *Female Figurines*.

[85] Waraksa, *Female Figurines,* 25.

[86] E. Waraksa, "Female Figurines (Pharaonic Period)" In Willeke Wendrich (ed.), UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, Los Angeles, 2008. http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4dg0d57b, 4.

[87] Pinch, *Votive Offerings,* 225.

fertility figurines. In "Dress, Undress, and the Representation of Fertility and Potency in New Kingdom Egyptian Art," Gay Robins examines the funerary and domestic realms in which these figures were discovered. Previous scholarship proposed these figures to be "concubines of the dead" but Robins proposes that these figures, some shown with small children at their side, "represent the concept of fertility necessary to produce the desired offspring" and that, in funerary terms, "their purpose was to help the deceased, male or female, to be reborn into the afterlife."[88] With the images of mother and child, these figures can be associated with the dangerous state of childbirth and the uncertain period of survival shortly thereafter. Since women did not give birth on beds but by squatting on birth bricks, the bed rather symbolizes the place of consummation and fertility and these positive associations (since fertility was successful with the birth of the depicted infant) may have protected the mother and child in this unpredictable and possibly perilous phase.[89] Clues concerning the use of fertility figurines can be found by examining their contexts. A connection between these figurines, the gods Bes and Taweret, and the image of the bed are intricately woven in the material culture of the domestic realm. Many of these figures were found near altars in the central room of houses in the Workmen's Village at Amarna. Similarly related structures (possibly altars) were discovered in the front room of the houses of the site of Deir el Medina. Images of the gods Bes and Taweret have been

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[88] G. Robins, "Dress, Undress and the Representation of Fertility and Potency in New Kingdom Egyptian Art," in *Sexuality in Ancient Ar*t, ed. N. Kampen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 30.

[89] G. Robins, "The Significance of Beds in Ancient Egypt," unpublished talk, Annual Meeting of the American Research Center, Baltimore, 2002 and *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 83.

linked to these domestic structures along with images of females with children. In House 49.21 at Amarna, a group of objects was discovered which further illustrates these connections (Fig. 3.2). The objects were found together in a cabinet under a staircase and consist of a female figurine, two model beds, and a small stela with a woman and boy worshipping Taweret. The female figurine and model beds were mass-produced and Anne Capel states, "since the discovery of these objects, scholars have interpreted the niche, dais, and objects from the House N.49.21 as the focus of domestic prayer and worship."[90] It has been debated whether the staircase, which these objects were located under, was part of the altar in the central room or the main staircase leading to the roof.[91] Either way, this constellation of objects points to a domestic focus for the successful fertility of women.

A fertility figure on a bed in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, (MFA 72.739) has the unusual distinction of containing painted images on the footboard (Fig. 3.3).[92] The female figure is placed off center and it is probable that an image of a child was painted at her side but is now missing. Sue D'Auria has identified the figures on the left of the footboard as that of Taweret with the *sa* symbol and a possible Bes figure with a tambourine. Another image is located under the female's head between the two front legs. It is in poor condition but D'auria reconstructs it to be that of a seated

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[90] For the catalogue entry for these objects see A. Capel, and G. Markoe, eds. *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996), 66-67.

[91] Anna Stevens, "The Material Evidence for Domestic Religion at Amarna and Preliminary Remarks on Its Interpretation," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 89 (2003): 153.

[92] The provenance of this piece is unknown. Sue, D'Auria et al, ed. *Mummies and Magic: the Funerary Arts of Ancient Egypt* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1988), 37.

woman with a mirror and possibly applying kohl. In this object, we have a combination of the images of the fertility figure and the bed with the decorative motifs found on the beds in elite and royal burials.

Iconographically, beds have an important link to the images of women and fertility and these images remain relevant in a domestic context even when there is a shift in religious practices, as in the Amarna period. Along with the elements of the bed, nude female, and child, fertility figurines sometimes had toiletry items, clothing, and details of the bed added to the figurines. In some instances, two painted snakes are depicted on the flat surface of the bed, with each one appearing along each side of the female figure. On a large fertility figurine in the Louvre (E 11764) two snakes are shown along with a kohl pot, makeup applicator, and mirror under the bed(Fig. 3.4). These snakes are shown in the "Wochenlaube" ostraca scenes, with one depicted along the side of the bed. It has been suggested these snakes represent the *ḫrḥt* serpent, which was a guardian of fertility.[93] Snakes play an important protective role in many books of the netherworld so their presence on the bed would be appropriate for the mother and child.

Elizabeth Waraksa has linked fertility figurines to a broader magico-medical use with the support of texts indicating they were used for certain rites, broken, and then discarded. Waraksa states, "Magical spells calling for female figures of clay and wood reveal that such objects were ritually manipulated in rites to repel venomous creatures

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[93] Pinch, "Childbirth," 406.

and heal stomachaches."[94] This broader range of use leads Waraksa to call these figurines, "female figurines" in her research rather than placing emphasis on a link to fertility.

Another category of object related to the bed found in a non-royal setting is the model bed. Model beds are often linked to fertility figurines as they are sometimes found together within an archaeological context such as the objects discussed previously from House 49.21 at Amarna. Model beds may have had a similar function to the fertility figurines on beds but may have had additional functions as well. It is unclear if specific model beds were produced to accompany fertility figurines. They have certainly been discovered near each other in the same locations (such as at Amarna and at Deir el-Medina) but individually could have carried their own meaning. Model beds begin to appear in the material culture around the beginning of the New Kingdom and different types have been discovered ranging from very simple clay examples to miniature wooden pieces that have strung mattress areas.[95]

Due to their similarity to fertility figurines, model beds probably held a votive function that was strongly connected to the concept of fertility. Clay examples of model beds have been found in the Workmen's Village of Amarna where Barry Kemp has created a map of the various find spots of both these beds and fertility figurines

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[94] UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology. "Fertility Figurines (Pharaonic Period)," accessed September 18, 2012, http://escholarship.org/uc/item/4dg0d57b.

[95] However, there is an example of a model/small bed (Petrie Museum, UC16139) found at Hawara from the Middle Kingdom. http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/detail.aspx?parentpriref=.

(Fig. 3.5).[96] At this site, these objects were found primarily in the village and rubbish deposits outside the town and not within the chapel area. Their votive use was most likely within a domestic context as the gods that were depicted on these beds were usually Taweret and Bes. In a north suburb house at Amarna, T.35.9, a small group of finds were discovered along with a pottery model of a bed (UC 46891) (Fig. 3.6).[97] No fertility figurine was found at the site, but a small figure of Bes was present. The bed is approximately 14 cm in length with painted details. The horizontal portion of the bed is decorated with a crisscross pattern of red lines with black and yellow circles. This may indicate the surface of a woven bed. The bed has one short circular leg located at one end of the footboard; the others have been lost. The most interesting detail is the outside of the footboard, which is painted with two figures. According to the description from the Petrie museum, it would appear to be two images of Bes but I believe the image on the left is the standard profile image of the goddess Taweret with a frontal image of the god Bes in the center. The right portion of the footboard is now missing. Obvious comparisons can be made to the MFA fertility figurine (MFA 72.739), discussed above, which has depictions of Taweret and Bes on the footboard as well. The decorative program of the bed stays consistent between the beds of fertility figurines and the stand-alone model beds.

Ceramic model beds make up the majority of this category of object. They are often sculpted in a basic fashion but have details such as paint or incised lines to

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[96] Barry Kemp, "How Religious were the ancient Egyptians?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 5:1 (1995): 29-32.

[97] See Petrie Museum online database, http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/detail.aspx?parentpriref=

indicate the webbing or coverlet of the bed (Fig. 3.7). Other ceramic beds sometimes have female figurines on top but the difference between these objects and the fertility figurines with beds as described by Pinch (Category 6b and 6c) is the emphasis placed on the bed with the figure shown in a relatively diminutive size. One such object from the Petrie Museum (UC 8656) could possibly be a combination object: the bed has a very high footboard and all legs are articulated, while the female figure is small and has a child at her side (Fig. 3.8). This piece essentially would be the equivalent of a separate fertility figurine placed on a bed, with more importance placed on the bed rather than just rendering it to look like a "slab."

Another category of model beds places emphasis on the decorative and sculptural elements and renders them in a truly "miniature" style of furniture. An example found in two-room Pit 1370 of Deir el-Medina had three small furniture pieces, a bed, a headrest, and stool, along with a full-size bed described as a "lit angareb" or a bed made in a similar style to those of the modern Sudanese.[98] The model bed is .075m long and .06 m high, made of sculpted wood, and is painted in black and white (Fig. 3.9). This bed has a direct design correlation to a full-size bed discovered in the tomb of Yuya and Tjuyu in the Valley of the Kings (Fig. 2.). The black and white decoration of the footboard and the painted white webbing of the Yuya and Tjuyu bed may have been the actual bed on which the model bed was modeled. The craftsmen of the bed may have wanted to take their own more elaborate and prestigious piece of furniture with them into the afterlife along with the very basic full-

[98] Bernard Bruyère and Gaston Jourdain, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir El Médineh (1934-1935)* (Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1939), 150.

size bed they may have used on an everyday basis. Another model bed in the Louvre even more closely resembles the same bed from Yuya and Tjuyu's tomb (N 880)(Fig. 3.10). The bed has a more detailed footboard and an open mattress surface with strung webbing. It is unclear if the design of the Yuya and Tjuyu bed was unique or a popular design for the time, but the miniature beds modeled on the same bed show a desire by the inhabitants of Deir el-Medina to have their own version for eternity.

Ostraca give another informal view of the bed as used in a non-royal context. Ostraca were pieces of pottery or limestone chips, which were used in place of expensive papyrus to record various forms of information or images. They were used for many purposes including artists' sketches, financial transactions, graffiti, and literary texts. Many were found at the site of Deir el-Medina and the Valley of the Kings. Figural illustrations were also common and artists used them for practice before executing the final designs on tomb walls. Ostraca were also designed to be finished pieces. The bed appears on ostraca in different compositions but most are related to each other: the *Wochenlaube,* or bed arbor scenes, female fertility scenes (which are related to the *Wochenlaube* scenes but contain less elements), and scenes related to the sexual act.

The majority of bed representations come from ostraca that depict *Wochenlaube* scenes. This term was coined by Emma Brunner-Traut in the 1950's and refers to scenes, which depict a mother and child on a bed in a possible "birth arbor" with various attendants and objects.[99] The female is often in the central position of the scene

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[99] Brunner-Traut, "Die Wochenlaube," 11-30.

and depicted clothed with jewelry and a full or tripartite wig. The child is shown nursing or lying on the bed beside the mother. The bed is elaborately decorated with legs in the shape of Bes and a snake painted along the horizontal edge of the bed. Other elements include convolvulus vines above and around the bed and attendants waiting on the main female figure. Cosmetic items such as mirrors and kohl pots can also appear under or near the bed.

Whether the woman gave birth in this environment is unclear. Evidence for women giving birth by squatting on the floor or on birth bricks is known but when exactly in this process did this "birth arbor" come into use? Was it part of the area where the mother and child stayed separated from the rest of the family and recovered after childbirth? Brunner-Traut hypothesizes that these birth arbors were temporary structures set up in an outdoor area on the roof or in a garden.[100] The bed, however, was probably not used for the actual moment of childbirth. The depicted beds are unlike most beds discovered from this time in that they have bed legs in the shape of the god Bes rather than the legs of a lion. There are examples of bed legs in the shape of Bes but they are often later in date than the New Kingdom.[101] There is textual evidence for the existence of so-called "women's beds" which are included in financial records from Deir el-Medina, but it is also unclear if these were a different category of object than the beds of everyday use.[102]

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[100] Brunner-Traut, "Die Wochenlaube," 12.

[101] Also, bed legs in the shape of Bes may never have existed during the New Kingdom.

[102] See Chapter 2.

The ostraca of Deir el-Medina were excavated by the French and published by Jeanne Vandier d'Abbadie in four volumes.[103] Today, these ostraca reside in various museum collections throughout the world. Vandier d'Abbadie assigned numbers to these pieces and I will use these for identification. There are a large number of Wochenlaube scenes in various states of preservation but I will focus on a few examples in order to highlight the characteristics of these type of scenes.

Although Ostraca 2340 is only a fragment, the elements of a Wochenlaube scene are clear (Fig. 3.11). The left side of the bed is shown with a portion of the footboard. The bed legs are in the form of two frontal images of the god Bes. A child can be seen lying on the mattress and the lower portion of the attendant's body can be seen standing behind the bed. Part of the wig and lower back of the central seated female figure is shown as well as the image of a snake along the horizontal edge of the bed. The colors of the different elements of the scene are clear in an example in the Louvre Ostraca 2347 (Fig. 3.12) (Louvre E 14336). Normally, Egyptian adult males and male children were painted the color red. The child in *Wochenlaube* scenes was commonly painted red which could indicate it was male.[104] However, the adult female figures of fertility figurines were also red in color. What was the significance of the females painted in red? Red was the color of virility. It is possible that the artist chose this color for this

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[103] J. Vandier d'Abbadie, *Cataloge Des Ostraca Figurés de Deir el Médineh* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1959).

[104] Some children are shown with erect penises.

context in order to emphasize the fertility of the female and even unseen male in the procreation of the child.[105]

Ostracon 2337 is currently in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo and is an almost complete example of a *Wochenlaube* scene. The woman and child appear on the bed with a male child placed behind (or rather beside) the woman. The woman is dressed in a long gown and wears a full wig with a scented cone of wax. Floral garlands hang from above and a kohl pot, mirror, and a possible ointment jar appear under the bed. The bed has the characteristic Bes legs and snake along the horizontal edge.

An ostracon from the Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm (MM 14 005) is well-drawn and depicts a woman nursing a child seated on her lap (Fig. 3.13).[106] The bed has floral garlands between the legs, indicating just how elaborate these beds could be. Poles extend upward from the horizontal surface of the bed, indicating the existence of some sort of canopy structure. A mirror appears outside of the bed/arbor on the left. The detail given to the execution of this piece suggests significant time was allotted to its production.

Other ostraca depict the bed but stand outside what is commonly considered to be *Wochenlaube* scenes. Ostraca 2345 depicts a female lying on a bed within a structure similar to the birth arbor (Fig. 3.14). Gone are the child, garlands, and attendants but the bed, a mirror, and a kohl pot are present. The female figure wears a

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[105] Waraksa notes that red is also the color of chaos which supports her theory of the use of three-dimensional figurines in magico-medical rituals. See Waraksa, *Female Figurines*, 61-65.

[106] *Medelhavsmuseet-En Introduktion*, (Stockholm: Medelhavsmuseet, 1982), 66-67 and G. Pinch, "Childbirth," 406-408.

long gown but its diaphanous quality places emphasis on her body underneath including her pubic region. She raises her hand to adjust or stabilize her wig, an accessory which often had sexual connotations.[107] This ostracon would appear to be a two-dimensional version of three-dimensional fertility figurines, which even depict mirrors and kohl pots underneath the bed.

The bed also makes an appearance in a sexually graphic ostracon that is currently held in a private collection (Fig. 3.15).[108] The sexual act depicted is unclear but the presence of a male with exaggerated genitalia, a female, and two other figures can be deciphered. The unknown figure on the left is seated on a bed with animal legs, probably lion legs, and gestures toward the sexual act. The presence of the bed, in this ostracon and those of the *Wochenlaube* scenes, indicates its role as a symbol of the sexual act—a location where the elements of fertility and the physical act of sex combine.

In papyri, the image of the bed can also point to a sexual function. Two unusual examples illustrate the range of sexual contexts of the bed. The first is a papyrus in the British Museum, which depicts animals in the roles of humans in various activities. The second is the Turin Erotic Papyrus, a unique example of a set of sexual images whose meaning has been debated since its discovery. While initially these two papyri might seem unrelated, there is a section of the Turin Papyrus, which also depicts animals in human roles, linking the two papyri. The bed figures into the composition of

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[107] For more on the sexual significance of the wig see P. Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 2, (1975): 55-74.

[108] Manniche, *Sexual Life*, 19.

both and some scholars speculate that the satirical nature of the animal scenes is reflected in the sexually explicit scenes.

A papyrus in the British Museum (EA 10016) is a famous example of human-animal inversion. With the largest fragment around 9 x 54.5 cm, the papyrus is well-preserved in two major sections and is humorous to viewers today (Fig. 3.16).[109] Beginning from the left, a partial figure of a wolf or cat is shown standing upright like a human. Next, a crow is depicted standing near a bowl of fruit. Following this is an image of a gazelle and lion seated on low stools across from each other playing the board game of *senet*. The lion's mouth is open as he and the gazelle both hold *senet* pieces in their paw/hoof. Next, a pair of foxes herd goats (rather than hunting them) and a cat herds ducks. Lastly, the lion reappears (or maybe another lion) and he is shown having sex with what appears to be the same gazelle of the *senet* game on a bed.[110]

The Deir el-Medina workmen, who crafted the images of the Theban tombs, understood quite well the subtleties and signifiers behind the images they created for the elite. They were then able to take these images and turn them around: first, by placing animals in the roles of humans, and secondly, by placing predatory animals in subservient or protective roles (the herding scenes). Houlihan likens the use of satire as a "a possible growing cynicism resulting from the disorder that Egyptian society

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[109] I will focus on the most popular section of the two.

[110] Houlihan states this is a donkey instead of a gazelle. P. Houlihan, *Wit and Humour in Ancient Egypt* (London: Rubicon, 2001), 66.

experienced at the close of Dynasty XX."[111] These satirical animal images originate almost entirely in Thebes, and Deir el-Medina in particular. Scholars such as Brunner-Traut have suggested these images belong to an oral tradition of animal fables but there has been little evidence to support this.[112]

The sexual nature of this papyrus has been long denied with various authors indicating (or repeating) that the scene was one of mummification.[113] The lion is, however, clearly shown in a sexual act with the gazelle on the bed—the full length of the lion's penis is shown penetrating the gazelle.

Turin Papyrus 55001 consists of two sections: the first third contains scenes of animals in human activities (Fig. 3.17) while the remaining two-thirds of the papyrus depict images of a sexually graphic nature (Fig. 3.18). The erotic section is a series of 12 vignettes, read from right to left, that depicts an older man (or men) with a young attractive female (or females) in various sexual positions and settings. In the center, a woman lies horizontally on a bed while she leans out to gesture towards a man who has fallen or lies on the ground. The nudity of the female (shown wearing only a hip girdle) implies her relationship to fertility figurines and the highly sexualized nature of their function, while the large phallus of the male accentuates his potency. The artistic technique of the work is skillful and the papyrus was probably made for a member of the elite.

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[111] P. Houlihan, *Wit and Humour*, 102.

[112] E. Brunner-Traut, *Egyptian artists' sketches: figured ostraka from the Gayer-Anderson Collection in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Leiden : Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1979): 11-18.

[113] TGH James, *Egyptian Painting* (London: British Museum Publications, 1985), 61, and repeated by David O'Connor, "Eros in Egypt," *Archaeology Odyssey* September/October (2001): 45.

When this papyrus first appeared in the collection of Turin in the early nineteenth century, images of such a sexual nature were considered startling by many people. Jean-François Champollion wrote to his brother in November 1824: "Ici un morceau du rituel funéraire,... et là des débris de peintures d'une obscénité monstrueuse et qui me donnent une bien singulière idée de la gravité et de la sagesse égyptienne..."[114] There are various references to the papyrus throughout the history of Egyptology where it is often referred to as the satirical-erotic papyrus. The first complete publication of this papyrus did not appear until 1973 and, even then, the sexual acts were described in Latin.[115] Today, the papyrus is on view in the Museo Egitto in Turin, but only the satirical portion is accompanied by an explanatory label for visitors.

Many scholars have speculated on the meaning of the papyrus. In the final section of her book, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*, Manniche imagines an artist taking his reed to papyrus:

> First he drew illustrations to the animal tales he knew. When he had finished, he drew a vertical line from top to bottom of the scroll and started on another subject. The illustrations to a new story which went around town? Or perhaps it was true what they said, it was something which really happened? Perhaps the characters were real people to whom he might have given names if he had wanted to?[116]

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[114] J. Champolion, *Lettres de Champollion le jeune.* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1909), 85-86.

[115] Omlin creates a list of citations where the papyrus is mentioned in the scholarship. Joseph Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001 und seine satirisch-erotischen Zeichnungen und Inschriften* (Torino: Edizioni d'arte fratelli Pozzo, 1973), 21-26.

[116] Manniche, *Sexual Life,* 106.

The nature of the papyrus does seem to lend itself to all sorts of imaginings and although the above quotation seems quite fanciful, Manniche makes it clear that the motives behind the creation of the papyrus are difficult to ascertain. Manniche describes various suggested interpretations but goes on to conclude that with the combination of the acts and the setting with a bed and various cushions scattered around, that the erotic section is a behind-the-scenes view of a brothel.[117] Meskell defends a more satirical reading, understanding the images in a similar vein as the satirical animal portion of the papyrus.[118] The topsy-turvy world of satire would make these images a possible graphic interpretation of the New Kingdom literature of love poetry where love and sexual acts are idealized through sensual image and metaphor.

The bed plays a central part in the papyrus, both literally and figuratively. The vignette with the bed stands at approximately the half-way point of the erotic scenes and breaks the primarily vertical scenes with its horizontal composition. These actions were probably thought to be in a domestic context, as beds were often kept in and around houses, but any connection made to an actual place is not present. The bed appears to be in a kiosk (reminding one of the birth arbor scenes) and the older man is stretched out on the ground underneath the bed. The impotent man is a well-known subject of ridicule throughout history. The man in the bed scene seems to have an erect phallus but the accompanying text appears negative:

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[117] L. Manniche, *Sexual Life,* 107. Manniche mentions the possibilities of a satire of a Hathoric singer/dancer and a priest of Amun or the various sexual activities of the gods.

[118] L. Meskell, *Object Worlds in Ancient Egypt: Material Biographies Past and Present*. (Oxford and New York: Berg Publishers, 2004), 168-174.

She states: 'Leave my bed alone, and I'll…semen(?) at me(?).'

He states: 'My big phallus…which suffers…inside.'[119]

In the next scene, labeled number seven by Omlin, the man's phallus is extremely long but limp, indicating impotence.

III. Images of the bed in royal contexts

The bed appears in sexual contexts in royal settings, primarily in temples. Mostly, it occurs in the cycle of scenes known as divine birth imagery, which appear during Dynasties 18 and 19. There is also evidence of beds appearing in the tombs and temples of the Amarna period. There is little evidence for graphic images of sex within a royal context with an exception being the scenes of the conception of Horus by Isis and Osiris in the temple of Seti I at Abydos. However, I have decided to discuss this particular scene in the funerary contexts considered in chapter five, citing it here briefly due to its equally important sexual nature.

In the New Kingdom, there are three surviving examples of a relief cycle referred to by Egyptologists as divine birth imagery where the myth of the birth of the king is related. The earliest evidence for this cycle of reliefs is found in the New Kingdom beginning with the reign of Hatshepsut. The cycle of Amenhotep III and remains of a cycle from Ramses II are also known. There may possibly have been visual precedents to these New Kingdom examples, but there are only faint hints of this.[120] The cycle appears remains mostly unchanged until the Ptolemaic period.[121]

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[119] L. Manniche, *Sexual Life*, 110.

[120] David O'Connor examines the chapel of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II at Dendera in his article "The Dendereh chapel of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep: a new perspective" in Anthony Leahy and John Tait (eds),

The most complete extant cycles are those of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III. There are differences particularly at the beginning but generally both cycles are comprised of fifteen scenes, beginning with Amen-Re announcing his intentions to impregnate the reigning queen. He appears to the queen in the form of her husband, the reigning pharaoh. However, she realizes this is the god and he impregnates her with the next pharaoh. Amen-Re then speaks to the god Khnum who models the bodies of the king and the king's *ka* on the potter's wheel. Thoth announces the impending birth and the pregnant queen is led to the birthing chamber.[122] The queen gives birth and the goddess Hathor presents the child to Amen-Re. The final scenes show the presentation of the child and the *ka* to various gods.

There are three scenes that feature the bed in the cycle. The first and probably best known is the image of the conception of the king, followed by the birth of the king, and finally the nursing of the king.

1. The conception of the king

In the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahri, Amen-Re and Hatshepsut's mother, Queen Ahmose, are shown seated on a flat surface facing each other, which is raised up by two goddesses, Neith and Selket, who are seated on a bed with two lion heads at

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Studies on Ancient Egypt in honour of H.S. Smith (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1999): 215-220. He states there is an early indication of the divine birth with the king and Hathor.

[121] The *mammisis*, or birth houses, of Graeco-Roman temples use this same cycle of scenes to represent a birth of a god to two divine parents.

[122] One of the only instances where a pregnant woman is depicted in royal art (outside of hieroglyphs).

either end (Fig. 3.19).[123] Amen-Re holds the *ankh*, or symbol of life, to the nose of the queen. The same scene is present in the cycle of Amenhotep III at Luxor temple with only a few differences (Fig. 3.20). The bed no longer has the lion-heads, the queen appears on the left instead of the right, and the surface on which the queen and Amen-Re sit is the *pt* hieroglyph, the Egyptian word for "sky". Otherwise, the scene is almost identical to Hatshepsut's. The accompanying hieroglyphs in both examples leave little doubt as to the meaning of the scene:[124]

> Words spoken […] his mother […] a great, good and pure hecatomb. The person of this god became excited (?) for very love of her […] this god [desired to meet with kings's] mother Mutemwia. He was given entry to the palace-dweller, face to face, nose to nose, having changed into the shape [of her husband, while] she [was] exulting (?) […] a great […] which all people desire, and Amun went to impregnate her.[125]

These two consummation scenes are in a poor state of preservation but a reused block from the Ramesseum now located at Medinet Habu is in quite good condition. It is positioned upside down in the wall of a Ptolemaic temple within the complex.[126] Amen-Re and Queen Tuya, the mother of Ramesses II, are seated on the bed with their legs overlapping (Fig. 3.21). The heads of the goddesses seated beneath are also extant.

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[123] When a couple was depicted seated together in Egyptian art, they were shown facing the same direction with the woman located behind the male. This indicated that they were in actuality seated beside each other but couples were rarely shown facing each other.

[124] Translations of this passage were initially censored, with Latin used as the language of the offending section. Breasted's translation: "He went to her immediately, *coivit cum ea*, he imposed his desire upon her, he caused that she should see him in his form of a god." James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earlist Times to the Persian Conquest.* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), 80-81.

[125] W. Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt* (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1995), 22.

[126] Found in the south wall.

Gaballa has found the head of Amen-Re reused in a different section of the same wall and it is hoped that maybe other scenes of this cycle will appear in the future.[127]

This scene, generally seen as the fourth in the cycle, is the moment of conception. The rules of decorum eliminate any graphic depiction of the sexual act so the artists have had to be subtle in the portrayal of this crucial moment. Therefore, the bed becomes a visual indicator of the unseen sexual element of the scene. Although the language does not shy away from describing the sexual act, the corresponding image is coded with the sign of the bed, which would have read as sex and rebirth to the ancient Egyptian.

2. The birth of the king

The birth of the king appears later in the cycle and is almost complete (though currently difficult to see) at both Deir el-Bahari and Luxor Temple (Figs. 3.22). Again, the scenes are almost identical. However, in the Luxor scenes the queen seems to be in labor, seated on a chair or throne on a seemingly two-tiered bed. Two goddesses are shown supporting her arms while the Deir el-Bahari scenes depict the newborn king (Hatshepsut) in the arms of the king's mother.[128] The gods Bes and Taweret appear under the bed on the lower right side.[129] While not often portrayed in a royal context, their presence is essential to the iconography of birth. The text located to the right of Bes may have been chapter 137 of the Book of the Dead (only partially preserved),

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[127] G. Gaballa, "New Evidence on the Birth of Pharaoh," *Orientalia* 36 (1967): 299-304.

[128] E. Naville, *The Temple of Deir El Bahari,* II. (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1896),

[129] The deities of the four cardinal points are present. The crocodile-headed and human gods represented the east and west, covering all directions.

which is a spell for lighting four torches to protect the body of the dead (or in this case, the living).[130] The protective nature of light near the bed can be seen in a scene from the Theban tomb of Sennefer (TT 99) where a lamp and the god Bes stand next to a bed being prepared by a servant (Fig. 3.23).

3. Nursing the king

The nursing scene appears in Scene XII of the cycle and also features a bed as a location for the newly born king (Fig. 3.24). The bed is different from those in scenes IV and IX and features friezes of *tyet* symbols. In the Deir el-Bahari example, there is a double lion-head on each end with one lion-head turned to face the opposite direction. The perspective of the bed does not seem to be the same as scenes with the conception and birth but does appear to be two-tiered as the bed in the birth scene. There are as many as thirteen children shown in the scene and these have been interpreted as the king and all of his/her *ka* spirits. Two of the children are being nursed on the bed while two are nursed underneath by Hathor cows.

Temple A in the Mut Precinct of Karnak holds evidence of a nursing scene from the divine birth cycle. The dating of the temple is unclear due to various building phases but the birth scenes have been assigned to the reigns of Shabako and Taharqa.[131] I have decided to include the images here due to their continuity with earlier cycles. Only the bottom portion of the divine birth scenes are still extent, with possible

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[130] R. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Publications, 1985): 127-132.

[131] Brooklyn museum: http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/features/mut/

additional scenes added to the birth scene repertoire established by Brunner.[132] Parts of a bed from a nursing scene are in good condition with traces of color (blue mane and gold skin of the lion (Fig. 3.25). There are also scenes of circumcision and evidence for images of Bes, Taweret, and a protective lion (similar to actual footboards on beds) found in an adjoining room of the same temple.[133] The constellation of these images could indicate a birth chamber of the temple or a structure closer to a *mammisi* in function.

The most interesting aspect of all of these scenes is the lack of functionality of the bed. Compositionally, the bed serves as the location for sex, birth, and nursing so the bed becomes the place for the consummation, birth, and nursing of the divine child. While sex probably occurred on beds, birth was usually in a chair or while squatting on birth bricks. In the birthing scene, the queen is even shown in a chair placed on top of a bed during labor or holding the king shortly thereafter. This configuration was highly unlikely, so what is the bed's function in this scene? It separates the divine event from the terrestrial world, by visually taking the players and their actions and putting them on a different plane. In scene IV from Luxor temple, the god and queen are lifted up by two goddesses seated on a bed but the consummating couple are actually resting on the horizontal *pt* glyph, which is Egyptian for "sky," indicating that this event takes place in the sky, with all of its divine elements and connotations.

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[132] Gaballa adds this scene to the other examples in his article, G.A. Gaballa, "New Evidence on the Birth of Pharaoh" *Orientalia* 36 (1967): 299-304.

[133] Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings. II. Theban Temples.* (Second Edition Revised and Augmented, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1972), 272.

The double-headed bed is worth noting. The convention for the depiction of the lion-headed bed had been established by the reign of Hatshepsut with the head of the lion often located on the right with the feet of the bed pointed in the same direction. At times, there was a footboard on the left with a lion's tail. However, in these scenes, both ends of the bed depict a lion-head and no tail or footboard is shown. As in the case of the birth scene, two lion-heads are shown overlapping each other on both sides of the bed. It is unclear if the artists meant to depict the bed from various perspectives, such as a bird's eye view, with regards to the nursing scene, but either way, the doubling of lion-heads on the bed possibly indicate even more protection from all angles.

Lana Troy notes the use of the *šwty*-crown by Mutemwia in the consummation scene of Luxor temple. Both the queen and Amen-Re wear this crown, visually mirroring one another in the scene. Troy states, "The two feathers, as the iconographic emblem of the queenship, moves in the same referential realm as the images of the vulture and cobra. They represent feminine duality and, in a more abstract sense, the power of transformation. The close association between the feather motif and the special role played by the horizons in the process of renewal is reflected in the position this image holds in the complex of solar imagery."[134] The appearance of the double lion-head could be to emphasize this aspect of the queen who is on the bed in each scene when the bed is present. The lion-heads can represent the lions of the horizon and indicate the role of the bed in this "process of renewal."

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[134] Lana Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1986), 128.

During the Amarna period, the bed appears in both temple and tomb scenes in direct relation to the royal couple, Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Blocks with images of the bed have been found as reused material within the ninth pylon of the temple of Karnak, while scenes that include representations of beds have been found within the tombs at Amarna. Here, the bed generally appears in the upper portion of the two-dimensional representation of the rooms of the palace (making these the rooms furthest away from the viewer in the back portion of the building).

Two talatat blocks with images of the bed appear in the ninth pylon of the temple of Karnak. These blocks were originally part of Akhenaten's temple located on the eastern side of the Karnak complex. Horemheb used the talatat from this temple as fill within the second, ninth, and tenth pylons. Talatat 28/276 (Fig. 3.26) and Talatat 28/404 (Fig. 3.27) depict the bed in the royal palace of Amenhotep IV at Thebes, as the pharaoh had not yet moved his court to Akhetaten.[135] One of the two Karnak talatat depicts a stool, a table, and a doorway while the other is fragmentary with only the head-end portion of the bed and the edge of a possible canopy. Both beds have very thick mattresses and the rays of the sun disc shine down upon them. Another talatat showing the bed in the royal palace is now part of a temple wall reconstructed in the Luxor Museum. The bed is shown with an unusual footboard that looks as if it is combined with a cushion (Fig. 3.28). All of these examples indicate the depiction of the "bedroom" of the palace within the reliefs of Akhenaten's building at Karnak. These scenes of the palace are specific to Akhetnaten's reign, so it is important to

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[135] Claude Traunecker, "Aménophis IV et Néfertiti. Le couple royal d'après les talatates du Ixe pylône de Karnak," *Bulletin de la Société Française d'Égyptologie* 107 (Octobre 1986): 28-29.

analyze in what other contexts they appear in order to understand the role of the presence of the bed.

Depictions representing the royal palace also appear in the tombs of Amarna. Most images of the palace include the bed and below I have listed the locations and descriptions of these scenes in these tombs:

Owner of tomb	Short description of bed scene	Location of scene
Huya[136]	1. Bed in unoccupied room of the palace	1. West wall
Ahmose	Bed in unoccupied room of the palace	Longitudinal hall, west wall
Meryra I	1. Bed in unoccupied room of the palace 2. Bed in unoccupied room of the palace	1. Pillared Hall, west wall 2. East wall, upper half
Pentu	Servant making bed in a room in the palace	South wall, lower register
Parrenefer	Bed in unoccupied room of the palace	West wall
Tutu	1. Bed in unoccupied room of the palace 2. Remains of bed in unoccupied room of the palace	1. West wall, north side 2. West wall, south side
Ay	Bed in unoccupied room in the palace with three small beds underneath	North wall

[136] Another image of the bed appears on the north shrine wall of Huya's tomb but I address this in Chapter 5 due to stylistic reasons.

Most palace scenes include this image of the bed so why was its presence so crucial to the depiction of the palace? Claude Traunecker connects these scenes with a unique example also found on the two talatat found within the ninth pylon of Karnak temple, which directly links the royal couple to the scenes of the bed in the royal palace (Fig. 3.28).[137] The blocks preserve the lower half of a scene of a male and female standing before a bed. The iconography and accompanying text indicate that this is indeed Akhenaten and Nefertiti.[138] The royal couple stands on a set of steps next to the bed. Nefertiti holds the arm of Akhenaten in a gesture, which can be assumed to be one of affection considered characteristic of the Amarna period. It is clear the couple's marriage bed has been blessed by the Aten and that all sexual and procreative activities would be effective and fruitful.

Traunecker notes that the sun's rays appear over two specific places within the palace: the royal thrones and the royal bed. The solar lions of the bed are emphasized by the rays of the sun disc. In one of the more unusual depictions of the bedroom in the tomb of Ay at Amarna, a bed is represented in the palace with three smaller beds represented underneath (Fig. 3.29). Traunecker connects these beds to those of the princesses.[139] If this theory holds, the sign of the bed would seem to have procreated, creating three smaller versions, which in turn could also be places for sex and procreation. The three smaller beds would indicate the effective use of the bed to

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[137] Traunecker, "Amenophis IV," 37-38.

[138] A cartouche of Nefertiti is located to left of the bed.

[139] Traunecker, "Amenophis IV," 32.

procreate the three princesses who in turn would be able to continue the line with their own procreative powers.

In a unique scene from the tomb of Amenemhet, called Surero, four beds are found under their own canopies, presented to Amenhotep III as New Year's gifts (Fig. 3.30).[140] The scene depicts a set of six statues appearing to the right of the bed: two of Bes, two of Taweret, and two of a protective lion with its front paws on the *sa* sign. Given the date of this tomb, the Amarna scene from the tomb of Ay could likely be an abbreviated version of this scene as the four beds appear under an elaborate canopy similar to the scene from the Theban tomb. These four beds under canopies may have reflected a specific New Year ritual unknown to us today.

The images found within the Seti temple of Abydos are certainly sexual in nature. Isis is shown as a bird alighting onto the penis of Osiris in order to consummate their relationship, which would later lead to the birth of the god Horus. Even though this image is one of the most obvious sexual images found within Egyptian art, it takes place within a funerary and afterlife context: funerary due to its placement within a mortuary temple and related to the afterlife as Osiris has died and been resurrected by Isis for this event. I have therefore placed the discussion of this scene within chapter 5.

IV. Manifestations of sexual life and procreation in New Kingdom texts

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[140] For more on this tomb, see T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Four Eighteenth Dynasty Tombs*. *Private Tombs at Thebes.* (Oxford: printed for the Griffith Institute at the University Press, 1957).

In addition to the images of sexuality presented in this chapter, ancient Egyptians addressed issues of sexuality and procreation in their written literature. Therefore, it is not surprising that the bed appears in these contexts as well. The primary sources for these references reside in a specific form of literature: love poetry. In love poetry, the bed is used to evoke sexuality and the specific moments leading to the act.

The bed appears in Egyptian love poetry. Most likely composed in the New Kingdom, the love songs were written in literary Late Egyptian. The poems are full of erotic metaphors and allusions that were considered part of the entertainment and possible performative nature of the poems. These issues cause difficulties with the translation of the texts. There are five main examples (two within the same section of text) of the use of bed/bedroom as well as various mentions of accouterments of the bed within the poetry. Below I have listed the three main examples followed by the context and discussion of any translation discrepancies. The poems are labeled with the numbering system of Michael Fox from 1985, followed by that of Alfred Hermann from 1959 in parentheses.[141]

The Poems

1. Cairo Love Songs, Group A-No. 20G (Cairo line 16-17)

(A) I'll kiss her,
her lips are opened—
I am happy without beer.
How the void has been filled!

[141] M. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the ancient Egyptian love songs.* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985) and Alfred, Hermann*, Altägyptische Liebesdichtung,* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1959).

(Divine) Menqet is adorned there,
while conducting (me[?]) with…
[he]r bedroom.

(B) Come here
So I may speak to you!
Put fine linen between her legs,
While spreading (her bed) with royal linen.
Take care for the white linens of adornment.[142]

In this cycle of stanzas found written on part of a broken vessel, a girl and a boy have a dialogue concerning their love and how a river and crocodile separate the two lovers. The boy crosses the river because of their love and, in the final climatic scene, orders someone to make a bed for the consummation of their love. The term translated by Fox as "bedroom" in section A is *ḥnky*. In the *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, Faulkner translates this word as "bed" rather than "bedchamber."[143] Since it was unclear if there was a specific room designated in the house as the "bedroom," the use of "bed" is probably more apt.

The second example is the word *nmꜥ* which is translated as "spreading her bed." In Fox's appendix, he translates *nmꜥ* as "to clothe a bed, sleep, lie down."[144] In this example, the word *nmꜥ* is followed by the determinative of a bed, connecting the action of the verb to the location of the bed, making clear the place for the culmination of the couple's love. The word *nmꜥ* also appears in a miscellaneous

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[142] M. Fox, *Song,* 33.

[143] R. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1972), 173. The *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache* does as well, Wb III, 119, 120.

[144] M. Fox, *Song*, 358.

fragment from Deir el-Medina which is labeled no. 51 or DM 1078. In the fragment the lover seems despondent, saying "don't do (that) to me, my lady, don't! Don't leave me waiting."[145] Fox translates the last fragments as "I lay me down…the water of the…message."[146] The word *nmꜥ* is translated here as "lay me down" rather than "clothe the bed." Faulkner and the *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache* translate the word as "sleep" and "make the bed" indicating the flexibility of the term.[147]

2. "Nakhtsobek Songs" No. 47 (Papyrus Chester Beatty I, 17, 12)

(Then) at any time the brother can come
and find her house open,
and find a bed spread with fine linen,
and a pretty little maidservant too.[148]

In this poem, a youth waits outside the door of a girl and longs to enter to see his beloved. He chastises the door for remaining closed to him and wishes the carpenter's apprentice would fashion a door out of grass in order that he may enter the abode of his beloved at any time.

While there are translation discrepancies apparent between the two examples, the bed (couch) remains the location of the lover. Fox notes that *nmꜥ* is also used here as the verb "to clothe (or in this case, spread) a bed with linen" with the bed

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[145] M. Fox, *Song,* 79.

[146] M. Fox, *Song,* 79.

[147] Wb 2, 266.7-8; R. Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary*, 133

[148] M. Fox, *Song,* 74.

determinative. The word "bed" is not just understood in this case but stated outright with the word *ḫʿty,* followed by the determinative for wood and the plural strokes.[149] The word *ḫʿty* is always used with the wood determinative, indicating the word "bed" is defined by the material in which it is made rather than its characteristics as a place to sleep or have sex.[150]

3. Papyrus Harris 500, Group B, No. 14

> The voice of the dove speaks. It says:
> "Day has dawned—
> When are you going (home)?"
> Stop it, bird!
> You're teasing (?) me.
> I found my brother in his bedroom,
> And my heart was exceedingly joyful.[151]

This example comes from a group of songs found within the Papyrus Harris with the heading "The Beginning of the Entertainment Song."[152] In this song, a female argues with a morning dove that awakens her while she is with her beloved, whom she found in his bed. She then discusses the mutual love of her and her partner. The word for "bedroom" here is *ḫnkyt* which Lichtheim and Tobin both translate as bed.[153]

4. Papryus Harris 500, Group C, No. 19

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[149] Fox notes that *ḫʿty* with plural strokes can be singular or plural. Fox, *Song*, 77.

[150] J. Janssen, *Furniture at Deir el-Medîna: including wooden containers of the New Kingdom and Ostracon Varille 19* (London: Golden House, 2009), 16.

[151] M. Fox, *Song,* 6.

[152] M. Fox, *Song,* 6. Fox states that these are clearly songs rather than just one song.

[153] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature. A Book of Readings. Volume II: The New Kingdom*, (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, University of California Press, 1976), 191; Simpson, ed., *The literature of ancient Egypt,* 314, and Fox, "The Cairo Love Songs," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 100 (1980): 102.

In it are *ṯ3yt*-flowers:
I took your wreaths,
When you came back drunk
And were asleep in your bedroom.
And I rubbed your feet,
While the children [in] your …
[I(?)] rejoice in the morning…
Health and life within you!

These lines are considered part of a larger group, No. 17-19, which has been labeled "The Flower Song" by modern scholars as each line begins with the name of a flower. This section has the female finding her lover after his night of drunkenness. She does not scold him but takes care of him, indicating the character's relaxed attitude towards his inebriation. The word for "bed" here is also *ḥnkyt* as in the last example. Just prior to this is the word *sḏr,* to sleep, followed by the bed determinative.

The consistency of the use of terms found within the Papyrus Harris also applies to other literary works found on the same papyrus but of a different genre. In the literary tale "The Tale of the Doomed Prince," the couple go to sleep and she conceives a son.[154] The word used here is *sḏr*, meaning "to lie, sleep, or spend the night."[155] The determinative is the glyph A55 depicting a mummiform figure on the bed. Here, the connection of sleep to the bed is a visual one and the results—the conception of a child—indicate that sex is also an activity that takes place with sleep on the bed.

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[154] Line 4,2 in the "Tale of the Doomed Prince." W. Simpson, ed. *The literature of Ancient Egypt*, 76.

[155] Faulkner, *Concise Dictionary*, 259.

There are additional instances where the Egyptians used the euphemism "to sleep with" to indicate sexual activity with someone, much like Western culture today. In the "Tale of Two Brothers," the wife of the farmer Anubis tries to seduce his younger brother, Bata. As the wife tries to seduce him she states: "Come, let's spend an hour lying together. Such is to your advantage: I will then make you fine clothes."[156] Bata rejects her advances and the wife then lies to her husband saying Bata had tried to seduce her.[157] The desired activity appears to be solely sex and not procreation but the intentions are not entirely clear.

Another example of the use of this phrase is found in a legal document from Deir el-Medina. A worker complains that his wife is cheating on him and that another man has slept with her, with a pregnancy resulting from the last time. He states, "Now when I had spent the night in the house of my father, I set out to go to his house, and I found the workman Mery-Sekhment son of Menna sleeping with my wife in the fourth month of summer, day 5.[158]

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[156] W. Simpson, ed. *The literature of Ancient Egypt*, 82. "Da stand sie auf, indem sie ihn faßte, und indem sie zu ihm sagte: Komm! Laß uns eine Stunde (gemeinsam) verbringen, laß uns (zusammen) schlafen!" "Keusch wie kaum ein anderes Volk"?: Einige Anmerkungen zum Sexual-Vokabular der alten Ägypter. In Mendel, Daniela and Ulrike Claudi (eds),*Ägypten im Afro-Orientalischen Kontext: Aufsätze zur Archäologie, Geschichte und Sprache eines unbegrenzten Raumes: Gedenkschrift Peter Behrens*, 315-335. Köln: Institut für Afrikanistik, Universität Köln.Schreiber, 329.

[157] This text is very similar to the Biblical tale of Joseph and Potiphar's wife.

[158] A.G. McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt. Laundry Lists and Love Songs* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999), 48. Also Schreiber's translation: "Er schlief mit meiner Frau im vierten Monat der.smw - Jahreszeit, am vierten Tag." from Silke Schreiber, "Keusch wie kaum ein anderes Volk"?: Einige Anmerkungen zum Sexual-Vokabular der alten Ägypter. In Daniela Mendel, Daniela and Ulrike Claudi (eds), *Ägypten im Afro-Orientalischen Kontext: Aufsätze zur Archäologie, Geschichte und Sprache eines unbegrenzten Raumes: Gedenkschrift Peter Behrens*. (Köln: Institut für Afrikanistik, Universität Köln, 1991): 329.

In a departure from the other works, "The Contendings of Horus and Seth" detail the struggle between the two gods as Horus fights to maintain his position on the throne. The bed appears as the location for Seth and Horus as they go to bed together:

> Now afterward at evening time, bed was prepared for them, and together they lay down. During the night Seth caused his phallus to become stiff and inserted it between Horus's thighs. Horus then placed his hands between his thighs and caught Seth's semen.[159]

Whether or not this scene was a possible attempt at humor, it is clear that Seth is trying to gain the dominant position in a sexual manner over Horus.

In "The Blinding of Truth by Falsehood," the same phrase is used to indicate the copulation of a woman with the personification of Truth.

> [Then] (the lady) N. saw him, and [sh]e desired him intensely when she saw [how handsome] he was in all his body. He went to bed with her that night and had sexual intercourse with her. / So she became pregnant that very night with a baby boy.[160]

Pregnancy does eventually result from "sleeping together" but the implication is sex has happened once with this result. "Sleeping together" appears to be used by the Egyptians in much the same way it is in the West—to indicate sexual activity without consideration of the intention to procreate.

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[159] From "The Contendings of Horus and Seth," in W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 99.

[160] From "The Blinding of Truth by Falsehood" in W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 105.

V. Conclusion

The use of the bed within sexual imagery of the New Kingdom is evident from multiple sources but it is important to consider the development of these images from earlier periods. Does the meaning of the bed as a sign of the sexual act and procreation change through time and what does it represent in the New Kingdom? These previous uses of the sign of the bed inform the use of the image in the New Kingdom, carrying many of the same connotations with it.

Images relating to sexuality and procreation appear from the earliest periods of Egyptian art. Hyper-sexualized female figurines of clay begin appearing in burial equipment as early as the Predynastic Period. During this time, the image and use of the bed was simultaneously developing, first appearing as a series of inventory items in the tomb of Hesy-re (Dynasty 3, Saqqara). Heinrich Schafer's work, *Principles of Egyptian Art,* examines the specific sexual imagery found in the Dynasty 6 mastaba tomb of Mereruka at Saqqara. In one scene, Mereruka holds a flywhisk and staff while seated on a bed next to his wife, Hertwatetkhet (Fig. 3.31). His wife plays a harp near the footrest of the bed and Mereruka sits to her right near a bump-like cushion.[161] Various scholars have discussed the erotic elements: the musical instrument, the bed, and the proximity of the couple to each other.[162] Groenewegen-Frankfort states: "Only once in the late Old Kingdom are the owner of a tomb and his wife, who is playing a

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[161] Located on the west wall, scene three. See Prentice Duell, *The mastaba of Mereruka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938).

[162] See D. O'Connor, "Eros in Egypt" and H. Groenewegen-Frankfort, *Arrest and Movement: An Essay on Space and Time in the Representational Art of the Ancient Near East*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951).

harp, depicted sitting opposite each other on a couch—a unique instance of something approaching an erotic scene. In fact, the absence of such scenes merely confirms the general avoidance of dramatic situations and need not be ascribed to a hypothetical chastity of the Egyptians."[163] Interesting to note, the scene that precedes this, depicts two servants reaching and kneeling while they prepare a bed. O'Connor states that the fly whisk which Mereruka holds can stand for the hieroglyph *ms*, or "birth."[164]

From the Middle Kingdom come three examples, which highlight the sexual use of the bed. The most explicit is an image of sex on a bed from a tomb located at Beni Hassan (Fig. 3.32). In the official tomb publication from 1893, the sign is marked with hash marks, a convention used by Egyptologists to indicate it no longer existed.[165] The glyph and others around it are described as "fanciful and semi-comic." [166]

The Dynasty 11 stela of Sebekaa from Thebes depicts many tomb-like scenes (such as baking, butchering, and offering), which would have served the same function as in a tomb. This alternative use of a stela would have been an attractive idea to an Egyptian unable to raise the funds for a tomb. This stela contains an unusual image of the deceased lying on a bed with a diminutive woman lying on top and recalls the image of Osiris with the bird-form of Isis during the conception of Horus (Fig. 3.33).

Finally, the Middle Kingdom coffin of Henui depicts a somewhat similar scene located on its left side. Two women lift another woman over the mummiform figure of

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[163] H.A. Groenewegen-Frankfort, *Arrest and Movement,* 42.

[164] D. O'Connor, "Eros in Egypt," 46.

[165] P. Newberry, *Beni Hassan, Part II*, (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1893), plate xiv.

[166] P. Newberry, *Beni Hassan II*, 59.

a male resting on a bed with his head on a headrest, a scene that also evokes the Osiris myth (Fig. 3.34). The positioning of the image in relation to the body within the coffin indicates an awareness of its orientation and the desire to connect the body inside to the image on the coffin.

These examples lead us up to the New Kingdom and its abundance of sexual images related to the bed. The increase of these images could be because of the accident of survival, but, more likely, because of the creation of different types of objects which featured the bed. Ostraca, model beds/figurines, and unique items such as the Turin Erotic Papyrus only appear during the New Kingdom. This wide variety of uses allows for a more complete reading of the sign of the bed.

Since the bed is not the location for birth, and for the typical ancient Egyptian, was usually not the location for sex or procreation, what then is the connection of the bed to sex and procreation? While the previous discussion of the fluidity between text and image strengthens the connection of the image of the bed as a glyph to its semiotic connotations (see chapter one), in this particular case, there are few linguistic links between bed and sex other than the use of the bed as a determinative of the word *sḏr* and a possible sexual reading of *nmꜥ*. Therefore, the primary connections between these subjects are made through what modern Westerners would consider the images of Egyptian art rather than the images of linguistic use (hieroglyphs).

In this chapter, I have analytically identified instances where the bed is used as a sign within various sexual contexts. Different social codes were employed, which were applied to the sign of the bed within royal and non-royal settings. Looking through Western eyes during modern times, the bed as a symbol of the sexual act and

procreation is secure but preconceived notions of scholars make it difficult to dissect the sign of the bed during the New Kingdom.

Embodied within the sign of the bed is the projection of the desired hope for successful birth / rebirth in the afterlife. The presence of the bed in situations where it is not necessary for procreation or sex but vital for the inherent semiotic connotations indicates the need of the sign for more than just an indication of place. The sign of the bed is the sum of all of its primary and secondary connotations and the next two chapters will discuss these crucial, and inseparable concepts: sleep and death.

Chapter 4

Sleep

I. Introduction

While sleeping, a person was connected to the *Duat*, a realm inhabited by the Egyptian dead, and a place where dreams were thought to originate. The state of sleep was often likened to the condition of death—the sleeper was unable to move and function as in death. Also, awakening and resurrection were used as interchangeable phrases where the awaking individual was compared to a reborn or resurrected being.[167] Dreams were considered as occurring outside of the individual and one's enemy could impose nightmares onto the dreamer. Sleep, therefore, was a liminal state that was considered dangerous and unpredictable, and the decorative program of actual beds was designed to protect the sleeper from unseen forces.

The apotropaic function of the bed was crucial for the sleeper. It was vital to the sleeper to be able to rise again the next day, like the rising sun. Therefore, all of the elements of the bed (as well as additional elements such as the headrest) contributed to this function. The legs of the represented bed are often depicted as lion legs, linking the bed to the lion. Lions were depicted as guardians of the eastern and western horizons (Fig. 4.1). The occupant of the bed could therefore be seen as being protected by these guardians of the sunrise and sunset—linking the sleep cycle, when the

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[167] Kasia Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes: Dreams and Nightmares in Ancient Egypt.* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2003), 21-23.

occupant would go to sleep at night and awake in the morning, to the cycle of the sun and its rebirth.

While little is recorded concerning sleep, the evidence that survives provides a window onto the worldview of the ancient Egyptians rather than any accurate analyses of their sleep or dreams. The Egyptians decorated their beds with images of Bes and Taweret as well as with images of lions and snakes. These apotropaic images acted to protect sleepers as they made their nightly journey through the Duat.

II. The concept of sleep

Sleep has rarely been addressed as a topic in the scholarship of Egyptology. One of the earliest examinations is de Buck's *De Godsdienstige Opvatting van den Slaap inzonderheid in het Oude Egypte*, which examines the religious notions of sleep.[168] While de Buck points out that these are 'religious' connections, the Egyptians themselves did not separate their world into secular and religious views. To them, sleep was a liminal state where the individual was able to connect with the Duat and those located there. The nature of this connection is still debated by scholars.[169] Whether the sleeper could fully interact with the dead or see them as if through a veil is unclear.

The Egyptians were aware of the beneficial effects of sleep. This renewed energy was credited to the interaction of the sleeper with the powers found within the

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[168] A. de Buck, *De Godsdienstige Opvatting Van Den Slaap Inzonderheid in Het Oude Egypte.* (Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap Ex Oriente Lux. Mededelingen En Verhandelingen; No. 4. Leiden, Brill, 1939).

[169] See next section for further discussion.

Duat. The sun hymns in Chester-Beatty papyrus IV discuss an individual entering Nun and being renewed as when he was first born. Erik Hornung states, "Sleepers and dreamers enter the primeval ocean of Nun that serves as a waterway for the barge of the sun, as it sinks on the western horizon each evening."[170] The dead were also perceived as being located in Nun and are often referred to as the dwellers in Nun. The renewal of the sun during each night is also a rebirth for the deceased and sleepers who all take part in this nightly ritual together. Dreams originate in the Duat, which caused them to be viewed as having special meaning.

De Buck states, "We have seen that to sleep is to be in the *Jenseits* (German word "beyond"). It is therefore no wonder the dead can be conceived as sleeping. This is not a euphemism, not the consoling thought: they only sleep; it is meant in sober earnest."[171] While the sleepers in this world move into the Duat, the dead awake from their slumber as the sun passes through their hour of the night. One of the most compelling images of this scene comes from the ceiling of the tomb of Ramesses IX (Fig. 4.2). The mummified dead awaken, throw off their bandages, and stand on their beds as they rejoice in the warmth and light of the sun. Some of the males are shown with erect phalluses, indicating their renewed ability to procreate while females are shown holding infants.[172]

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[170] Erik Hornung, *Idea into image: essays on ancient Egyptian thought* (New York: Timken, 1992), 95-96.

[171] A. de Buck, *De Godsdienstige Opvatting van den Slaap: Inzonderheid in het Oude Egypte* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1939), 29.

[172] A more in-depth discussion of this image appears in Chapter 5.

The night was also a vulnerable time for sleepers. Nowhere is this better seen than in the writings of the Amarna period. Rather than focus on the journey of the sun in the netherworld, there seems to be a melancholy that settles over the land of the living in the absence of the sun. This vulnerability was probably felt during the rest of the New Kingdom but not written or depicted as this might have left sleepers even more open to attack from unseen forces. A Hymn to the Aten states:

> Whenever you set on the western horizon,
> the land is in darkness in the manner of death.
> They sleep in a bedroom with heads under the covers,
> and one eye cannot see another.
> If all their possessions which are under their heads were
> stolen, they would not realize it.[173]

The complete oblivion of the sleeper to actions possibly occurring in their homes is apparent. The bed is not mentioned explicitly but there appears to be a room for these sleepers near where their possessions are located. This deep fear of going into an unknown region and possibly being unable to come back was very real. Undoubtedly, the Egyptians knew that death could occur during sleep, when the individual no longer would wake on this daily cycle.

One of the most commonly used words for sleep was *sḏr* with the determinative of a mummy on a bier (A55). Another word used was *qd*, which also could mean 'dream.'[174] Below is a list of words used for sleep:

sḏr to lie; to sleep; spend the night[175]

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[173] W. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 279-280.

[174] K. Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eye*s, 9. Wb, V, 78

sḏrtj sleeper

sḏr.yt sleeping place; bedridden; intercourse[176]

qd.t sleep[177]

qdd sleep[178]

jbꜣn to be sleepy[179]

ḥꜥw sleep[180]

In the above list, the words *sḏr* and *sḏr.yt* can be translated as intercourse and 'spending the night' as noted in the previous chapter. However, *sḏr* is primarily translated as "to sleep' or 'to die,' two words that are often as interchangeable today as they were during the New Kingdom. The connection of these two concepts is bridged by the Egyptians view of the afterlife. Shifting religious concepts over the centuries placed this other world in different locations such as the waters of Nun, which surrounds the world, or the underworld, which was a more prevalent idea during the New Kingdom. Various modern authors describe this world as the beyond or the farworld, in order to not focus on shifting location but rather its separation from this world.

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[175] Wb 4, 390.9-392.6

[176] Wb 4, 390.

[177] Wb 5, 79.

[178] Wb 5, 78.

[179] Wb 1, 62.

[180] Wb 1, 120

The hieroglyph A55 depicts the mummy on the bier. As shown previously, this glyph is used as a determinative for many words concerning sleep. While the words for sleep and death are interchangeable, so can the image of the mummy on the bier depicting both sleep and death. The same image depicts both states.[181] Therefore, the interchangeability is reflected in the text and the images of the text (hieroglyphs).

Gods, the dead, and sleepers inhabited the Duat but the level of interaction that they had with each other is still unclear. [182] Kasia Szpakowska states, "But rather than the sleeper awakening in the farworld itself in direct proximity with the dead, it is more accurate to say that the sleeper awoke in a liminal landscape between the two worlds, whose boundaries and walls were transparent, and where he could see the dead, and the dead could watch him."[183] The Letters of the Dead from the First Intermediate Period were written by living individuals as supplications to the dead in the Duat to intercede in some aspect of their life or dreams. These requests indicate an inability for the individual in this world to control certain aspects that those in the Duat had influence over. For instance, a letter to the dead from the First Intermediate Period (2160-2025 BC) was discovered near Abydos, which describes a son, Heni, who asks his father, Meru, to keep their deceased servant Seni from watching him in his dreams. This

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[181] M. Müller, "Zur Transkription eines neuhieratischen Zeichens," GM 200 (2004):11-12. Müller states that in the transcription of the hieratic sign of the determinative category of sleep a bird should appear on the bed and not the mummy. This indicates a discrepancy amongst the depictions of the determinative. Examples are given for different birds: falcons appear on the bed in the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak and an ibis on a bed in oDeM 1227.

[182] E. Hornung, "Chaotische Bereiche in der geordneten Welt," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 81 (1956): 29.

[183] K. Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eye*s, 27.

unsettling dream was enough for the son to write to his father to intercede on his behalf in the next world. There is no indication that the servant Seni could harm the sleeper but rather watch him, albeit in a disturbing way. Seni can also force himself to be seen by Heni, indicating the passive nature of the sleeper in the next realm. There appears to be nothing the son can do but beg for help from his father in the form of a letter placed in his tomb.

The terms for sleep and death are often used interchangeably in the Egyptian language. Many of these examples pre-date the material of this dissertation and originate in the Pyramid and Coffin Texts. This sets up a precedent for the use of these terms in the New Kingdom. The Pyramid texts state, "Oh N.N., great of sleep, great of lying down. This great one lies down, while he has passed away."[184] Concerning Osiris, the Pyramid texts also state, "O Osiris the King, you have gone, but you will return, you have slept, [but you will awake], you have died, but you will live."[185] The cycle of sleep and death are in direct correlation to each other in this statement. The cycle of sleep is repeated everyday until the person dies. The deceased then continues this cycle by being reborn in the afterlife. The sleep cycle repeats within the afterlife as the deceased awakens when the sun god passes through their hour of the night. These overlapping cycles explain the tie between the use of the terms.

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[184] J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy,* 82.

[185] Utterance 670, line 1975-1976 in R.O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1969), 285.

Weariness and tiredness are also used as replacements for death. Osiris is called 'tired of heart' and he is characterized as having 'tiredness of the limbs'.[186] Life was in a suspended state during sleep and death and the weariness and tiredness that led up to these conditions were also considered as attributes of these states. The dead were often called the "tired ones"—"oh tired one, who sleeps, oh tired one in this place, which you do not know."[187] The determinative for the words used for tired (*bꜣn, wrḏ,* and *bꜣgj*) are followed by the weak or fatigued man (hieroglyph A7) rather than the mummy on the bier determinative (A55). This indicates that these words are actions rather than the completed static state of sleeping or death.

There is an emphasis placed on the division between the conscious and unconscious states, rather than the states of being awake or asleep. While these two sets of states may sound the same, the importance is placed on the psychological aspect of the individual rather than the physical being. Erik Hornung links the *ka* to the unconscious and the *ba* to the conscious aspect of an individual. The inner state of *maat*, which sustains a person, is found deep within the unconscious. This is the part of the soul where the *ka* resides and maintains balance within a person's psyche. On the other side of the coin is the *ba*, which connects the person's soul to the conscious and living world.

With the importance placed on sex, sleep, and death in Egyptian culture, it would seem logical that dreams would also play an important role. However, dreams

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[186] J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy*, 82.

[187] Coffin Texts, I. 306.a in R.O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 2004).

were not widely discussed in Egyptian literature. The first dreams mentioned are in letters to the dead in the First Intermediate Period.[188] Occasionally used as a literary device, dreams were rarely emphasized. This may simply be due to the accident of survival, but dreams did occur during the liminal time of sleep when the dreamer would have been in contact with the Duat. Recording dreams may have re-exposed the dreamer to a vulnerable state, opening the lines between this world and the next anew. It is not surprising that there was a lack of documentation about this unsure state just as there are few images of women depicted in the state of childbirth. The discussion of dreams may have also been part of an oral culture, passed down from one generation to the next.

One important text, the Ramesside Dream Book, does address the interpretation of dreams, giving insight into the approach the Egyptians took towards this unknown realm (Fig. 4.3). The papyrus was found with other papyri in a tomb from Deir el-Medina, and dates to the reign of Ramesses II.[189] It appears it was passed down to subsequent generations indicating the importance the text held to those who owned it. The text does not focus on specific dreams but reads more like a medical text, describing a general scenario followed by a "good" or "bad" interpretation.[190]

Kasia Szpakowska's *Behind Closed Eyes: Dreams and Nightmares in Ancient Egypt* is the foremost work on this subject. She translates and examines the work in

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[188] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 65.

[189] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eye*s, 69.

[190] The Ramesside Dream Book was found as a part of Papyrus Chester Beatty III.

detail, while also giving the history of dreams in Egypt up until the New Kingdom. Szpakowska notes that the determinative for the word for dream, *rswt*, is the symbol D6, or the open eye. This would indicate that the dream was something seen and not done. There is no verb meaning "to dream" within the Egyptian language, reflecting the passive nature of the sleeper in the dreamworld.

The bed appears once within the Ramesside Dream Book:

If a man sees himself in a dream while his bed goes up in flames;

BAD, it means that his wife will be expelled.[191]

The interpretation of this dream is negative. The presence of the dreamer and the bed going up in flames indicates that there was a perceived connection between the relationship of the couple and the bed. The living consequences of the dream have the wife expelled, most likely, from the household and therefore the relationship.[192] As previously examined in chapter three, sex and procreation were certainly connected to the bed. The bed is seen here as not a place of sleep, but rather a symbol of marriage. A marriage occurred when a woman took up residence at the home of her husband, so it is interesting that the symbol, which appears in the dream, is not the home but rather a more intimate object such as the bed. The wife is not mentioned as appearing in the dream.

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[191] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 101.

[192] Gardiner translates this as "it means driving away his wife." Alan Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum: Third Series Chester Beatty Gift, vol. 1* (London: British Museum, 1935), 17.

Nightmares were often known as bad dreams and their first references are to be found in the 'execration texts' of the Middle Kingdom.[193] These texts were inscribed on bowls or figurines and listed groups of hostile forces meant to be repelled. Bad dreams were listed in the final grouping. Was the dream of the flaming bed from the Ramesside Dream Book considered a nightmare? It was certainly considered bad, like the dreams from the 'execration texts'. Also, the Egyptians believed in 'night terrors', which were different from what modern science describes today as a parasomnia disorder, which causes feelings of dread and sometimes paralysis. Instead, Egyptian 'night terrors' were essentially nightmares. In Papyrus Leiden I 348, the title of the text is "Book of Driving out Terrors which come in order to descend upon a man in the night."[194] The concept of the dream descending onto the sleeper is not unlike the actually physical feelings that sometimes occur during a nightmare such as a crushing or pressing feeling on the chest of the individual. Ostracon Gardiner 363, dated to the time of Ramesside Thebes, contains a spell against night terrors.[195] Ritner describes the ostracon as containing "almost a complete text for the protection of sleeping men and women against the nightly assault of demons and the dead."[196] Words should be recited over four uraei which should be placed in the four corners of the room where there will

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[193] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 161.

[194] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 167-169.

[195] See R. K. Ritner, 'O. Gardiner 363: A Spell Against Night Terrors', JARCE 27 (1990): 363 and Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 170-171.

[196] R. Ritner, "O. Gardiner 363," 33.

be sleepers. It is unclear if the word used is 'room' or 'bedroom' but either way it is clear that the uraei are meant to protect sleepers.

It is difficult to apply modern dream analysis to the dreams of the ancient Egyptians. Szpakowska states "Even Carl Jung's theories of archetypes and the collective unconscious cannot be applied to a culture which does not reveal to us the images or narratives of its dreams."[197] She also states that although the Ramesside Dream Book would appear to be an exception by giving visual scenarios, it does not give the details of any one specific dream from an individual.[198] However, the 'dreams' of the Ramesside Dream Book must have been based on certain symbols and connections prevalent in the Egyptian worldview.

III. Sleep and the artistic record

It is clear that there were many unseen forces perceived to be at work during the phase of sleep. The travel of the unconscious individual into the Duat was a precarious and uncertain time. The visual record does little to record this but there are instances where a sleeping individual is shown. One scene from a New Kingdom chapel from Saqqara depicts a man sleeping in a doorway, presumably on the job as doorkeeper (Fig. 4.4). While such humorous scenes depict rare instances of sleeping individuals, none are in a bed but rather sleeping on the job in a leaning/squatting position. This state of sleep was possibly depicted in a light and humorous way because "sleeping on

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[197] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 5.

[198] Szpakowska, *Behind Closed Eyes,* 5.

the job" was not considered deep enough to render the individual vulnerable to the dangers of being completely immersed in the Duat.

There is a Dynasty 18 vignette from the tomb of Intef at Thebes (Theban Tomb 155) that depicts a man sleeping on the job (Fig. 4.5). Four porters and foreman wait outside of the door of a wine cellar to be received. The first porter is shown knocking on the door while the viewer can see that the doorkeeper is sleeping inside. What follows is a funny exchange amongst the porters and foreman:

> Foreman: Hurry up! It's getting hot out here in the sun!
> First porter: The load's getting heavy!
> Second porter: Really!
> Fourth porter: The storekeeper is asleep.
> Third porter: He's just drunk on wine.
> Storekeeper: I haven't been sleeping at all! [199]

The caricature of the sleeping doorkeeper appears in other tombs and, as Houlihan notes, becomes a "running joke."[200] In the tomb of Neferhotep at Thebes (TT 49), the grumpy, just-woken doorkeeper chases off a group of merry-makers with a short stick. Another image from a Theban tomb (Staatliche Museen Berlin 18539) depicts a sleepy/sleeping overseer seated under a tree while his workers reap grain around him (Fig. 4.6). It is important to note that the tomb owner is never shown in these vignettes, preserving his dignity within the setting of the tomb.

The humanity of these images connects the modern viewers to the ancient ones—falling asleep on the job is something with which most of us can relate and being

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[199] William Ward, "Humor from the Tombs," *Saudi Aramco World* (May/June 1968): 30-33 and Patrick Houlihan, *Wit and Humour in Ancient Egypt* (London: Rubicon Press, 2001), 49.

[200] P. Houlihan, *Wit and Humour*, 47.

woken by drunken revelers is an extreme annoyance. These images also bring spontaneity to the tomb chapel, allowing the artists to place their personal stamp on their work.

Only a few images of sleep are found outside tombs. The fine, and sometimes non-existent, line that stands between images of sleep and death makes it difficult to divide the material into neat and ready sections. Images of sleeping are linked to death as images of awakening are related to rebirth. The only way to truly distinguish between the two is the context of the image and if not that, the setting in which the individual is presented. Even then, the use of sleep as a metaphor for death could still be ever-present.

Evidence of individuals sleeping in beds is found in a more subtle way rather than obvious and literal images. As stated previously, exposing a person to the dangers of the night or farworld, even in the confines of an image, was considered risky. Since many of the images of the individual are within a tomb context, the tomb owner is depicted sleeping the "eternal sleep" rather than going through the cycle of daily life in a purely earthly sphere. The tomb's role was to aid in the transition of one cycle into another and the images within supported that.

A few images of sleeping in beds do exist. On an ostracon from Amarna (Berlin 20488), a man is depicted sleeping under a blanket on a bed (Fig. 4.7).[201] The sketch is done in an x-ray view, where the body of the man can be seen beneath the blanket. There are no characteristic details of the bed shown (such as lion legs) but only the

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[201] H. Schafer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 123.

lines of the horizontal portion. This piece is claimed as a rare example of this type of perspective, but it should also be noted for its unusual subject manner of a sleeping individual.[202] This may have been a practice piece for an artist but as no similar images appear within the formal artistic context, it may have been an artist sketching another worker or family member in a moment of quiet repose.

In all, the most noteworthy observation concerning the use of images of sleeping in beds is that there are very few. It was understood that a bed was designed to be slept in but unnecessary, and perhaps dangerous, to portray it. However, written texts were another matter—sleep is mentioned fairly frequently within literature.

The most basic of functions of the bed was a place for sleep. Textual references, mostly literary, mention the bed in this context. Sleep can appear in a story where the dreamer or narrator describes their state of being. The bed could also be a place where one could "sleep with" someone, as in sexual relations (discussed in chapter three) or as a place for a dying individual (which will be discussed in chapter five) but the examples below focus on the state of sleep.

In "The Teaching of King Amenemhet I for his son Senwosret," the king is tired and describes his own state:

I was lying on my bed, for I was tired,

And I started / to drift off to sleep.[203]

In "The Tale of the Doomed Prince," the bed appears in a similar context:

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[202] H. Schafer, *Principles of Egyptian Art*, 123.

[203] W. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 168.

> Now after some days had elapsed, the youth sat down and made holiday in his house. And after the end of the evening breeze the youth lay down upon his bed, and sleep took possession of his body. [204]

The bed sets the scene, so to speak, in that it gives the impression of a domestic space where all is right with the world. The individual is going about his/her routine and getting into bed to go to sleep. This creates a calm, safe setting that will soon be juxtaposed against an unusual occurrence (the plot).

The bed was also considered a sign of civilization as shown in the tale of Sinuhe. Sinuhe has lived abroad in a foreign land, and, upon his return, is met with the trappings of civilization which were available to the cultured Egyptians:

> I was outfitted with fine linen and rubbed with the finest oil. I passed the night on a bed.[205]

Once again, the bed shows a stable and secure environment where sleep can be achieved successfully. The balance of life is restored and can even be connected to the balance of *maat* where the cycle of sleep is unhindered.

IV. The bed as a locus of the nightly transition of the sleeping individual into the next day

How then, does the bed function for sleepers as they embark on the nightly journey into the Duat? Previously, I have discussed the image of the bed as a whole, but the individual elements of the bed worked together as well as separately to ensure

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[204] W. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 78.

[205] W. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 66.

the protection of the sleeper. These elements include the images of lions, the gods Bes and Taweret, and solar and celestial associations. Another element closely linked is the headrest, which had similar functions as the bed and, in essence, acted as an extension thereof.

Actual beds varied from simple undecorated beds with square legs to more elaborately painted and inlaid examples. The two-dimensional bed in the New Kingdom is almost always depicted with lion feet whether in its simplest or most elaborate forms. It follows that the connection of the image of the bed to the lion was inseparable but what can be deduced from this association? The lion legs of the bed, present on each side of the bed's occupant, would have guaranteed the sleeper a safe passage through the night with the presence of these lion guardians. The apotropaic function was obvious but there are other, equally important connections to be made.

Lions were animals that lived on the edges of the Egyptian world, and were symbolically shown as the guardians of the eastern and western horizons. This culminates in the image of the *akhet* sign, or horizon symbol, which depicts the sun rising between two mountains. On either side, a lion stands guard, facing outward away from the sun. The occupant of the bed could therefore be seen as being protected by these guardians of the sunrise and sunset—linking the sleep cycle, when the occupant would go to sleep at night and awake in the morning, to the cycle of the sun and rebirth.

This double lion is identified as different beings, the most common being *Rw.ty*, or literally, double lion. An earlier name for this deity was Aker, with direct relation to the horizon, *akhet*, or rather a personification thereof. This god opened the gates of sunrise and sunset for the sun god to pass through on his journey into the Duat. The

presence of this god (Aker, or plural Akeru) on the bed is appropriate considering the cyclical nature of sleep occurring on the bed.

Bart Hellinckx discusses the solar iconography associated with the headrest, which is frequently shown with beds in reliefs.[206] In his discussion of the shape of the headrest, Hellinckx relates this also to the *akhet* sign. He states, "In fact, it seems that the symbolism of the headrest runs to a large extent parallel to that of the bed."[207] The curve of the headrest cradles the head in the same way as the mountains of the horizon cradle the rising and setting sun. Hellinckx argues that this analogy would have been evident to the Egyptians. The sleeper would place his head in the headrest at approximately the same time as the sun would set and then the sleeper's head would rise just as the sun rose the next morning.[208] The iconography of the bed contributes seamlessly to this argument by completing the image of the horizon.

The most compelling evidence is an ivory headrest from the tomb of Tutankhamen (Fig. 4.8). The headrest has the central image of a god in a kneeling position with his arms upraised supporting the curved upper portion of the headrest. Two recumbent lions face outward on either side of the image of the god. Most identifications of the god point to Shu, who is depicted in Egyptian art in his role as divider of Nut and Geb, allowing for an interpretation of the division of earth and sky in

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[206] B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation of head and sun as expressed by headrests," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, Band 29 (2001): 61-95.

[207] B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation," 90.

[208] B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation," 77.

the function of the headrest.[209] The legs of the bed are usually oriented towards the head of the bed as well, indicating the importance of the location of the head and headrest.

In a further link among these iconographical details, the double lion could also represent the gods Shu and Tefnut as well as the gods Aker/Rw.ty. With Shu's presence on Tutankhamen's headrest, it is not surprising to link other elements of the bed to the divine couple of Shu (air) and Tefnut (best described as moisture). With Shu and Tefnut firmly placed between the heaven and earth, the bed takes on a celestial, as well as solar, dimension.

This association may have been reserved for the deceased rather than the sleeper. Hellinckx notes that when headrests are iconographically connected to the celestial realm, it is usually within a funerary context.[210] Both the solar and celestial combine to aid the deceased in an effective rebirth in the Duat. DeWit notes that the lion, both in a solar and celestial aspect, can be combined to represent the land of the dead, the West:

"Dans l'édition de Lepsius, la chose parait plus évidente encore: un immense lion est étendu devant la déesse du ciel, courbée dans la position caractéristique qu'on lui connait pour figurer la voûte du ciel, les pieds a l'est, les bras a l'ouest. En dessous

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[209] Hellinckx gives different interpretations for this figure that have been presented by the scholarly community including an identification with Heh in the role of a personification of eternity. For other interpretations see B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation," 62.

[210] B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation," 62.

de la déesse, prés de ses pieds, se trouve un scarabée-le soleil naissant-; derrière le lion se tiennent Isis et Nephthys. C'est bien le lion de l'Ouest, Rw.tj."[211]

V. Conclusion

The lack of evidence of sleeping individuals in the artistic record indicates the Egyptians hesitancy in depicting this vulnerable state. Even so, texts that mention sleep and dreams show their significance in the Egyptian worldview. Dreams provided a crucial look for the Egyptians into the Duat as well as providing Egyptologists a window into the Egyptian mind.

The headrest is frequently shown with beds in reliefs and the archaeological record. The curve of the headrest cradles the head in the same way as the mountains of the horizon cradle the rising and setting sun. The sleeper would place his head in the headrest at approximately the same time as the sun would set and then the sleeper's head would rise just as the sun rose the next morning.[212] The iconography of the bed contributes seamlessly to this argument by completing the image of the horizon. The lion legs of the bed, present on each side of the bed's occupant, would have guaranteed the sleeper a safe passage through the night with the presence of these lion guardians.

The images of death that appear in tombs illustrate the sleeping/deceased individual. The image of a sleeping person in the earthly realm may have been considered redundant or unnecessary within this context. The image of the mummiform deceased would have ensured the rebirth of the individual and the connections between sleep and death would have been evident to the viewer.

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[211] C. DeWit, *Le role et se sens du lion dans l'Egypte ancienne.* (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 132.

[212] B. Hellinckx, "The symbolic assimilation," 77.

Therefore, as a sign the images of sleeping or deceased individuals merged into one, as the connotations between the two were so intimately entwined. The terminology was, for the most part, interchangeable, so it would follow that the images of sleeping and death might also connect in the same way.

Chapter 5

Death

I. Introduction

In the paintings and reliefs of the New Kingdom, the bed appears most frequently within a funerary context. Often termed by Egyptologists as a funerary bier, or funerary couch, this manifestation of the bed is distinguished in the scholarship as separate from the bed of daily use found within the homes of the living.[213] The image of this bed

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[213] The literature surrounding death in Ancient Egypt is wide-ranging and encompasses works designed for a general audience to the most detailed scholar. While many separate volumes categorically address the objects of Tutankhamen's tomb, the funerary/domestic beds have not yet been published. One must turn to the separate publications for each tomb to find information on these objects. In "An Egyptian Funerary Bed of the Roman Period in the Royal Ontario Museum," Winifred Needler focuses on a funerary bed from the Roman period in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.[213] Needler gives a very comprehensive history of the lion bed. Needler assumes distinction between daily use beds (actual examples that have been found and those from New Kingdom tomb walls) and funerary/lion beds. She also states that Sennefer's tomb is the first time the famous scene of Anubis with the mummified deceased on a lion bed can be seen within tomb painting.

In Harold Hays' conference paper, "The Form and Context of the Lion-Bed," he deals exclusively with the lion bed which he determines "holds a specific---and, I think, exciting—constellation of ideas commonly associated with it."[213] He breaks down the category of lion bed into eight different types, examining the contexts of use in each one. He concludes that the "lion-bed is not restricted by form to context." This examination is unique in that it blurs the lines between what was considered a "domestic" bed and a "funerary" bed.

Beyond archaeological reports on beds, the most helpful information on this topic appears through specific research on the production of funerary goods and those that address the concept of death for the Egyptians. Kara Cooney's *The Cost of Death: the Social and Economic Value of Ancient Egyptian Funerary Art in the Ramesside Period* and Jac Janssen's *Commodity prices from the Ramessid period: an economic study of the village of Necropolis workmen at Thebes* both address the production of funerary beds and domestic beds (which had the potential to be used in a funerary setting) particularly within the community of Deir el-Medina.[213] There are also works which address this realm through the funerary art such as Sigrid Hodel-Hoenes' *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt: Scenes from Private Tombs in New Kingdom Thebes* and Abeer El-Shahawy's *The Funerary Art of Ancient Egypt: a Bridge to the Realm of the Hereafter*.[213] This general reference book focuses on eleven private Theban tombs, two from the Deir el Medina area. There are general discussions concerning the layout of each tomb and its decoration, coloration, function, history and excavation. The method allows a comprehensive approach to the complete decorative program of a single tomb from the New Kingdom. Hodel-Hoenes also includes translations of large amounts of text from the tomb walls.

The concept of death gets its most extensive treatment in Jan Assmann's *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt,* which addresses the attitudes and range of emotional and psychological responses of the Egyptians to death.[213] Jan Zandee had previously examined death as an enemy and element of chaos in *Death as an Enemy: According to Ancient Egyptian Conceptions.*

appears primarily on the walls of tombs but also within temples and funerary papyri. The adjective "funerary", as well as the use of the term "bier", indicates a difference in the function of this bed from the daily beds (also depicted within tombs) included with the funerary equipment. A closer examination of the terminology is needed in order to understand the purpose of this item of furniture.

As an actual object, there are only a few beds of that could be considered "funerary beds" remaining from the New Kingdom. These beds (mentioned previously in Chapter 2) do not correlate in an exact manner to the images depicted in the tombs and temples but the relationship between them is undeniable. It is therefore imperative to examine the various discrepancies between the material record and the artistic record as well as examining the images and words within the philological realm.

Before the New Kingdom, the so-called funerary bed is depicted infrequently in tombs or temples. However, in Dynasty 18, scenes from the afterlife were depicted more often, creating an increase in the prevalence of the bed's appearance. The most common image of the bed in Egyptian art comes from this funerary context, indicating the importance the bed held as a symbol for death and resurrection. The Egyptian concept of death must therefore be examined in order to understand the role the bed played within this realm.

An examination of the image of the bed within the tombs of the New Kingdom in Luxor provides a large corpus of material for the bed's role in the funerary sphere. The large numbers of elite tombs become the source for a database of images, which can then be studied for their contextual information. I have divided these images based on subject

matter rather than royal versus non-royal since many of the images are similar in composition and originate from similar resources (such as funeral papyri).

The image of the funerary bed is often defined as a bed with leonine elements. In addition to the bed's regular profile, the profile of a lion's head can be seen at the head end of the bed and a lion's tail is sometimes shown extending from the end of the bed and curling back over the body. Also, a footboard might appear in this representation. The legs of the bed are leonine although domestic beds at this time also have lion legs but are not generally included in the funerary bed category. Scholars have repeatedly called a bed with a specific funerary function a "couch" or a "bier" in order to distinguish its function in the scenes that they are described. Scholars have been known to use these terms in the literature next to each other or with the term "bed".[214] Therefore, this bed must, in general, appear in a different form than that of the so-called domestic bed. How then, to differentiate between the two forms, if that is what is necessary?

Leaving behind the term "bed" for the moment, "bier" and "couch" are popular terms within the scholarship for the piece of furniture that appears under the mummy. In modern day descriptions, a "bier" is typically defined as "a framework for carrying" or "a stand on which a corpse or coffin is placed" while the "couch" is "an article of furniture for sitting or reclining."[215] These two words are versatile and allow scholars to steer clear of giving this manifestation of the bed a particular label. However, is this distinction something that appears in the hieroglyphic record? There are a few terms, which appear

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[214] T. Säve-Söderbergh, *Four Eighteenth Dynasty Tombs*. *Private Tombs at Thebes*. (Oxford: printed for the Griffith Institute at the University Press, 1957), 39.

[215] Merriam Webster Online, www.merriam-webster.com.

to be specifically related to the bed in a funerary sense but this may be because of the accident of survival. Below is an abbreviated list of words that are translated as bier within the *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* and Faulkner's *Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*.[216]

Egyptian word	**translation**	**Reference in *Worterbuch* /Faulkner's *Dictionary***
ꜣẖ.t	bed; bier	Wb 1, 23.11-12
wꜣš	portable bier (?)	Wb 1, 262.12
mꜣj	lion-bier (of Osiris)	Wb 2, 12.8
mkꜣ.tj	He-upon-the-bier	Wb 2, 162.14
nmj.t	bier; bed	Wb 2, 266.2-5
ḥr.j-ḫ.t=f	one who is upon his belly; (Osiris upon his bier)	Wb 3, 135.2
šfdy.t	bier	Wb 4, 462.2-3: FCD 266
šs	bier (?)	Wb 4, 543.2

By examining this list, it is apparent that two words that are translated as "bier" appear next to, and interchangeably, with "bed". Some are specific such as *mꜣj* and *mkꜣ.tj* but overall, the words have flexibility with regards to their translation.[217]

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[216] See *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* and R. Faulkner's *Concise Dictionary*.

[217] *sytj.t* is identified as bier by Andreu/Cauville, RdE 30, 1978, 11, but Kara Cooney says that it is not a bier but should be translated as mummy board. See Kara Cooney, *The Cost of Death.*

However, the context and choice of glyphs used within the words are essential elements to determining the nature of the word by philologists. To dissect one example, the word *šfdy.t* appears in the tomb of Senet, the mother of Antefoker, dating to the Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BC).[218] The word is used to describe a scene of the so-called "nine friends" as they carry the sarcophagus of the deceased to the tomb. The use of a determinative depicting a bed with lion feet (but with no occupant) would lend one to translate the word as bed but with the undeniable funerary context the translation chosen by Davies was "bier".[219] Another incident where *šfdy.t* is used is in the *Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage*.[220] The translation of the line where the term appears has proven difficult since the discovery of the papyrus. Gardiner translates the line as "Behold, he who was buried as a hawk is …. What the pyramid concealed is become empty."[221] The difficulty lies in the construction of the sentence. The hawk is described as *šfdt* with the wood determinative—the hawk is a bier. After a deeper examination, Gardiner makes the final translation of "He who was buried as a hawk is (now) a (vacant) bier" and states "this meaning is strained and not very probable."[222] The Tobin translation in Simpson's *Literature of Ancient Egypt* is translated with the opposite meaning: he translates "Behold, he who was buried as a falcon (now) sleeps on a bier, And what the pyramid

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[218] N. Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker, Vizier of Sesostris I, and of His Wife, Senet*. (University of Michigan Library, 1920).

[219] N. Davies, *The Tomb of Antefoker,* 20.

[220] Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 198.

[221] Alan Gardiner, *The admonitions of an Egyptian sage from a hieratic papyrus in Leiden, Pap. Leiden 344 recto.* (Hildesheim: G. Olms Verlag, 1969), 54.

[222] Gardiner, *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage,* 54.

once held hidden will (now) be wanting."[223] Gardiner's translation is most likely closer to the true translation because, for now, the falcon is a bed—-where the falcon (or king) was buried, there is now an empty bed. This section of the *Admonitions* discusses how the world is turned on its head and all is not right with the world. However, the king is traditionally buried on a bier or bed so the opposite of this must be the true translation. The king is without his funerary bed—an unthinkable situation for the body of the king.

A new examination of the word comes from Isabelle Regen's article, "*šfdy.t* et la transport du mort." In this article she examines the six instances on five monuments where the word appears and comes to the conclusion that the word should actually be translated as "stretcher." But how different is the word "stretcher" from the word "bed"? They are certainly related as similar horizontal supports for the body but with the word "stretcher" there is the connotation of movement, which is integral to the word. For the Egyptians, however, the bed in general might have been tied to this idea of movement, particularly in its funerary sense. This concept will be examined later in this chapter.

Other terms have appeared in conjunction with this specific type of bed. The term "lion-bed" is more descriptive than bier or couch and makes clear the manifestation the bed takes within the image. However, there are difficulties in knowing the parameters which make up the so-called "lion-bed". Harold M. Hays discusses the "lion-bed" and states that there are eight different types of lion-bed appearing between Dynasty 4 and 25, with minor differences between them.[224] They either include or do not include the tail,

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[223] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 198.

[224] H. Hays, "The Form and Context of the Lion-Bed,"

head, or footboard but the leonine legs always remain as part of the bed's structure. These eight types range from the plain and undecorated "daily life" bed with leonine feet to the fully-formed bed with footboard, head, tail, and feet. Therefore, in his categories, Hay does not distinguish between the lion-bed, often referred to as a bier, and the bed of more common domestic use.

Winifred Needler categorizes beds into "daily life" beds and lion-beds.[225] Her distinction between the two is related to the object's structure and not function. The bed that had lion legs but no other indications of leonine qualities was placed in the "daily life" bed category along with beds with plain legs. Her lion-bed is defined by the appearance of the lion's head with/or without the tail. In Needler's chapter on the lion-bed, she states that, according to the tombs of Meru and Sebky (?) at Heliopolis and of Mena at Dendera, "it is unclear whether these beds (lion-beds) were used in daily life or only for ritual purposes, since they occur in inventories of offerings, not in scenes of activities."[226] However, there is an early image of the so-called lion-bed within an active scene and not just within an inventory list located in the Dynasty 6 tomb of Pepiankh, also called Heni the Black.[227] The "lion-bier", as it is called by Aylward Blackman, is carried by three men into the Tent of Purification, or *jbw,* and then to the Embalmer's workshop, and eventually in reverse order to retrieve the body from the embalmer's

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[225] See W. Needler, *An Egyptian Funerary Bed*, Chapter 1.

[226] Scenes of inventories of offerings depict objects gathered for a temple or palace. Needler, *An Egyptian Funerary Bed,* 5.

[227] D. O'Connor, "Sexuality, statuary and the afterlife; scenes in the tomb-chapel of Pepyankh (Heny the Black): an interpretive essay." In Peter Der Manuelian, (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson* vol. 2, 621-633. In tomb chapel A, No. 2, Room F, east and west wall.

workshop and to the tent of purification possibly to perform the opening of the mouth ceremony. This early image of the bed displays its funerary function as the bed is the support for the coffin and body as it goes through the stages of the funerary procession.

The bed eventually becomes part of the accouterment of Osiris in the Middle Kingdom as well as the deceased who begins to be identified with Osiris during this period. The Middle Kingdom coffin and funerary bed of Ity, son of Satsobek, from Thebes (Cairo SR 19/11/27/4) appears to be a three-dimensional example of what would later become the image of the deceased carried in the funerary processions in New Kingdom tomb paintings.[228] The assemblage consists of two parts: the lion-bed (with a open-top framework) and the coffin. Maspero describes the mummy and bed as early as 1884 in the *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Égyptien*: "Comme toujours, les pieds ont la forme de pattes de lion: les pattes de devant supportant un mufle de lion a la tete, les pattes de derriere au pied."[229] The upper portion has a framework consisting of a cutout *khekher* frieze which rises to a height just above the mummy.[230] The bed, which supports the mummy, depicts the lion heads at the head of both sides of the bed, creating one of the earliest three-dimensional objects, which shows the bed in this form.

After an examination of the bed, Jacobus van Dijk summarized it thus: "We must therefore be facing a model of a mummification bed."[231] Van Dijk believes that this

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[228] P. Rigault and É. Delange "Le lit funéraire de Djéhoutyhotep (Louvre AF 9170)" *Revue d'égyptologie*, vol. 60 (2009): 109.

[229] G. Maspero, *Bulletin de l'Institut* Égyptien, 1884, 64.

[230] A *khekher* frieze Ancient Egyptian decorative frieze consisting of papyrus-stalks tied together.

coffin was influenced by the design of an embalming bed. Upon closer inspection, however, it is unclear which came first in this case, embalming beds with lion-heads or funerary objects constructed in this manner. The accident of survival creates a difficult timeline in which to reconstruct the first appearance of the lion-bed.

Another image of the lion-bed is to be found in a sculpture of Osiris on a lion-bed found in the early dynastic tomb of Djer in Abydos (Fig. 5.1). During the New Kingdom, and perhaps even earlier, this tomb was identified as that of Osiris.[232] The black basalt statue depicts Osiris on a lion-bier, which has a lion head on each side as well as a tail and two front and back legs for each animal. There are two kites present at each end of Osiris and another perched on top of his body, labeled Isis. Thought to be a focal point of the cult of Osiris at Abydos, the sculpture has been variously dated to the Middle Kingdom and the Late Period. In "The Osiris 'Bed' Reconsidered," Anthony Leahy argues in favor of a Middle Kingdom to Second Intermediate Period date based on the epigraphic evidence, as stylistic dating has proved inconclusive.[233]

Due to the prevalent use of the image of the lion-bed in later contexts, it is difficult to find any one context in which this funerary bed appears. Hay's conclusion that the lion-bed is not restricted by context would appear to be true but, as in most cases with Egyptian art, there are general trends that emerge, primarily from New Kingdom

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[231] H. Willems, "The Embalmer Embalmed: Remarks on the Meaning of the Decoration of Some Middle Kingdom Coffins," in Jacobus van Dijk (ed.) *Essays on ancient Egypt in honour of Herman te Velde*. Egyptological Memoirs 1. (Groningen: Styx, 1997), 359, footnote 56.

[232] A. Leahy, "The Osiris Bed 'Reconsidered'." *Orientalia* 46 (1977): 424–434. Leahy sites Kemp in his footnote, no. 5

[233] A. Leahy, "The Osiris Bed 'Reconsidered', 426. A wide range of dates from the Old Kingdom to the Late Period have been suggested.

Theban elite' tombs. A closer look at the instances of when and where the bed appears in these New Kingdom examples allows a closer understanding of the concepts the bed may have represented.

The bed appears in various locations related to a funerary context. The majority of examples are found within the scenes of the non-royal tombs located on the west bank of the Nile across from modern Luxor. Of these examples, a number of scene types feature the bed as the main element of the composition. Due to the large number of extant tombs, these scenes can be catalogued by their scene types, allowing for a nuanced look at the use of the bed. Royal tombs from both the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens also have scenes with beds in a funerary context. While there are a few unusual examples, most of these can be firmly placed within the same scene types found within the non-royal tombs. However, defining a funerary context can be difficult when there can be multiple levels of meaning informing the images. For the purposes of this chapter, I have divided the material based on the context of the image within its immediate setting rather than the larger architectural context. For instance, although images of beds appear in inventory scenes within Theban tombs, I have chosen to categorize these scenes elsewhere since their main immediate subject matter is not funerary in nature.

Tombs located at other sites also display the bed in a funerary context. The tombs at El Kab and Amarna have examples which can be placed within the same scene categories that materialize in the non-royal tombs of Luxor, indicating a consistency of funerary concepts present not only during a specific time, but also throughout the country. However, tombs are not the only funerary context in which the bed appears. They also appear in the reliefs of mortuary temples, most notably the temples of Seti I at

Abydos and Qurna. Funerary papyri, the source of many of the images found in the non-royal tombs, contain different scene types that include the bed. Finally, there are three-dimensional representations of the bed depicting the deceased alone on a bed, or accompanied by the *ba* bird.

The different funerary locations in which the bed appears indicates how strongly linked it was to the concept of death. Seeing the bed with a mummy or deceased individual would immediately alert the viewer to its funerary nature. So if this image of the bed with and without the deceased is found in all these locations, what exactly does this say about the Egyptian view of death? Did the sign of the bed change within various funerary contexts? And is it a completely different sign with the mummy placed on the bed?

II. The New Kingdom concept of death

In order to explore the bed within a funerary context, one must examine the ideas of death in the ancient Egyptian worldview. Death for the Egyptians was not a static concept throughout their thousands of years of culture, but there were elements which held constant. Foremost, there was the need to preserve the body. The body was one of the vital elements of the individual along with the individual's *ba, ka,* name, and shadow. Life was seen as a series of stages such as birth, maturity, old age, and death. Death was not the end but another phase through which a person would pass. Spell 178 of the Book of the Dead states that death was "the night of going forth to life" linking the concept of death to the cycle of sleep.[234]

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[234] J. Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt.* University of Chicago (2001), 12. See Taylor's relation of sleep to death in chapter 4.

Egyptians had a dualistic view of death itself, viewing it as both a friend and an enemy. The uncertainty of death was feared by the Egyptians although their thorough preparations were attempts to quell their trepidation. The anxiety of death did not escape them nor did the weariness of life that sometimes accompanied the end of the life cycle. Ancient literature provides insight into the Egyptians' views of death. "The Dispute between a Man and his *Ba*" comes from a group of texts known as wisdom literature and focuses on the thoughts of an unhappy man as he discusses death with his *ba*.[235] Although this text comes from the Middle Kingdom, it becomes clear that the Egyptians held a complex psychological view of death from very early in their history.

My *ba* is senseless in disparaging the agony in life,

And impels me to death before my time.

/And yet the West will be pleasant for me, for there is no sorrow there.

Such is the course of life, and even trees must fall.

So trample down my illusions, for my distress is endless.[236]

However, the man's *ba* later emphasizes the fact that even if he was a king, his monuments would crumble and there would be no one to administer his funerary cult:

Even those who built with stones of granite,

Who constructed magnificent pyramids,

Perfecting them with excellent skill,

So that the builders might become gods,

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[235] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 178.

[236] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 180.

Now their offering stones are empty,

And they are like those who die on the riverbank with no survivors.

/The flood carries off some, and likewise the sun (takes) others,

And now only the fish are curious about them at the edge of the river.[237]

Death was an integrated part of everyday life for the Egyptians and crucial to the understanding of their worldview. Modern Western culture has fought hard to segregate the subject of death and its related issues from the everyday world. Jan Assmann classifies early cultures into two categories: those that feared death and those that did not.[238] The Egyptians, however, had a unique view of death within history: "The Egyptians certainly did not accept death, but they also did not repress it. It was on their minds in many ways, unlike the western world that does not readily confront it. In Egyptian culture, as in no other, we may observe what it means not to accept death and yet to place it at the center of every thought and deed, every plan and act, to make it, in every possible way, the theme of the culture they created."[239] Death provides the impetus for the creation of this unique worldview and in turn this culture provided what was missing in the lives of the Egyptians as they dealt with death—an everlasting existence.

The tomb's primary roles were to function as a place to protect the body and serve as the principal location of the individual's funerary cult. The architectural design of

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[237] W. Simpson, ed. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt,* 182.

[238] J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation,* 17.

[239] J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation,* 17.

both non-royal and royal tombs changed over time but most had two architectural elements which addressed these functions: the burial chamber, which held the body, and a tomb chapel or shrine, which was essential for the activities of the funerary cult. In the New Kingdom, the non-royal chapels were often T-shaped and consisted of a transverse hall, longitudinal hall, cult chapel niche, and burial shaft. Outside, there was often a courtyard that served a solar function. The chapels, and occasionally burial chambers, were decorated with various scenes often grouped into categories such as "daily life" and funerary scenes.

The Egyptian tomb worked on a many levels. The entire structure was designed on multiple planes to ensure the successful transition of the deceased individual into an *akh,* or one of the transfigured dead. In her book, *Tomb Painting and Identity in Ancient Thebes 1419-1372 BC*, Melinda Hartwig discusses the role of the tomb in establishing an eternal identity for the individual and creating a space for the resurrection of the deceased.[240] The tomb was often called the "house of eternity" (a fitting location for the bed to play a prominent role).

However, the tomb could also represent the cosmos, a reflection of the world at the beginning of its creation and at its most perfect moment. Janice Kamrin discusses the role of the cosmos in the tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hassan from the Middle Kingdom.[241] While this tomb dates to a time before the New Kingdom, Kamrin's conclusions can be applied to tombs of other time periods. The tomb as a cult location

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[240] M. Hartwig. *Tomb Painting and Identity in Ancient Thebes, 1419-1372 BCE*. (Brussels, Turnhout, Belgium: Fondation égyptologique reine Elisabeth; Brepols, 2004).

[241] J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos of Khnumhotep II* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

represented the Egyptian cosmos. Kamrin discusses how this was present on three levels: the personal cosmos of Khnumhotep II (with its link to the present life of the individual and his location), the royal cosmos (landscape of the terrestrial realm) and the "Egyptian cosmos as a whole, evoked in its entirety within this tomb."[242] She also discusses how the chapels at Beni Hasan represent "personal mortuary temples" where the outer court represents the festival court, the chapel represents the hypostyle hall, and the shrine stands in for the sanctuary.[243] The tomb functioned on many levels as did the images within. A lion-bed appears in a carpentry scene on the north part of the west wall of the chapel[244] and the bed reappears with the deceased lying on top in an anthropoid coffin (labeled as Khnumhotep) on a papyrus skiff on his way to Abydos (scene W16).[245] Kamrin mentions that the bed must be an important object as it is the only one shown completed within the carpentry scene.

In the tombs of the New Kingdom, gods begin to appear in tomb paintings.[246] These changes are apparent in the decisions made to depict images of the afterlife, which were not often shown in earlier tombs. This trend peaked in the Ramesside Period, with the deceased and his relationship with the gods becoming the primary visual focus.

The early New Kingdom followed many of the elements of the mortuary cult of the Second Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom. Within the later part of the New

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[242] J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos*, 140.

[243] J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos*, 165.

[244] J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos*, 61.

[245] J. Kamrin, *The Cosmos*, 77.

[246] J. Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife*, 139.

Kingdom, there came a marked shift in the concept of the afterlife. This had an impact on all funerary elements including the material culture such as the tomb structure, equipment, and decoration. During the Ramesside period, the focus of the funerary equipment became more tailored to objects used only in the afterlife, and images of "daily life" scenes began to disappear from the tomb walls. While there are a few Dynasty 18 burials found undisturbed, the tomb of Sennedjem (TT 1) is the only tomb from Dynasty 19 found with its complete burial equipment.[247]

Almost all rulers of the New Kingdom were buried in the Valley of the Kings. Here it is apparent that the tomb is a representation of the cosmos as the walls were often decorated with funerary texts, which emphasized the cycle of the god Ra as he moved through the heavens during the day and through the underworld at night. These texts were reserved for royalty

Non-royal tombs of Dynasty 18 depicted the owner in his role during life and, hopefully, after death. His relationship to the king was stressed by the placement of images of the pharaoh in various locations in the tomb. In Dynasty 19 tombs, there was an increase of images of the tomb owner with various gods and goddesses, which heralded a shift in tomb design from daily life scenes to that of the afterlife.

III. Images containing the bed in New Kingdom funerary contexts

Below I have listed the types of scenes in which the bed appears in the New Kingdom tombs of elite and royal individuals. These include specific tombs dated to the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth dynasties from Thebes, El Kab, and Amarna.

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[247] B. Bruyère,, *La Tombe No.1 de Sen-Nedjem a Deir el-Medineh*, Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'lnstitut français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, tome LXXXVIII, Le Caire, 1959.

The most ubiquitous scene of a bed appearing in tombs first in the New Kingdom and continuing to the Graeco-Roman period is the image of Anubis attending the mummy. With its vast dissemination throughout all parts of Egypt in both time and location, and with its use on multiple types of monuments and objects, it is almost impossible to record every occurrence of its appearance. Indeed, this scene becomes so common in later periods that much of the funerary art, particularly mummy cartonnages, depicts this scene in one form or another.

The scene consists of Anubis attending a mummy that rests on a lion-bed with Isis and Nephthys flanking each end (Fig. 5.2). Appearing first in tombs in Dynasty 18 and more frequently in Dynasty 19, this image often shows the bed in a different form—not only does the bed have the legs of a lion but also the tail and the head, depicted above the leg at the head of the bed. Different versions lack the Isis and Nephthys figures (Fig. 5.3) while others place different objects or hieroglyphs under the bed (Fig. 5.4). Also, there can be instances where Isis and Nephthys are shown by themselves and as kites (Fig. 5.5).

One of the earliest instances of this scene appearing in a tomb is TT 96B of Sennefer (Fig. 5.6).[248] Located within the decorated burial chamber, the scene shows a direct connection to Spell 151 of the Book of the Dead and displays the same square-like structure surrounding the figures of Anubis and the mummy as those that appear in papyri. The bed rests on a sledge within a shrine. The canopic jars, which later appear regularly under the bed in scenes of this type, are not present but the owner's *ba* bird is

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[248] W. Needler, *An Egyptian Funerary Bed*, 6.

present instead. The bed has a lion-head and legs with a tail curled over the foot end. The four magic bricks of the four sons of Horus, who each preside over one canopic jar, are depicted in the corners of the structure, which is most likely the tomb itself. In Spell 151, the gods present in the scene offer their protection and a shabti offers his services for the deceased. Due to the rarity of occurrences where the burial chamber is decorated as well as the chapel, it is interesting that the artists used the vignette of Spell 151 to decorate Sennefer's burial chamber. An image of the burial chamber inside the burial chamber of Sennefer would have ensured the continued existence of the structure through the power of the image, in the same way the images of the tomb chapel worked for the tomb owner in the afterlife.

This scene appears quite frequently in the tombs of Deir el-Medina dating from Dynasty 19.[249] The increased emphasis placed on the depictions of the gods and the afterlife most likely led to the popularity of this image as a decorative choice. It becomes an icon of the preservation of the body in the afterlife, magically functioning to protect it, in the event of damage.

Other images of this scene appear without Anubis but with the goddesses Isis and Nephthys in position. In the mortuary temple of Seti I at Qurna, an image, which usually appears in the tombs and funerary papyri, makes an appearance. Seti I is shown as a mummiform figure with Isis and Nephthys flanking the body, possibly located in a shrine or structure. The relief is in an extremely poor state of preservation and the upper half of the scene has been destroyed. Porter and Moss state, "Osiris on bier between mourning

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[249] Though difficult to calculate there are approximately 18 tombs in Deir el-Medina with this scene.

women, and at right end standard of the West (personified) making *nini* (greeting?)"[250] This scene functions in the same way as it would in a tomb, giving the king an image of the protection of his body for his journey into the afterlife.

The mummy appears in state on the lion-bed in a few instances without the immediate presence of deities or in the funeral procession. Of four examples, the earliest comes from TT 277, the Dynasty 19 tomb of Amenemonet, and depicts the mummy on a lion-bed that has the head, legs, and tail of a lion (Fig. 5.7). The ba bird hovers over the deceased while a priest uses a censor on the left. The remaining three examples, TT 220, the tomb of Khaemteri, TT 306, the tomb of Irzanen, and TT 409, the tomb of Simut, called Kyky, also date to the Ramesside period and depict the mummy with priests, mourners, and various instruments of the funeral ritual. Although these scenes are categorically different, they are characteristically close to the images of the mummy with Anubis, Isis, and Nephthys, the images of the mummy as it travels in the funerary procession, and the image of the deceased with his *ba.*

The bed appears many times in the latter part of the funerary procession which is distinct from the section of the procession mentioned above. Here, the bed supports the mummy, canopic jars, coffins, and various types of equipment directly related to the body of the deceased. Often the bed appears under the mummy, which rests on top of the sarcophagus, indicating that both of these objects are actually within. The placement of the bed within the sarcophagus in order to support the coffin recalls the example of

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[250] B. Porter and R. L. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings. II. Theban Temples.* (Second Edition Revised and Augmented, Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1972), 416.

Tutankhamen's gold lion-bed, which supported the three coffins that were placed within his sarcophagus.

One of the few images from the tomb of Tutankhamen (KV 62) contains a bed in a procession (Fig. 5.8). On the east wall of the burial chamber is a large scene, consisting of only one main register that depicts the nine friends, along with priests, pulling the coffin of the king as it rests on a lion-bed. This image accurately reflects the use of the bed within the actual sarcophagus as found by Howard Carter during his excavations of the burial chamber.[251]

South of Luxor, at El Kab, there are rock-cut tombs dating from Dynasty 18 which are similar in subject matter to those of the Theban tombs. Two of the tombs have images of the bed in funerary processions. In the tomb of Renni, Nomarch of El Kab during the reign of Amenhotep I, the bed appears twice on the east wall as it makes it way along the funerary procession, once supporting the sarcophagus or canopic chest (Fig. 5.9) and the other supporting the mummy during a libation ritual. This is an unusual example of tomb art during the early part of Dynasty 18, which gives scholars a better understanding of the transition of Middle Kingdom tomb art into the canon of the New Kingdom.

The bed appears three times in Paheri, a nomarch of El Kab was in office ruled during the reign of Thutmose III. The bed is shown within the funerary procession scenes on the west wall of the tomb. In the upper register, the bed is shown supporting the coffin of Paheri, and both rest on top of the sarcophagus (Fig. 5.10). The whole

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[251] For an in-depth examination of this scene and bed, see the case study in Chapter 6.

assemblage is placed on a sledge within a canopied shrine, which is pulled by two oxen. Female figures on either side play the roles of Isis and Nephthys and mourn the deceased in his role of Osiris. In a lower register, what is presumably the sarcophagus is shown being transported on a boat, attended by three men and two women, possibly the same Isis and Nephthys figures as before. Finally, the bed appears as supporting the sarcophagus/canopic shrine as it makes its way to the tomb (Fig. 5.11). The repeated use of the image of the lion-bed as a piece of support furniture gives the procession a narrative feel as well as one of movement as we can trace the objects on their way to the tomb. Many of these examples occur in what is known as the sacred district, termed the "rites in the garden" by Porter and Moss. This section of the burial ritual followed earlier ritual practices known as the Butic burial and the ritual journeys to Sais and Heliopolis which were considered crucial to the funerary rituals of Dynasty 18.

There still exists a possible precedent for the use of the bed within these types of scenes, which hail specifically from the area. In the tomb of Senet, mother of vizier Antefoker, (TT 60) from the reign of Senwosret I, there are two images of the bed, which appear in the burial rituals. Along the top registers of the south wall, the bed appears as a lion-bed underneath the coffin on a boat accompanied by Isis, Nephthys, a lector, and a *sm*-priest (Fig. 5.12). The same boat then appears later as it moves onto land, being pulled by a sledge. It is greeted by the *mww* dancers, reflecting a consistency in subject matter with the later portrayals of the New Kingdom.

In a later scene located in the middle and bottom registers of the south wall, the coffin appears shouldered by four attendants. The inscription states, "the nine courtiers carrying (it) on the bier." Davies makes a note that there are neither nine attendants nor a

bier in the scene but the inscription most likely alludes to the concept of the nine friends, who were attendants in this portion of the ritual and often depicted in groups numbering from nine down to an abbreviated three. The bier, although not present here, is present under the coffin in similar scenes from the New Kingdom tombs.

Creating a list of the tombs with these beds presents the same difficulties as those of the funerary procession. Many of these tombs are not published but the work of Jürgen Settgast in *Untersuchungen zu Altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen* gives an indication of the number of tombs with beds appearing within the sacred district.[252] Settgast's simple line drawings of the components of these scenes are lacking in detail but he does make a point to distinguish the types of beds.

The funerary procession occurs in many Theban tombs with various formats and styles. The bed appears in a number of these scenes but in many instances Porter and Moss only list "funeral procession" for the content of the register. With many tombs unpublished, it is hard to know for certain if there is a bed present. In a typical scene such as that in the tomb of Ramose (TT 55), the bed is carried by two male attendants in a procession with the funerary furniture and equipment for the tomb (Fig. 5.13). Variations have one or three males carrying the bed often with a small child underneath carrying another object such as a small chest. In TT 181, the tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky, the scene contains a bed with a headrest in position carried by two men, with a small nude male adolescent underneath. The adolescent steadies a small chest on his head with one

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[252] J. Settgast, *Untersuchungen zu altägyptischen Bestattungsdarstellungen*, (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo, Ägyptologische Reihe, Bd. 3, 1963).

hand while he carries a small staff and headrest or headrest-amulet that is attached to the staff.

In TT 96B, the tomb of Sennefer, the scene of Anubis and the bed is not the only location where the bed appears in the burial chamber. The bed occurs at the very entrance into the antechamber in a scene of a funerary procession (Fig. 5.14). The bed is very simple in design but is distinctive with its form and lion legs. The procession moves around the edge of the wall towards a large image of Sennefer where other funerary objects in the procession can be seen. The mummy mask, shawabtis, chests, and necklaces are all shown as objects carried by the bearers (Fig. 5.15). These scenes of movement from the realm of the living to the realm of the dead aided the deceased in his transportation into the afterlife.

In this scene type, which re-emerges during the reign of Thutmose III, the bed is prepared by a servant who is often shown smoothing the bed or placing the headrest into position. This scene certainly has its origins in the similar scene type from the Old Kingdom, where it is found in mastabas at Saqqara and Giza. With only approximately five examples of this small scene type appearing in Theban tombs, this visual use of the bed can be closely examined in a way in which the above three types cannot. An examination of the scene, its placement within the tomb, and its neighboring scenes allows a detailed view of the use of this sign within the language of the tomb.

In his short article from 1923, T.H. Greenlees entitles the scene of bed preparation from TT 260, “An Unusual Tomb Scene from Dirâ 'Abu'l-Negâ.” While this scene is certainly unusual, he also states that it is “nearly or entirely unique” which we now know to be untrue. Written evidence has been recorded for this scene in five tombs, TT 53, TT

82, TT 99, TT 140, and TT 260, but only documented visual evidence remains from TT 82, TT 99, TT 140, and TT 260. In *Five Theban Tombs*, Davies states that, in his opinion, a scene from the West corridor on the east wall of TT 103, the Dynasty 11 tomb of Daga, shows "remains of a bed or chair under a canopy supported on slight columns and of men approaching it." The accompanying footnote states, "I think it showed the bed being spread by servants as in *Deir el-Gebrâwi,* II., P1. xxxiii." This scene could be a local precedent, which the Theban artisans might have noted but there are currently no remaining images of this scene (Davies did not include the image in his own publication).

Interestingly, these scenes are often placed immediately to the inside of the doorway of the inner chamber. TT 260, the tomb of User, holds a scene of bed-making just inside a doorway (Fig. 5.16). This tomb is one small room, lacking the T-shape of many tombs of this time. From the reign of Thutmose III, this tomb depicts two registers to the immediate left inside the door. The top register contains the image of bed-making with a female servant leaning over the bed smoothing the linen and placing the headrest into position. There is a mirror, kohl pot, and jar with a red-like substance located under the bed. The bottom register depicts a scene with three attendants. The first is a young nude female smoothing the cushion of the chair, which also holds a jar with a red-like substance in it. The second attendant is a female in a white shift dress holding a jar in her forward hand and possibly a mirror in her rear one. The final attendant appears to be male by the color of his skin and also carries a jar of red ware.

There appears to have been a lower third register which held another scene. Remains of the upper part of a shrine or canopy can be seen in the top right portion of the register. This object might be related to the canopy over the mummy, which is present in

the funeral procession on the left-hand wall of the tomb. This would directly tie the images of the bed into the funeral procession scenes.

In TT 99, the tomb of Senneferi, the image is located to the left side of the doorway of the inner chamber past an autobiographical text (Fig. 5.17). The scene consists of a female attendant shown from the waist up bending over at a slight angle, most likely to smooth the linens of a bed. A large damaged section exists where the image of the bed once stood, but it is clear from the canopy placed over the bed and the candle stand on the left that this was an area for a bed. The presence of the god Bes to the left of the candle stand also confirms this theory, particularly in his associations with the decoration and activities of the bed. Nigel Strudwick states that this may be the first time the god is shown in a tomb painting.[253]

As the wall turns, the funeral procession begins, creating a possible link to the previous scene. Why is this scene not included with those of "daily life" typically shown within the transverse hall? It is generally thought that the function of the rooms change as one moves back from the transverse hall further into the chapel. The scenes often show a progression from secular to ritual concerns. Therefore, it is revealing that these images of the preparation of the bed occur between the images of "daily life" and the funerary procession. This scene is certainly between two worlds and the bed is an indicator of a liminal location.

The scene with the attendant is not, therefore, a simple display of daily life within the household of the tomb owner but rather a preparation of the future use of the bed for

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[253] From the Tomb of Senneferi, by Nigel Strudwick: http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/tt99/

the owner in the next world. This scene was used in a similar way in the Old Kingdom tombs where often the bedroom was shown along with the bed. A closer look at other tombs shows common links of this scene to the preparation for the afterlife.

In TT 140, an interesting combination of scenes on two separate registers indicates the link between the bed and its future sexual function in the afterlife (Fig. 5.18).[254] In the top register, a male attendant places a headrest on the mattress of the bed. Beneath the bed, a possible wine jar is placed on a stand. In the bottom register, a female arranges the hair of another female who is seated in front of her, holding a mirror. This woman is depicted at a lower level, presumably so it will be easier for her to have her hair styled by the other woman. Derchain discusses the erotic complications of this scene and compares it to the cryptogram from the tomb at Beni Hasan.[255] These scenes depict the imagery evoked by New Kingdom love poetry mentioned in previous chapters.

In all of these scenes, there is a very important element missing—the tomb owner. It is quite possible that the image evokes the absence of the tomb owner in his own household, as the funeral procession marches towards the tomb, but the sexual elements such as the nude females and toiletry items evoke the fertility figurines mentioned in previous chapters. TT 82 and TT 53 both held images of females making a bed but the lack of visual resources does not indicate if these females were nude or not. However, most attendants making beds in the Theban tombs are female, while the male shown in TT 140 is counterbalanced by the erotic scene of hair-dressing in the register below. In

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[254] For more on this tomb see M. Baud, *Les dessins ébauchés de la nêcropole thebaine (au temps du Nouvel Empire)*. MIFAO 63, Cairo, 1935.

[255] P. Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 2, 1975, 66-67.

his article, "Sexuality, Statuary and the Afterlife: Scenes in the Tomb-chapel of Pepyankh (Heny the Black). An Interpretive Essay," David O'Connor discusses a set of scenes on the north wall of Room A of Tomb Chapel A, no. 2, in Meir owned by Pepyankh.[256] The scenes are not at first easily relatable to each other in content but O'Connor suggests that they are erotically encoded for reasons that include the image of bed construction (the bed being a direct link to sexual activity) and the construction of a door (necessary for privacy reasons). These scenes lead O'Connor to theorize that the doorway cut into this wall led into Pepi's wife's burial chamber which would also hav the function of a bedroom, allowing the couple to continue their sexual activity into the next life. With this hypothesis in mind, the placement of these New Kingdom bed-making scenes could indicate a similar function for the inner-most room of the tomb chapel as a possible location for the renewal of the tomb owner's life through sexual relations indicated by the presence of the bed.

In rare instances, the bed appears as an item of furniture on the journey to Abydos or to the tomb of the owner. In TT 57, the tomb of Khaemhat, the bed can be seen on top, and therefore, inside, the structure located on the boat (Fig. 5.19). The headrest is in position and there is also a mattress. It can be seen again on another boat as well. In TT 69, the tomb of Menna, the bed appears on a boat on the journey to Abydos. It is also placed in a similar location with the headrest in position. All of these beds only have the lion-legs typical of the New Kingdom bed design and show no indication of an immediate funerary use. The beds are present, most likely, to denote wealth and prestige

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[256] D. O'Connor, "Sexuality, statuary and the afterlife; scenes in the tomb-chapel of Pepyankh (Heny the Black): an interpretive essay." In Manuelian, Peter Der (ed.), *Studies in honor of William Kelly Simpson* 2, 621-633. (Boston: Dept. of Ancient Egyptian, Nubian and Near Eastern Art, Museum of Fine Arts, 1996.)

in a similar fashion to the funerary procession and provide sleeping accommodations for the deceased for the journey.

In *The Funerary Art of Ancient Egypt*, Abeer el-Shawawy states that there seems to be confusion concerning the boats that were used during the funerary procession and the boats used during the pilgrimage to Abydos.[257] Personal items, including beds, which were typically shown in the funeral procession appear on boats going to Abydos. Now, whether this is "confusion" as el-Shawawy states or rather an amalgamation of these two scene types, as I would posit, is indeterminable. (El-Shawawy states that in Theban tomb 78 the boats are labeled as "crossing in peace to Abydos" with an added "that it may arrive in western Thebes" and that this may be further evidence for the combining of the two elements.

The tomb is not the only space devoted to the funerary realm. The bed also appears in papyri, mortuary temples, and sculpture, which celebrate this transition. The bed takes center stage in certain scenes which appear in these contexts such as the *ba* returning to the mummy (which is lying on a bed) and the union of Isis and Osiris where Osiris is typically shown reclining on a bed.

The royal tomb at Amarna holds evidence of two, probably three, beds within its remaining wall reliefs. The depictions are not of the simplified, empty room often shown in the palace depictions of the elite' tombs, but of events which occur inside the bedroom (or room where the bed is located). These images are located in a separate set of rooms referred to by Bouriant as *alpha, beta,* and *gamma*, which form a separate set of rooms to

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[257] El-Shahawy, *The Funerary Art of Ancient Egypt,* 24.

the right of the main corridor of the tomb. On the lower section of Wall F of *alpha*, the king and queen stand in a mourning position with their arms raised at the head of a bed, which is occupied by an unknown figure (Fig. 5.20).[258] There are traces of a figure in the publications but Geoffrey Martin states in *The Royal Tomb at el-ʿAmarna* that the figure lying on the bed was probably mummiform rather than showing an arm, which is indicated by the early copies of Bouriant.[259] The only indications of a bed are the lion-leg and footrest located at the foot of the bed. There are two registers located to the right of this scene, which show the mourners along with the presentation of a child, most likely emerging from the room of the deceased. The appearance of a vizier and the open fan, or *flabellum*, an indication of royalty, allude to the possibility that this is a royal child.

The scene located in the register above this points to a high probability that it too, had a bed with a deceased person. Akhenaten and Nefertiti stand in the same position of mourning at, what is presumably, the head of the bed. No traces are left of the bed but the design of the scene seems to be similar to the one in the register below.

A scene in *gamma* is also very similar in content to the scenes in *alpha*. *Gamma* is thought to be the location of the burial of princess Meketaten, due to the depicted scenes. After the unfortunate destruction of the reliefs in modern times, only the footboard and part of the horizontal portion of the bed are still extent. The scene in gamma on Wall A depicts the royal couple standing to the right/head of the bed just as in

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[258] Almost nothing remains from this scene.

[259] U. Bouriant, G. Legrain and G. Jéquier, *Monuments pour servir à l'étude du culte d'Atonou en Égypte*, MIFAO 8 (Cairo: IFAO, 1903).

the scenes from alpha. Three registers show the mourners along with a woman nursing a small child.

Much conjecture has been made with regards to the subject matter of these scenes. The intense emotion shown (with Akhenaten supporting Nefertiti by the arm) and depiction of the moment of death of an individual stray from the scenes shown in the chapels of the Theban tombs. All scenes point to a connection with the birth of a child and the death of a royal female family member. However, the bed was not usually the location for the birth of a child but rather the birth arbor, or *Wochenlaube*, so it is curious that the child is brought directly out of the bedroom where the mother is generally conjectured to have just died. The bed in this instance has become the visual signifier for the locus of birth as well as death, a sign, which correlates to the use of the bed outside of the Amarna period. The mother has completed her task of continuing the royal line yet has died in the process, making the bed an appropriate visual location for both events. Anna Stevens discusses the connection of fertility to the royal women in her article, "The Amarna royal women as images of fertility," and it is clear that the population of Akhetaten connected these women to the concept of fertility.

The sexual union of the deities Isis and Osiris is one of the most dynamic myths. While the elements of the myth change throughout pharaonic Egypt, the sexual union of the two is an essential moment for the Egyptian worldview, as it is through this union that their son Horus is born. The pharaoh's connection to Horus as his representative on earth creates a direct link back to this moment of divine conception. This union is both sexual and funerary in nature as the sexual act takes place after the death and resurrection of Osiris.

In a typical scene, Isis is shown as a bird alighting on the mummy of Osiris who is sometimes explicitly shown as ithyphallic. The funerary bed becomes the location of this union, mirroring the sexual function of the bed in the world of the living. Osiris is able to sexually reproduce, an essential function for the afterlife. The transfigured dead, who hoped to be transformed into the god Osiris after death, would have also acquired this reproductive capability.

Some of the more explicit images of a sexual nature come from the myth of Osiris and Isis and are depicted in the temple of Seti I at Abydos. From as far back as Predynastic times, Abydos was an important religious center. While there are many chapels dedicated to various gods including Seti himself in the temple, there is a strong emphasis on the rituals of the cult of Osiris. The scenes, which include beds, are located in the Osiris complex of rooms and the Ptah-Sokar chapel located between the main portion of the temple and the Gallery of Lists.

There is a set of rooms often referred to as the Nefertem-Ptah-Sokar Complex that consists of a three-columned chamber, which is entered from the second Hypostyle hall, and two chapels which extend to the rear. These chapels are named after the Memphite gods which were celebrated within (Nefertem and Ptah-Sokar) and it is quite possible that a third chapel to the goddess Sekhmet was intended for this space to complete the trinity.[260] It has been shown that these chapels were most likely used in the "ritual of the

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[260] Evidence suggests that there would have been a third chapel or possibly part of the stairway passage. Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 98.

royal ancestors," a set of daily rites performed by priests which moved from the chapel of Seti I into these rooms.

In the lower right scene of the south wall, Isis is shown as a bird alighting on the ithyphallic mummy of Osiris who is flanked by the figures of Isis at the head of the bed and Horus at the foot (Fig. 5.21). Two falcons appear at the ends of the bed. Underneath the bier are (from right to left), Thoth, the cobra goddess Mut, a second cobra goddess Nennwt, and the baboon Ifet.[261] This scene depicts the conception of Horus, which may seem strange considering that an adult manifestation of Horus is present at his own conception. This contradiction was certainly not a problem for the Egyptians, as the cyclical nature of the scene would have allowed for this and mythical time was perceived outside of real time.

The bed in this scene has a lion's head and feet but no tail is present. The detailed carving is quite intricate, such as the fur of the lion's mane and this style is homogenous with the rest of the reliefs present in the temple. The entire scene takes place within a shrine-like structure possibly indicating a tomb or the place of embalming.

Across from this scene on the North Wall is a graphic image of a god lying on a lion-bed, holding his erect penis with one hand while the other is held in front of his face (Fig. 5.22). The identification of this figure is given in hieroglyphs in two places: above the figure and on the pectoral worn by the figure. The first identifies the god as Sokar-Osiris, while the pectoral states Seti-Menmaatre. Therefore, this scene depicts the king after his death, when he would be transfigured into the god Sokar-Osiris. Seti lies on a

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[261] R. David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual*, 105.

lion-bed within a shrine with Isis at the head of the bed and Horus at the foot of the bed. The four sons of Horus (partially damaged) are shown underneath the bed. The lion-bed in this scene is almost identical to the one on the south wall and does not have a tail or a footboard.

There are also two other images of beds within the Osiris chapel, in another part of the temple, marked as the central side-room branching off from the second Osiris hall. Two remaining scenes (one greatly damaged) face each other on the long walls. The fragmentary scene on the right most likely depicts Osiris on a lion-bed with Nephthys kneeling at the head of the bed (Fig. 5.23). There are a few lines, which indicate the presence of a bird hovering over the figure, which would indicate that this is Isis and the scene is the conception of Horus. There are two standing male figures, one, which is leaning over. Another standing male figure tends to the body of Osiris but the top portion of both of these male figures is lost. The image directly across from this scene mirrors it as there is evidence of a lion-bed but little remains to indicate the full subject of the scene.

The purpose of these scenes is unclear as are those of the adjoining chapels due to their extensive damage. Rosalie David states that this Osirian complex would have had a very specific and unique set of rituals, which were performed here, and comparisons to images in other temples would not be applicable.[262] These scenes of Osiris on the lion-bed reside in the central chapel of the second hypostyle hall of the

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[262] R. David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual*, 126.

complex, possibly indicating its importance by position. However, David believes that the final culminating act of the ritual was the erection of the *djed* pillar

The bed appears quite a number of times in the *Book of Going Forth by Day* as well as in other afterlife books such as the Book of Gates and the Book of Night. Spell 151 from the *Book of Going Forth by Day* has been previously mentioned in this chapter as it appears in TT 96B, the tomb of Sennefer. In one example, the papyrus of Muthetepti from the New Kingdom depicts Anubis attending the mummy with the goddesses Isis and Nephthys flanking the body with *shen* signs (Fig. 5.24). An image of Anubis in his canine form on a shrine (the tomb) appears upside down under the feet of the anthropomorphic Anubis while the four magical bricks are represented as the mummiform figures of the four sons of Horus placed at opposite corners of the tomb. While this image is stylistically different from the image in Sennefer's tomb, it is clear that the bed is acting as a crucial sign for the location of the tomb—where the final transition from this world to the afterlife would take place. In an image from the Book of the Dead of Ani, the ba bird joins together with the mummy in a nightly union (Fig. 5.25). The bed is the location for this union and can even be translated as a glyph for the divine sphere in which the mummy resides.

Three-dimensional examples of this scene type exist in the form of shabtis with the deceased on the bed with a *ba* bird. A number of excellent examples remain of these statuettes often categorized as shabtis or even double shabtis. Often the ba bird is shown on the chest of the deceased and the bed is only partially cut away in the stone. In an example from the Museo Egizio (inv. no. 2805) a figure lies on a bed with a *ba* bird on his chest (Fig. 5.26). Additional mummiform images stand in pairs at the feet and head

of the bed. This category of shabti is connected to the story of Isis and Osiris, as it would have been visually similar to the consummation scene.

Another interesting example consists of a large so-called "double shabti" which depicts two deceased individuals lying next to each other on a funerary bed (Louvre inv. N 2659) (Fig. 5.27). It is rare for two individuals to be portrayed in the same bed but the husband and wife are shown side by side. A human-headed ba bird is shown sitting next to the male figure with its wing/arm resting on the deceased's chest while there is no figure on the woman's side. This may possibly be a way to show hierarchy between the couple. A female figure looks over the footboard, which comes to the height of her chin.

An unusual example of a funerary statuette of a man on a bier depicts a man dressed for daily life rather than in the form of a mummy—he wears a long kilt and lies on an undecorated bier. His hands are on his thighs rather than holding items or placed across his chest. The surface he lies on is plain with no indications of leonine elements. According to the authors "it is not a wide back pillar—it has two long supports…"[263] and it seems to fit the category of shabti along with the images of the deceased on a lion-bed with a ba bird.

In the royal tombs of the Ramesside period, the bed appears within complex scenes illustrating specific funerary books. Many of these scenes come from the Book of the Night, a text that first appears in the Osireion of Seti I at Abydos.[264] The Book of the

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[263] S. D'Auria, P. Lacovara, and C. Roehrig, eds. *Mummies & Magic: the Funerary Arts of Ancient Egypt*. (Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts, 1988).

[264] There are also many instances where the bed appears in inventory scenes in the royal tombs, which was mentioned previously in this text. The Osireion was a cenotaph dedicated to the god Osiris.

Night documents the sun's journey after the goddess Nut has swallowed the sun. The sun then travels through the twelve hours of the night within the body of Nut. Nut gives birth to the sun at the end of the night, producing the sunrise. It is during the night that the blessed dead are shown waking and arising from their funerary beds as the sun passes through, only to go back to sleep after the sun has left their hour of residence. Thematically, this funerary book is related to the Amduat and the Book of Gates as it documents the sun's journey through night. In the Book of the Night in the Osireion, the scenes depict the hours 1-10; the hours in which the bed appears are 2, 3, 5, and 6. In hour two, the dead are shown reclining on their lion-beds on the lowest register, while the solar barque is towed by many helpers, sometimes including the king. The third hour shows the dead on their lion-beds with, in some cases, their *bas* returning to their bodies in a human form, seated on top of them.

Roulin states "Il ne s'agit pas à proprement dit de leçons du *LdN*, mais de compositions s'en inspirant."[265] These scenes from the ceiling are not scenes from the Book of Night but are inspired by the contents of them. In the tombs of Ramesses V-VI and Ramesses IX, the bed appears with regards to the resurrection of Osiris as well as the awakening of the blessed dead. These scenes appear on the ceiling of both tombs either in the burial chamber (Ramses V/VI) or in the corridor nearest the burial chamber (known as corridor c in the tomb of Ramses IX). In the tomb of Ramses IX, the scenes are located on the ceiling and the artist has used the location to his advantage, painting an unusual bird's eye view of the beds on which the dead rest. The legs and lion-heads of

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[265] G. Roulin, *Le Livre De La Nuit: Une Composition egyptienne de l'au-dela.* Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 147 (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1996), 11.

the bed are shown at both ends of the bed. The horizontal portion of the bed is shown extending straight up from the frame rather than seen in profile as it is typically depicted. At the top of the horizontal portion, the other side of the bed frame is shown but this time reversed (or upside down depending on the viewer's position) to the other side of the bed. The result is a flattened bed with the frame looking as if it has collapsed outward from each side of the bed.

IV. Conclusion: the bed in its funerary function

The examination of the funerary contexts where the bed appears, particularly in the elite tombs of Luxor, illuminates the importance of the bed as a visual sign for the transition of the individual into the afterlife. Just as the bed can be shown in hieroglyphs alone or with an occupant, the image of the bed in a funerary context contains its own inherent funerary elements related specifically to that sign but can also take on new meanings as its contexts change. The multifaceted aspects of the afterlife lead the bed to be one of the most effective images of death, particularly when coupled with the image of the deceased lying on top. However, the sign of the bed as a determinative versus the sign of the bed with *an occupant* as a determinative are two different signs and must be treated as such.

The determinative known as A55 of the standardized Egyptian sign list shows the mummiform figure of a person lying on a bed. Below is a list of the words, which use A55 as a determinative.

Egyptian transliteration	English translation	References
jb3n	"put to sleep"	(Wb 1, 62.19; see Meeks AL 78.0256, see Allen, Inflection, 581)
n.tj-nmʿ	"dead"	(WB 2, 266.9)
ḫpi	"to die, to die"	(Wb 3, 258.17-259.3)
Eg.n.n.f	"has gone to his ka (ref. the Dead)"	(Wb 3, 430.1) (lemma-no. 131 630)
sḏr	"to spend the night"	(WB 4, 390.17; GEG § 483.1,. boy, Näger Gr, 87) (lemma-no. 851 684)
sḏr.yt	"bedridden"	(WB 4, 392.14; Lesko, Dictionary III, 127, 586 ff ONB, note 511) (150 830 lemma-no.)
sḏr.t	"[fixed in Abydos]"	(WB 4, 392.16-18; FCD 259) (150 850 lemma-no.) (lemma)
šs	"'grave (?) "	(WB 4, 543.2) (lemma-no. 156 990)
ḳns	"buried"	(WB 5, 55.3) (lemma-no. 161 440) (lemma)

On a very basic level, the decision to use the bed with an occupant (possibly deceased) for these words is curious when most Egyptians would not have slept in a bed during any part of their life or death. Goldwasser states that "These choices would seem to emanate from conscious or unconscious choices of what is defined today in cognitive studies terminology as 'prototypical members' of a category."[266] For instance, the determinative for dog uses the image of a hunting dog and not a number of other types of dogs, which could have been utilized.[267] It is not the purpose of this dissertation to delve into all of the examples where the bed and its occupant is used as a determinative but it is very clear that the Egyptians associated these words with this image.

The lack of division between the worlds of text and image aids in our understanding of the sign of the bed in Egyptian art. This allows the hieroglyphs to point towards an understanding of these signs whether it be through the use of the words that are connected to the glyphs or the choices of glyphs used to illustrate these words. The images of the bed found within the hieroglyphs informs the images used within the "art". While the image of the determinative would appear to be funerary in nature with a mummiform figure with the false beard lying on the funerary bed, it appears with words also concerning sleep, sickness, and sex. Why an image of a presumably deceased individual on the bed? The occupant "activates" the image of the bed. While the determinative is predictably used for funerary-related words such as "grave' and "dead" it is used for verbs and adjectives which describe states of being, such as "bedridden", "to put to sleep", and "to spend the night." Just as in divine imagery when Amen-Ra and the

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[266] O. Goldwasser and C. Grinevald, "What are 'determinatives' good for?", 33.

[267] O. Goldwasser and C. Grinevald, "What are 'determinatives' good for?", 32-33.

queen are seated on the bed, the presence of the human (and/or divine) element is an extension of the bed sign. The bed is in an active role as it works to help the transition of the deceased into the afterlife. It creates a sacred space where the deceased can move into the next world. The previous elements of sex and sleep are not left behind—these elements make the bed an appropriate choice for its funerary role as they come together to complete the set of connotations for the sign of the bed.

The tomb of Sennefer (TT 96B) is one of the few remaining non-royal tombs in Luxor, which has a completely painted burial chamber. Some scenes are those usually painted within the above-ground chapel but others are unique. The underground burial area is comprised of an antechamber and a burial chamber. A procession of attendants carry items that are clearly related to the funeral, such as the mummy mask and shawabtis, towards a large seated figure of Sennefer and his wife. Another procession appears on the left wall of the burial chamber and appears to be the standard, multi-registered scenes, which usually appear on the left wall of the longitudinal hall. This procession could also be seen as a continuation from the antechamber, bringing the two rooms together compositionally. The procession continues in the main burial chamber in three registers on the left wall and moves toward two large images: one of Hathor, as the goddess of the West, and one of Osiris Onnophris. Many parts of this wall are now missing but examples from other tombs of this time indicate that it might be similar to what Porter and Moss term the "rites in the garden," also known as the representation of the sacred district, which is discussed more in the following section. The mummy was probably depicted in the missing section as lying on a bed placed on top of the sarcophagus, which would be dragged to the tomb by male attendants. There is a section

of a scene which shows the canopic chest on a bed with a lion-tail being pulled in the same direction in which the mummy would have been pulled. This procession is indicative of a movement from one realm, that of the living, to the realm of the dead.

Directly across from this wall lies the scene of Anubis attending the mummy from Spell 150 of the Book of the Dead. The bed now holds the transfigured dead who is presented in the divine form of Osiris. The bed, which functioned in the world of the living as a place of transformation through sexual union, conception, and the daily cycle of sleep, has now made its own transformation, and can facilitate transitions into the next realm. The bed has changed forms from the bed more commonly connected to daily use (shown in the image in the antechamber) to the bed complete with lion-tail and head accompanied by Anubis. To ensure the success of this transformation, another image reflecting this concept lies to the immediate left of this scene on the same wall. Sennefer is shown with his wife, Meryt, adoring Osiris and Anubis. Osiris, usually with green or black skin color, is shown here with the same facial coloration and style as the deceased and a comparison between the two is easily made (Fig. 5.28). The assimilation of the deceased with the god Osiris is complete.

This transition of the bed from one realm into the next is also highlighted in the tomb of Ramose (TT 55).[268] In a beautiful and well-known procession from the tomb, the bed is more detailed than the image from Sennefer's tomb with a mattress and the headrest in position on top of the bed. Shabti chests and stools are carried in procession with the bed and all move along the west wall. If one looks at the register above, though,

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[268] N. de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of the Vizier Ramose.* London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1941.

the continuation of the procession appears with the shrines for the canopic jars and the sarcophagus. The shrine for the sarcophagus is located on a lion-bed with images of Isis and Nephthys standing to the front and back of the shrine. This lion-bed appears almost directly above the domestic bed and one can almost see the transition of the bed into its funerary form. This foreshadows the use of the bed by the mummy as a funerary bier in his state as the deified Osiris.

An important object in this procession is the presence of the headrest located on the bed. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the headrest held many solar associations. The head could symbolize the sun setting in the horizon and lions were, at times, represented alongside the headrest. The fore and hind legs of the lion are another manifestation of the lion, completing the picture of lion associations. The location for rebirth is now complete. Another interesting observation is the location of the processional reliefs in the tomb of Ramose (Fig. ?). As in the tomb of Sennefer, the procession leads in a direction towards the actual burial and in a plan from the tomb the location of the entrance into the underground chamber can be seen at the end of the wall. The procession is located on the wall just above the entrance and this would most certainly have been a deliberate decision of placement on the part of the tomb designers.

The bed as a sign would seem to be visually linked to funerary contexts more frequently in the New Kingdom than in previous periods. While the bed is shown in a few funerary contexts of the Old Kingdom, its prevalence in New Kingdom images indicates an increased importance in which the sign appears in the funerary realm. This could be due to the accident of survival—the material evidence from the New Kingdom is abundant. However, the scarcity of the bed in the New Kingdom tombs of Saqqara

may indicate that the importance of the bed was rooted in an Upper Egyptian tradition based in Thebes, which may have travelled to Amarna with Theban artists.

The bed fits quite well into the unspecified space and time of the Theban tomb. Its apparent limitless functionality during life and the afterlife (for the mummy) makes it a very appropriate piece of furniture for the tomb, or "house of eternity." The iconic sign of the bed as a determinative hieroglyph allows it to become its own signifier and signified simultaneously within the world of semiotics.

The semiotic connotations of the bed can be seen as double, however. The Egyptian concepts of *nḥḥ* and *ḏt* time existed simultaneously in the Egyptian consciousness. This makes it possible for the connotations, which are conveyed by the bed as an image, to convey both types of time simultaneously. The *ḏt* aspect is present, for instance, in reference to its appearance in the funerary procession, a one-time event with a marked place in history and its *nḥḥ* aspect appears with the cyclical constructions of birth and rebirth. The semiotic connotations conveyed by the bed "The work of art exists as an "aesthetic object" located in the consciousness of an entire community."[269]

To the Egyptians, the semiotic view of the bed was clearly linked to a connection with death through its close association with sleep. The image of the bed had an instantly identifiable funerary connotation, which was probably present even in other contexts. The Egyptians would know when looking at a bed that, although the acts of sex and sleep and childbirth might be occurring on the bed, the final and culminating action would be

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[269] J. Murarovsky, "Art as semiotic fact" in *Structure: Sign and Function, Selected Essays*, (New Haven: Yale Unveristy Press, 1934), 8.

related to death. Maybe this message would come across only faintly or subconsciously but its presence was undeniable.

Chapter 6

Case Studies

In this chapter, I will look at two objects that exemplify the coalescence of the main connotations of the bed. The bed of Sennedjem and the coffin bed of Tutankhamen were both found in their original locations in the tombs of their owners. Each bed conveys many of the same ideas but in different ways. Both objects were found in relatively untouched contexts, allowing for a look at the objects within their original setting.

Case study 1—The bed of Sennedjem

For this case study, I would like to take an in-depth look not only at the bed of Sennedjem but also its placement within the context of the tomb. We are fortunate that the paintings of this tomb are intact and that most of the objects buried within have survived. I will therefore be able to examine the "dialogue" between the bed as object and the two-dimensional representation of the bed to find how they functioned together to create a space for the successful rebirth of Sennedjem.

The bed of Sennedjem was discovered in a tomb at Deir el-Medina in 1886. Sennedjem's title was "servant in the place of truth" which was held by many of the craftsmen working within the royal tombs in the adjacent valley.[270] His tomb was occupied by many generations of his family and was filled with belongings from many different family members. There are no photographs of the discovery to indicate the

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[270] For current research and more information concerning the tomb of Sennedjem see Marta Sanjaume, "La Tombe de Sennedjem a Deir-el-Medina TT1" (Ph.D. diss., University of Barcelona, 2006).

placement of objects within the tomb so we can only conjecture about their original configuration.

The bed is currently housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (JE 27254) (Fig. 2.13). Standing on its side and pushed to the back of the upper level of a vitrine, the bed is hardly recognizable or noticeable in a room full of objects from the tomb. The bed toured museums in the exhibition, *The Quest for Immortality* in the early 2000's and appeared in the accompanying catalogue.[271]

The bed of Sennedjem is made of a native wood, painted white, and its legs are sculpted in the shape of lions' paws.[272] The bed is 54 cm wide, 160 centimeters long, and only stands 23 centimeters off the ground. There are two long side rails, which are joined in the middle by two stretchers, which contain hieroglyphs indicating the owner of the bed. The stretcher closest to the head of the bed states[273]:

wsr sḏm ꜥš n(y) nb tꜣwy sn-nḏm

"The Osiris, the servant of the Lord of the Two Lands, Sennedjem"

The second stretcher states:

jmꜣḫw wsr sn-nḏm mꜣꜥḫrw

"Revered, the Osiris Sennedjem, justified"

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[271] For these resources see Abdul-Fattah El-Sabbahy, "The Funerary Bed from the Tomb of Sen-nedjem," Discussion in Egyptology 43 (1999): 13-18 and Erik Hornung and Betsy Bryan, eds.,*The Quest for Immortality: Hidden Treasures of Egypt*. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art; Copenhagen: United Exhibits Group, 2002.

[272] Native woods were often pieced together to make coffins and furniture and were considered of less desirable quality than imported wood.

[273] Abdul-Fattah El-Sabbahy, "The Funerary Bed from the Tomb of Sen-nedjem," 15-16.

With Sennedjem identified as Osiris, it is clear that the bed was painted for a funerary purpose. It may also have been constructed with a funerary purpose in mind. The bed has neither a footboard nor evidence of drill holes for webbing, which would have made the bed more flexible and accommodating to Sennedjem during his lifetime. Since the bed was the most expensive item in the household, many Egyptians reused the bed from their homes to play a funerary role in the tomb. It is possible that this bed was covered with a thick mattress and blankets making the use of webbing somewhat unnecessary but the large gaps between the wooden stretchers make that unlikely.

The most distinctive feature of Sennedjem's bed consists of the two snakes painted on the top surface of the long side rails. Their heads meet and face each other on the top crossbar and their tails overlap on the bottom crossbar. In all images of other beds that I have examined, the head of the occupant is placed where the lion head would be (if present) with regard to the direction of the lion's feet. It follows that the snake heads of Sennedjem's bed should be located where the sleeper's head would be located at the "head" of the bed. There are various theories as to the nature of the two snakes. It has been speculated that the one on the left has the head of Anubis and the one on the right a standard snake's head. El-Sabbahy puts forth the theory that the snake on the left is "a viper with pointed ears" which can be seen in vignettes of the Book of the Dead.[274]

In an image of a fertility figurine, two snakes run along the sides of the female figure with child (Fig. 6.1). The snakes are both yellow and black and flank each side

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[274] Abdul-Fattah El-Sabbahy, "The Funerary Bed from the Tomb of Sen-nedjem," 14.

of the bed. The fertility figurine is located on a model bed with her feet resting on the footboard. There is a direct visual link between Sennedjem's bed and this fertility figurine: They both have beds that have yellow and black snakes located on each side of the top portion.

As we have seen in Chapter 3, these are not the only places where snakes appear on beds. The *Wochenlaube,* or birth arbor scenes, display extremely similar snakes. In magic, it was ideal to fight evil forces with the same weapon. The serpent god Apophis was considered the embodiment of chaos and appears frequently in the underworld books as one of the main opponents of the god Ra. Snakes are also used to protect, indicating their dual nature. They appear frequently in New Kingdom royal tombs and protect the king and other gods from evil forces in the Duat. It therefore seems appropriate to have two snakes on the bed to fight the chaotic fear of death and unsuccessful childbirth. Essentially, snakes were protective figures on the bed working in the same fashion as the images of Bes and Taweret on the beds we have seen earlier.

In his article on the bed of Sennedjem, El Sabbahy says that the encircling image of the snakes could be linked to the circle drawn around a bed by a "magic wand" or knife**.** Magic wands are a name given to a type of object made of hippopotamus tusk resembling a throw stick that was used in rituals to ward off evil (Fig. 6.2). The wands were sometimes placed on the belly of the pregnant woman or under the bed to provide protection. By drawing circles, therefore creating boundaries, a division was created between the ordered world and the chaotic forces that threatened to destroy it. The iconography of these wands is very similar to many of the images linked to the bed. The guarding lions, the god Bes, the goddess Tawaret with her *sa*

symbol, and numerous snakes are all part of the decoration of both magic wands and beds, indicating they shared a similar function.

In the tomb of the Rekhmire (TT 100), there is an image that indicates the relationship of these wands to the bed. The image itself is part of an inventory scene where many objects are stacked together to show the provisions for a palace or temple. Several wands are shown underneath a bed, which is also protectively flanked by two snake staffs (Fig. 6.3). Their proximity to the bed and similarity in iconography indicates their shared function—to protect the individual in the bed through the uncertainty of sleep, conception, birth, the period after birth, and ultimately the rebirth of the individual into the afterlife. The outward-facing staffs recall the protective nature of the uraeus that is present on various royal headgear to protect the wearer. This two-dimensional image would have worked in the same manner as an actual bed placed in the tomb for Rekhmire. Since we do not have Rekhmire's burial goods, it is unclear if he had a full-size bed in his tomb.

The walls of Sennedjem's burial chamber are painted, which was common in tombs belonging to the residents of Deir el-Medina but not for the other non-royal tombs of the Westbank of Thebes.[275] There are two images of the funerary bed, which sit across from one another: one of Anubis attending the mummy and the other of Isis and Nephthys as kites watching over the mummy (Fig. 6.4). Both scenes show the coffin on the funerary bed under a canopy of woven material. The scenes were carefully selected by the tomb owner to function for him (and his family members) in

[275] The above-ground chapels were painted, not the burial chambers below.

the afterlife, reflecting the need for a functioning funerary bed whether it was via the images or object itself.

The bed of Sennedjem was not only used for a funerary purpose but also as a location for successful fertility and procreation. The bed becomes a signifier of Sennedjem's effective rebirth in the afterlife. The images of the snakes and the inscriptions all work together to aid Sennedjem in being successfully reborn as Osiris. With the coffin placed on the bed, the body of Sennedjem would have been placed here and this bed would have aided in his successfully transition into the next world.

II. Case study 2—The coffin bed of Tutankhamen

In another example, the signs of the bed in various media (here, actual beds and two-dimensional images) all work together to present the same concepts and functions as in the tomb of Sennedjem. Although this example is royal, it does not change the connotations, which can be derived from the signs. In the tomb of Tutankhamen, a bed was discovered under the coffins of the king. Howard Carter and his excavation team were stunned to find that the bed had supported the weight of three extremely heavy coffins for thousands of years. Carter states:

> The only remaining object in the sarcophagus was the gilt bed-shaped bier with lion's head and feet. It stood on the bottom and served as a support to the first (outermost) coffin. It was made of a stout and heavy wood covered with gesso-gilt; but the astonishing fact was that, after supporting the weight of those three great coffins—more than a ton and a quarter—for over thirty centuries, it was still intact. Strips of broad webbing were passed under it, and this splendid example of ancient Egyptian construction was raised out of the sarcophagus. It stands about 12 inches in height, 7 feet 6 inches in length, and is curved so as to receive and to fit the base of the outer-most coffin. The central panel is designed in low relief to represent a cord-mesh—like the string mesh of the Sudanese *Angarîbes* (bedsteads) of to-day. The joints of the

> framework are hardly sprung, thus bearing witness to the good quality of the wood and the extreme excellence of the joinery.[276]

When the bed was removed from the tomb, it was photographed against the background of a white sheet (Fig. 2.5). It is clear that there is a definitive curve to the horizontal portion of the bed that allowed it to fit perfectly under the outer coffin. This combination of objects will probably never occur again as it would be too hazardous to all the pieces to place the coffins on the bed. However, one can get an idea of this combination from an unusual source—the Luxor Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. The tomb of Tutankhamen was recreated in the hotel and the designers chose to use the bed under the coffin for display purposes. While the reconstruction is a bit inaccurate it gives the idea of how Tutankhamen's coffins would have rested on the bed (Fig. 6.5).

However, was this bed actually necessary in order to support the coffins inside the sarcophagus? While it may have provided space to place small objects between the sarcophagus and the coffin, this was probably not the primary reason for its use. The coffin would have been able to rest on the bottom of the sarcophagus without support. The important thing is that the presence of the sign of the bed was necessary for the successful transition of the deceased into the afterlife. There is evidence that other kings of the New Kingdom had similar beds under their coffins such as Horemheb and even Ramses II but none survive to any substantial degree.[277] This does not seem to be a trend that extends to other dynasties so this could very well be a reflection of a specific use of the bed during the New Kingdom or even in the Theban area.

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[276] H. Carter, *The Tomb of Tutankhamen* (New York: Cooper Square Publisher, 1954), 89.

[277] For a discussion of these beds, see Chapter 2.

Tutankhamen's tomb was quite small and probably not intended for his burial. Its wall painting are confined to only the burial chamber. Depicted on the east wall is a group known as the "nine friends" with three priests dragging a sledge.[278] On the sledge is the coffin of Tutankhamen resting on a bed, which is then placed inside a shrine. The viewer is treated to an "x-ray" view as we can see the coffin and bed inside. The coffin and the shrine do not appear like the actual objects placed with the tomb but this is certainly in keeping with the idea of functionality of these images. The details are of less importance than the function they held for the benefit of the tomb owner.

The bed is present both as an image and object in the tomb of Tutankhamen as it was considered essential for the transformation of the individual as well as practical in the transportation of the mummy. With only a small space available to the artists, the images chosen to be represented in the tomb must have had a special significance. The image of the mummy on the bed dragged in the funerary procession stands as an abbreviated form of the much larger funeral procession and worked just as effectively. The artisans needed to find the essential sign of the procession and settled on the image of the mummy on the bier, the determinative hieroglyph for death.

There are additional beds in the tomb of Tutankhamen, including the three famous funerary biers and various "domestic" beds. It is unclear if they were placed in the tomb to function as replacements to the bed under the coffin (if it were to be destroyed) or as symbols of prestige or both. Either way, they are all signs of the bed

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[278] For a more complete look at this scene type, see Chapter 5.

for the tomb owner. The sign represents the same connotations for the New Kingdom Egyptian, whether they operated in a royal or non-royal context.

These two beds function as signs within their funerary contexts. They indicate the need of the tomb owner to have a place for the transition into the afterlife. While the tomb provides an actual physical location, the bed symbolizes that more than just a tomb is needed for the transition to occur. The sign of the bed informs the viewer that there are connotations at work on another level. Even if there was no viewer, which in the case of the final burial there was not, the sign would still function in its setting.

Conclusions

It has been the aim of this dissertation to examine the bed as a sign in New Kingdom Egyptian art. The many and varied forms in which the bed manifests itself indicate its importance in the Egyptian worldview beyond that of modern Western perceptions. Although the form of the bed had been established early in Egyptian art and material culture, the range of information available from the New Kingdom allows for a more complete analysis of the function of this sign.

The above case studies bring the strands of this dissertation together to show how the sign of the bed functioned for the ancient Egyptians. By examining the variety of media where the bed appears, it becomes clear that the same semiotic connotations emerge from the sign of the bed in all environments. While particular aspects may move to the forefront in certain situations, such as the connotation of fertility with a fertility figurine or death and rebirth with the mummy on the bier, the other aspects are

still inextricably woven into the signified and do not just hold a latent position in contrast to other concepts. The connotations also flow seamlessly between the different forms of the sign, whether it is a two-dimensional wall painting or a full-size bed placed under the mummy.

The bed goes through its own transition in the tomb, reflecting the state of the tomb owner/bed owner as he/she moves from this world into the Duat. This transition, however, does not leave behind the notions of sex, procreation, and sleep in favor a singular visual reading of death. With the complex weaving together of concepts, the Egyptians were able to take advantage of the multivalent nature of their sign system to bring together as many positive aspects into one sign in order to move the tomb owner forward successfully into the Duat.

The bed, however, is not the only sign with the ability to aid the tomb owner's transference into the afterlife. In *Object Worlds in Ancient Egypt: Material Biographies Past and Present,* Lynn Meskell explores a similar function with the "social hieroglyph" of the coffin. Meskell sees the coffin as being "intimately tied" to the person as an object linked to the biography of the tomb owner. I believe this notion can be extended to the image of the bed as the A55 determinative  . While the coffin may be a more immediate object in relation to the body (encompassing the entire body), the location of the transformation of the individual is viewed with a similar importance. This importance of location—of the transformation of the deceased into the actual mummy on the location of the bed—can be seen in two examples postdating the New Kingdom. On a coffin from the Ptolemaic period, the various stages of mummification are depicted and the lion funerary bed figures predominantly

throughout. The body has been transformed from the realm of the living into the divine through the process of mummification. The body is first shown being anointed, then in the stage of being placed in the wrappings (the body is distinguished from the linen) to the final stage of the transfigured dead which allows the deceased to enter into the presence of the gods.

In another example, the embalming tables used in the mummification of the Apis bulls of Memphis adopt the sign of the bed (Fig. 6.6). The beds are constructed of marble and date to the Dynasty 26. They are large platforms that were used for the bodies of the sacred bulls in much the same way embalming tables would have functioned for individuals. The liquids from the mummification process would have drained along the top edge of the table, which was tilted toward one end where a marble basis caught the remains. Along the long sides of each table are representations of the lion-bed carved in relief. These reliefs have no physical function (like lion-like legs and supports for an actual bed) so the presence of the sign itself is the primary function. The purpose of this platform became instantly recognizable to all who saw it and the image was instilled with the connotations it represented.

It is important to remember the power of the image and word in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians carried out ritual mutilation of the images of hieroglyphs when they depicted a destructive force.[279] The horned viper, known as the monoconsontal glyph "f" in the language, is sometimes shown cut in half to protect the tomb owner from its poisonous bite. While the letter itself could be used in a benign word, the image still

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[279] Ritual mutilation of hieroglyphs was first addressed by P. Lacau, "Suppressions et modifications de signes dans les textes funéraires," ZÄS 51 (1913), 1–64.

presented a danger. Another example of this can be seen in the destruction of the god's name Amun during the Amarna period. The names of elite members of society were ritually excised if their name contained the name of Amun, it was removed as well. The sign was taken out in both text and image, indicating the equal power of both.

The sign of the bed brings together some of the most important concepts of ancient Egyptian thought. This dissertation has brought together these ideas in a way not previously addressed within the scholarship. By using semiotics and addressing the bed as a sign and not just an image, the result is a more comprehensive view of the ancient Egyptian knowledge system.

Appendix 1
Beds in non-royal Theban tomb scenes of the New Kingdom

The following table lists instances where the bed appears within the scenes of non-royal Theban tombs. This is not a comprehensive list for a variety of reasons including the impossibility of checking all tombs in person, the lack of survival of material from when it was first recorded in the scholarship, and the lack of photographic evidence for many tombs. The main source of this information comes from Bertha Porter and Rosalind Moss, *Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs, and paintings*. 2nd edition revised by Jaromír Málek.. Oxford: Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, 1970. However, beds are not often pointed out within, what Porter and Moss describes, scenes of funeral processions. I have therefore only included the tombs where there is a confirmed image of a bed. (A semicolon separates different scenes listed in the same tomb.)

Theban Tomb (in order by number)	**Description of scene**
TT 1 Sennedjem Ramasses II	Mummy on lion bed flanked by Isis and Nephthys as kites; Anubis attending mummy—one of the most famous scenes of this.
TT 2 Khabekhnet Ramesses II	Anubis tending mummy in form of fish on a couch (PM)
TT 3 Pashedu Ramesses II	Anubis tending mummy on couch beyond with divine bark above
TT 11 Djehuti Hatshepsut-Thutmose III	Bed under mummy with two attendants.
TT 12 Hray Ahmose – Amenhotep I (?)	Funeral procession including mummy on bed with priests, *tekenu*, and mummers.
TT 16 Pahnesy Ramesses II-Merenptah (?)	Mummy on bed in shrine on bed on sledge
TT 17 Nebamun AII (?)	Mummy on bed in shrine Lower register—on sledge 2 more shrines/boxes on bed on sledge

TT 19 Amonmose Ramesses I to Seti I (?)	Evidence for bed carried by one man. Wall C
TT 20 Mentuhirkhopshef Thutmose III	Funeral procession-South wall, scene 1. All 3 registers show shrine (with djed and *ankhs*) on beds
TT 21 User Thutmose I-Thutmose III	Funeral procession—sarcophagus on bed above rites in the garden
TT 39 Pujmre Hatshepsut-Thutmose III	Funerary procession—mummy on bed in top register, sarcophagus in shrine on bed in middle register
TT 40 Huy Tutankhamen	Two beds overlapping with two headrests
TT 42 Amenmosi Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Funeral procession—sarcophagus on bed in shrine
TT 45 Dhouty Amenhotep II	Man holds bed by one leg and over the head
TT 48 Amenemhet, called Surero Amenhotep III	Couches in individual shrines, two statues of hippopotamuses, two of Bes, two of lions
TT 50 Neferhotep Amenhotep II	Two images of the mummy on a bed with funerary text
TT 53 Amenemhet Thutmose III	Girl prepares bed on inner lintel; Mummy on bed in procession
TT 55 Ramose Amenhotep IV	Bed in funeral procession; Shown carried by attendants and a lion-bed shown carried by
TT 57 Khaemhat Amenhotep III	Bed on top of boat in Abydos pilgrimage scene. Bed has headrest.
TT 65 Nebamun Hatshepsut	Casket with cartouches- the top looks like a bed. There are 3 figures with four offering stands.
TT 69 Menna Thutmose IV	Bed carried by 2 attendants. East wall, upper register, longitudinal hall; Beds under sarcophagi on boats and on top of sarcophagus (box?) on sledge and with sarcophagus on boat with Isis/Nephthys

	all on east wall heading towards Anubis; Top register, west wall longitudinal hall, pilgrimage to Abydos scene—bed on top of kiosk on boat.
TT 73 Amenhotep Hatshepsut	Scene with attendants and new year gifts including two obelisks, beds, vases, and statuette of Hatshepsut kneeling in front of a god.
TT 78 Horemheb Thutmose III-Amenhotep III	Funeral outfit and procession—bed in funerary procession with two men
TT 79 Menkheper Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Two beds with mummies on top, objects and necklace hover over the bodies of the mummies
TT 81 Ineni Amenhotep I-Thutmose III	Bed in funerary procession
TT 82 Amenemhet Thutmose III	Remains of autobiographical stela superimposed on image of girl preparing bed/ funeral procession
TT 85 Amenemhab Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Mummy on bier with Anubis
TT 96B Sennefer Amenhotep II	Mummy on couch with Anubis and ba between Nephthys and Isis and text with vignettes including living bas and sons of horus Scene 2--Funerary processional scene in antechamber of tomb of Sennefer (TT 96a)
TT 99 Sennefer Thutmose III	Girl prepares bed, with candle, statue of Bes, baskets, and toilet-box
TT 100 Rekhmire Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Scene 1-Carpenters making bed Scene 2-Bed as an object of inventory
TT 104 Dhutnufer Amenhotep II	Funeral procession and outfit—remains of bed in procession—carried by one man over his head

TT 106 Paser Seti I-Ramesses II	Anubis tending to mummy in tomb structure
TT 112 Menkheperrasoneb Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Bed being constructed with weaving cord
TT 127 Senemiah Hatshepsut-Thutmose III	Procession-bed
TT 133 Neferronpet Ramesses II	Boat with mummy in procession
TT 135 Bekenamun Dynasty 20	Procession/mummy on couch
TT 140 Neferronpet Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Unfinished scene--Man preparing bed just to the inside of door of longitudinal hall. Scene below is a "girl arranging lady's hair"
TT 172 Mentiywy Thutmose III-Amenhotep II	Procession—Bed carried by 3 attendants in weird poses with arms. Headrest with bed. 1st atten—hands over shoulders and carries bed from behind 2nd—one arm up. 3rd—arm behind and in front
TT 179 Nebamun Hatshepsut	(sacred district) Procession—mummy on bed
TT 181 Nebamun Amenhotep III-Amenhotep IV	Funeral procession/outfit, bringing bed carried by 2 attendants headrest in place/ small child underneath carries chest on head and something in other hand.
TT 214 Khawi Ramesses II	Anubis with mummy on bier

TT 217 Apy Ramesses II	Scene 1-Scene of many pieces of furniture and bowls and jars. Scene 2-Reconstructed image of Ani (relative?) carrying bed on head. Scene 3-Scene at the end of Scene 2 mentioned above and spans height of 2 registers. Deceased lies on bed while two priests prepare the mummy.
TT 218 Amennakht Ramesses II	Anubis tending mummy on couch between Isis and Nephthys as hawks.
TT 219 Nebenmaat Ramesses II-Merenptah	Scene 1- Anubis with Opening of the Mouth instrument tending mummy on couch mirror and vessels underneath MMA T3403 Scene 2-Mummy on bed
TT 220 Khaemteri Ramesses II-Merenptah	Mummy on couch No lion head, shrines and vessels and mirror under couch
TT 222 Hekamaatre- nakht, called Turo Ramesses III –Ramesses IV	Man offering to mummy on couch.
TT 249 Neferronpet Amenhotep III	Funeral procession with sarcophagus in bark
TT 250 Ramosi Ramesses II	Two funeral processions?
TT 255 Roy Horemheb-Seti I	Funeral procession—mummy on bed within shrine on barque on sledge
TT 260 User Thutmose III	Girl preparing bed inside doorway to tomb

TT 276 Amenemopet Thutmose IV?	Three of the nine friends and bandaging mummy on bier Anubis with mummy on barge
TT 277 Amenemonet Amenhotep III	Priest censing; *ba* above mummy on bed.
TT 286 Niay Dynasty 19	Mummy on couch tended by Anubis, and table of offerings
TT 290 Irynefer Ramesses II	Anubis tending mummy
TT 298 Baki and Wennefer Dynasty 19-20	Anbis tending mummy between Isis and Nephthys, with two shrines.
TT 306 Irzanen Dynasty 20-21	Book of the Dead. Female mourners, and priests attending mummy on couch.
TT 323 Pashedu Seti I	Anubis tending mummy on couch between Isis and Nephthys on tympanum
TT 335 Nekhtamun Dynasty 19	Anubis tending mummy on couch (no lion head) purified by Isis and Nephthys. Tympanum.Many items under bed including mirror. Cave C
TT 336 Neferronpet Ramesses II-Merenptah	Chamber B Anubis w/mummy in niche
TT 341 Nakhtamun Dynasty 20	Mummy on bed in shrine on boat carried by attendants, lower register
TT 356 Amenemwia Seti I-Ramesses II	Anubis with mummy on couch

TT 360 Kaha Ramesses II	Anubis tending mummy on bed cut by door

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