Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists

Volume 2
Issue 1

2017

The Dogs in Three Theban Private Tombs

Prof. Magda Abdalla
Professor, Kafr el sheikh university, Faculty of Arts. The head of the History department, drmagda2008@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguaa

Part of the History Commons, and the History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguaa/vol2/iss1/5

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Arab Journals Platform. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists by an authorized editor. The journal is hosted on Digital Commons, an Elsevier platform. For more information, please contact rakan@aaru.edu.jo, marah@aaru.edu.jo, dr_ahmad@aaru.edu.jo.
The Dogs in Three Theban Private Tombs

Cover Page Footnote

This topic was dealt with by Prof. Dr. T. Handoussa, "Le Chien d' accordement en Ancienne Egypte", GM 89,(1986), pp. 23-41. Our paper tries to demonstrate a new interpretation to these scenes in three tombs only, Nr. TT 20, TT 21, TT 154.

This article is available in Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists: https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguaa/vol2/iss1/5
The Dogs in Three Theban Private Tombs

Prof. Magda A. Abdalla

Abstract:

In ancient Egypt, it was known that dogs were considered as ones of several Canidae. Since predynastic period, dogs were the earliest animals to be known and pictured. The main point of this article is to reveal the difference in use between the dogs used in hunting and those seated under the chairs of their owners especially in three Theban private tombs (TT.Nr.21, 20, 154), where dogs were considered to be more than pets for their owners. Further we will try to answer the question: why dogs in many tombs were seated under the chairs of their owners?

Keywords:

Ancient Egypt, dogs, Canidae, Theban Tombs, Tomb of User TT Nr. 21, The Tomb of Mentukhepeshef TT Nr. 20, The Tomb of Tati TT Nr. 154.

* This topic was dealt with by Prof. Dr. T. Handoussa, "Le Chien d’ agreement en Ancienne Egypte", GM 89,(1986), pp. 23-41. Our paper tries to demonstrate a new interpretation to these scenes in three tombs only, Nr. TT 20, TT 21, TT 154.

* Professor, Kafr el sheikh university, Faculty of Arts. The head of the History department. drmagda2008@yahoo.com
In ancient Egyptian texts, many terms were used to refer to dogs [in Arabic كُلْبَ (Klb)] such as iw iw iw, (2) which is probably an onomatopoetic of “howler”, (3) ishb , (4) tsm . (5) The later name was used in the New kingdom’s texts to denote the Saluki dog, (6) or the Greyhound, (7) while the small ones were called Ktkt šry, (8) or only Kkt . (9) Other words were also known such as: wnšyw, iš,bhn,whr. (10)

As for the female dog it was named tsmtp , (11) or Whrt . (12)

Other words were derived from the word tsm, such as “training“ tsm for the troops, or the word “Spear“ tsmty , (13), which might be used by the ancient Egyptians to describe the dogs’ special skills of courage, earnestness, and speed.

Dogs’ special status for the ancient Egyptians was described by the expressions used in the texts to assure the zealousness, honesty, and control of the vizier’s duties, as follows:

(1) In Ancient Egypt the name Ku-r-bi , K=rA=bi , as PN m. “Dog “. In P.Wilbour was mentioned as individual’s name. It has an origin from Akk.Kál-bu , Kal-bi, in Amorite Kalbum . For others names derived from the root Klb or Kalb , See: J.E. Hoch , Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period (New Jersey, 1994),238, 239, Nr. 476.A.H.Gardiner, The Wilbour Papyrus , Vol.III , (Oxford , 1948) 33;32;35.
(2) Wb I. 48; 3,50;1
(4) Wb I,132; 22.
(5) Wb V, 409; 13- 16.
(6) Fischer, LÄ 3 , 77.
(8) Wb V, 146; 6.
(9) R. Hannig , Die Sprache der Pharaonen , Grosses Handwörterbuch , Ägyptisch – Deutsch (2800-950 V.Chr.)( Mainz ,1995 ), 890.
(10) Handoussa , GM 89,26.
(11) Hannig , Die Sprache der Pharaonen , 965.
(12) Wb I , 346 , for other names have used to indicate Dogs see : Wb VI , ( Hund) 81.
(13) Hannig , Die Sprache der Pharaonen , 965.
“The dog of the Keeper of dogs” (14) or as “dog of the guardsman of dogs dispatched on a mission of pr- nsw. (15)

In few texts the word dog was used to indicate the submission of the enemies like the inscription of Thutmosis III, dated to the year 23rd. At the Temple of wadi Halfa, the Libyans were described as dogs. (16) King Piankhy also, on his stele at Gebel El Barkal, used the same word to show the subjugation of the chiefs of Lower Egypt to him, as in:

“Counts and rulers of great houses are as dogs at his heels“. (17)

It is well known that dogs are considered as one of several Canidae. (18) Since the Predynastic Period, (19) they were the first animals to be represented. (20)

The main purpose of this article is to reveal the different indications of two forms of dog representation: the dogs used in hunting and those seated under the chairs of their owners, especially in three Theban private tombs where dogs were considered to be more than pets for their owners. Further, the central question the paper raises is: why were dogs in many tombs seated under the chairs of their owners? (21)

In Ancient Egypt, there were different species of dogs such as Dachshund, Cape Hunting Dog, Grey hound, Mastiff, and

---

(15) G.P.F. van den Boorn, The Duties of the Vizier, Civil Administration in the early New Kingdom (New York, 1988), 289,f.n.3.
(17) Paton, Animals of Ancient Egypt, 19.
(19) P.F. Houlihan, The Animal World of the Pharaohs (Cairo, 1995), 74, 75, 76.
Saluki. The Saluki, the famous hunting dog, is considered as the most ancient kind of dogs in Africa along with the Sudanese Basenji which has its origin from Congo, ……etc.

Dogs were brought in vast numbers as tributes from Punt, Libya, and Nubia in order to be used as hunting partners or co-operatives with their owners. So, ancient Egyptians represented their dogs in tombs since pre-dynastic times, old Kingdom, through Middle and New Kingdom until the Late Period.

In addition, dogs were buried next to their masters since pre-dynastic time, and we have an example from the 21st Dynasty at San El Hagar (Tanis) at the royal tomb of Psuennes I where P. Montet found the skeleton of the king’s favorite dog interred along with him in the burial chamber, watching over the sepulcher for eternity. Moreover, dogs, in some cases, are symbolically represented the fingers of the goddess Nut who holds the sun.

---

(22) Houlihan, The Animal World of the Pharaohs, 76, 77.
(23) Handoussa, GM 89,24,25.
(24) Fischer, LÄ 3, 77.
(25) N.de. Garis, Davies, The Tomb of Rekh-mi-Rec at Thebes 1., 27, pls. XVIII-XX.
(27) Houlihan, The Animal World of the Pharaohs, 75.
(28) W. Davies, Masking the Blow, (Oxford, 1992), 43, fig. 5.
(30) Handoussa, GM 89,29-33.
(31) Handoussa, GM 89,33.
Description of the Scenes in the Three Theban Tombs: An Analytical Study

1. 1 Tomb of “User” the Scribe and Steward in the reign of King Thutmosis I, TT Nr. 21.\(^\text{(34)}\)

   On the north wall of the passage, there is a hunting scene, which shows the deceased in his chariot, hunting in the desert. In the third register, a Saluki dog, distinguished by its leap-ears, puts its teeth at the throat of a gazelle, wearing a collar to be easy for leash (Fig. 1).\(^\text{(35)}\)

   The second scene of dogs in the same tomb is pictured on the north and south walls of the shrine, where the deceased “User” is seated in an official appearance, with a short wig, a beard, a long skirt and collar. Beside him is his wife “Beket”. Both are seated in front of an offering table. Under the chair of the wife is her pet dog,\(^\text{(36)}\) whose name is partly erased (Fig. 2).\(^\text{(37)}\) The same scene is repeated on the south wall (Fig. 3), but there is another dog named: \[\text{hsy f m3ty} \] “his favorite, trusty” and both are painted in red.\(^\text{(38)}\)

   Yet, a question must be raised: Are both dogs setting as if prepared to protect their owners from any danger through their

---

\(^\text{(34)}\) It is in the Sheikh Abd el Qurna , PM I,1 , 35, 36 ( 10 ) .
\(^\text{(35)}\) N.de G. Garis Davies , Five Theban Tombs , ( London ,1913 ) , 23 , pl. XXII. To pointed this dog as Saluki .See: Houlihan , The Animal World of the Pharaohs , 77 .
\(^\text{(36)}\) In spite of Cats were usually represented under the chairs of the ladies . See as an Example: C.Maystre , Tombes de Deir El – Médineh , La Tombe de NEBENMÂt ( No 219) , MIFAO 71 (1936) , pl.V[Upper]. Handoussa , GM 89,23. But It obvious that, dog has pictured under the lady’s chair in some Thebes tombs, dated to the New Kingdom , see for example, The Tomb Nr .15.N.De G. Davies , “The Tomb of Tetaky at Thebes (No. 15) , JEA 11(1925) ,15, pl. IV.
\(^\text{(37)}\) On the wall are still signs , It was perhaps named \(\text{t3 - nht} \) “ Great of Strength “, For names see : H. G. Fischer , “ More Ancient Egyptian Names of Dogs , and other Animals “ , MMJ supplement vol. 12 ( 1978- 1980 ) , 178 . Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 16, pl. XXV.
\(^\text{(38)}\) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 26, pl. XXVI

90
journey to the other world? (39) Apparently, their owners wished them to share in the offerings and to accompany them in the other world. (40)

On the East wall of the same shrine, there is the fourth scene of dogs: the "User" is seated on a chair, wearing two or three long white garments, a short wig, and a beard. His pet dog is under his chair (Fig. 4). (41)

N. de .Garis Davis stated that this dog is from the same breed as that of the dog belonging to his wife. (42) But the owners of this tomb might have had three saluki dogs of which the latter's physical appearance, strength and sturdiness show that it could be used as a hunting dog or as a watcher. Moreover, its collar, which is perhaps made of leather, (43) is different from the other collars. (44)

It is worth noting that this scene is repeated on the East wall of this shrine on its north side, but the bottom register where the dog must be pictured is damaged now. (45)

(40) About Offerings presented to dogs in the Old and Middle Kingdom , see : Handoussa , GM 89,33.
(41) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 25- 26 , pl. XXVII
(42) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 25- 26, pl. XXVII. PM, 1.1, 36 (13- 14).
(43) These collars were decorated by lines or Roses or scenes of hunting sometimes inscribed with the name of the dog itself .Handoussa , GM 89,31.M. G. Daressy, Fouilles de la Vallée des Rois , CCG ( Nos 24001- 24990), ( Le Caire , 1902) , CG. 24075- 24076.
(44) The collar for this dog is a stripe decorated in the middle by circles , while the first and second dog have collars on their necks decorated by Zigzag line in the middle . Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pls. XXV, XXVI, XXVII.
(45) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 25- 26 , pl. XXVIII.
1.2 The Tomb of Mentukhepeshef, the fan bearer, the Mayer of Aphroditopolis, in the reign of the King Thutmosis III, TT Nr 20: \(^{(46)}\)

On the north wall of the inner room, a scene is outlined in black only. It shows the deceased seated with his brother or his father. \(^{(47)}\) In front of them is an offering table filled with all good things. Under the chair of the tomb’s owner is a crouching dog that has stretched forelegs, pended-ears, with a collar to be leashed and a long tail (Fig.5). We could deduce that this dog is a saluki dog having rest. \(^{(48)}\)

This dog seems to be pictured again in a hunting scene on the east end of the north wall, with the deceased hunting in the desert on foot and followed by his attendants. On the lower register, the hunting dog (saluki) is biting a prostrate animal. Above this scene there is another one in fragments, which represents the same dog sinking his teeth into the throat of an Oryx? \(^{(49)}\) (Fig.6 a-b).

Further, in this tomb another kind of dog is pictured. In the inner room, on the west end of the south wall, \(^{(50)}\) there is another scene representing the deceased seated with his mother, Taysent. Under her chair a dog sits with erect ears and long legs turning his head to look at a monkey, which holds it on a leash (Fig.7). \(^{(51)}\) This dog is a dachshund used as a watcher. \(^{(52)}\)

Arguing against the analysis of N.de. Garis Davies, who considers this scene as a comic one, \(^{(53)}\) or that of T. Handoussa

\(^{(46)}\) It is in Drac abu el Naga, PM I, 1, 34 (8).
\(^{(47)}\) There is no names has inscribed on the wall, Davies, Five Theban Tombs., 7.
\(^{(48)}\) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 7-9, pl. XI.
\(^{(49)}\) PM I, 1, 34 (7). Davies, Five Theban Tombs., pls I, XII. Compare this figure of dog with other saluki dogs which were spread in the New Kingdom, See: Houlihan, The Animal World of the Pharaohs, 77, figs. 48, 53, pl. XXXII.
\(^{(50)}\) In PM, it is denoted as Passage, see: PM I,1, 35.
\(^{(51)}\) Davies, Five Theban Tombs., 11, pl. IV. PM I, 1, 35 (4-5).
\(^{(52)}\) Houlihan, The Animal World of the Pharaohs, 77.
\(^{(53)}\) Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 11.
who considered the turn of the dog to the monkey as disdain-
look,(54) I will argue that this scene may be a real scene representing a real act, where the mother is taking care of her son, leaving her dog under the monkey's care. However, one might raise the question: Are the dog and monkey considered as symbolic animals of the gods in the other world—the dog as Anubis and the other, the baboon, as god Thot? (55) The answer could be considered in light of our knowledge from the Book of the Dead, in which Thot was the ibis-headed god whose sacred animal was the dog-faced baboon 3ccn, jcn, Kfdnw; (56) he was the scribe of the gods, and recorder of the Mysteries of the West, as well as the tomb owner's fate as the weight of his heart. (57)

1.3 The tomb of Tati, the Butler in the reign of Thutmose III. TT Nr 154.

On the north wall of the Hall scenes, in fragments, on the upper register, there is the deceased seated on a bench with his wife. Under their bench is his pet dog (now identified only by the remaining legs and tail). It is suggested that it is a kind of dachshund used as a watcher (Fig 8). (60)

The dogs were always pictured sitting under the chairs of their owners, where they were represented as entertaining animals

(54) Handoussa, GM 89,31.
(56) Hanning, Großes Handwörterbuch, 3, 30. As for other names of the “Dog headed ape of Thot” see: Paton, Animals of Ancient Egypt, 15.
(57) The prayers of Thot in this form enable the Soul to pass the Seven “Degrees of Light” which stand outside the Gate of Ro-Setau (near Memphis), the kingdom of Osiris. A. Champdor, The Book of The Dead, based on the Ani, Hunefer, and Anhai Papyri in the British Museum, Translated by F. Bowers, ( New York, 1966), 43. From Ch. CI to CXXIV.
(58) As for the role of Thot in the other world see: C. Seeber, Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Totengerichts im Alten Ägypten, ( Berlin, 1976), 147-154, Abb. 5, 13, 14.
(59) It is in Drac Abu el Naga, PM I, 1, 262; 1.
(60) The head is missing, Davies, Five Theban Tombs, 42, pl. XXXIX.
which (the owners) wish them to resurrect again from death in
the other world.\(^{(61)}\)

Yet, we must ask: Did the deceased accompany his dog in the
other world as a sacred and a symbolic animal of some gods such
as Anubis and Wepwawat?\(^{(62)}\) Both were Canidae too,\(^{(63)}\) that
were connected with the deceased during his journey.

So, perhaps the deceased wished to approach them, or needed
their support in the other world. Specially, when he is purified in
the lake of jackal, with his face like a Jackal, his spirit is to be
behind him and in his body according to the order of Anubis.\(^{(64)}\)
We could ask here: Did the ancient Egyptians think that the dogs
would guard and protect them against dangers in the other
world?\(^{(65)}\)

---

\(^{(61)}\) Handoussa , GM 89,32,33,34. See for example under the chair of Tati’s wife is a mirror
and two pots of Cosmetic! It may be prepared to be a gift to the Goddess Hathor , the lady
of the west , lady of the western mountain , The goddess of the dead . See: H. Bonnet,
Relexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte, ( Berlin, 1952) , 279- 281 . I. Shaw and P.

\(^{(62)}\) Bonnet, Relexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte, 40- 45. The Greeks identified
the sacred animal of Anubis as a dog, but Wepwawat as a wolf, the first one is always
represented recumbent on belly , while the other one is mounted emblematically up on a
stand . H. Bonnet, Relexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte, 41 . Fischer., LÄ 3 ,
78-79.

So Dogs were the sacred animals for those Gods. As “ wepwawat “ ( Fuhrer der Seelen von
Nachen und Pee ) see : Bonnet, Relexikon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte., 844. See
the role of Anubis’s Bark in : R. O. Faulkner , The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts , Vol. I ,

\(^{(63)}\) Fischer, LÄ 3 , 78.

\(^{(64)}\) S. A. B. Mercer, The Pyramid Texts (Translations) (USA, 1952) , 90 , Utterance 268 ,
118 Utterance 355 , 130 Utterance 374 , 220 , Utterance 553 . As for the role of Anubis in
the Osris Court See: C. Seeber , Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Totengerichts in Älten

E. Hornung , Ältagyptisch jenseitsbuccher , 37- 88 , 117- 147 . Kees ,Totenglauben und
jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Ägypten. 287-302.
Conclusion:

It can be concluded that the dogs pictured in these three Theban tombs are of two kinds:

a) The first are those used in hunting scenes\(^{(66)}\) throughout their lives.

b) The second are dogs pictured sitting under the chairs of their owners.

Perhaps, the ancient Egyptians thought that dogs would give them a magic assistance in the other world. So they have figured them as Amulet to watch and protect their owners in the other World.\(^{(67)}\)

It is argued also that though dogs are used as household pets, or in hunting, they could perhaps also be used as symbolic animals of some gods such as Anubis and Wepwawat that help the dead through the journey to the other world.

\(^{(66)}\) Beside their role as household pets: guarding the house, going out for works with the master. Handoussa, GM 89, 30 ff.

\(^{(67)}\) As for these dogs are all figured with short-legged dated to the Roman and Coptic Period. All as amulets of animal gods. W. M. F. Petrie, Amulets, Illustrated by the Egyptian Collection in University College London, (London, 1941), 48, Nr. 233. See small figures of dogs from El Lisht, 12\(^{th}\) Dynasty. W. C. Hayes, The Scepter of Egypt, Part I, (New York, 1990), 224, fig. 140.


**Bibliography:**


Daressy G., Fouilles de la Vallée des Rois, CCG (Nos 24001-24990), (Le Caire, 1902).

Davies N. de G., “The Tomb of Tetaky at Thebes (No. 15), JEA 11(1925).


Decker W. and Herb M., Bildatlas zum Sport, Spiel, Tanz, Teil I, Texts (Köl, 1994).


Hannig R., Die Sprache der Pharaonen, Grosses Handwörterbuch, Ägyptisch – Deutsch (2800-950 V.Chr.) (Mainz, 1995).


Hoch J.E., Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period (New Jersey, 1994).

Hornung E., Ältagyptische jenseitsbucher, Ein einführender über blick (Darmstadt, 1997)

Houlihan P.F., The Animal World of the Pharaohs (Cairo, 1995).


Maystre C., Tombes de Deir El – Médineh, La Tombe de NEBENMÀt (No 219), MIFAO 71 (1936).


Petrie W. M. F., Amulets, Illustrated by the Egyptian Collection in University College London, (London, 1941).


Seeber C., Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Totengerichts in Älteren Ägypten, MÄS 35 (1976).


van den Boorn, G.P.F. The Duties of the Vizier, Civil Administration in the early New Kingdom (New York, 1988).


Fig. 1. A Saluki dog puts his teeth at the Throat of a Gazelle. The Passage- north wall- Tomb of User T.T.Nr. 21. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. XXI.

Fig. 2. A dog perhaps named as “3-nht“ seated under the chair of User and his wife. Tomb of User – the shrine - north wall. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. XXV.
Fig. 3. Another dog named as “ḥṣyṯ.f mšṯʿy “seated under the chair of the same couple.
Tomb of User – the shrine – South wall.
Davies, The Five Theban Tombs, pl. XXVI.
Fig. 4. Another Saluki dog seated under the chair of User.
Tomb of User – Shrine- East wall.
Davies, The Five Theban Tombs, pl. XXVII.
Fig. 5. A saluki dog crouching under the chair of Mentukhepeshef and his wife. Tomb of Mentukhepeshef – Inner room -north wall. TT Nr. 20. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. XI.

Fig. 6 a. A Saluki dog is biting a prostrate animal. Tomb of Mentukhepeshef – Inner room -north wall. TT Nr. 20. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. XII.

Fig. 6.b. A saluki dog fastening his teeth on the throat of a Oryx- fragments. Tomb of Mentukhepeshef – Inner room .TT Nr. 20. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. I.
Fig. 7. A dachshund seated under the chair of Mentuherkhepeshef’s mother. Tomb of Mentukhepeshef – Inner room. -South wall. TT Nr. 20. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl. IV.

Fig. 8. A scene in fragments shows a dachshund under the chair of Tati and his wife. Tomb of Tati -The hall - north wall. TT Nr. 154. Davies, Five Theban Tombs, pl.XXXIV.
الكلاب في ثلاث مقابر للأفراد بطيبة
أ.د. ماجدة أحمد عبدالله

ملخص:
عرفت الكلاب في مصر القديمة منذ عصر ما قبل الأسرات كواحدة من فصيلة الكلاب، ولذلك تعتبر الكلاب من أقدم الحيوانات التي صورت قديماً، وأحاول من خلال هذا البحث أظهر الفرق بين الكلاب التي تم استخدامها بغرض الصيد، وتلك الكلاب المصورة قابعة أسفل مقاعد أصحابها، وبالخصوص من خلال دراسة ثلاث مقابر للأفراد بطيبة وهي المقابر أرقام ٢٠، ١١، ١٥٤، حيث أعتقد أن الكلاب المصورة داخل تلك المقابر تعني الكثير بالنسبة لأصحابها، كما سنحاول في تلك المقالة الإجابة عن لماذا صورت الكلاب في عدد من المقابر أسفل مقاعد أصحابها.

الكلمات الدالة:

استاذ بجامعة كفر الشيخ بكلية الآداب، ورئيس مجلس قسم التاريخ
drmagda2008@yahoo.com