

Knife - Holders in Ancient Egyptian Tombs (Religious and Artistic Study)

Associate Prof. Rasha M. Omran *

Abstract

Studying ancient Egyptian tombs have long been an important source of information regarding many aspects of Egyptian religion. The walls of tombs are often extensively decorated with scenes rendered in paint or in color relief sculpture. While they were primarily private structures containing images selected by the person who expected to be housed there for eternity, the funerary monuments also reflect religious beliefs more generally. While numerous researches have focused on many of the religious scenes depicted on the walls of ancient Egyptian Tombs, no one focused on the Knife Holders (Gate – guardians) scenes. Hence, the current study focused on Knife - Holders scenes depicted on the walls of both royal and private tombs dating back to the New Kingdom at Thebes.

The current study was undertaken to shed light on the meaning and the function of knife in Ancient Egypt. To study the role of the knife-holders in Ancient Egypt. To spot light on the actions and behaviors and locations of the knife-holders in Ancient Egyptian civilization. To spot light on the representations of the knife-holders on the walls of the ancient Egyptians tombs in the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens as well as the private tombs at western Thebes. To focus on the shapes and positions of the Knife-holders in Ancient Egypt. To explain the difference between Knife - Holders and Demons.

* Tourism Guidance - Faculty of Tourism and Hotels - Fayoum University –

To achieve the objectives of the study, the required data were collected from periodicals, references presenting Knife Holders scenes. Preserving the scenes of knife - holders on the walls of the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens dating back to the New Kingdom as well as the private tombs at western Thebes that contributed to the interpretation of all the data gathered from literature.

The preliminary results indicated that the term (Knife-Holders) is an expression which indicates to tomb-guardians, demons or minor divinities. These minor deities were subordinate to the major gods and goddesses. They performed specified tasks upon demand and while the major gods tended to be more universal in nature, demons were often defined by specific actions, behaviors and locations. Knife - Holders were often associated with caves, pits and tombs which were considered entrances to the underworld. Moreover, they constituted different categories. Some were clearly portrayed with frightening instruments of punishment like knives for the damned. Others were not inimical and may often be classed as minor guardian deities such as the keepers of the various gates of the underworld. Some were creatures specially tasked with the protection of the king or the deceased in the journey through the netherworld. Concerning their forms, Knife-holders took many forms such as human forms, semi-anthropomorphically with human bodies. They are represented with the heads of different creatures like falcons, jackals and rams.

Key Words

Knife-Holders, Ancient Egyptian Tombs, Thebes, Demons, Gate-Guardians, Minor divinities, New Kingdom.

Introduction

While study of ancient Egyptian tombs have long been an important source of information regarding many aspects of Egyptian religion. The walls of tombs are often extensively decorated with scenes rendered in paint or in colored relief

sculpture. While they were primarily private structures containing images selected by the person who expected to be housed there for eternity, the funerary monuments also reflect religious beliefs more generally. While numerous researches have focused on many of the religious scenes depicted on the walls of ancient Egyptian Tombs, no one focused on the Knife - Holders scenes. Hence, the current study focused on the scenes of Knife - Holders in Ancient Egyptian Tombs .The term "Knife-Holders" is an expression which indicates to minor divinities that were subordinate to the major gods and goddesses. They performed specified tasks upon demand and while the major gods tended to be more universal in nature, demigods were often defined by specific actions, behaviors and locations. The Egyptian believed that the journey underworld included many obstacles which must be passed by the sun god on his nightly journey, by the deceased king as part of the sun god's entourage (or fused with the god), and by the deceased who must pass these barriers in order to reach the place of afterlife existence. So, Knife – Holders were represented together with other demigods to eliminate these obstacles facing the deceased.

Life after Death in Ancient Egyptian Conception

Death in ancient Egyptian conception had different meanings all of them represented that it was an intermediate stage between life on earth and life in the netherworld or it was the passage to a new life in the netherworld.¹

According to chapter 179 in the Book of the Dead, death was the night after which the day comes where the life.²

Ancient Egyptian civilization celebrated the death more than any other civilization in the world as the religious rituals were

¹ Taylor, J. H., Death and the after Life in Ancient Egypt, London, 2001, p. 12.

Hodel- Hoens, S., Life and Death in Ancient Egypt, London, 2000, p. 1.

Gardiner, A., Life and Death, London, 1933, p.20.

² إريك هورنونج، ديانة مصر الفرعونية، مترجم، القاهرة، ١٩٩٥، ص. ١٧٩.

³ بول بارجية، كتاب الموتى للمصريين القدماء، مترجم، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٤، ص. ٢٢٤.

very important in ancient Egyptian life because it was considered the entrance to the never ending life.³

Resurrection was considered in Ancient Egyptian conception as unification between the soul and the deceased body as mentioned in chapter 89 in the Book of the Dead.⁴

The daily circulation of the sun played a very important role in the ancient Egyptian conception of resurrection thus when the sun was born in the morning and set in the evening then was born again in the morning let the ancient Egyptian to think about the world to which the sun went. They thought that it was underworld which was not entered by the livings.⁵

The ancient Egyptians believed that the headquarters of immortality was in the underground and called it the underworld because they noticed that burring was underground so they believed that their second life was in the same place or it was the entrance to the life of immortality.⁶

Some people believed that the headquarters of immortality was in the west because of the place of building the tombs for the deceased persons.⁷

On the other hand some persons that the sky was the residence of the netherworld to which the soul was flying up.⁸

After thinking about the headquarters of immortality, the ancient Egyptian started to think about the journey which would lead him to his eternal residence. He believed that the deceased person would receive three fates, he was destroyed by fire, he was swallowed by monsters or he would be a part of the body of god Osiris at the end of the journey. In this case, he would be

³ Pinch, G., Magic in Ancient Egypt, London, 1994, p. 150.

⁴ Bonwick, J., Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought, London, 1878, p. 71.

⁵ فوزى مكاوى، الناس في مصر القديمة، القاهرة، ١٩٩٥، ص. ١٣٧.
عبد الرحيم محمد عبد المحسن، أشكال و رموز الأبدية في مقابر أشراف الأسرة الثامنة عشر
بطيبة الغربية، رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة، كلية السياحة والفنادق، الفيوم، ٢٠٠٩، ص. ١٦.

^٦ فوزى مكاوى، المرجع السابق، ص. ١٣٧.

^٧ نفس المرجع.

^٨ رندل كلارك، الرمز والأسطورة في مصر القديمة، مترجم، القاهرة، ١٩٨٨، ص. ٣١.

allowed to accompany the sun in his daily journey either in the morning or in the evening like the corresponding with the gods.⁹

In order to achieve the resurrection and the immortality for the deceased, some guarantees must be provided to ensure for the deceased the achievement of immortality and resurrection as well as an access to its premises for the eternal residence after this arduous journey. Accordingly, the tomb had to be provided with some religious texts and spells which were responsible for protecting and guiding the deceased in the netherworld.¹⁰

These religious texts and spells were always depicted on the walls of the tombs and inside the chapels and coffins as well as on the stelae and papyrus scrolls.¹¹

They had been recited during the funeral rituals of the deceased before burial to provide him with sufficient knowledge that enabled him to get on with life again after death, as well as the eternity.¹²

These texts started by pyramid texts dating back to the Old Kingdom in order to protect the deceased from barriers facing him in the netherworld.¹³

During the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom, Coffin texts appeared to ensure an eternity life for the dead person. During the New Kingdom, Book of the Dead was the most famous which was intended to the arrival of the

⁹ عبد الرحيم محمد عبد المحسن، مرجع سبق ذكره، ص. ١٧.
سيد محمود القمنى، أوزوريس وعقيدة الخلود في مصر القديمة، الطبعة الأولى، القاهرة، ١٩٨٨، ص. ٨٠٧.

فوزى مكاوى، مرجع سبق ذكره، ص. ١٣٧.

¹⁰ Dorey, F., Life Beyond the Tomb "Death in Ancient Egypt", London, 1956, p. 6-7.

¹¹ Taylor, J., H., op. cit, p. 193.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Ancient_Egyptian_funerary_texts (Last Accessed 1/1/2014)

¹² Taylor, J, H., Ibid.

¹³ Taylor, J, H., Ibid., p. 194.

عبد الحليم نور الدين، آثار وحضارة مصر القديمة، الخليج العربي، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٤، الجزء الأول، ص. ١٩٢.

deceased to the headquarters of eternity.¹⁴

Later on, other religious Books appeared such as imy dwAt, Book of the Gates, Book of the Caverns which represented the journey of the sun through the netherworld and the relationship of the fate of the deceased king with it.¹⁵

MDAt imy dwAt or the book of what is in the underworld was the oldest text found on the walls of the burial chamber of the tomb of Tuthmosis III and Imnhotep II.¹⁶

This book was still the only text that adorns the walls of the royal tombs of the New Kingdom even El Amarna Period. King Tutankhamun and King Ay used part of it, but King Horemheb used a fraction of it because he entered the Book of the Gates. MDAAt imy dwAt represented the journey of god Ra through the twelve hours at night and each hour is divided into three registers representing the passage of the sun god Ra with the deceased king through the gates.¹⁷

The tombs of the nobles at Western Thebes depended on The Book of the Dead or prt m hrw which means the departure of the day.¹⁸

Chapters 146 and 147, in this book, were dedicated to describe the Gates which were often found before the judgment hall in the nobles tombs.¹⁹

¹⁴ Spencer, A., G., Death in Ancient Egypt, London, 1982, p. 142.

عبد العزيز صالح، الشرق الأدنى القديم (مصر والعراق)، القاهرة، ١٩٩٧، الجزء الأول، ص. ٣٤٣.
^{١٥} رمضان عبده على، حضارة مصر القديمة، الجزء الأول، القاهرة، ٢٠٠١، ص. ٣٥٨-٣٦١.
عبد العزيز صالح، المرجع السابق.

عبد الحلیم نور الدين، موسوعة مصر الحديثة، القاهرة، ١٩٩٦، المجلد العاشر، ص. ٤٤.

¹⁶ Faulkner, R., O., A Concise Dictionary of the Middle Egyptian, Oxford, 1972, pp. 99, 133, 309.

Hornung, E., The Valley of the kings, Translated by David Warburton, New York, 1990, p. 206.

^{١٧} سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، التغلب على العقبات في العالم الآخري مناظر مقابر مقابر طيبة الغربية في عصر الدولة الحديثة، كلية الآداب، جامعة الإسكندرية، ٢٠٠٠، ص. ٢٠، ٢١.

^{١٨} والس بدج، برت إم هرو، كتاب الموتى الفرعوني، ترجمة: فيليب عطية، القاهرة، ١٩٨٨، ص. ١٩٨.

¹⁹ Abdul-Qader, M., The Development of the Funerary Beliefs and Practices Displayed in the Private Tombs of the New Kingdom at Thebes, Cairo, 1996, p. 203.

The difference between Gates in the Royal Tombs and the Private Tombs

On the walls of the royal tombs in the valley of the kings, each gate was depicted as an architectural feature and it was named as a goddess and protected by a fire spitting - serpent as well as by its own guardian deity. In the funerary texts for nobles and others there is more variation. In Chapter 147 of the Book of the Dead, for example, seven gates were mentioned each with its own deity, a doorkeeper and a herald. Chapter 146 contains 21 gates, each of which was given a number of names and epithets and guarded by a zoo anthropomorphic deity usually depicted seated and holding a large knife. The guardian deities are usually given terrifying names like "Swallower of Sinners".²⁰

The Passage of the Sun – God Ra through the Underworld Journey

Ra was thought to travel in the Underworld on two sacred barks called the *manDt* (the Boat of Millions of Years), or morning bark and the *mSktt*, or evening bark.²¹

These barks took him in his journey through the sky and the *dwAt*, the literal underworld of Egypt.²²

While Ra was on the *mSktt*, he was in his ram-headed form. When Ra traveled in his sun bark, he was accompanied by various other deities including *siA* (Perception) and *Hu* (Magic) as well as *nhs* (Observer). Sometimes members of the Ennead helped him on his journey, including Set, who overcame the serpent Apophis, and Sekhmet, who defended against the monsters of the underworld. When Ra was in the underworld, he would take all of his various forms.²³

²⁰ Wilkinson, R., H., The Complete gods and goddesses of Ancient Egypt, London, 2003, p. 82.

²¹ Gardiner, A., Egyptian Grammar, Oxford, 1976, p. 499.

²² Ibid., p. 570.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra> (Last Accessed 20/1/2014)

²³ Faulkner, R., A., op. cit., pp. 105-118.=

=Hart, G., The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses, Oxford, 2005, pp. 31, 32.

During the evening, the Egyptians believed that Ra set as Anum or in the form of a ram. The msktt, or the Night boat, would carry him through the underworld and back towards the east in preparation for his rebirth. These myths of Ra represented the sun rising as the rebirth of the sun by the sky goddess Nut; thus attributing the concept of rebirth and renewal to Ra and strengthening his role as a creator god as well.²⁴

When Ra was in the underworld, he merged with Osiris, the god of the dead, and through it became the god of the dead as well.²⁵

Apophis, the God of chaos, was an enormous serpent who attempted to stop the sun boat's journey every night by consuming it or by stopping it in its tracks with a hypnotic stare. He attacked the sun in his bark and after each defeat he returned again as a permanent threat to the world. Many rituals were performed to protect the bark of the sun, to prevent the victory of the chaos demon or to destroy his evil eye. Finally, the world, Egypt, gods and men were bound to be threatened or attacked by demons wanting to gain power. Other demons were invoked to keep the world in order, people and gods at peace.²⁶

The Ancient Egyptian conception of the underworld included many gates, portals or pylons which must be passed by the sun god on his nightly journey by the deceased king as a part

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra> (Last Accessed 20/1/2014)

سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، مرجع سبق ذكره، ص ٢٣، ٢٤.

²⁴ Hart, G., Ibid., pp. 179–182.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra> (Last Accessed 20/1/2014)

²⁵ Griffit, J., G., Osiris, in: The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, Oxford, 2001, Vol.2, pp. 615- 619.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra> (Last Accessed 20/1/2014)

²⁶ Hart, G., op. cit., pp. 179–182.

Meeks, D., Demons, in: The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, Oxford, 2001, p. 378

Boughouts, J., F., The Evil Eye of Apophis, in: JEA, London, 1973, Vol. 59, pp. 114-150.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ra> (Last Accessed 20/1/2014)

مانفرد لوركر، معجم المعبودات والرموز في مصر القديمة، ترجمة: صلاح الدين رمضان، مراجعة: محمود ماهر، مكتبة مدبولي، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٠، ص ٣٣.

أدولف إرمان، ديانة مصر القديمة، ترجمة: عبد المنعم أبو بكر، مراجعة: محمد أنور شكرى، مكتبة مدبولي، القاهرة، ١٩٩٥، ص ٣٧.

of the entourage of the sun god and by the deceased who must pass these barriers in order to reach the place of afterlife existence. Different versions of the underworld gates were preserved in various funerary texts with over one thousand deities depicted, but in all cases the barriers were guarded by minor gods who would allow only those who knew their secret names so they had power over them to pass. These minor gods were also known as semi gods or demons.²⁷

Demons

According to the ancient Egyptian point of view, any being, whether supernatural, human, or material which was involved in a ritual at some time was a god. The performance of a ritual did not necessarily require a temple thus demons were part of the god category. There is no Egyptian term that corresponds even approximately to the word demon. Demons are usually classified by Egyptologists as minor divinities a category that is hard to define.²⁸

In fact these minor deities were subordinate to the major gods and goddesses. They performed tasks on command, usually in a specific sphere while the greater gods were more universal in character. When a demon was free from his specific bonds of subordination, he became a greater god. This promotion was not the result of a conscious decision by an authority rather it evolved over centuries from a historical process that involved Egyptian society as a whole.²⁹

Demons had a protective aggressive role which means that they were very aggressive and hostile because they had to protect something or some one. In their passive role, demons repelled whatever threatened the object of their protection while in their

²⁷ Wilkinson, R., H., op. cit., p. 81.

<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/minorgods.htm>(Last Accessed 1/1/1014)

²⁸ Wilkinson, R., H.,Ibid.

<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/minorgods.htm>(Last Accessed 1/1/1014)

²⁹ Meeks, D., op. cit., p. 375.

dynamic role, they were sent to punish those transgressed the principles that organized the created world which had been established by the gods themselves. The dual nature of demons made them either dangerous or beneficial to humans.³⁰

Demons were distinguished from genies through the aggressive protective aspect. Genies were not involved in protective aggressive activity although they assigned to specific tasks and usually subordinated to another deity. For example, numerous genies concerned with economic production. Other deities, either subordinate or dangerous, were assistants to the creator god, they personified different aspects of his creative power and his comprehensive divine authority. As assistants, they were incorporated in the insignia of royal power on crowns and scepters. They were considered as auxiliaries to creative power and divine or royal authority outside the categories of demons or genies. Demons in ancient world were also differentiated by their origins and or the type of their subordination. Some demons were emanations of human beings, either dead or alive. They were sometimes evoked for an individual by divine decision either permanently or occasionally.³¹

People were also surrounded by demons that resided practically everywhere like in water, doors, bolts, pots and so on. Some of these had very little power and could be used after divine approval, by human themselves for their own purposes.³²

Gangs of demons were responsible for many troubles and misfortunes. Most of the main deities had such troops at their service. They could be used against both men and other gods.

³⁰ Loc. cit.

Wilkinson, R., H., op. cit, p. 81.

Sylvie, C., Á propos des 77 génies de pharbaithos, in: BIFAO 90, Paris, 1990, pp. 115-133.

Georges, P., Lés aafarit dans l' ancienne Égypte, in: MDAIK, Cairo, 1981, Vol. 37, pp. 393-401.

³¹ Meeks, D., Ibid.

Meeks, D., and Anges, G., Démons en Égypte, Paris, 1971, pp. 19-84.

³² Meeks, D., Demons, Ibid., pp. 375, 376.

Demons were very anciently known as they were mentioned in the Pyramid Texts from the Old Kingdom which is considered the first known Egyptian corpus of religious texts. There is no important religious or magical text did not mention them. They associated inexplicable illness. Magic spells written on a papyrus strip, simply wrapped on inside a little container and worn on a necklace, were considered effectual in keeping them away from its owner. Moreover, in medical documents, spells may be added to recipes to improve the treatment or to protect the patient from demonic influence.³³

Demons had a relationship with astronomic cycles which made them most active through specific periods such as the last five days of the year which did not fit in the ideal year of 360 days. They were considered dangerous because of their departure from the ideal pattern introduced chaotic elements in the organized world. During that period, demons were uncontrolled spread over the earth. In all the Egyptian temples, priests recited litanies to dangerous goddesses and their demonic servants to appease them and calm their wrath.³⁴

Gate Guardians (Knife Holders)

From the beginning of life, the ancient Egyptian was surrounded by powers which affected his destiny in many ways. Demons were present at all his life and accompanied him after death.³⁵

The underworld was full of evil demons especially in the spaces between the living world and the Hall of Osiris which gave access to the green fields of paradise.

They guarded the gates, channels, crossings and so on, which the deceased person had to pass to reach to the safe place in the netherworld. The deceased had to persuade them to let him

³³ Meeks, D., *Ibid.*, p. 377.

³⁴ *Loc. cit.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

pass. He usually had to answer the questions asked by the demons that only let pass those who could prove that during life they had learned enough about the underworld to be allowed to travel in it. In ancient Egyptian periods, visitors to the osirion at Abydos were frightened by the underworld demons painted on the walls and left inscriptions asking the sun god to protect them from these demons. Demons created to protect the sun god against cosmic enemies might be invoked to protect Osiris the dead or even the temple. Guardian demons were sometimes depicted anthropomorphically, but they were more frequently represented in human form or semi-anthropomorphically with human bodies and the heads of other animals that were considered malevolent but whose power could be used for protection. However, the repertoire of the animals included in their composite bodies is somewhat more varied: reptiles, felines, canines, donkeys, baboons, hippopotami, goats, bulls, insects, scorpions, and birds such as falcons and vultures. They generally hold attributes in their hands; the most recurrent ones are knives. Hence, the name "Knife- Holders" or "Butchers" sometimes were given to them.³⁶

Knife and in Ancient Egypt

In Ancient Egypt, the word *ds* was used to refer to knife which means in fact flint. The hieroglyph appears it as a determinative for different kinds of knives and by extension for other words such as cut, carve and slaughter.³⁷ The knife was a

³⁶ Lucarelli, R., *The Guardia - Demons of the Book of the Dead*, in: BMSAES, Oxford, 2010, Vol. 15, pp. 86.

Meeks, D., *Demons*, op. cit., p. 377.

Wilkinson, R., H., op. cit., p.81

Meeks, D., *Fantastic Animals*, in: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2001, Vol. 1, p.504-507.

<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/minorgods.htm> (Last Accessed 1/1/1014)

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/online_journals/bmsaes/issue_15/lucarelli.aspx(Last Accessed 11/1/2014)

³⁷ Gardiner, A., *Egyptian Grammar*, op. cit., p.515.

Wilkinson, R., H., *Reading Egyptian Art*, London, 1994, p. 189.

natural symbol of protection and retribution.³⁸

Because of the magical power inherite in depiction of the knife, images of malevolent creatures such as serpants and scorpions are often shown cut with knives to render them powerless, both in written texts and in representational scenes.³⁹

Some deities like goddess tAwr̄t (Figure 1) and god bs may be shown armed with knives. Many of the beings inhabiting the Egyptian underworld hold knives by which they destroyed the enemies of the Sun god (Figure 2)⁴⁰

The knife also played a very important role in solar and lunar imaginary. A knife is shown as a part of the ancient "follower sign" which accompanies Ra in his daily journey in the solar barques of the morning and evening, as well as the crescent moon is a knife in the hands of lunar deities such as Thot. Magical knives also functioned in the destruction of the sun's enemies. This imaginary is especially common in relation to the underworld serpent Apophis, the enemy of the sun. Many representations illustrate Spell 17 of the Book of the Dead, in which God Ra in the form of the Helipolitan wild cat cuts off the head of (slaughter) the great serpent with a knife as it threatens the sacred perseia iSd tree which was the symbol of the sun god Ra himself (Figure 3).⁴¹

This scene can be found in many toms at western Thebes such as tomb of sn nDm.⁴²

The walls of the New kingdom royal and private tombs are covered with many scenes representing many knife - holders with different forms, positions and attitudes trying to guard the

³⁸ Wilkinson, R., H., *Ibid.*, p. 189.

³⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ Houser-Wegner, J., Taweret, in: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2001, Vol. 3, pp. 350-351.

Rolf, G., Thoeris, in: *LÄ 6*, Weisbaden, 1985, pp.494-497.

Wiedemann, A., *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, London, 1897, pp. 1, 169.

⁴¹ Hart, G., *Egyptian Myths*, London, 1992, p. 54.

⁴² عبد الحليم نورالدين، حوار الحضارات في تاريخ الفنون، دار الأقبسى، القاهرة، ٢٠١١، ص. ٧.

journey of the god Ra and the king in the underworld like (Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) Moreover, the walls of the private tombs are also carved with different scenes of knife – holders such as (Figures 9, 10, 11, 12)

Study Methods of the Research

To, accurately, serve the focus of the research "Knife Holders in Ancient Egyptian Tombs (Religious and Artistic Study. The historical approach is applied to introduce the period of time considered in the research: (New Kingdom), the descriptive approach is applied to describe the selected scenes of Knife Holders in Ancient Egyptian tombs especially in the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens and finally the analytic approach is applied to explain and comment on the details and components of the selected scenes. To achieve this approach, the researcher will discuss the scene name, name of the tomb owner, dynasty, the position of the scene according to its place, the size of the scene in relation to the wall, the components of the scene, the purpose of the scene and Comment on it.

Study Problem

The ancient Egyptian recorded every detail of his life as well as the details of his journey in the netherworld including the difficulties facing him through it and how he was able to overcome them in order to reach eternity peacefully. Accordingly, the researcher identified the current research problem as: "Why we have scenes of Knife Holders on the tombs of the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens as well as the private tombs at western Thebes"

Study Limitations

This research focused on the period of time known as the New Kingdom, which comprised the dynasties from the 18th to the 20th at Thebes.

Results

The results indicated that Knife-Holders in Ancient Egypt is a term that describes the word demigod which in its turn refers to

minor divinities. The function of Knife-Holders was to repulse the evil which the deceased must face in his journey in the underworld before reaching the field of Iaru. These minor deities were subordinate to the major gods such as god Ra as represented on the walls of the tombs especially in the religious scenes. They performed specified tasks upon demand such as eliminating the obstacles facing god Ra, the deceased king and the deceased person in the Underworld journey. These beings were often associated with caves, pits and tombs which were considered entrances to the underworld. The Underworld demigods constituted different categories. Some were clearly portrayed as frightening instruments of punishment like knives for the damned, many were not inimical and may often be classed as minor guardian deities such as the keepers of the various gates of the underworld. Some were creatures specially tasked with the protection of the king or the deceased in the journey through the netherworld such as knife-holders. The Underworld demigods took many forms such as human forms, semi-anthropomorphically with human bodies. They are represented with the heads of different creatures (birds and animals) like falcons, jackals, bulls, hippopotamus, and rams. They took different positions either sitting or standing.

Methods of making the research useful for Tourism Guidance

Introducing unconventional scenes (Knife – Holders) from the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the Queens as well as private tombs at western Thebes dating back to the New Kingdom. Providing people who have particular interest in archaeology and ancient civilizations , including tour guides with academic material that might help them explaining some of the religious scenes in the ancient Egyptian tombs.

Conclusion

To conclude, this research studied a type of the religious scenes, the journey of the deceased in the Netherworld and his

elimination of all the obstacles facing him in order to reach his goal of resurrection and immortality as the scenes explained that both individuals and kings had the same right to immortality in the Netherworld and that was their doctrine since ancient times. Nevertheless, the right to depict those scenes on the walls of tombs explicitly was not available to individuals only in the era of the New Kingdom which indicates that the Ancient Egyptian was aware of and believed in the idea that people are equal in everything that they faced in the Netherworld since ancient times. Accordingly, the idea of judgment in the Netherworld was a logical idea in the history of humanity.

Figures

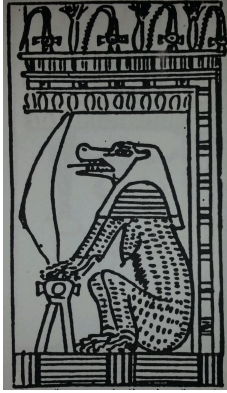


Figure 1

Guardian of the 5th gate,
chapter 146, Book of the dead

سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، التغلب على
العقبات في العالم الآخر في مناظر مقابر مقابر
طيبة الغربية في عصر الدولة الحديثة، كلية
الآداب، جامعة الإسكندرية، ٢٠٠٠، ص.
٣٦٩، شكل ٤٣

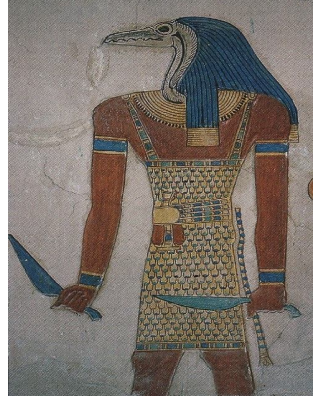


Figure 2

Tomb of Imn Hr xp S.f, Valley
of the Queens, Western Thebes

Wilkinson, R., H., The Complete gods and
goddesses of Ancient Egypt, London, 2003,
p.81.



Figure 3

Tomb of in Hr xa (TT359) – Ramses 3rd and 4th – Deir El-Madina
God Ra in the form of the cat – he slices Apophis with a knife
beside the Ished tree in Iwn

Wilkinson, R., H., Reading Egyptian Art, London, 1992, pp. 116,117,189

مانفرد لوركر، معجم المعبودات والرموز في مصر القديمة، ترجمة: صلاح الدين رمضان،
مراجعة: محمود ماهر، مكتبة مدبولي، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٠، ص. ٢٠٠.

[http:// www. Osirisnet. Net// Nobles Tombs at Luxor// TT359](http://www.Osirisnet.Net//NoblesTombsatLuxor//TT359) (Last Accessed 5/ 11/ 2013).

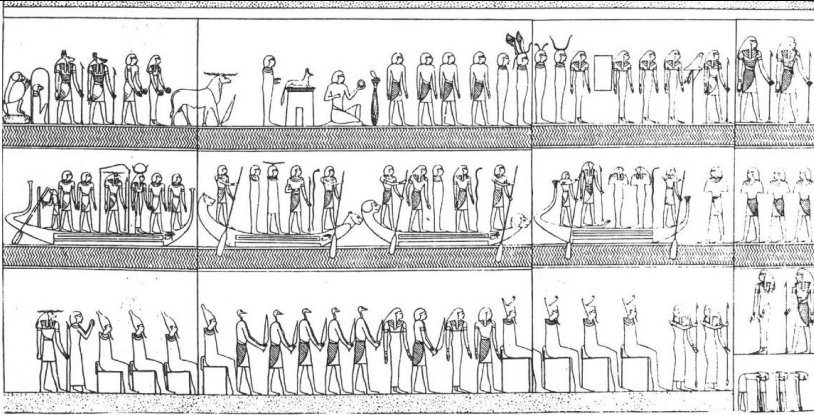


Figure 4

Tomb of Amenhotep III, The 3rd hour in the Book of imy dwAt, Burial Chamber

سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، التغلب على العقبات في العالم الآخر في مناظر مقابر مقابر طيبة الغربية في عصر الدولة الحديثة، كلية الآداب، جامعة الإسكندرية، ٢٠٠٠، ص. ٣٣٦، شكل ٣. عصام صلاح البناء، الديانة المصرية القديمة، القاهرة، ٢٠٠٥، ص. ٢١٩، شكل، ٢٤.

http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/pharaons/amenhotep3/e_amenhotep3.htm (last Accessed 01/01/2014)

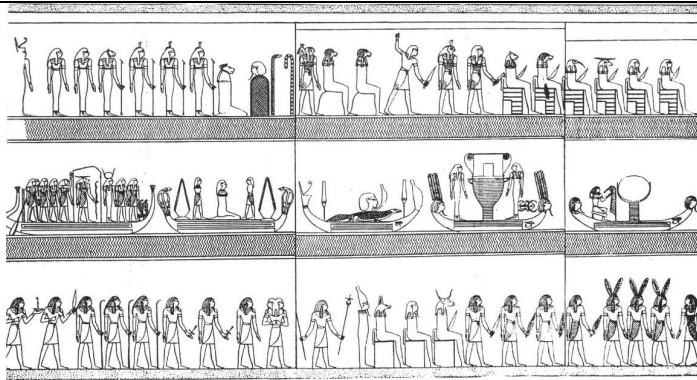


Figure 5

Tomb of Seti 1st (KV 17), Valley of the Kings, 2nd hour from the Book of imy dwAt, Burial Chamber

سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، التغلب على العقبات في العالم الآخر في مناظر مقابر مقابر طيبة الغربية في عصر الدولة الحديثة، كلية الآداب، جامعة الإسكندرية، ٢٠٠٠، ص. ٣٣٥، شكل ٢.

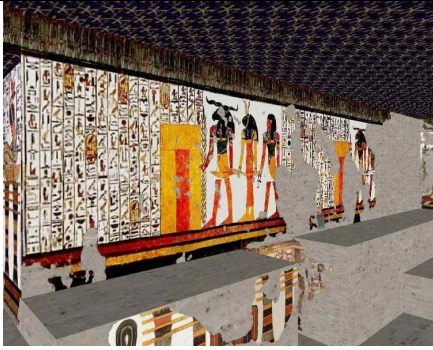


Figure 6

Tomb of Queen Nefertari QV66,
Valley of The Queens, Burial
Chamber – Western Wall, Nefertari's
passage through the gates - Chapter
144 from the Book of the Dead
http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/pharaons/nefertari/e_nefertari_06.htm (last Accessed
01/01/2014)



Figure 7

Tomb of Queen Nefertari (QV66),
Valley of the Queens, Burial
Chamber - Eastern wall plus part of
the north
Nefertari's passage through the gates
- Chapter 146 from the Book of the
Dead
http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/pharaons/nefertari/e_nefertari_06.htm (last Accessed
01/01/2014)



Figure 8

Tomb of Ramses 6th, The 11th Gate from the Book of the Gates,
Hall of Pillars – South Wall – West one

سامية توفيق سيد أحمد حسين، التغلب على العقبات في العالم الآخر في مناظر مقابر مقابر طيبة
الغربية في عصر الدولة الحديثة، كلية الآداب، جامعة الإسكندرية، ٢٠٠٠، ص. ٣٥٩، شكل ٢٥.

http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/pharaons/ramses6/e_ramses6.htm (last
Accessed 01/01/2014)

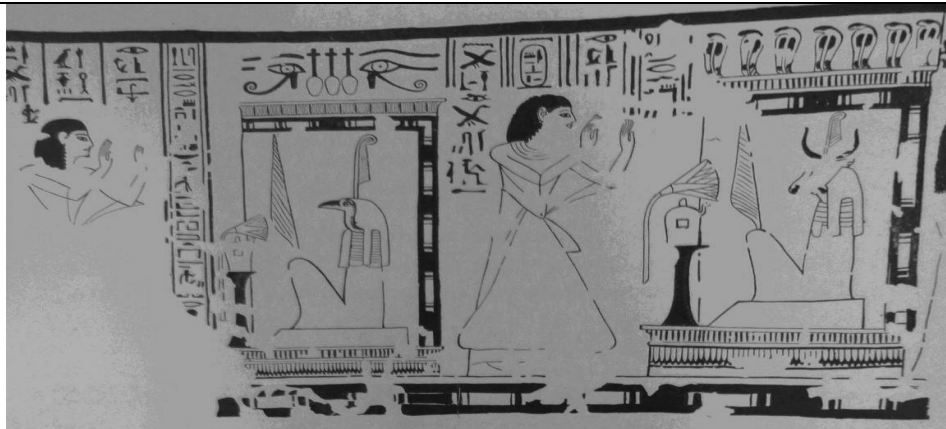


Figure 9

Tomb of pA nHsy (TT16) – Ramses 2nd – Dra Abu El-Naga

The deceased in front of Gate Guardians of the Underworld

Foucart, G., Tombes Thebaines Necropole de dra Abu Naga Le Tombeau d'Amonmos, MIFAO, Cairo, 1932, Vol. 57, Fig. 6.

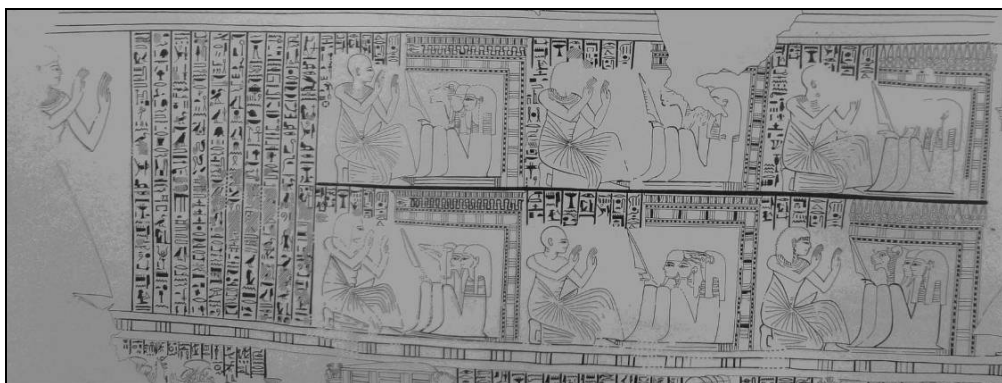


Figure 10

Tomb of nXt imn (TT341) – Ramses 2nd - Sheikh Abd El-Qurna

The deceased in front of Gate Guardians of the Underworld

Davies, N. and Gardiner, A., Seven Private Tombs at Kurnah, London, 1948, Pl. 25.

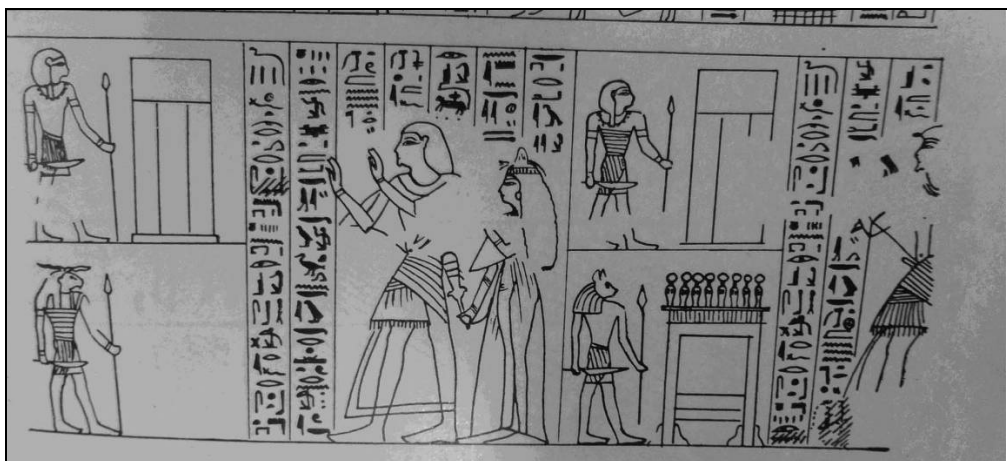


Figure 1

Tomb of SA mwt kiki (TT409) – Ramses 2nd – Al-Asasif
The deceased and his wife in front of Gate Guardians of the Underworld

Abd-el-Kader, M., Two Theban Tombs, Kyky and Bak- en- Amun, ASAE, Cairo, 1966, Vol 59, Pl. 9



Figure 12

The deceased and his wife in front of Gate Guardians of the Underworld

[Http// Www. Osirisnet. Net// Nobles Tombs at Luxor// TT1](http://www.Osirisnet.Net//NoblesTombsatLuxor//TT1/)(Last Accessed 25/ 11/ 2013).

حاملى السكاكين فى المقابر المصرية القديمة (دراسة دينية فنية)

ملخص البحث :

لقد كانت دراسة المقابر المصرية القديمة لفترة طويلة مصدراً هاماً من مصادر المعلومات الخاصة بالعديد من جوانب الديانة المصرية . وغالباً ما زينت جدران المقابر عل نطاق واسع بالمناظر سواء المظلى منها أو المنحوتة نحتاً ملوناً بارزاً. وبينما كانت المقابر ما هى إلا مباني خاصة تضم صوراً إختارها الشخص الذى من المتوقع أن يكون ساكنها إلى الأبد ، فإن الآثار الجنائزية تعكس المعتقدات الدينية بشكل عام. وبينما ركزت العديد من الأبحاث على العديد من المناظر الدينية المصورة على جدران المقابر المصرية القديمة، فلم يركز أحداً على مناظر حاملى السكاكين (حراس البوابات)، من هنا تركزت الدراسة الحالية على وصف مناظر حاملى السكاكين فى المقابر المصرية فى عصر الدولة الحديثة طبيبة.

إن مصطلح حاملى السكاكين هو تعبير يشير إلى حراس المقابر، العفاريت أو المعبودات الثانوية التى كانت تتبع الآلهة والإلهات الرئيسية التى كانت تؤدى المهام المحددة المطلوب تأديتها. وبينما كانت الآلهة الكبرى تتجه لتكون أكثر عالمية فى طبيعتها، كانت الشياطين (العفاريت) محددة بأعمال، وسلوكيات وأماكن محددة. ولقد أجريت الدراسة الحالية لتسليط الضوء على معنى ووظيفة حاملى السكاكين فى مصر القديمة، وعلى العمال والسلوكيات الخاصة بهم فى الحضارة المصرية القديمة. كما أنها سوف تلقى الضوء على مناظر حاملى القرابين الممثلة على جدران المقابر المصرية فى منطقة طيبة الأثرية، فضلاً عن التقسيمات المختلفة لها وكذلك الأدوات التى كانت تحملها، بالإضافة إلى العلاقة بين حاملى السكاكين والإلهة سخمت. وأخيراً، دراسة اسم حاملى السكاكين فى اللغة المصرية القديمة (الهيروغليفية).

ولقد أشارت النتائج الأولية أن حاملى السكاكين كانوا غالباً ما يرتبطوا بالكهوف، الحفر و المقابر على إعتبارها مداخل إلى العالم السفلى. وعلاوة على ذلك ، فإنها كانت تشكل فئات مختلفة، فصور بعضها على شكل حاملى أدوات مخيفة مثل السكاكين لعقاب الشخص الملعون، أما البعض الآخر لم يكن معادياً بل ربما كان فى كثير من الأحيان يصنف على أنه من الآلهة الثانوية الحامية لأبواب مختلفة من العالم السفلى حيث كان بعض هذه المخلوقات مكلف خصيصاً بحماية المتوفى فى رحلته فى العالم السفلى. أما بالنسبة لأشكالها، فبعضها إتخذ أشكال آدمية وشبه آدمية ذات رؤوس مخلوقات مختلفة مثل الصقور، أبناء أوى والكباش كما أنها إرتبطت بالإلهة سخمت و الآلهة العظيمة الأخرى فى ملامحها العدائية.

الكلمات الدالة

حاملى السكاكين، المقابر المصرية القديمة، طيبة ، العفاريت ، حراس البوابات ، الآلهة الثانوية، الدولة الحديثة.