Chapter 2

The Archaeology of Death and Burial: Established Interpretations, Terminologies, and Definitions

The burial of the dead would seem to be a simple and obvious process. However, in reality it involves a complex and multifaceted undertaking arising from cultural tradition, societal obligation, religious requirement, and familial responsibility. Despite its complexity, receiving a proper burial in the ancient world was crucial, just as it is in ours today. Although largely invisible, some of the complexities may be revealed in tomb architecture, grave goods, and the corpse itself. For decades, archaeologists have been excavating and interpreting tombs and burials from Bronze Age Canaan. Among these, multiple-burial, chamber tombs have been the most challenging to excavate and interpret. Nevertheless, in an attempt to understand and explain ancient mortuary practices, archaeologists have developed theories and notions based largely on tomb architecture, the artifacts found within, and the placement of corpses within the tomb. Before proceeding with a focused discussion in relation to the funeral kit, it is necessary to review past scholarship in regard to specific, selected subtopics within the overall study of Canaanite mortuary practices as they pertain to the funeral kit. The purpose for such rehearsal is twofold: to provide background for those not familiar with the mortuary practices of Bronze Age Canaan and their academic interpretations and to establish a firm foundation upon which to build the funeral kit model. The topics selected for review in this chapter were chosen because they relate directly to subsequent discussions as the book unfolds. Offering a summary here will make for a fuller and more meaningful discussion in the chapters that follow. To that end, this chapter will examine the following topics: the use and purpose of multiple-burial, chamber tombs; grave type and tomb architecture; grave goods in general; scarabs and toggle pins as grave goods; the afterlife; funerary ceremony; rite, ritual, and ceremony; banqueting; the *marzēaḥ*; feeding the dead; gender; and kinship.

Use and Purpose of Multiple-burial, Chamber Tombs

Larger chamber tombs capable of housing multiple burials, sometimes consisting of several generations and hundreds of interments, developed from smaller, single-chamber tombs that typically held one or several burials. The smaller, single-chamber tombs (sometimes double) with just one (or several) interment(s) generally offer a clearer picture of mortuary practices in terms of orientation, position of the body (flexed or supine), and the items that comprised the assemblage of grave goods. It is often thought that these single burials focused more on the individual rather than the collective kinship group, the way larger, chamber tombs did. Understanding the use and purpose of multiple-burial, chamber tombs, as opposed to single-interment, chamber tombs, will provide background for historic analyses and interpretations of Canaanite mortuary practices and establish groundwork for subsequent discussions on the identification and interpretation of mortuary uniformity.

The advantage of the larger chamber tomb was its ability to accommodate multiple interments for successive generations over a long period of time, giving rise to a dizzying entanglement of human remains and grave goods. Initially, this chaotic mixture of human remains and grave goods led most excavators to conclude that the retrieval of useful information in regard to individual burials was too difficult, and consequently, few attempts were made to associate grave goods with individuals or to determine the relationship of those interred (e.g., Megiddo Tombs). This approach, in general, resulted in long lists of vessel and material culture, typologies, and bottom line tallies upon which assumptions were made regarding ancient activity both within the tomb and among the community (e.g., wealth and international trade).

Concurrently, excavators of tombs that yielded fewer intertwined burials were better able to record details such as orientation, the position of the body, location within the tomb, associated grave goods, and when possible, age and sex (e.g., Petrie at Tell el 'Ajjul). Later, excavators learned to identify what appeared to have been the final interment(s) in the tomb (e.g., Kenyon at Jericho). These were usually given careful attention and recorded meticulously. The final interment(s) within a chamber usually experienced little postdepositional disturbance allowing for less obstructed observance of the burial's position, orientation, location within the tomb, sex, age, and associated grave goods (Kenyon 1960, 1965; Maeir 1997). The data gathered from final interments could then be applied to the disentanglement of the remaining burials in the tomb.

Based on the large number of interments some tombs contained, it has long been held that multiple-burial, chamber tombs belonged to a family or larger kinship-based group (Cooley 1983; Cooley and Pratico 1994a, b; Schloen 2001; Stager 1985). Additional support for this notion stems from numerous textual references that discuss the importance of being buried with one's family. Although written at a slightly later period, certain phrases in the Hebrew Bible appear to reflect earlier Canaanite traditions and sustain this assumption. Phrases such as being "gathered unto one's fathers/people" (Genesis 25:8, 35:29; Deuteronomy 32:50; Judges 8:32, 16:31; 2 Samuel 21:12–14, 1 Kings 2:10, 11:43, 15:8), or to "sleep" or "lie with his fathers" (Genesis 47:30; Deuteronomy 31:16; 2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Kings 14:31; 2 Chronicles 12:16) appear to refer to burial in a family tomb with one's deceased family members. The desire to be buried with one's family is vividly illustrated by the death of Joseph's father in Egypt who, at his request, was transported back to Canaan for burial in the family tomb (Genesis 23, 50:1–14). On the other hand, an individual's punishment for wrongdoing could be denial of a proper burial with one's family, referred to as being "cut off" from one's kin as in I Sam 24:21 (see also Brichto 1973). Thus, one purpose of a chamber tomb was to provide an enduring space wherein several generations of deceased members of a kinship group could be housed.

Extrapolating from archaeological and textual evidence, activity within the multiple-burial, tomb chamber was repetitive and predictable and may have included the following scenario. Once the body was prepared for burial, it was transported to the tomb, placed inside, and then appropriately arranged. Once the corpse was situated, grave goods including toiletries, tools, weapons, seals, and ceramics containing food and drink were positioned on the floor around the corpse. Upon completion, the door was fixed into place, sealed, and the access shaft may have been filled with stone and rubble, sealing it as well. On the occasion of another death, the family reopened the previously sealed tomb and identified space for the new interment. If necessary, earlier interments and associated grave goods would be pushed aside to create space for the additional corpse. In some instances, removal of the previous burial seems to have been performed haphazardly, without concern for the welfare of the individual who had previously been laid to rest in such a loving manner. Such cavalier action may have been due to the perception that decayed flesh symbolized the spirit's completed journey into the afterlife resulting in disinterest in the skeletal remains and accompanying grave goods (Cooley 1983; Cooley and Pratico 1994b; Kenyon 1960; Schmidt 1996; Scurlock 1995; Xella 1995). Then, as with the previous interment, once the new burial was complete, the door and shaft were sealed. Additional burials were placed into a tomb as long as space provided. Once the tomb was full, it was ceremoniously sealed and no longer used (Maier 1997). With this type of repetitive, long-term use, it is not surprising that many multigenerational, chamber tombs contained a complex entanglement of human remains and furnishings. The importance of family burial is evidenced not only by textual references but also by the scores of multigenerational, chamber tombs that have been found in Bronze Age Canaan (e.g., Megiddo, Lachish, Tell el-ʻAjjul, Tell el-Farʻah South, and Tell el-Farʻah North).

The tomb functioned both as a way-station for the spirit as well as domicile for the physical remains. The spirit inhabited the tomb temporarily while making its journey from this world into the next; decomposing flesh represented a journey in progress and decarnated bones symbolized the completed journey. It has been suggested that libations were offered to the deceased during the transitional period; however, once the spirit had passed into the afterlife, libations and other offerings were required only on certain festival days (Cooley 1983; Cooley and Pratico 1994b; Schmidt 1996). Even though the decarnated corpse may have symbolized a completed journey into the next life, it is clear that "ghosts" required routine long-term care as is well attested throughout the ancient world, a matter that will be discussed at greater length below. An additional function of the tomb was to serve as a portal through which the dead and the living could maintain communication.

The ancestors' constant need for regular nourishment meant that surviving family members had to provide it; this was a responsibility typically assigned to the eldest son. In other regions for example, required offerings were made to the ancestors at regular intervals and were deposited in or near the burial place or in a mortuary chapel associated with the tomb (for examples from Egypt, see Richards 2005; for examples from Mesopotamia, see A. Cohen, 2005). In Egypt, family members and friends communicated with the dead seemingly on a regular basis, sometimes by writing letters or enlisting the services of a medium to express grief, ask for guidance, fertility, benevolence, or for insight into future events (cf. Egypt, e.g., Richards 2005; Wente 1990; Digital Egypt for Universities). In Canaan, similar festivals and communication with ghosts, sometimes via mediums, may have been commonplace. For example, although later, Saul's experience with the Witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28:3–5) may reflect earlier Canaanite practices.

The tomb's purpose, then, was multifaceted. It provided a practical place for disposal of a decaying corpse, serving as a temporary domicile for the spirit, as a portal between this world and the next, and as a place where the dead could receive rations from surviving family members. It is equally important to note that family burial grounds and ancestor worship may have served as a means of denoting land ownership and boundaries, which legitimized the family's "genealogical rights of ownership" and inheritance (Bloch 1975; Keswani 2004; Lewis 2002; Porter 2002; Saxe 1970, 1971; Schloen 2001; Schmidt 1996; Stager 1985). For example, Joshua's grave was located on the ancestral estate within the borders of the *nahala* (Genesis 23:9, 20; Joshua 24:30, 32; Judges 2:9; I Kings 2:34).

Grave Type and Tomb Architecture

The architectural features of tombs, both internal and external, have been traditionally interpreted as markers of social status, wealth, sex, and age (Binford 1971, 1972; Morris 1987; O'Shea 1984; Saxe 1971; Tainter 1978; Trigger 1989); the more elaborate the tomb, the greater the socioeconomic standing of those within. It is assumed that rock-cut, chamber tombs (single or multiple interments) belonged to individuals or families of high status and great wealth, because their construction and maintenance would likely require a certain economic commitment available only to the prominent and affluent. For example, Petrie considered a built tomb at Tell el-‘Ajjul, consisting of a gabled roof, stepped dromos, and large limestone slabs lining the walls to be that of a governor (Gonen 1992; Petrie 1933). Conversely, simple cist or pit graves are interpreted as having been those of lower economic classes or even migratory or nomadic peoples (Gonen 1992). Interior features of rock-cut, chamber tombs (specifically multiple interments), such as niches or platforms, are assumed to have been utilized to separate celebrated individuals from the ordinary. For example, Kenyon (1960, 1965) interpreted the placement of individuals on mud brick platforms in Tombs H6 and J14 at Jericho, as illustrative of those individuals' special social status. Others have suggested that grave type may have been commensurate with age as demonstrated at Dan where built tombs and cist graves contained children from two to twelve years of age and jar burials contained infants and children up to two years of age (Ilan 1996:253). Additionally, certain tomb types and architectural features have been considered by some to reflect foreign influence or presence (Gonen 1992; Waldbaum 1966). Architectural features considered to be foreign include a long, stepped dromos and benches around the chamber's walls (e.g., Sarepta, Tell el-Far‘ah [South], and Tell el-‘Ajjul), rock-cut tombs with niches or *loculi* (e.g., Tell el-‘Ajjul, Lachish, Tell Dothan, and Megiddo), bilobate tombs (e.g., Tell el-Fa‘rah [South] and Lachish), and structural or built tombs (e.g., Megiddo, Dan, and Aphek). Additionally, larnaxes, ceramic coffins, and anthropoid used to house the corpse have been considered by some to denote foreign influence or presence (e.g., Gezer, the Persian Garden near Acco, Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh, Tell el-Far‘ah [North], and Deir el-Balaḥ). Thus, the traditional interpretation of the chamber tomb's overall architectural form appears to be one of wealth and the high social standing of the family who was presumed to have owned the tomb. While grave type and tomb architecture (both external and internal features) may have served as differentiating variables among interments, separating celebrated individuals from ordinary, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, based on associated essential grave goods, that is the funeral kit, will serve as a binding factor.

Grave Goods in General

Grave goods offer an intimate glimpse into the lives of the individuals with whom they were buried. When grave goods are analyzed, they can be separated into three categories: personal, status, and essential (Binford 1972; O'Shea 1984; Parker-Pearson 2005; Shay 1983; Wason 2004). Personal items define the nature of one's persona and may include jewelry, toiletries, game pieces, and perhaps favorite possessions. Status items identify wealth, social rank, or profession and might include luxury items, imported goods, weapons, seals, or the tools of one's trade. Essential equipment consists of objects necessary for a proper burial and the well-being of the spirit such as food, drink, perfumes, oils and unguents, amulets, and burial garment(s). Most, if not all, grave goods were deposited with the understanding that the deceased would in some way want or need these items in the next life.

Traditionally, grave furniture has been viewed as an artifactual indicator of wealth and social standing revealed by the quantity, quality, and place of manufacture of the items. A person whose funerary assemblage was high quality and included imported luxury items in large quantities is assumed to have been of high socioeconomic standing. This interpretation assumes that only a person, or family, of great wealth could afford to be buried with such extravagant items, thereby representing society's inequalities inside the tomb. The quantity, quality, and location of grave goods have also been associated with sex and age. For example, certain items have been engendered and assigned to sex-specific categories; arrowheads, daggers, and spearheads are presumed masculine and therefore buried with males, while spindle whorls, needles, and beads are presumed feminine and therefore buried with females. More will be said about this below under "Gender." Children under a certain age were usually accompanied by a smaller quantity of grave goods, though they were still afforded a provision of foodstuffs, even if it was a smaller portion. Similarly, it has been widely recognized that essential equipment, such as food, drink, oils and unguents (all of these contained in bowls, juglets, jugs, or jars), clothing and, to some extent, amulets were crucial to the well-being of the deceased, not only to provide the basic essentials for the deceased but also to prevent him/her from haunting the living. Some have alluded to the ritual and ceremony that probably stood behind the burial and grave goods (Ilan 2002:99, 101; Hallotte 2002:108–109); although until now, the quantity, quality, and typology of grave goods and the implications of their characteristics appear to have been the main foci when interpreting the meaning of grave goods in Canaanite tombs and burials.

Scarabs

Scarabs were among the grave goods found with Canaanite burials, especially those of the Middle (MB IIB–IIC) and Late (LB I–II) Bronze Ages. Because these were found in such quantity, it is clear that they were integral to Canaanite funerary tradition. Not only does the presence of scarabs suggest that they held special meaning to the Canaanites, but also that there was an exchange of ideas and cross-cultural adoption and adaptation of a symbol (Goodenough 1988), indicating that the scarab was essential to the well-being of the deceased.

Scarabs were utilized in Egypt as early as the First Dynasty, becoming popular in the Middle (ca. 2040–1650 BCE) and New (ca. 1570–1070 BCE) Kingdoms (Andrews 1994; Richards 2005). To the Egyptians, the dung beetle, after which the scarab is fashioned, was a symbol of self-creation, rebirth, and regeneration (Andrews 1994; D. Ben-Tor 1991). When worn as an amulet, the scarab transferred the dung beetle's powers to the wearer. Initially, the dung beetle was venerated because of its habit of rolling dung balls, which served as either food or an incubator for young dung beetles. This observed action caused early Egyptians to identify the beetle as the creature who moved the sun across the heavens on its daily journey from east to west, under the earth, and back again, rising on the eastern horizon each morning (Bishara 1978). Regenerative traits were also ascribed to the beetle, because when dropped to the ground, or when attempting to escape danger, the beetles "feign death" (Bishara 1978:92). Once danger passes, the beetle comes back to life, resuming its business. This behavior may have prompted the Egyptians to believe the beetle possessed the ability to rise from the dead (Bishara 1978). Perhaps the most mysterious habit of dung beetles was that of reproduction. According to Plutarch and Horapollo, the Egyptians believed that all dung beetles were male, symbols of a warrior race (Bishara 1978). It is now known that male and female dung beetles mate underground, out of sight. When the female is ready to lay her eggs, she prepares a ball of dung in which to lay them. The dung ball is constructed very slowly and deliberately, but, unlike the feeding ball, it is pear-shaped rather than spherical. When complete, she transports it to a safe underground location where the eggs are inserted before burying it in the sand (Bishara 1978). This ball, then serves as an incubator and a constant source of food for the developing larva, kept warm under the sand. When the young beetles hatch, they seem to materialize from the sand without ever progressing through the usual reproductive and growth processes, as if they magically appeared from the ground fully grown (Andrews 1994; Ben-Tor 1991; Bishara 1978). For these reasons, the Egyptians attributed the magical qualities of life, spontaneous generation, and rebirth to the dung beetle, and translated its powers into scarab-shaped amulets, which were worn around the neck, on the wrist, or as finger rings (Aldred 1971:160–161).

The earliest recognizable scarab-shaped amulets thus far discovered in Egypt date to the Badarian period (ca. 4100 BCE) and to the First Dynasty (ca. 3100 BCE) (Andrews 1994). All of these were found in funerary contexts, suggesting their significance both for this life and the next. The dung or *hprr*-beetle was associated with the deity Khepri, "he who came into existence by himself," who was a "form of the primeval god Atum" (Ward 1978:44). Amulets were "carried about by the wearer in order to gain magical benefits from it, apart from any material use" (Petrie 1914:1) and scarabs were assumed to give the wearer "magical protection" (Andrews 1994:6). Amulets were worn throughout life for their apotropaic qualities; upon death amulets were taken into the tomb for use in the afterlife (Andrews 1994) as it was assumed these good-luck charms would protect them against misfortune and catastrophe even in death. Petrie devised five categories for the use of amulets; however, the main purpose of amulets was the psychological effect on the wearer, providing "confidence and self reliance," helping the wearer to feel as though he/she was in some way fortified and guided through the dangers of life without faltering or fear (Petrie 1914:2). Thus, amulets could take the form of animals, such as the dog, bull, or lioness; and the powers that those creatures possessed were magically transferred to the wearer, giving him/her strength and courage (Andrews 1994). With powers such as these, one can easily understand why scarabs became popular, even accompanying their owners into the next life. In fact, in Egypt, scarab amulets were buried with the dead because the magic of the amulet ensured the spirit's life in the next world (Ward 1978).

Egyptian scarabs were elaborately carved so that the back and sides represented the dung beetle. The bases, however, were carved with designs and mottos that invoked the names of deities and popular pharaohs. The artist very carefully represented the clypeus, head, prothorax, elytra, and legs in the elaborately carved back and sides (Andrews 1994). Other amulets, could resemble animals such as monkeys, antelopes, fish, lizards, lions, crocodiles, flies, dogs, cats, and frogs, to name a few. The bases of scarabs were carved with even greater variety, but with equal intricacy. Their use as good-luck amulets, and the variety of symbols used to communicate lucky mottos, was extensive. The bases of most Egyptian scarabs contain blessings or good-luck formulae such as "A good day," "A mother is a truly good thing," "Golden life," "With Amen-Re behind (you) there can be no fear," "May Mut grant a long lifetime," and "May the god be content with all I have done" (Andrews 1994; D. Ben-Tor 1991). The bases of some Egyptian scarabs used hieroglyphs in pseudo cartouches, or configured signs in a nonsensical arrangement or in a split mirror image, giving the appearance of readability, while really being just decorative. Others simply contain ornamental designs such as cross patterns, scrolls, spirals, and concentric circles. Egyptian scarabs were crafted from a wide variety of substances. Stone, both nonprecious and semiprecious, was the most utilized material of the scarab craftsman, including steatite, limestone, amethyst, lapis lazuli, crystal, jasper, hematite, feldspar, and, occasionally, gold. Others were fashioned in faience, while others were of ivory, wood, and glass (Aldred 1971; Andrews 1994; D. Ben-Tor 1991; Lucas 1962).

Because they are abundant and often mention the names of pharaohs, it is tempting to try to determine the date of scarabs and apply it to the archaeological context in which they were found. However, to do so is naive, especially if the hieroglyphic groupings were derived from pharaohs' names, which were frequently worked into the slogan on the base. As early as Petrie, scholars recognized the difficulties involved in trying to date these scarabs because they were often kept as heirlooms and because the designs commonly reuse certain pharaohs' names, sometimes for many generations after their deaths, because of their imputed magical qualities (D. Ben-Tor 1991:5–6).

In Canaan, scarabs were utilized during the MB IIB–IIC and LB I–II, underscoring the strong economic relationship which existed between Canaan and Egypt (Ben-Tor 1997, 2007). Scarabs have been found at sites such as Ashkelon, Tell el-ʿAjjul, Tell el-Farʿah (South), Hazor, Lachish, and Jericho, to name a few. The stylistic differences between Canaanite and Egyptian scarabs may have to do with the Canaanites' understanding of the Egyptian craft, the meaning of the scarab, and hieroglyphic symbolism. According to Ward (1978), Tufnell (1984), Keel (1995) and Ben-Tor (1994, 1997, 2003, 2007), the stylistic features of the carved sides and backs of scarabs can provide important chronological data. These scholars have analyzed the stylistic features and have divided them into chronological types for both Canaan and Egypt. D. Ben-Tor's most recent research reveals that Egyptian scarabs of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate periods and Levantine scarabs from the MB IIB–IIC Bronze Age can be dated, and she has established a chronological framework by which to identify the date and origin of scarabs based on their designs, updating the earlier work of Tufnell (1984), Ward (1978, 1987), and Ward and Dever (1994).

Many would classify scarabs as personal objects,[2] especially given that the message of the design on the base probably reflected something of the owner's character, or as status markers since scarabs often functioned as seals. However, the regularity with which scarabs were deposited with burials, without regard to gender or age, suggests their function was multifaceted and their meaning intrinsic to the well-being of the owner. No doubt the apotropaic qualities that the scarab and its design provided the owner in life, continued to do so in death. It is not surprising, then, that the Canaanites would have considered the scarab to be an essential component among their grave goods.

Toggle Pins

Like the scarab, toggle pins were also frequently found with Canaanite burials. They were usually found on or near the shoulder region or the waist of skeletons. The main function of toggle pins were to secure the closure of a garment on a body, hence indicating the corpse was clothed or shrouded at the time of interment. Although somewhat ambiguous for the Canaanites, by way of comparison it is known from later time periods (Iron Age to Roman) and from other cultures (Greek and Roman) that washing, anointing the body with oils, herbs, perfumes and dressing it was a vital part of the funerary rite and ritual (1 Samuel 28:14; Matthew 27:59; Mark 15:46, 16:1; Luke 23:53; John 19:39–40; Garland 2001:23–25, 138–139; Toynbee 1971:44). The washed, anointed, and clothed corpse then lay-in-state while mourners paid their final respects prior to interment, known to the Greeks as *prothesis* (Garland 2001:23–31; Toynbee 1971:44–45). Due to the climate in Canaan, most textiles did not survive; however, the toggle pins did, which attests to the once present garment or shroud. The toggle pins, then, represent the intimate act of preparing the corpse for burial, a vital role in the funerary rite and ritual and therefore an important part of the funeral kit.

Toggle pins were worn by both men and women. Reliefs on wall paintings in Egypt and Syria depict three types of commonly worn garments. One is a cloth skirt worn only by men, which could have been secured around the waist by a sash or held in place with a pin. The two other garment types were worn by men and women alike. One consisted of a piece of cloth draped over one shoulder and secured by a toggle pin, leaving the other shoulder uncovered. The other was a cloth that covered both shoulders and was secured by two pins, one for each shoulder (Irvin 1997). Two types of pins were used to secure the garments: the toggle pin, prominent throughout the Bronze Age, and the fibula, utilized during the Iron Age and later. The basic design of toggle pins included rounded tops tapering to pointed needle-like bottoms. They were most commonly made of metal but were made from bone and ivory as well. Metal pins were usually bronze, silver, gold, and electrum, though bronze was used most frequently. In general, toggle pins measured from approximately 3.3 cm to 25.0 cm long and were only a few millimeters thick (Henschel-Simon 1938; Irvin 1997).

The pins could be decorated elaborately, simply, or not at all. The decorated area commonly extended from the top of the pin to the threading hole or "eye," which was generally at or near the middle of the pin. The area from the hole to the point was usually not decorated as it would be embedded in the cloth it secured. Decoration consisted of incised bands, raised ridges, bulbous knobs, or just a simple ball on top of the pin. Use of the toggle pin was very straightforward. The sharp point was passed through the garment as far as the hole, and another puncture was made from inside the cloth to bring the point out again. A string could be attached through the hole and passed around the exposed parts of the pin, around the cloth that was held by the pin. This secured the cloth in place. A secondary function of the toggle pin was as a place from which to hang one's cylinder seal. One end of a cord would be passed through the eye and the other through the cylinder seal. This way a person's seal was readily at hand (Gruber 1995).

To date, the most detailed study that has been made of toggle pins is the work of E. Henschel-Simon (1938). In her article, she discusses the possible origin of toggle pins and the viability of tracing cultural groups based on the pins' decorations. Perhaps her most significant contribution was in establishing a toggle pin typology. According to Henschel-Simon, some of the earliest toggle pins to appear in Canaan can be associated with the arrival of the "Hyksos (who) brought this new feature with them from the north" (Henschel-Simon 1938:176). However, excavations since this article have shown that toggle pins were used earlier, in the Early Bronze IV period (hereafter EB IV; also Intermediate Bronze Age) in Canaan, at Ugarit, Byblos, and Qatna (Gerstenblith 1983:94), and in Mesopotamia in the Early Dynasty III period (EDIII) (Sass 1997:240). Henschel-Simon's typology was mainly based on schematic differences; however, "no proper chronological development is attributed to the sequence of these subdivisions" (Henschel-Simon 1938:173).Though, some types do seem to occur only in the Middle Bronze II (MB II) and Late Bronze Ages (LB), as opposed to the Iron Age (IA). She suggests that the second millennium pins from the Levant were based on third millennium prototypes from Mesopotamia and that pins from Byblos, Hamman, Laipithos, Troy, and Megiddo had a central place of manufacture from which the toggles were shipped (Gerstenblith 1983; Henschel-Simon 1938). Clearly further analysis and research into the typology, chronology, manufacture, and origin of toggle pins must be undertaken.

As with the scarabs, toggle pins are usually classified as personal items.[3] They are usually viewed as jewelry or personal adornment. However, given the regularity with which toggle pins are found among burials, they too appear to possess a multifaceted role in the mortuary arena (e.g., at Jericho, Kenyon 1960, 1965; at Megiddo, Guy 1938, Loud 1948; at Lachish, Tufnell 1940). Aside from personal decoration, their function was to secure a garment onto the body of the deceased. As part of the mortuary ritual, washing and dressing the corpse were essential and intimate acts performed by the closest female members of the family.[4] The presence of toggle pins and textile fragments reflect this aspect of the mortuary ritual. As a result, toggle pins are considered to be a component of the funeral kit.

Afterlife

To the ancient mind, death was a natural progression from one state of being to another; however, the perception of the afterlife, the way in which one arrived there and one's daily existence in that world, was largely determined by the beings and deities who inhabited it. The grave goods that were deposited with the deceased were meant to outfit him/her for the afterlife, providing the essentials necessary for a successful journey into the afterlife and for a happy existence in eternity. Knowing culture-specific, afterlife scenarios provides some insight into the reason certain items were placed with the dead. Since there is little written evidence for the Canaanite's afterlife scenario, examples from neighboring peoples may provide some insight.

In Mesopotamia, for example, ghosts resided in the Below or in the Underworld, which was located not too far beneath the earth's surface where the tomb acted as a portal between this world and the next (Bottéro 2004:105–110; Davies 1999:54–55; Scurlock 1995:1886–87; Segal 2004:96;). Much of what is known regarding the physical attributes of Mesopotamia's afterlife is couched in terms of architectural references of the interior features of palaces, temples, house-temples, and so forth. Rivers, fields, and sheep also exist in the Mesopotamian Underworld; however, they differed from those in this realm (Horowitz 1998:348–362). Humans were originally created by the Mesopotamian deities to be their servants and remained subservient to them even in the afterlife. To get to the Underworld, one had to make an "arduous journey across a demon infested steppe" (Scurlock 1995:1886), cross the Khubur River with the help of Silushi, aka Silulim the boatman, and successfully pass through the seven gates (Scurlock 1995:1886; Segal 2004:95). To assist their journey, living family members equipped the deceased with food, drink, clothing, offerings, and gifts for the deities; if royalty, then transportation was provided (Scurlock 1995:1884). There were seven walls, seven gates, and seven gate keepers, which served as filters, permitting entry to only the virtuous and preventing the deceased from leaving. At any one of the seven gates, the deceased could be denied entry as a result of unresolved issues at the time of death or because of an improper funeral or burial. Once at the seventh gate, the individual would have surrendered all possessions (Segal 2004:95). The Netherworld was illuminated by the sun god Shamash whose daily visit was part of his regular cycle. Further, the Mesopotamian Netherworld was perceived as a place to which one's spirit had to journey and gain entry. It mirrored this world with all of society's social complexities at play (Buttéro 2004:105–110; Scurlock 1995:1887).

In another example, the Egyptian's view of the afterlife was equally, if not more elaborate, comprising beliefs and practices that evolved over thousands of years. To the Egyptians, death was inevitable, but it was not the end of one's existence. In the Netherworld there was renewal of life in the form of a bodily resurrection (Lesko 1995:1763; Te Velde 1988:34), Death could either be friendly or adversarial (Te Velde 1988:27) and all who entered the afterlife were judged in the Hall of Two Truths or the Hall of Judgment of Osiris. A lifetime of good deeds reaped reward and evil deeds, punishment (Lesko 1995:1768–1769; Silverman 1997:132; Te Velde 1988:30). To arrive in paradise, one had to embark on a potentially perilous journey resulting in a paradisiacal existence if successfully navigated. Navigating one's way through the dangers of the Underworld to reach paradise could be difficult. A person's spirit could be destroyed by hostile serpents, demons, or doorkeepers unless they knew the spirit's name (Silverman 1997:132). To aid one's journey, guidebooks were available as well as magical spells to ward off danger and provide instruction for proper conduct and rhetoric in order to gain entry into heaven (Kanawati 2001:36–40; Te Velde 1998;). Having successfully passed the tests and navigated the journey, the person would then become an aspect of Osiris, deity of the Underworld. Although the deceased retained their individual human characteristics and personality, they also received divine status and power (Silverman 1997:133). The Egyptian afterlife was considered to be a paradise-like reflection of life in the Nile Valley, which has been vividly depicted in some tomb paintings. Although paradisiacal, it remained necessary to equip the deceased with worldly possessions and foodstuffs and to continue provisioning the deceased with sustenance forever (Davies 1999:29–35; Kanawati 2001:40–43; Oakes and Gahlin 2007:391; Segal 2004:43–48). To that end, mortuary chapels were erected, and tomb paintings and grave goods ensured eternal provisioning.

These oversimplified summaries of Mesopotamian and Egyptian afterlife scenarios offer a glimpse into worlds that the living would one day inhabit. Like their neighbors, the Canaanites believed that death was inevitable and that the spirit continued to exist in another realm. Much of what is known of the Canaanite afterworld has been gleaned from Ugaritic texts such as the Tale of Aqhat (Ginsberg 1969; KTU 1.161, KTU 1.6.6.45–49; 1.113; Lewis 1992). At the time of death, an individual's soul or *npš* left the body to live in a gray, shadowy world in the kingdom of Mot (death) below the Earth. In the Canaanite afterworld there was no judgment, no punishment, and no reward for the good life one led. Instead it was an unpleasant world where everybody shared the same gloomy existence in a dusty shadowy world void of optimism or paradisiacal continuation (Xella 1995:2063; Segal 2004:114). To arrive there, the deceased had to embark on a journey, which is presumed to have paralleled the struggle between Baal and Mot descried in the Baal

Epic. In this scenario, in order to enter the afterworld, the deceased must traverse a pass demarcated by two mountains. This passageway is dangerous, and the deceased must not get too close to Mot, who has an insatiable hunger for humans. If Mot swallows someone, that person is annihilated forever. Baal's role was to retain power and victory over Mot by temporarily surrendering and descending into the throat and belly of Mot and subsequently resurrecting himself (Segal 2004:114; Xella 1995:2064–2069).

As a result of this triumph, Baal restricted Mot's powers and limited what he could do to the dead, thereby reducing their suffering. Baal came to be seen as the healer and savior of the underworld, yet he did not grant resurrection to the deceased. Although he protected the dead from Mot, they still maintained a shadowy existence in this world. The other Canaanite deities who also inhabited this world seemed "indifferent to the fate of humans" (Davies 1999:48) and were preoccupied by their own desires (Tale of Aqhat recounted in Xella 1995). Since the deities of the Canaanite and Ugaritic afterlife were busy attending their own needs, save for Baal, humans were left to fend for themselves in an afterlife where there was no promise of reward or bodily resurrection, just a shady place where the spirit dwelt for eternity. Because of this, the care and feeding of deceased relatives became an essential service not only for the survival of the deceased in the afterlife but to ensure their benevolence toward surviving relatives (Davies 1999:47–50; Segal 2004:113–115; Xella 1995). Although their existence may have been bleak, the deceased were considered beneficent entities possessing powers of healing, wisdom, fertility, and redemption (Xella 1995). Nevertheless, their benevolence required constant persuasion (Davies 1999).

Early Hebraic burial customs, material culture, and notions of the afterlife were much like those of the Canaanites. As Israelite society developed its mortuary practices, their perception of the afterlife developed as well and became distinct from those of the Canaanites. This aspect of afterlife scenarios will be important after the Canaanite development of the funeral kit is examined in subsequent chapters. As monotheists, the Israelites were required to focus on one God, Yahweh, and to avoid activities such as consultation with the dead or ancestor worship (Thompson 1908:1–2, 9–14; Deuteronomy 18:9–12; 1 Samuel 28; 1 Chronicles 10:13; Isaiah 8:19; Leviticus 20:27). Paradoxically, the dead, or the rephaim, were considered to possess certain powers and could adopt either a benevolent or malevolent attitude toward the living. The dead were also considered to possess insightful wisdom and could be consulted by the living (1 Samuel 28; Schmidt 1996:267–273; Xella 1995). Initially, the rephaim maintained a shadowy existence in Sheol, which was void of any deities, including Yahweh (Thompson 1908). Later, beginning around the 7th century BCE, Yahweh came to be seen as the God of life, delivering the rephaim from a desolate existence to a resurrected, everlasting spiritual life (Isaiah 26:19, Ezekiel 37:1–14; Daniel 12:2–3; Johnson 2002:218–227; Xella 1995). The early notion of Sheol as an eternal shadowy existence may have been a bleak prospect. It was a place to which one descends or "goes down" into (Lewis 2002:183-185), making the contemporaneous Canaanite notion of Baal as healer and savior much more appealing. With this in mind, Yahweh's offer of a resurrected, everlasting spiritual life may have been superior.

The Funerary Ceremony

Funerals are as beneficial for the living as they are the dead. The funerary ritual, from the preparation of the corpse to its burial, not only equips the dead for their journey into the next world, but also enables the survivors to begin to cope with their loss. These obsequies remain largely invisible; however, the grave goods, specifically the essential ones, provide tangible, artifactual evidence for them. Understanding the activities that took place during the funerary process helps to explain the reason certain items were deposited with the deceased and vice versa. As with the Canaanite afterlife scenario, insight into these invisible activities has to be gleaned from the parallels of contemporaneous as well as later peoples.

The funeral is a rite of passage believed to transport the deceased from this world into the next and to transport the survivors from one reality to another (i.e. continued life without the deceased). This occurred in three stages: separation from a former status, transition, and incorporation into a new status (van Gennep 1960; Schmidt 1996:5; A. Cohen 2005). For the deceased, funerary rites removed him/her from life at the time of death and propelled the person into the next world, thus incorporating the deceased into the spiritual realm. Concurrently, the survivors experience similar stages, which began at the time of death, or earlier when prolonged illness was involved, and ended when the spirit finally passed into the next world.

The Canaanite funerary rite and associated activities can be reconstructed from several sources. At the time of death, a family member closed the eyes of the deceased (Genesis 46:4).[5] Grief stricken family members may have embraced and wept over the corpse (Genesis 23:2, 50:1). Family dressed the corpse in a garment as evidenced by toggle pins frequently associated with Bronze Age burials and remnants of textile as at Jericho (I Samuel 28:14; Kenyon 1960:266; de Vaux 1965:56). Soldiers and warriors were often buried in their armor and with their weapons as exemplified at Jericho in Tomb J3 (Kenyon 1960:306–308; see also Ezekiel 32:27 and de Vaux 1965:56). Once prepared, the body was placed on a bier, covered with flowers, herbs, and spices (2 Samuel 3:31, 2 Chronicles 16:14), and after a period of mourning, carried to the tomb. Along the way there was great mourning, and in some instances mourners built a bonfire in honor of the deceased (2 Chronicles 16:14). Aspects of this ritual are exemplified in the Legend of King Keret and in the Tale of Aqhat (Ginsberg 1992:142–158). Mourning was an integral part of the overall funerary rite and seems to have taken place in every stage of the funeral (KTU 1.161; CTA 5.614ff; CTA 19.4.171–184; RS 25.460; KTU 1.5.VI:17b–20A; KTU 1.19:IV:11, 22): 1) at the moment of and immediately following death; 2) when the corpse was being prepared; 3) while being transported for burial; and 4) during burial at which point the mourning could be quite animated and passionate. Extended mourning lasted for a period of seven years to facilitate remembrance of the deceased. Mourning often included the tearing of one's clothes (Genesis 37:34; 2 Samuel 1:11–12, 3:31, 13:31), wearing sackcloth (Genesis 37:34; 2 Samuel 3:31), refraining from personal ornamentation and covering the head and face with a veil (Exodus 33:4; 2 Samuel 15:30, 19:5; Ezekiel 24:17, 23), putting dust on one's head and rolling around in the dust or sitting among ashes (Joshua 7:6; 1 Samuel 2:8, 4:12; Ezekiel 27:30), shaving off one's hair and beard and possibly cutting one's own skin (Jeremiah 6:16; Amos 8:10), and of course, weeping (Genesis 29:11; Jeremiah 9:1). Another integral component of the funerary ceremony was the lament, which mainly consisted of exclamations of grief and sorrow by close relatives and friends. David wrote lamentations, or eulogies, for Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:9–27) and Abner (2 Samuel 3:33–34). These were usually composed and performed by professionals (2 Chronicles 35:25; Amos 5:16) who were frequently women (de Vaux 1961). Laments are also known from Ugaritic sources in which these mourning practices are described (Hess 2007:107; KTU 1.5 VI 11–25; 1.6 I 2–8).

Rite, Ritual and Ceremony

Scholars have traditionally and appropriately applied the terms rite, ritual, and ceremony when discussing ancient funerary practices. These terms describe human behavior of solemn observances as routine procedures that are purposeful, consisting of prescribed formulas that included well-established ceremonies intended to commemorate important public, private, social, or religious events, and may have included liturgies, songs, and prayers with the intention of "changing the social or emotional state of either the individual or group" (Arens 1988:224; Gallou 2005:13). However, it is necessary to make note of the distinctions between rite, ritual, and ceremony, because each performs a different function within the overall funerary procedure. A rite moves a person from one state of being to another, described as a rite of passage by van Gennep (1960) and C. Bell (1997). For example, puberty, marriage, and initiations are rites that transition an individual from one stage of the life cycle to another. Rituals consisting of the prescribed formulas both define the specific rite and facilitate its execution. For example, the marriage formula is different from that of an initiation (C. Bell 1997) or baptism. Finally, ceremony is the public, outward expression of both the rite and the ritual, which announces to the community that the aspirant(s) undergoing the rite, now occupies a new status in society. During the ceremony, rite-specific formulae are performed which may include liturgies, actions, songs, chants, and prayers. Community members who attend and participate in the ceremony act as witnesses to the transformation. Baptismal rites in the Christian tradition offer both an historical and contemporary example of the use of prescribed ceremony and text to mark an individual's decision to adopt a new morality and their incorporation into the community of believers. It is also worth noting that in the Christian tradition, the funeral rite includes prayers, songs, the reading of scriptures, and a commendation (Harmon 1942; *The Book of Common Prayer* 1916:186–191; 1977:462–507; *A New Zealand Prayer Book* 1989:811–852).

Banqueting

Fasting, animal sacrifices, and feasting were integral parts of the funerary ceremony. Among the essential grave goods, vessels for containing, serving, and eating a meal provide artifactual evidence for the funerary banquet. Like the Canaanites, neighboring peoples incorporated banqueting into their funerary process; accordingly, better preservation of artifacts, textual, and pictorial representation provide strong parallels.

In Greece, Rome, Egypt, Mesopotamia as well as Canaan, fasting expressed grief at the loss of the departed; sacrifices honored one or several deities; and feasting bound participants in the grieving process. Sharing a meal with family and close friends is an intimate means of establishing, demonstrating, and strengthening relationships that are private, communal, social, political, or religious (Dunbabin 2001, 2003; Garnsey 2002; Job 1:4–5; Jenks 1992; Pollock 2003; Steel 2004b; J. Wright 2004). Conversely, rupture of relationships could be demonstrated by refusal to share a meal (1 Samuel 20:33–34; Jenks 1992). On a mystical level, festivals and feasting may have served as a conduit for giving thanks to and communing with deities. Some examples include the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Genesis 12:1–20; Exodus 34:18–20); the Feast of the Harvest (Exodus 23:10–19); the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22); the Feast of Passover (Exodus 34:25); the Feast of Tabernacle (Leviticus 23:34); and the Legend of Aqhat (L. Bell 1997; Ginsberg ANET 1992; Jenks 1992; Lloyd-Edinburgh 1990; Pope 1972, 1981). Religious festivals such as these brought communities, cultural groups, and even nations together for a common commemorative purpose. Banqueting displayed political power, status, and wealth; which was equally true in the Greek and Roman worlds (Dunbabin 2003; Steel 2004b; Wright 2004).

From various sources we know that funerary ceremonies included a banquet, which some consider to be the marzēaḥ referred to in the Bible as "house of mourning" (2 Kings 23:15–18; 2 Samuel 3:31–36; A. Cohen 2005:45–98; Ginsberg 1973:119; Jeremiah 16:5, 7–8; Xella 1995).[6] Upon death, those close to the deceased might have fasted, as exemplified by David's fast after the deaths of Saul, Jonathan, and Abner (2 Samuel 1:12, 3:35), which could have lasted for the entire seven-day mourning period (Genesis 50:10; 1 Samuel 31:13). However, food and drink were often provided to nonfasting mourners by family and friends, and these foodstuffs may have been consumed at a house of mourning as mentioned in Deuteronomy 26:14, Jeremiah 16:5–8, and Ezekiel 24:17, 22, which are also statements of prohibition. Although negative in nature, statements of prohibition address issues regarding unwanted recurring activity. For example, modern-day signs stating

"No Smoking," "Do Not Block Intersection," or "No Trespassing" imply that indeed people have been smoking in a certain place, blocking an intersection, or trespassing, and are they are being asked to discontinue such activity. Similarly, it is clear from the prohibitive language in certain texts that the Israelites were engaging in Canaanite funerary rituals and were being asked to modify their actions.[7] Nevertheless, from this negative inference it may be assumed that a funerary banquet was not only common in Canaanite funerary practices, but it may have been in the Israelite's as well (Xella 1995).

Banqueting was integral to funerary activities throughout the Ancient Near East. At Gordion, for example, the tomb of King Midas (ca. 700 BCE) contained over 150 metal vessels including a standard wine set, fourteen wooden furniture items including serving and dining tables, and three cauldrons and tripod stands. The remnants of foodstuffs also included a beverage (mix of wine, beer, and homey mead) and a "spicy lentil and barbecued sheep or goat stew" (McGovern 2000:27). The lion-headed *situla* discovered in Midas' tomb is similar to those depicted in an Assyrian wall relief found in the palace of Sargon II (ca. 710 BCE); perhaps this scene portrays a funerary banquet similar to the one held in honor of Midas (McGovern 2000). Mesopotamian banqueting scenes depicted in mosaics and seals illustrate vessel forms that parallel those found in the royal tombs (A. Cohen 2005). The typology of certain vessel forms found in ED III period tombs seem to have been chosen for the purpose of feasting, specifically for the serving and eating of the feast's food and drink (A. Cohen 2005:84–93, 167–220). Additionally, A. Cohen notes that the emptiness of the vessels and the careful placement of them around the corpse in the tomb suggest the deceased were believed to have participated in the feast as well (A. Cohen 2005:90, 92).

The later Greek funeral or *kedeia* consisted of several parts: the *prosthesis* or lying out of the body; the *ekphora* or the interment or cremation; and the deposition of the remains in the tomb or grave. Participants offered prayers to the *chthonic* deities asking them to receive the deceased in kindness (Segal 2004:209). On the third day after death, the *perideipnon* was held at the hearth in the deceased's house to mark an end to the three-day fast, which began at the time of death. Attendees included grieving family as well as the deceased. During this event, participants wore garlands, sang songs, and delivered eulogies. This event not only bound the grieving together, but it also symbolized the departure of the deceased (Garland 2001:39; Lindsay 2001:68–69).

Similarly, funerary banqueting in Canaan probably consisted of sharing a meal (in spirit) with and in honor of the deceased, which accomplished several purposes: it bound family and friends in their grief; celebrated the life of the deceased; provided opportunity to bid farewell to the deceased; and ushered the deceased into the greater ancestral clan (Davies 1999; Dunbabun 2003:103–140, 187–191; Garnsey 2002:128–129; McGovern 2000:22; Morris 1987:31–32). van Gennep notes that the aim of such a ritual meal was "to reunite all the surviving members of the group with each other, and sometimes also with the deceased, in the same way that a chain which has been broken by the disappearance of one of its links must be rejoined" (van Gennep 1960:164–165). It is important here to highlight the difference between a funerary banquet and a feast held in conjunction with an ongoing mortuary cult. The banquet held in honor of the deceased during the funerary process was a final farewell and send-off of the deceased into the netherworld. The deceased's portion of this meal provided sustenance for the journey. A mortuary cult feast provided sustenance necessary for the long-term well being and appeasement of the deceased and the ancestors, which will be discussed in greater detail below.

The Marzēaḥ

As mentioned above, marzēaḥ, as a concept, physical place, or both, can be associated with funerary activities, at least in part. The funerary aspect of the marzēaḥ is relevant to the discussion of the funeral kit, because it is during the banquet that a portion of the essential vessels would have been compiled and, although debated, the funeral banquet may have been held at a bêth marzēaḥ or banquet hall. Therefore a brief discussion on the marzēaḥ is warranted. There remains an ongoing debate regarding the true nature of the marzēaḥ and a consensus has yet to be reached; however, it is generally held that in some way it may be associated with mortuary practices. The issues surrounding the marzēaḥ concern its function: was this a funerary banquet, a death club or cult of the dead, or was it merely a drinking club or *symposium*? To reach the heart of the matter, scholars have investigated both textual and archaeological evidence.

To date, the marzēaḥ debate has largely centered on textual references, some of which can be contradictory and confusing. Scholars have yet to form a harmonious consensus as to the general purpose and function of marzēaḥ (Brichto 1973; Greenfield 1974; King 1988, 1989; Lewis 1989; Pardee 1996; Pope 1981; Schmidt 1996; Wright 2001). The texts most often discussed that either mention or allude to marzēaḥ include Biblical and non-Biblical sources, yet they appear to reflect Canaanite practices. The most significant non-Biblical texts come from Ugarit: RS 14.16; RS 15.70; RS 15.88; RS 18.01; KTU 1.21 (CTA 21.A); KTU 1.114 (RS 24.258); KTU 3.9 (RS 1957.702); and KTU 4.642 (RS 19.103). Additionally, texts from Phoenician Carthage and Piraeus, Elephantine, Palmyra, Nabatea, two rabbinic references, and the Medeba Map all reference the marzēaḥ (Ackerman 1989:275; Greenfield 1974:29; Ackerman 1989:275; King 1988, 1989; Lewis 1989:81). The most relevant Biblical references can be found in Deuteronomy 26:14; Isaiah 28:7–22; Jeremiah 16:5–9; and Amos 6:4–7; each boasts negative connotations.

Based on these texts, it appears that marzēaḥ was a kind of social institution, which had a leader referred to as an *rb*. Members paid dues, and membership could be bequeathed from father to son. The club could own land, possess a meeting house, and engage in frequent elaborate drinking parties. Some texts discuss the society's business arrangements, such as the purchase or lease of land and the procurement of storage facilities (Greenfield 1974). Some texts allude to the social aspects, which includes extreme drinking (Isaiah 28:7–22). Other texts refer to patron deities such as *Šatrana* (RS 15.70); while other deities, such as *El*, invite the gods to his marzēaḥ where there is excessive drinking and inebriation (KTU 1.114). Still other texts place the marzēaḥ in a funerary setting, where feasting and drinking are taking place in the wake of the death of a loved one (King 1988, 1989). Some Biblical references seem to prohibit the Israelites from participating in marzēaḥ or perhaps establish guidelines of participation in a marzēaḥ where mourning is taking place.[8] Due to the diversity of contexts in which marzēaḥ is mentioned it is not surprising scholars cannot reach a consensus as to its purpose. However, there are three context-types concerning its purpose upon which scholars can agree: contractual or dealing with the membership (RS 14.16; RS 15.70; RS 15.88; RS 18.01; KTU 3.9; KTU 4.642); as a social/religious institution where drinking among the members and deities occurred (KTU 1.114); and finally as a house of bereavement (KTU 1.21; KTU 1.1114; Amos 6:4–7; Jeremiah 16:5–9; King 1988), and it is from these categories that some argue in favor of the mortuary characteristic of the marzēaḥ.

Recent studies have suggested that a clearer understanding of marzēaḥ may come from the integration of both textual references and archaeological data (King 1988; Lewis 2002; McGeough 2003) or by relying on the archaeological evidence alone, which utilizes architecture and material culture as proof that certain structures should be reinterpreted as a bêth marzēaḥ (Bietak 2002, 2003). McGeough (2003) uses both textual evidence and the archaeological remains from the *Temple aux rhytons* (Yon 1996) and the *Bâtiment au vase de pierre* at Ugarit to define the attributes of bêth marzēaḥ structures. McGeough suggests the latter is a better candidate for a bêth marzēaḥ than the former. Taking a purely archaeological approach, Bietak (2002, 2003) argues that several structures, including the sacred precinct at Tell el-Dab'a, the Fosse Temple at Lachish, the Shrine of the Calf at Ashkelon, and the Rectangular Temple at Nahariya, should be identified not as cultic temples, but instead as ritual, funerary banqueting halls or bêth marzēaḥ buildings.

At the heart of the archaeological argument is the notion that the architecture, ceramics, and material culture found within these structures are more in keeping with textual descriptions of a marzēaḥ than with those of a temple. Because the primary activity of marzēaḥ appears to be drinking and merrymaking and not necessarily cultic activity, then the architectural layout of the bêth marzēaḥ would not necessarily resemble that of a temple. By focusing on the architectural features of the above-mentioned structures, Bietak (2002, 2003) observes a similarity between them and Egyptian domestic- and funerary-style, architectural traditions. In regard to the *Bâtiment au vase de pierre* and textual references, McGeough observes that the size of the meeting room for the marzēaḥ membership needed to be "large enough to accommodate a group of about twelve (or more) people" (McGeough 2003:414; see also Pardee 2000:55). Accordingly, the interior design of these structures does not follow the typical tripartite plan of contemporaneous Canaanite temples (Dever 1995:607-610). Instead, they generally consist of one large room, with benches along one or more of the walls (Fosse Temple III Lachish),[9] a platform, column bases, and side rooms that exhibit evidence of food preparation and storage. Additionally, if these structures are in fact related to marzēaḥ, where heavy drinking and feasting was taking place, then the ceramic types found within should be commensurate with the activities of the marzēaḥ as opposed to those of a temple. Correspondingly, the ceramic remains found within these structures were commensurate with food preparation, food storage, and all aspects of the serving and eating of a meal, especially drinking. Such vessels include cooking pots, plates, bowls, drinking cups, goblets, dipper-juglets, strainers, jugs, pitchers, kraters, amphorae, and vats. Imported wares such as Mycenaean kraters, Cypriot White Slip Ware, and Base Ring Ware, considered to be or to contain luxury items, attest to the sumptuousness of the gathering. The faunal remains associated with the interior of these buildings include sheep/goat, oxen, gazelle, some fowl, and other domesticated animals (Ben-Dor 1950; Bietak 2002). Other items include incense burners, model pots, figurines—anthropomorphic and zoomorphic—made of both clay and metal; ivory objects; stone and glass vessels; jewelry, including beads and a carnelian pendant; bronze tools such as an adze, chisel, and dagger(Ben-Dor 1950; Bietak 2002; Tufnell 1940). The assemblages of artifacts associated with these structures appear to be more characteristic of a banqueting hall where feasting and merry-making were taking place, rather than the ritualistic activities characteristic of a temple. Thus, the architectural style, interior design, ceramics and material culture, together with the location of each structure, outside of the city wall and surrounded by graves, may suggest that these structures may well have been used for marzēaḥ-type activities rather than the worship of a deity (Bietak 2002, 2003; McGeough 2003). Furthermore, when comparing the ceramic typologies of material found inside tombs with the types found inside the above-mentioned marzēaḥ-type structures and temples, the ceramic typologies found in tombs best match those from the marzēaḥ-type structures[10].

The above-mentioned texts offer vague and often perplexing descriptions regarding the true nature of the marzēaḥ and the archaeological record offers some insight but few concrete answers. Under the circumstance, it is little wonder that scholars cannot agree on the fundamental purpose of marzēaḥ. The long-standing question still remains: was marzēaḥ secular, cultic, or funerary? The one aspect of marzēaḥ mentioned repeatedly in the texts is drinking; a characteristic upon which most scholars can agree. In the same way that dining binds participants together, so too does drinking. In many societies, drinking, be it public, private, social, religious, or political, plays a prominent role in determining social status, political power, and economic advantage (Bunimovitz and Greenberg 2004; Dietler 1989; Mendelbaum 1965). Societies that employ drinking customs may use them to "institutionalize status differences within society—that is to differentiate individuals or groups on the basis of age, gender, role, prestige, or other socially relevant distinctions" (Bunimovitz and Greenberg 2004:27). Drinking can be used to encourage social solidarity, organize labor-force projects through "work-party feasts" (Deitler 1989:365), and can be used in religious and social festivals such as births, weddings, deaths, and cultic festivals (Deitler 1989:362). Armstrong (1998) discusses alcohol from a pharmacological perspective, the effect it can have on the human body and mind, and its role in ancestor veneration rituals in Zhou Dynasty China and in Iron Age Palestine. Intoxication was thought to enable communication with the ancestors. The use of mind altering drugs, or hallucinogens, often facilitated contact with the spiritual realm and alcohol is one such hallucinogen that can alter a person's state of mind, propelling a person into communion with a deity or, as in this case, with the ancestors.

Perhaps the textual evidence should not be viewed as conflicting but instead as reflecting the multi-faceted nature of marzēaḥ. It may be that scholars cannot reach a consensus as to a single purpose of marzēaḥ precisely because it embraces any number of functions. For example, another agreed aspect of the marzēaḥ has to do with membership, which was all male, and the fact that the men of the marzēaḥ owned property and furnishings. Accordingly, it may be appropriate to view the marzēaḥ as a fraternity or a social institution (as suggested by Greenfield 1974) similar to that of the modern-day Freemasons. The Freemasons consist of an all-male membership, who believe in a "Supreme Being" (who may have different names), who own property, and who meet in a Lodge (also referred to as a Temple, Hall, or Center). Organizationally, many Lodges fall under a Grand Lodge or Grand Orients according to geographical area. Among the members there are lodge officers, with the Worshipful Master being the president, after which there are senior and junior wardens, a secretary, a treasurer, a tyler (one who guards the door during the Lodge sessions), and there are deacons, stewards, and a chaplain. While basic principles for membership, ritual, and ceremony exist, each Masonic jurisdiction can prescribe its own format. Masonic lodges also tend to be active in the community either participating in or hosting charitable events for organizations such as education, medical assistance, or housing projects (Macnulty 2006; Morris 2006). In the same way that the Masons engage in private and communal activities, so too may have the men of the marzēaḥ. The marzēaḥ-fraternity may have consisted of members from a certain echelon of society who engaged in their own societal rituals and ceremonies (which included drinking parties). They may have recognized one or several deities. They may have been active in the community, and they may also have provided a venue in which grieving fraternity members could hold a funerary banquet.

As a further example from the Roman world, fraternal burial or funeral clubs (Lindsay 2001; Toynbee 1996) existed among the lower classes, which ensured that slaves and former slaves would receive a proper burial. Members were required to pay a basic fee and contribute an amphora of wine. Upon death, their funerary costs were then covered by the club, and a commemorative meal was held in honor of the deceased. Whether the marzēaḥ functioned as a *collegia funeraticia*, or as a social club (Toynbee 1996), the true nature of the marzēaḥ remains a mystery. Although at present, its multifaceted attribute as well as its associations with social drinking and fraternal membership remain its most notable characteristics.

Feeding the Dead

While it may seem subtle, the difference between a funerary banquet and the feeding of the dead was of great importance. As discussed above, the funerary banquet was inextricably interwoven with the burial process and was a meal held with and in honor of the deceased. The deceased's portion of that meal, in which he/she mystically partook, was deposited with him/her at the time of interment. This food was viewed as either sustenance for the spirit's journey, as an offering that the deceased gave to the ancestors, or perhaps both. Feeding the dead or making offerings to them was associated with postfunerary mortuary activities, which involved different intentionalities. The funerary banquet mourned, honored, and celebrated the life of the deceased; it prepared the deceased for the journey into the afterlife; and it ushered the deceased into the realm of the ancestors. In contrast, feeding the dead has to do with the long-term happiness of the deceased and the greater ancestral clan. Additionally, proper provisioning of the ancestors ensures supernatural favors, and food offerings serve as a prophylactic gesture to ward off ghostly mischief (A. Cohen 2005:102–113; Gardiner 1928; Gardiner and Kurte 1995:2068–2070; Schaeffer 1939:46–56; Schmidt 1996; Scurlock 1995:1889–1892).

It is commonly accepted that the care and feeding of dead ancestors was a widely practiced (Davies 1999:54–556). In Mesopotamia, generally the eldest son, referred to as *pāquidu,* performed the duties of the *kispum* ritual, or the routine care and feeding of the ancestors. Other names attributed to the *pāquidu* include *sahir*, "caretaker," or *naqme*, "water pourer," or *zakir sumi*, "name caller," all terms which describe the eldest son's ceremonial responsibilities toward the ancestors (Pope 1981:159–162). Ugaritic texts, such as "*The Duties of an Ideal Son*" found in the Aqhat text (Lewis 1989:53–71 [CTA 17.1.26–34]; Schmidt 1996:27–46, 59–62) and some texts from Mari (See Schmidt 1996:28–46) describe some of the responsibilities that the eldest son has to his father both in life and in death. These include providing food for the dead, which many see as a parallel role to the Mesopotamian *pāquidu* (Davies 1999:56; Pope 1981). Other scholars disagree, stating that the duties of an ideal son listed in the Aqhat story actually describe those of a son to his living father (Lewis 1989:96; Schmidt 1996:59–62; Wright 2001:48–54) Nevertheless, the kispum appears to have been a tripartite ritual wherein the family went to the tomb in order to invoke the name(s) of the departed, to provide food for their nourishment, and water to quench their thirst (Schmidt 1996:28–46). This ritual was not merely one that deposited food offerings, but it was also one in which the dead were remembered by the living through invocation and a ceremonial meal.

Biblical references regarding eating the food sacrificed to the dead occur as prohibitions (Bloch-Smith 1992:122–126; de Vaux 1965: 59–60; Deuteronomy 26:14; Ezekiel 24:17, 22; Genesis 28:22, 31:52–54; Isaiah 57:6–7; Jeremiah 16:5, 8; Johnston 2002:62–64, 167–195). However, Bloch-Smith points out that "nowhere in the Bible are the Israelites and Judahites forbidden to feed the dead" (Block-Smith 1992:126), and it is possible that the Israelites practiced ancestor veneration, in common with the Canaanites. The prohibitions that are mentioned with respect to the dead include consulting the dead for advice, misappropriation of tithes slated for the Temple of Yahweh, or any activity that might deter one's attention from the cult of Yahweh.

Examples of funerary feasts that are less ambiguous can be found from later periods among the Greeks and Romans during which they clearly separated the funerary banquet from food offerings associated with recurring postburial mortuary rituals. For the Greeks, once the house had been cleansed with sea water and hyssop, the funerary meal, the *perideipnon*, which was held at the deceased's house and shared by relatives, was held on the third day after interment had been made. Additional funerary rites were conducted on the 3rd, 9th, and 30th days after death; the30th-day rite probably ended the mourning period (Garland 2001:39–41, 104–105; Lindsay 2001:68). Annual rites included the *eniausia*, which was performed either on the anniversary of the deceased's death, funeral, or birthday; the *genesia*, which was originally a private ceremony that became a national festival held on the 5th of *Boedromion* as decreed by Solon; and possibly the *nemeseia* an all-night festival that honored the dead (Garland 2001). Food and drink offerings for the dead were left at the tomb and were considered to be the primary means of honoring and "delighting" the deceased (Garland 2001:110). The food itself, however, may have been considered tainted and unclean for the living who may or may not have ingested it (Garland 2001:110–113).

The Romans likewise presented food to the deceased at various stages in the funerary process. Like the Greeks, the Romans cleansed the house after the body had been removed for burial. The *silicernium,* the funerary meal, was held at the tomb. This meal consisted of a sausage, and the heir was required to sacrifice a sow to Ceres in order to achieve proper ritual cleansing. This was an extremely important part of the process because of pigs' regenerative qualities. Once the sow had been sacrificed, then the grave was officially consecrated (Lindsay 2001:72). After more ritual cleansing, participants partook in the *novemdial sacrificium*, which is similar to the Greek's 9th day of funerary activities. Banquet items included bread, eggs, sausage, vegetables, beans, lentils, salt, poultry, grapes, cakes, and drink that often included water and wine, as well as libations of milk and blood. Portions of this meal were left at the tomb or the grave stone for the deceased (Toynbee 1996). The details for both the burial and continued memorial meals at the tomb were left by the deceased. These ceremonial meals were to be carried out by the deceased's heirs and/or freedmen and freedwomen. Additionally, the, freedpeople, the grandson, and the heirs of the deceased would have contributed funds for the maintenance of the tomb and for the required food and drink.

The Roman calendar incorporated two annual festivals. One is the *Parentalia*, held from February 13–21 when the dead were "honored and appeased by offering" (Lindsay 2001:74), which also incorporated the *Feralia* on February 22. The other was the *Lemuria*, held on May 9, 11, and 13, which was a time when the ancestors were dreaded and their spirits expelled by incantations (Lindsay 2001). In both festivals, food played an important role; however, the type of food and exact extent of its involvement in these ceremonies is neither entirely known nor fully understood. The purpose of the Roman cult of the dead was twofold: the dead remained in the memories of living relatives and friends and "perennial renewal of life to their immortal spirits" (Toynbee 1996:62) was given through routine care to their mortal remains and the offerings left in the tomb such as money and food stuffs.

As mentioned above, although the ancient Egyptian afterlife was fertile and paradisiacal, the dead remained dependent upon surviving family members for continual care and feeding. The eldest son of the deceased, the patriarch, prepared a tomb and provided an endowment for the deceased's his mortuary cult. This would ensure the deceased's happiness in the next life as well as guarantee the deceased's name would be remembered forever. The eldest son functioned as the *ka-priest* or servant, and he, along with other relatives, regularly visited the funerary chapel to leave offerings of food at the tomb's false door where the deceased's ka would come up to meet the family and partake of the food offering. Over time, families lost interest in perpetuating these routine offerings and hired ka-priests to perform these duties in their place. In theory, the descendants of the employed *ka-priests* would inherit their fathers' duties; however this was not always the case and the lack of interest for the office coupled with the inevitable lack of financial support contributed to the decline of most funerary cults. However, to ensure the dead would not starve, the Egyptians incorporated "the magic of image and word" (Ritner 1997:141) into the tomb. Now tomb walls were adorned with images depicting servants harvesting and preparing food stuffs, pouring liquid to quench the thirst of the deceased, bringing food to table, and reciting funerary prayers in the same way the ka-priest would do. In this way, if both the family and the hired ka-priest failed to perform their duties, the images on the tomb walls would do so magically. As early as the late Fourth Dynasty, miniature stone replicas were created of the food that would have typically comprised the food offerings and placed in the tomb with the corpse (Assmann 1990; David 2001; Kanawati 1987; Ritner 1997; Roth 1988). In the Sixth Dynasty, miniatures were made of wood and ceramic instead of stone; and throughout Egyptian history wall paintings in tombs included scenes of food preparation and offerings. By placing miniatures in the tomb and depicting food in wall paintings, the representation magically ensured a constant supply of food in the afterlife, should the actual offerings cease to be made (David 2001; Tooley 1995).

Some have suggested that architectural features in Ugaritic and Canaanite tombs, such as secondary shafts, may be indicative of postburial food or drink offerings. Secondary shafts such as those associated with some tombs at Ugarit, may have functioned as "feeding tubes," providing evidence for a well-established ancestor cult there. These tubes were discovered in conjunction with numerous Late Bronze Age houses at Ugarit suggesting that through a series of tubes, gutters, jars, and pits inside the tomb, liquid could be administered from the surface as a ready supply for the deceased within. For Schaeffer (1939), this was clear evidence of a death cult at Ugarit. For others, such as Lewis (1989) and Schmidt (1996), this evidence does not necessarily underscore the existence of a death cult. Pitard (1994, 2002) has demonstrated that the tubes, gutters, jars, and pits at Ugarit were misunderstood and misinterpreted by Schaeffer by arguing that these installations were actually drainage pipes and gutters that belonged to the houses built above the tombs. Similarly, in Tomb 1 at Tell Dothan, a secondary opening in the form of a small channel (Cooley 1983; Cooley and Pratico 1994a, 1994b) was situated just outside the tomb on the northwestern side above Crypt C. The opening measured 60 × 60 cm on the outside and narrowed to a diameter of 20 cm on the inside. This coupled with the presence of two sizeable storage jars associated with dipper-juglets caused excavators to speculate that this may have been a libation tube through which relatives could quench the thirst of the dead.

Further pictorial evidence can be found in feasting scenes that appear on seals, cups, wooden boxes, and friezes such as those found at Early Dynastic Ur (Pollock 2003). These scenes depict people engaged in drinking and feasting; the animals and food eaten in the banquet; jars with straws, cups, and gestures of drinking; and participants, attendants, and musicians. These scenes probably depict not only the funerary banquet but also postburial festivals. Certainly, the *triclinia*, masonry couches and dining tables, found in Egyptian tomb chapels as well as Roman tomb architecture suggest that families conducted certain postburial funerary festivities in these areas (Toynbee 1996:61–64, 73ff; David 2001:115). Similar features have been found at Pompeii in the tomb of Cn. Vibrius Saturnius and Ostia at the Isola sacra where the *triclinium* is located at the entrance of the tomb (Dunbabin 2003:126–129).

Gender

In recent years, scholars have focused on gender studies as a way to tease out male and female roles in society and the family or household in the ancient world, including Canaanite burials (Conkey 1991; Day 1989; Nelson 1997; Peterson 2002). Whether intentional or not, the sex of some individuals has been assumed on the basis of associated grave goods that have been engendered. The assumption is that that certain grave goods, such as jewelry and weapons, are typical to one sex over and against another; jewelry for women, weapons for men. The topic of gender is relevant to the discussion because, although the sex and gender of individuals and grave goods may be determinable, the essential items that comprise the funeral kit are not gender-specific. This will become evident as the following chapters unfold. For clarification, the difference between sex and gender should be noted: sex refers to one's biological and physiological characteristics as being male or female, and gender reflects sociocultural behavior as being feminine or masculine (Costin 1996; Nelson 1997; Peterson 2002). The brief discussion here is concerned with gender and the feminine or masculine characteristics that may or may not be found among burials, grave goods, and tomb architecture.

Textual references and pictorial representations in wall paintings, friezes, and decorated vessels help to elucidate gender-specific funerary responsibilities and contributions to both the community and the family (Burke 2008; Pollock 1991; Stears 2008). For example, painted decorations found on ceramic vessels, sarcophagi, and larnaxes from Mycenae depict female mourners, underscoring this as a professional office held by women. In addition to these resources, recent studies have attempted to identify gender-specific roles and the division of labor between men and women by analyzing artifacts and the use of space. Interpretive analyses have been biased in terms of dividing tasks between the masculine and feminine; once a task is deemed masculine or feminine, it has been difficult to envision exceptions to the rule. For example hunting and war are considered masculine; while food gathering and preparation and textile production are considered feminine (Nelson 1997). Accordingly, lithic and metal blades, knives, daggers, spearheads, and so forth are assumed to have been made and used by men for hunting and engaging in war (Crass 2001; Gero 1991; Peterson 2002; Weglian 2001); whereas, grinding stones, mortise and pestles, needles, looms, and associated paraphernalia are considered to have been used by women for food preparation, sewing, weaving, and so forth (Brumfiel 1991; Hastrof 1991; Peterson 2002).

Therefore, when evidence for food preparation or weaving is present within buildings, those spaces are interpreted as being under the direction of women. Conversely, when workshops or production areas for tools and weapons are discovered, these are considered to be under the supervision of men. When it comes to mortuary practices, similar gender-specific classification and interpretation have been applied to tomb architecture in terms of the use of space and to grave goods (Goring 1989; Seger 2007; Stears 2008). Observations such as the ratio of females to males in a given tomb, clustering, placement within the tomb, and quantity and type of grave goods have been utilized to draw gender-specific conclusions (Goring 1989). For example, tombs containing more men than women, or only men, or clustering of a single sex in separate areas of the tomb are interpreted to suggest that women and men may have been given different, unequal mortuary treatment. However, interpretations such as these do not take into account extenuating circumstances such as the possibility that male family members may have been killed in battle or while hunting and their bodies were never returned to the family tomb or they may have had multiple wives. Other explanations include the possibility of complex intimate relationships such as same-sex couples (Parkinson 1995; Reeder 2000) or the presence of widows and widowers living within the household of their next of kin.

If grave goods reflect persona and status, then it would seem logical to conclude that grave goods may also reflect gender. This rule of thumb is presumed especially useful when it is not possible to determine the sex of the skeleton. Accordingly, when a skeleton of undetermined sex is discovered with a knife, dagger, and/or spearhead, the individual is assumed to be male. Similarly, if an unsexed skeleton is associated with jewelry, make-up paraphernalia and/or loom weights, it is considered to be female (Parker-Pearson 2005:95–110; Seger 2007). However, as with many things, there are exceptions to this rule. For example, Tomb 23, a Late Bronze Age Cypriot tomb at Hala Sultan Tekke, (Niklasson 1983), contained the remains of one individual, whose skeletal remains were positively identified as male adult. As expected this male was buried with essential equipment, including vessels that comprised a drinking set; status and personal items such as weapons including arrow heads, a dagger and a trident; faience gaming pieces; a scarab; and a silver finger ring—all items one would expect to find associated with a male who may have been in the military.

Also deposited among these grave goods were beads (presumably for a necklace), two gold earrings, gold pendants, finger rings, faience and ivory spindle-whorls, and pieces from an ivory box—all items typically interpreted as feminine. The reason for "feminine" grave goods to have been buried with the male interment in Tomb 23 isn't known for sure, but there have been numerous other cases where "gendered" grave goods have been deposited with the opposing sex; most likely it was done for a variety of complicated cultural reasons related to gender rather than sex (Crass 2001; Parker-Pearson 2005:97). If tools, weapons, cylinder seals (Pollock 1991), and personal items (gaming pieces, jewelry), reflect profession and persona; then perhaps objects that are repeatedly deposited with males and females can be generally interpreted as masculine or feminine. Closer scrutiny of these broad generalizations has revealed that tasks traditionally assigned to females, such as professional mourners, while predominantly female, were also performed by males and vice versa (Bachvarova 2008; Wright 1996; Stears 2008). Imposing gender biases upon burials and their grave goods is more complex than would first appear, and there are no absolutes.

Kinship

Familial organization and configuration in the Ancient Near East, including Canaan, was convoluted and complex, just as it is with any cultural group, ancient or modern (Brichto 1973; Gelb 1979; Schloen 2001; Stager 1985). A brief summary of kinship is warranted here as it will provide some background to the discussion regarding the use of interior tomb space in subsequent chapters. Attempting to define that which comprises a nuclear family, an extended family, clan, or tribe is complicated. The diverse realities found within family groups cannot always be embraced by rigid definitions no matter how broad or inclusive the definition may be because the complexity of each family's matrix is unique (Gelb 1979; Kertzer 1991; Parkin 2003). It is strongly emphasized by those who study kinship that family groups may include biologically as well as nonbiologically related members. However, since terms such as nuclear family, extended family, household, and clan are so often used when discussing tombs, burials, and the familial groups associated with them, it is necessary to establish generic parameters with the proviso that these definitions remain flexible and the realities of life may not always be immediately recognizable in the archaeological and artifactual record.

For the purpose of this work, the following definitions will be utilized. A nuclear family may consist of a mother, father, and unmarried children. A complex or extended family may include the nuclear family plus grandparent(s), uncle(s), aunt(s), unmarried sibling(s), or married sibling(s) and their family(ies). A household may incorporate members outside of the kinship group and can be either public, private, or both. A private household would be that of a nuclear or extended family and may also include nonbiologically related members. A public household could consist of a land owner and his nuclear family as well as the estate's laborers; temples including the priest(ess), his/her family, temple personnel, and miscellaneous individuals seeking refuge. A royal household may include the king and/or queen, his/her family, attendants, officials, and so forth. A household, then, could consist of a nuclear family in which cohabitating members may or may not have been related biologically or by marriage (Fox 2003; Gelb 1979; Kertzer 1991; Parkin 2003; Stager 1985). A clan may consist of several nuclear and/or extended families who claim to be descended from a common ancestor.

Traditionally, it has been assumed that those buried in multiple burial, rock-cut, chamber tombs in Canaan were members of the same clan. This assumption has been made based on the above-mentioned textual references regarding burial with one's kin or forefathers. Certainly, a multigenerational tomb such as the rock-cut chambers provided a burial place among one's ancestors. However, surprisingly little research has been undertaken to provide insight or data to support this claim. Apparently, the chaotic mix of burials and grave goods presented by numerous tombs has proved a stumbling block to archaeologists regarding the true relationship of those interred. Until recently, scientific analysis (e.g., DNA analysis) has been expensive and slow; and sometimes samples prove difficult to obtain due to poor preservation of the skeletal material. Nevertheless, given the complex nature of the family and the importance of being buried with one's family, the maintenance of certain relationships within the larger kinship group would have been of great significance. It is necessary, then, to reevaluate the archaeological evidence in regard to familial relationships and the form and function of the chamber tomb.

The Foundation

The aspects of mortuary practices mentioned above were chosen because they factor into the funeral kit discussion. In most cases, these topic summaries are over simplifications of much larger issues; however, only the basics are mentioned here, because to say more would go beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the scholarship that has been undertaken and the conclusions that have already been made are important building blocks in the ongoing study of ancient mortuary practices. Ignoring the foundation that has already been built would negate or suggest rejection of much that has been learned as well as our current understanding of ancient mortuary activities and beliefs. It is upon this foundation that the thesis for the funeral kit is based. It is from this foundation that the discussion of ancient mortuary practices can take one more step forward.