

The Interplay of Motifs Reflecting the Doorkeeper's Duties Form and Function

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ABSTRACT




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Doorkeepers form part of the workmen community about whom the information is occasional. The figured motifs of the doorkeepers hint at their role in securing a place efficiently. Though less informative small-scaled motifs may seem to be, they provide useful information regarding the lives of individuals. One of such motifs is the doorkeeper whose figure was not an ornamental motif; rather a functional one. Subject of the current research is defining, detecting and reassessing the status of doorkeepers in the ancient Egyptian society by means of the interpretation of the interplay of motifs in the scenes. In this respect the doorkeepers' gestures, attitudes and attributes are valuable sources of information. Unlike other workers and artisans, the doorkeeper's work was in the palace interiors and store rooms. The originality of the subject in the New Kingdom makes the doorkeeper motif a remarkable addition to the scene repertoire of daily life activities, this time within the palace. Interpreting the iconography and the interplay of motifs in the scenes enable a better understanding of the doorkeeper's role.

Introduction

Doorkeepers form part of the workmen community about whom the information is occasional. The figured motifs of the doorkeepers hint at their role in securing a place efficiently; a necessary procedure to allow persons to proceed through an area. Offices of doorkeepers ¹ *iry* ʿ3 and guardians ² *s3w* or ³ *s3wty*, seem to have been closely related.⁴ According to Černý, a guard started his

¹ *Wb* I, 104, (3); 164, (17).

² *Wb* III, 418, (1) 'der Wächter'. The term is attested since the Middle Kingdom.


³ *Wb* III, 418, (8).

⁴ Černý, J., *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, BdE 50, 3rd edition (Cairo, 2004), 158, 168; Goecke-Bauer, M., "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", in: Jac. J. Janssen (ed.), *Woodcutters, potters and doorkeepers. Service personnel of the Deir el-Medina workmen*, EgUit 17 (Leiden, 2003), 143, 144.


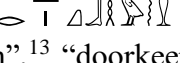
career as *iry* ʕ.⁵ Doorkeepers were mentioned among the workmen community of the Deir el-Medineh personnel on ostraca and papyri.⁶

Although doorkeepers made their appearance in the models of *Mkt-R*^c dated to the Middle Kingdom, they were only introduced in representations during the New Kingdom. They appeared as particular anonymous characters, never supposedly uttering any of the inscriptions. The tomb of *Ini-iti.f* at Thebes (TT 155)⁷ provides the only exceptional scene where part of the inscription is supposedly uttered by the doorkeeper.

Though less informative small-scaled motifs may seem to be, they provide useful information regarding the lives of individuals. One of such motifs is the doorkeeper whose figure was not an ornamental motif; rather a functional one. The doorkeeper's figure is typologically comparable to the small-scaled genre motifs complementing scene constituents. He appears to be a feature of the house that has been stimulated in particular during the Amarna period.

The gate is the most characteristic element associated to the doorkeeper in representational material. Whether opened⁸ or closed,⁹ the door leaf  could be that of a house, a city or a chapel, etc.¹⁰ In most cases there are no captions attached to the compositions. Yet, in a few others their attributes or the inscriptions related to passersby or other people represented in the scenes, help provide significant interpretations.

Subject of the current research is defining, detecting and reassessing the status of doorkeepers in the ancient Egyptian society by means of the interplay of motifs in the scenes. The study is merely limited to constitute and analyze the corpus of the iconographical representations of doorkeepers in the context of their work in everyday life while performing their tasks.

A thorough investigation proved the attestation of the following titles of doorkeepers: “doorkeepers of the doors of the sky” as in PT 1252 (P. 470)  *h3 iry-ʕ3 py n pt* ‘O doorkeeper of the sky’,¹¹ var. PT 1141 (P. 336)  *iry-ʕ3 kbh* ‘doorkeeper of *kbh* (i.e. the sky)’,¹² “doorkeeper of the earth”,¹³ “doorkeeper of the

⁵ Černy, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 149 ff.

⁶ Janssen, Jac. J., *Village Varia: Ten Studies on the History and Administration of Deir-el-Medina*, EgUit 11 (Leiden, 1997), 55.

⁷ Guglielmi, W., *Reden, Rufe und Lieder auf altägyptischen Darstellungen der Landwirtschaft, Viehzucht, des Fisch- und Vogelfangs vom Mittleren Reich bis zur Spätzeit*, TÄB 1 (Bonn, 1973), 87.

⁸ An example is shown in Davies, N. de G., *The Rock tombs of El Amarna. Part 6: Tombs of Parennefer, Tutu and Aḳ*, ASEg 18 (London, 1908), pl. 4, west wall.

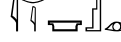

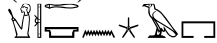


⁹ An example is shown in Davies, N. de G., *The Rock tombs of El Amarna. Part 2: Tombs of Panehesy and Meryra II*, ASEg 14 (London, 1905), pl. 13, east wall.

¹⁰ *Wb* I, 164, (12)-(14).

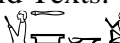
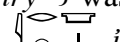

¹¹ *Wb* I, 164, (18). See also PT 1252a (M. 535); PT 1252b (N. 1113-1114).

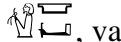
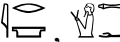



¹² Also PT 1141a (M. 638).




¹³ *Wb* I, 164, (19).

Underworld” as in PT 411, 412  *iry ʿ3 Wsir* ‘doorkeeper of Osiris’,¹⁴ PT 520 (T. 9)  *iry ʿ3 n Hr* ‘doorkeeper of Horus’, as well as BD chapter 125  *iry ʿ3 n dw3 pn* ‘doorkeeper of this door’,¹⁵  *iry ʿ3 dw3w dw3t* ‘doorkeeper of the *dw3t*’,¹⁶  *iry ʿ3 pw n imnt* ‘doorkeeper of the west’¹⁷ and ‘doorkeeper of the sun barks’,¹⁸ etc. Yet, the religious context of the netherworld guards is outside the limits of the study, and therefore are not subject of the current study.

The administrative title

During the Old Kingdom doorkeepers were only mentioned in the Pyramid Texts.¹⁹ In the Middle Kingdom *iry-ʿ3* was an administrative title and appeared as .²⁰ The female rendering  *iryt-ʿ3* appeared in the Pyramid Texts, spell 1440e, P 651, M 750 as  *iryt-ʿ3 nt pt* ‘(female) doorkeeper of the sky’.²¹

The literal translation of the title , var. ,  *iry-ʿ3* is according to the *Berlin Wörterbuch* “Pfortner”, “Türhüter”²² (doorkeeper) having the main duty of guarding the door. The doorkeeper was closely related to the entrance and the gate; hence the typical inclusion of the door leaf in the title. The door in this sense defines the role of the person in charge, and possibly justifies his low ranked job. The function of “guarding a closed or open entrance leading to a place” was simply marked by the door leaf  or the strong arm . The title is composed of the *nisbe* *iry* and the substantive *ʿ3*. Černý interpreted the title by reading *iry-ʿ3* instead of *wn(w)*²³ ‘open’.²⁴

There are no sources recording the title from the Eighteenth dynasty; due to the very bad preservation state of the documents.²⁵ The form  is obviously an abbreviated version of .²⁶ Most probably  *ʿ3* was a shortened form of the title that

¹⁴ Also PT 1157 (P. 360); PT 1157a (N. 1073-1074); PT 1201a (M. 589); PT 1201b (N. 1194).

¹⁵ *Wb I*, 164, (20). Also Naville, E., *Das ägyptische Tottenbuch der XVIII. Bis XX. Dynastie* (Berlin, 1886), Chapter 125, 38-39; also Chapter 52, 6-7; Chapter 141-143, 47; Chapter 147; Chapter 127 A, 1-3; Chapter 127 B, 10-13; Chapter 181, 1-5. Cf. *Urk. IV*, 64 (tomb of Inni).

¹⁶ Naville, *Das ägyptische Tottenbuch der XVIII. Bis XX. Dynastie*, Chapter 127 B, 2-4; Chapter 127A, 1-3.

¹⁷ Naville, *Das ägyptische Tottenbuch der XVIII. Bis XX. Dynastie*, Chapter 17, 81.

¹⁸ *Wb I*, 164, (21).

¹⁹ Jones, D., *An Index of Ancient Egyptian Titles, Epithets and Phrases of the Old Kingdom I*, BAR 866 (I) (Oxford, 2000), 312, 1140.

²⁰ Ward, W.A., *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom* (Beirut, 1982), 61, nr. 500.

²¹ Also PT 1440b (M. 752). Cf. PT 815a (M. 116); PT 815b (N. 54).

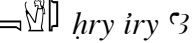
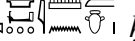


²² *Wb I*, 104, (3); 164, (17); *Anlex I*, 36, 77.0371. See also Faulkner, R. O., *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford, 1988), 25; Goecke-Bauer, “Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine”, 63, 64.

²³ *Wb I*, 311, (3).

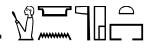
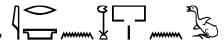
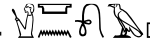
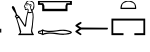
²⁴ Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 161.

²⁵ Goecke-Bauer, “Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine”, 75.

²⁶ Goecke-Bauer, “Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine”, 73-75.

made its appearance in New Egyptian.²⁷ It is noteworthy that the title  *hry iry 3* ‘chief doorkeeper’ was attested in examples such as  *hry iry 3 Imn-m-ib* ‘chief doorkeeper *Imn-m-ib*’ in the tomb of *Imn-m-ib* at Thebes²⁸ and  *hry iry 3 h^c-m-tr* ‘chief doorkeeper *h^c-m-tr*’ on O. Michaelides 13, 6-7.²⁹ The title  *s^ck n N* was also used as designation of the temple’s doorkeeper.

Deir el-Medineh documents (ostraca carrying lists of rations,³¹ private transactions,³² necropolis journals,³³ and letters), include varied forms of the Egyptian administrative title *iry 3*, sometimes accompanied by doorkeepers’ names.³⁴ The doorkeepers’ titles signalling their relationships with varied places reflect the diverse responsibilities they should have been taking. The door and the strong arm thus help defining the doorkeeper’s activities. Since the Middle Kingdom the titles leave no doubt as to their attachment to temples, viziers’ offices, specific halls, in addition to the storehouses as follows:

-  *iry 3 n hwt-ntr* ‘doorkeeper of a temple’.³⁵
-  *iry 3 n h3 n t3ty* ‘doorkeeper of the vizier’s office’.³⁶
-  *iry 3 n why* ‘doorkeeper of an audience-hall’.³⁷
-  *iry 3 n hnrt* ‘doorkeeper of a prison’.³⁸

²⁷ Wb I, 165, (2).

²⁸ Champollion le Jeune, *Monuments de l’Égypte et de la Nubie : notices descriptives conformes aux manuscrits autographes rédigés sur les lieux I* (Paris, 1929), 851.

²⁹ Grandet, P., *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques non littéraires de Deir el-Médinéh, Tome IX. Nos 831-1000*, DFIFAO 41 (Cairo, 2003), 79; Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 164-165.




³⁰ *AnLex* III, 243, 79.2455 ‘l’introducteur du dieu N’, comme désignation du portier d’un temple. See Ramond, P., ‘Un socle pour une statuette de Thot’, *JEA* 65 (1979), 170 n. (e).

³¹ Among the lists of rations including the doorkeeper: O. Cairo 25608 rto, O. DeM 379, O. DeM 638 rto, O. DeM 376, O. DeM 149, O. DeM 381, O. DeM 735.

³² O. Colin Campbell 23, I, O. Turin 57150, O. DeM 779, O. DeM 410, O. Cairo 25604, O. Černý 15, vso.

³³ O. DeM 34, O. DeM 427, O. DeM 604, pTurin Cat. 1891, vso 9, *Giornale* 17-A: dated by Gutgesell, M., *Die Datierung der Ostraka und Papyri aus Deir el-Medineh und ihre ökonomische Interpretation. Teil I. Die 20. Dynastie*, HÄB 18-19 (Hildesheim, 1983), 141.

³⁴ Goecke-Bauer, ‘Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine’, 65-73.

³⁵ Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, 62, 502; Hannig, R., *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II: Mittleres Reich und Zweite Zwischenzeit I*, Kulturgeschichte der Antiken Welt 112 (Mainz am Rhein, 2006), 338, {48807}. Stela Florence 8063 for example bears a designation of  *iry 3 n pr-Imn* ‘doorkeeper of the temple of Amon’. To be also compared with the Middle Kingdom stela BM 1016, and the New Kingdom stela Turin 101 bearing the title  *iry 3 n Imn* ‘doorkeeper of Amon’. Ushebtu Louvre 1013 bears likewise the title  *iry 3 n Imn* ‘doorkeeper of Amon’.

³⁶ Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, 62, 503; Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II: Mittleres Reich und Zweite Zwischenzeit I*, 338, {3090}.

³⁷ Ward, *Index of Egyptian Administrative and Religious Titles of the Middle Kingdom*, 62, 501.

The doorkeeper: an appealing motif

The doorkeeper is not one of the most recurrent figures in ancient Egyptian figurative documents. The motif is one of the unexpected newly introduced details to New Kingdom compositions. In this approach to study the motif, it appeared that it typically reflects glimpses of realistic art. The details studied highlight the role of the doorkeeper, and the artistic conventions adopted in picturing the motif. Although the theme proved to have existed since the Middle Kingdom, It is noteworthy that it was only introduced in the scene repertoire during the Amarna period. It was repeatedly attested several times in the same tombs. This suggests a tendency towards recreating and including it frequently, especially in palatial contexts. It might therefore be suggested that the motif became an appealing subject to the artists.

The scenes show only male guards. However, Kanawati highlighted the role of a female guard who bore the title *hnty-š*. The position of a female guard was rarely acquainted and may have served in the most intimate parts of the royal Harem.⁴² Guards were never named in scenes; yet some of their names were encountered in ostraca and in letters. Nineteen *iryw*-⁵³ were known by names from the time of Ramesses II till Ramesses XI in ostraca and papyri.⁴³

Far from conventional representations, the doorkeeper's figure seems to have been a light-hearted element, shown bare feet, unattended and unarmed. His gestures, attitudes and attributes are valuable sources of information. The postures of the represented doorkeepers, in addition to their attributes highlight low ranked position. The motif was pictured several times standing nearby, behind or in front of the doorway, sometimes engaged in cleaning the floor. His gestures show him often alternating between squatting at the door, sitting on a cushion, or as a crouching figure with his face leaned on his hand in a sleepy attitude. He was also occasionally shown verifying visitors' identity before allowing them access.

It is noteworthy that representations of doorkeepers showed them small in scale and proportion in comparison to the major figures in the scenes. The canon of proportions reveal the small or miniature size of the doorkeepers in comparison to the tomb owner's heroic size, and the subordinates' relatively smaller size.

The context

The occasions and contexts in which doorkeepers appear effectively complement the information given in the texts recorded on ostraca and papyri. The newly introduced motifs were common in Amarna period iconography, and these details significantly share several features. Most, yet not all of the related iconography, derive from palatial contexts, where interior spaces were indicated by walls and columns.⁴⁴ Stylistic parallels of the doorkeeper's motif appear during the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Dynasties, with variations in poses and attitudes.

⁴² Kanawati, N., "A Female Guard Buried in the Teti Cemetery", BACE 12 (2001), 66, 67.

⁴³ Goecke-Bauer, "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", 152.

⁴⁴ Examples are shown in Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, pl. XIII, west wall, palace interiors; Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 17, west wall, south side.

The restricted access to certain areas was secured by the presence of the doorkeeper. Such areas could be private parts of a house, harem residence in the royal palace, storage areas, etc. Doorways expectedly were to be separating commonplaces from private areas where people were barred from entering.

The contexts where doorkeepers were figured appeared to be as follows:

- Palatial iconography
- Non-palatial iconography
- Store rooms

The number of the doorkeepers shown iconographically was generally one, and only in some cases two, in front of each doorway. Some palace life scenes pictured in the tomb of *Iy* at Amarna (no. 25) show male guards sitting or standing outside.⁴⁵ In other contexts concerning the doorkeepers of the tombs, the texts mention that they were two or more,⁴⁶ and their number seems to have been varying according to the needs.⁴⁷ The royal tomb *p3 hr* was guarded even when its entrance was sealed or closed, and when no work was going on.⁴⁸

The doorkeeper's main charge should have been guarding the door and what relates to it; i.e. inspecting the identity of entering visitors. Other duties such as delivering supplies to the workmen seem to have been temporary.⁴⁹ The duties of the *iry 3* at Deir el-Medineh included deliveries of grain rations, provisions, vegetables and wood.⁵⁰ O. Cairo 25611 recorded that the doorkeeper *h'-m-w3st* had the duty of receiving and registering deliveries to the workmen.⁵¹ O. DeM 726 [inv. 1629 + 1411], dated to the first year of the reign of Ramses IV, recorded deliveries received by two doorkeepers.⁵² The doorkeeper's duties may have also included transmitting

⁴⁵ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28; B. Kemp, *The City of Akhenaton and Nefertiti: Amarna and its people* (Cairo, 2012), 144, fig. 4.18.

⁴⁶ Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 162-164, 167; Valbelle, D., *Les ouvriers de la tombe : Deir El-Médineh à l'époque ramesside*, BdE 96 (Cairo, 1985), 127 (e.g. pTurin Cat. 1880 points to the multiple tasks assigned to doorkeepers. While two of them seem to have been assigned to guard the tomb, others were in charge of the provisions).

⁴⁷ Ventura, R., *Living in a city of the dead: A selection of topographical and administrative terms in the documents of the Theban necropolis*, OBO 69 (Freiburg, 1986), 112.

⁴⁸ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 88; Massart, A., "The Egyptian Geneva Papyrus MAH 15274", *MDAIK* 15 (1957), 182 n. 1.

⁴⁹ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 111, n. 31. Helck, W., "Türhüter", in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds.), *LÄ VI* (Wiesbaden, 1986), 788.

⁵⁰ Goecke-Bauer, "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", 94, 138; Gutgesell, *Die Datierung der Ostraka und Papyri aus Deir el-Medineh und ihre ökonomische Interpretation I*, 95, 105, 106; Janssen, Jac. J., *Commodity prices from the Pameesside Period: An economic study of the village of necropolis workmen at Thebes* (Leiden, 1975), 151-153.

⁵¹ Janssen, Jac. J., "Two personalities", in R. J. Demarée and Jac. J. Janssen (eds.), *Gleanings from Deir El-Medina*, EgUit 1 (Leiden, 1982), 117; Janssen, *Commodity prices from the Pameesside Period*, 20.

⁵² Grandet, P., *Catalogue hiératiques non littéraires de Deir el-Médinéh*, Tome VIII, n^{os} 706-830, DFIFAO 39 (Cairo, 2000), 27, 129.

news and letters.⁵³ According to O. Černý 17, the *iryw* ʒ worked in shifts including a night watch.⁵⁴ Besides, in O. Berlin 10663, 3, supposedly originally from Deir el-Medineh, dated to year 28 of Ramses III, *iryw*-ʒ acted as letter carriers.⁵⁵

Gestures and attributes of doorkeepers



Gestures of doorkeepers were classified into the following three categories as attested in the representations:

1. Sitting down/ crouching
2. Standing in front of, beside or behind the door
3. Cleaning the floor

1 - Sitting down/ crouching

The earliest representations of doorkeepers were three dimensional in the stable, granary, brewery and bakery models of the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of *Mkt-R*^c at Thebes.⁵⁶ Scenes depicting doorkeepers sitting down or crouching were attested in the tombs of *Hwy*ʒ,⁵⁷ *Ty*⁵⁸ and *Twtw*⁵⁹ at Amarna. These represent variations in the poses attested.

Table 1 - The doorkeeper sitting down/ crouching

Tomb owner/ Tomb location	Figures (details)	Description	Attributes	Reference
<i>Mkt-R</i> ^c Thebes		crouching nearby the door (stable)	stick	Winlock, <i>Models of Daily Life</i> , pl. 17.
<i>Mkt-R</i> ^c Thebes		crouching nearby the door (granary)	stick	Winlock, <i>Models of Daily Life</i> , pl. 20.

Continued

⁵³ Gutgesell, *Die Datierung der Ostraka und Papyri aus Deir el-Medineh und ihre ökonomische Interpretation. Teil I. Die 20. Dynastie*, 98 ff.

⁵⁴ Gutgesell, *Die Datierung der Ostraka und Papyri aus Deir el-Medineh und ihre ökonomische Interpretation. Teil I. Die 20. Dynastie*, 127, 128.








⁵⁵ Helck, "Türhüter", 788.

⁵⁶ Winlock, H. E., *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē*^c at Thebes (New York, 1955), pls. 17, 22, 25.


⁵⁷ Davies, N. de G., *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna. Part 3: The Tombs of Huya and Ahmes*, ASEg 15 (London, 1905), pl. 13.

⁵⁸ Davies, N. de G., *The Rock tombs of El Amarna. Part 6: Tombs of Parennefer, Tutu and Aÿ*, ASEg 18 (London, 1908), pl. 28, north wall, doorway, left side.

⁵⁹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna. Part 6*, pl. 17, west wall, south side.

<i>Mkt-R^c</i> Thebes		crouching nearby the door (brewery and bakery)	stick	Winlock, <i>Models of Daily Life</i> , pl. 22.
<i>Hwy3</i> El-Amarna		sitting down in front of the door, seemingly sleepy (palatial context)	none apparent	Davies, <i>The Rock Tombs of El Amarna</i> 3, pl. 13.
<i>Iy</i> El-Amarna		sitting on a cushion, while eating in front of the door (harem, palatial context)	none apparent	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 28, north wall, doorway.
<i>Iy</i> El-Amarna		crouching in front of the door on a cushion, with head leaned on his arms. (harem, palatial context)	none apparent	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 28, north wall, doorway.
<i>Iy</i> El-Amarna		sitting on a cushion in front of the door, while holding a brush (harem, palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 28, north wall, left side.
<i>Twtw</i> El-Amarna		sitting on a cushion in front of the door (palatial context)	none apparent	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 17, west wall, south side.
<i>Twtw</i> El-Amarna		sitting on a cushion in front of the door (palatial context)	none apparent	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 17, west wall, south side.




Continued

<i>Ini iti.f</i> Thebes		crouching behind the door with his head leaned on his hand (temporary storage)	none apparent	Säve-Söderbergh, <i>Four eighteenth Dynasty tombs</i> , pl. 15, hall, right back wall.
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2 - Standing in front of, beside or behind the door

The study of the doorkeepers' figures allow to conclude that the standing posture in front of the door was the most eminent. This attitude was the most attested, probably as it reflects his characteristic job (e.g. tombs of *Mry R^c*,⁶⁰ *P3 nḥsy*,⁶¹ *Mry R^c II*,⁶² *Mḥw*,⁶³ *P3 rn nfr*,⁶⁴ *Twtw*⁶⁵ at Amarna and *Nfr ḥtp*⁶⁶ at Thebes). In context, the figures related to this posture alternate between palatial contexts and store rooms.

Table 2 - The doorkeeper standing in front of, beside or behind the door

Tomb owner/ Tomb location	Figures (details)	Description	Attributes	Reference
<i>Mry R^c</i> El-Amarna		standing in front of the door. (palatial context)	unclear	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna 1</i> , pl. 18, east wall, lower half.
<i>Mry R^c</i> El-Amarna		reclining in front of the door. (palatial context)	unclear	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna 1</i> , pl. 18, east wall, lower half.
<i>P3 nḥsy</i> El-Amarna		standing in front of the door. (palatial context)	unclear	<i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna 2</i> , pl. 13, east wall.

Continued

⁶⁰ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1, pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.

⁶¹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 13, east wall.







⁶² Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 36, south wall, east side.

⁶³ Davies, N. de G., *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 4: *The Tombs of Penthu, Mahu, and others*, ASEG 16 (London, 1906), pl. 25, south end wall.




⁶⁴ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 4, west wall.

⁶⁵ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 17, 20 west wall, south side.

⁶⁶ Davies, N. de G., *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes*, Volume I, MMAEE 9 (New York, 1933), pl. 14, 16, 18.

<i>Mry R^c II</i> El-Amarna		standing while leaning with one leg against the door at his back. (palatial context)	holding something unclear in one hand, and waving with the other hand while chatting with someone.	<i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 2, pl. 36, south wall, east side.
<i>Mhw</i> El-Amarna		standing in front of the door. (store rooms)	stick	Davies, <i>The Rock Tombs of El Amarna</i> 4, pl. 25, south end wall.
<i>P3 rn nfr</i> El-Amarna		registering articles brought by a file of servants heading to the stores. (store rooms)	palette	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 4, west wall.
<i>P3 rn nfr</i> El-Amarna		two guardians keeping the doorway through which servants carrying baskets and jars defile. (store rooms)	stick brush (?) palette (?)	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 4, west wall.
<i>Twtw</i> El-Amarna		standing while leaning with one leg against the door at his back. (palatial context)	holding something unclear in one hand, while chatting with someone.	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 17, west wall, south side.
<i>Twtw</i> El-Amarna		standing in front of the door, most probably verifying the identity of the visitors. (palatial context)	stick	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 20, west wall, south side.


Continued

<i>Nfr-htp</i> Thebes		standing at the doorway (palatial context)	holding a stick in one hand, and something unidentified in the other.	Davies, <i>The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I</i> , pl. 14.
<i>Nfr-htp</i> Thebes		standing in the doorway (palatial context)	holding a type of brush (?) in one hand, and waving with the other.	Davies, <i>The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I</i> , pl. 18.
Relief block from a tomb Saqqara Berlin inv. 13297		standing while in a sleepy attitude in front of the door (door of temple or tomb - funerary context)	none	Martin, <i>Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom</i> , pl. 24.65

3 - Cleaning the floor

Scenes from palatial contexts show varied attitudes of doorkeepers engaged in cleaning. A doorkeeper is shown sprinkling water from a jar in the tomb of *Mry R^c*;⁶⁷ most probably to clean the floor and to bring fresh air. The doorkeeper is often shown engaged in cleaning the floor with a type of brush (e.g. tombs of *Mry R^c*,⁶⁸ *P3 nhsy*,⁶⁹ *Twtw*⁷⁰ and *Hwy3*⁷¹). It is to be noted that sprinkling the water from a jar was only attested twice.⁷² However, such remarks should not be conclusive as it should be taken into consideration that other scenes may have not survived.

Table 3 - The doorkeeper engaged in cleaning the floor

Tomb owner/ Tomb location	Figures (details)	Description	Attributes	Reference
<i>Mry R^c</i> El-Amarna		sprinkling water from a jar. (palatial context)	jar	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna 1</i> , pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.

Continued

⁶⁷ Davies, N. de G., *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1: *The Tomb of Meryra*, ASEG 13 (London, 1903), pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.



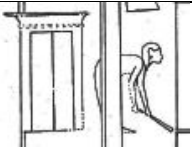
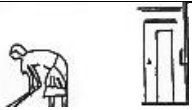

⁶⁸ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1, pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.

⁶⁹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 13, east wall.

⁷⁰ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 17, west wall, north side.

⁷¹ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, pl. 13.

⁷² Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1, pl. 18; Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 17.






Mry R^c El-Amarna		engaged in cleaning using a type of brush for sweeping the floor. (palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 1, pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.
Mry R^c El-Amarna		engaged in cleaning using a type of brush for sweeping the floor. (palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 1, pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.
P3 nḥsy El-Amarna		engaged in cleaning using a type of brush for sweeping the floor. (palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	<i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 2, pl. 13, east wall.
Hwy3 El-Amarna		engaged in cleaning using a type of brush for sweeping the floor. (palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	Davies, <i>The Rock Tombs of El Amarna</i> 3, pl. 13.
Twtw El-Amarna		engaged in cleaning using a type of brush for sweeping the floor. (palatial context)	brush for sweeping the floor	Davies, <i>The Rock tombs of El Amarna</i> 6, pl. 17, west wall, north side.

The scene details hint at the duties of the doorkeeper. Based upon the information conveyed by the representations, we may feel confident to interpret the seated postures as indicators of the doorkeepers having been active for a long time while being engaged in guarding.

Doorkeepers' attitudes

Representations of doorkeepers were not widely attested. The stylistic parallels depicting doorkeepers' gestures and attitudes during the New Kingdom deviate from the norm as per the artistic conventions as follows:

- The doorkeeper was **shown as having been provoked by others** in some contexts. This may be the reason why the motif has been interpreted by Van de Walle and

Houlihan as to reflect humor.⁷³ Morenz likewise interpreted the rendering of the doorkeeper's sleepy figure as indicator of humor.⁷⁴ The standing posture holding a stick in one hand occurred three times in the tombs of *Mhw*,⁷⁵ *Twtw*⁷⁶ at Amarna and in the tomb of *Nfr-htp* at Thebes. The latter possesses the only representation which appears to be in close parallelism with the sign  (A59); depicting a man threatening with a stick,⁷⁷ used as determinative to the verb  ⁷⁸ *shr* 'drive away'.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, in the tomb of *Nfr-htp* at Thebes the man is not raising the stick above his head's level as in the sign A59. It is additionally noteworthy that the sign  is to be differentiated from the signs  (A24) and  (A25);⁸⁰ both related to striking.

- **The seated representations** of doorkeepers were frequent. They are shown seated on a cushion or directly on the ground. Among the varied postures is the one showing the doorkeeper eating from a plate placed on the ground in front of him.⁸¹ The seated doorkeeper is either depicted beside, behind or in front of the door. The attitude most commonly represented is the one being in front of the door.
- **The dormant representations**⁸² of doorkeepers let us wonder whether they were napping while being work-free. Although his main task necessitated full attention, the doorkeeper was curiously often depicted as a sleepy figure; totally conforming with Davies' description of the doorkeeper in the tomb of *Mry R^c II* as "who has nothing to do but lean idly against the door-cheek and gossip".⁸³ The tomb scenes available as source materials often show dormant, lazy and possibly careless doorkeepers, extremely contradicting the duty anticipated vigilance.

Doorkeepers seemingly remained inactive in their work places while being freed from work, instead of moving back to their houses. Such an observation should be taken into consideration when reconstructing the doorkeepers' functions related to their figured attitudes. It might be assumed that the doorkeeper was sitting out there for several hours. During most of the time he may not have been dealing with anyone; except for the few visitors allowed in.

⁷³ Van de Walle, B., *L'humour dans la littérature et dans l'art de l'ancienne Égypte*, Scholae Adriani de Buck memoriae dicatae IV (Leiden, 1969), 7; Houlihan, P. F., *Wit & humour in ancient Egypt* (London, 2001), 49.

⁷⁴ Morenz, L.D., *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors: Ein Kulturgeschichtlicher Testschnitt*, BÄB 3 (Berlin, 2013), 83, 84.

⁷⁵ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 4, pl. 25, south end wall.

⁷⁶ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 20, west wall, south side.

⁷⁷ Gardiner, A., *Egyptian Grammar*, Third edition (London, 1957), 445.

⁷⁸ See *Wb* IV, 219, (9)-(12); *Urk.* IV, 618, 7.

⁷⁹ Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, pl. 14. Cf. *Wb* IV, 219, 220.

⁸⁰ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 444, 445.

⁸¹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28, north wall, doorway.

⁸² Types of sleeping figures representing the far arm laid across the other on the knees were represented in the Middle and the New Kingdoms. (e.g. Cairo fragment no. 1562: Wreszinski, W., *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Volume I (Leipzig, 1923), pl. 397; Berlin fragment: Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte I*, pl. 385.


⁸³ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, 38.

- **The doorkeeper's attitude of standing while placing one leg against the door at his back** probably hints at having been at the place for long. Possible interactions such as chatting with a passerby, be it a colleague worker, or a visitor, could be detected. This attitude might as well suggest boredom; most probably due to the monotony of the charge. Getting bored and feeling asleep were therefore normalized with the character.
- **Frontality:** The doorkeeper on the relief block (Berlin inv. 13297),⁸⁴ originally from a late New Kingdom tomb-chapel at Saqqara, is shown with a remarkable relaxing pose. Yet, instead of being attentive, he is rather asleep;⁸⁵ leaning with an arm on the door, while his head leans on the other. Frontality was used to mark his closed eyes. Nevertheless, he is unrealistically falling asleep while standing; a probable hint at the long time he had been spending at a relatively not frequented place.

The interplay of motifs identifying the doorkeeper

Using iconicity to reflect the doorkeeper's main responsibility was simply by depicting the doorway beside or behind. The place does not seem to be a guard's post; but the entrance was secured by the doorkeeper's presence. His major tasks seem to have been the opening and closing of the secured area, in addition to controlling others' movement into the place.

The doorkeeper's presence at the entrance was necessarily in association with safety.

The door leaf forming part of the title  *iry-ꜥ3* was regularly rendered as a **door or doorway** in the representations. Ventura's definition of the doorkeeper's occupation evidently sums up his role as: "opening something closed (blocked physically, or just of forbidden access) to introduce (after inspection)".⁸⁶

Unlike the required qualities including *a priori* corporal strength of the necropolis *iryw ꜥ3*,⁸⁷ the duties of the doorkeepers in charge of ordinary houses required the ability to stay in place for a long time, in addition to having a good knowledge of the area and of the inhabitants.⁸⁸ It is tempting to expect that the doorkeeper would consequently be residing in the nearby area. Besides, the doorkeeper should have been a trustworthy person.⁸⁹

In iconography doorkeepers were merely shown on duty. Identifying the motif hence mostly depended on his attributes, in addition to the scene contextual analysis.

- The doorkeeper was usually associated with the door; his main job was to guard the access to an area or a place. **A double-leaved door** is usually shown closed but never bolted. The door was usually either represented behind or beside the

⁸⁴ Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* I, pl. 91 c.

⁸⁵ Morenz, *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors*, 83.

⁸⁶ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 113.

⁸⁷ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 108, 109.

⁸⁸ Goecke-Bauer, "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", 140.

⁸⁹ Goecke-Bauer, "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", 140, 142.

doorkeeper's figure. The difference in scale between the man's size and that of the door is not unusual.⁹⁰

- **The stick** or baton that he carries is evidently more suggestive of his character, and is indicative of his role. The stick hints at the act of threatening; probably in case of intruders. Yet, the doorkeeper was not equipped with a stick in all representations.
- **The brush for sweeping the floor** seems to be one of the doorkeeper's attributes. Using the brush to sweep the floor should be in association with the verb sk "wipe".⁹¹ *P3-hr-n-hnsw* was 'porter of Amon temple', and was depicted with obvious obesity wearing a fine linen costume. His figure shows him holding in his right hand the brush used for sweeping the floor as marker of his charge.⁹²
- The particularity of rendering the **doorkeeper's status as dormant** is markedly not frequent. Less frequent than the documents depicting the doorkeeper engaged in cleaning the floor or sprinkling water from a jar, are the ones depicting him lazy. It is noteworthy that the motif showing the hand supporting the head was introduced in the New Kingdom.⁹³
- The question arises whether the doorkeeper's responsibility merely involved watching duties. It is of importance to conveniently summarize the features, in order to highlight the doorkeeper's functions. The duties involved inspection and allowing to pass the door or the gate. The main role assigned to the doorkeeper was inspecting on visitors allowed in and those who were not, according to the rules of the institutions they were attached to. In the tomb of *Nfr-htp* at Thebes one of the doorkeepers carries the **scribe's palette**, most probably to note the visitors' names.⁹⁴ Verifying who the visitors or passersby wishing to have access to the place was evidently an integral part of the doorkeeper's duty.⁹⁵ In the tomb of *P3 rn nfr* at Amarna,⁹⁶ the doorkeeper is holding the palette and a **brush pen** to register the articles brought into the store.

⁹⁰ Cf. Wreszinski, W., *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, Teil III: *Gräber des Alten Reiches* (bearbeitet von H. Schäfer) (Leipzig, 1936), 151.

⁹¹ Faulkner, R. O., *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford, 1988), 250. For examples of types of brushes see: Felgenhauer, A., *Aus Gräbern, Heiligtümern und Siedlungen: Die altägyptische Sammlung des Übersee-Museums Bremen* (Darmstadt, 2015), 128, fig. 172.

⁹² Ghalioungui, P., "Sur deux formes dobésité représentées dans l'Égypte ancienne", *ASAE* 49 (1949), 316, fig. 16 ; Guilhou, N., "Génies funéraires, croquet-mitaines ou anges gardiens ? Étude sur les fouets, balais, palmes et épis en guise de couteaux", in S.H. Aufrère, *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'Univers végétal – Croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne I*, *Orientalia Monspeliensia X* (Montpellier, 1999), 383, 386, fig. 42.

⁹³ Morenz, *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors*, 83.

⁹⁴ Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, pl. XVI, 2.

⁹⁵ Sweeney, D., *Correspondence and Dialogue: Pragmatic Factors in Late Ramesside Letter-Writing*, *ÄAT* 49 (Wiesbaden, 2001), 123. An interrogation of a gang of robbers included the following question: "You are the doorkeeper of this place. Please name every man whom you saw." (pBM 10403, r1.4).

⁹⁶ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 4, west wall.

Other types of documents belong to the workmen community from Deir el-Medineh. The study of Deir el-Medineh doorkeepers⁹⁷ includes attestations of routine activities. Side activities were assigned to the doorkeeper, yet, seemingly not on a regular basis. In Deir el-Medineh one of the doorkeepers assisted the representatives of the crew in receiving the delivered products. For that he was stated to be the person “through whose hand” (*m-drt*) the provisions were brought at the enclosure of the necropolis.⁹⁸

Three dimensional representations of doorkeepers

The earliest three dimensional representations of doorkeepers are models dating from the Eleventh Dynasty of the Middle Kingdom. The tomb of *Mkt-R^c* included doorkeepers⁹⁹ in the models of the stable (D),¹⁰⁰ the granary (F),¹⁰¹ the brewery and bakery (G).¹⁰²

The model of the stable (D): (fig. 1) The front half of the stable appears as an unroofed yard. The stable entrance door is guarded by a seated doorkeeper holding his stick. Winlock interpreted the function of the stick as either to be used to stop intruders or to prevent the escape of animals from the stable.¹⁰³

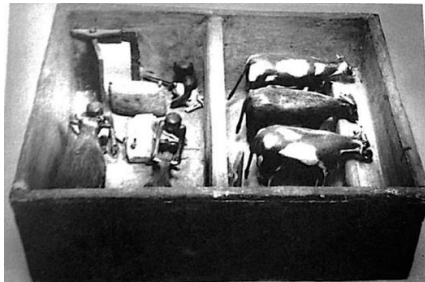


Fig. 1. Cattle stable model, tomb of *Mkt-R^c*

After: Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt*, pl. 17.

The model of the granary (F): (fig. 2) The granary was unroofed like the modern Egyptian one called in Arabic (شونة).¹⁰⁴ The entrance has a cleated door, where the guardian was shown squatting with a stick in hand. Four scribes sitting near him are busy counting the grain baskets.

⁹⁷ Goecke-Bauer, “Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine”, 64.

⁹⁸ Janssen, Jac. J., *Village Varia: Ten Studies on the History and Administration of Deir-el-Medina*, EgUit 11 (Leiden, 1997), 7.

⁹⁹ Leprohon, R. J., “Gatekeepers of This and the Other World”, *JSSEA* XXIV (1994), 81.

¹⁰⁰ Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, pl. 17.

¹⁰¹ Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, pl. 20.

¹⁰² Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, pls. 22, 23.

¹⁰³ Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, 22.

¹⁰⁴ Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, 25.

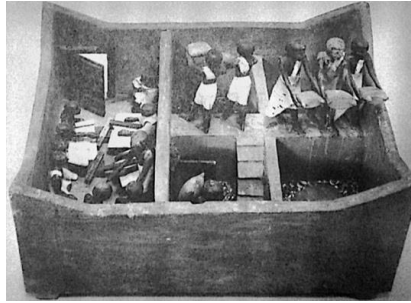


Fig. 2 Granary model, tomb of *Mkt-R^c*

After: Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt*, pl. 22.

The models of the brewery and bakery (G): (fig. 3) Bakers and brewers share one building divided by a high partition wall. A door through the partition wall connects the two small rooms. This is where the doorkeeper is seated with a stick in his hand; while guarding both the brewery and the bakery.¹⁰⁵



Fig. 3. Brewery and bakery model, tomb of *Mkt-R^c*

After: Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt*, pl. 25.

Scene analysis and interpretation

Attestations of pictured doorkeepers only appeared on private tomb walls and date to the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties. It is possible to identify their figures, even with the absence of inscriptions, due to their attributes highlighting particular aspects of the character.

The scenes display a remarkable parallelism in depicting the doorkeeper, however with a degree of individuality allowing a sense of freedom in representing the details, gestures and postures. It is noteworthy that all representations of doorkeepers are minor figures shown in palace interiors or at the entrance to storage areas.

Tomb of *Mry R^c*, El-Amarna

Location: pillared hall, west wall depicting the palace¹⁰⁶

The scene includes five representations of doorkeepers (fig. 4). In the upper register, to the right side, one of them is sprinkling water from a jar, most probably to clean the floor. In the lowest register, two doorkeepers one to the right side, and the other to the left side, are both engaged in cleaning the floor with a type of brush. To the left side in the upper register, a doorkeeper stands in front of the door. Another figure is a bit reclining in front of a door.

¹⁰⁵ Winlock, *Models of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt from the Tomb of Meket-Rē^c* at Thebes, 27.

¹⁰⁶ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1, pl. 18, pillared hall, west wall.

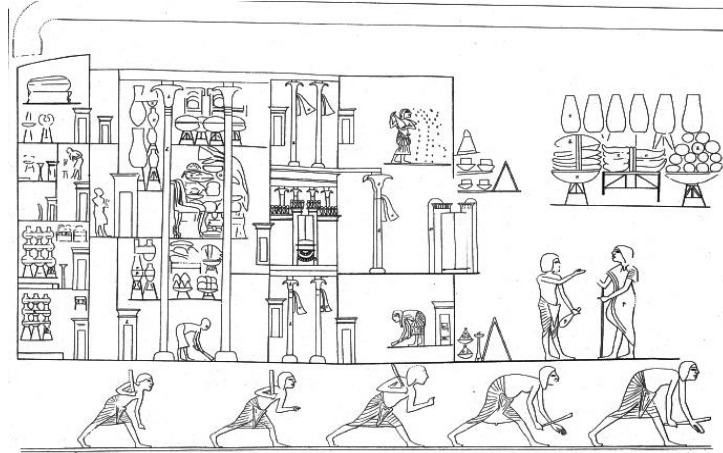


Fig. 4. Detail of the west wall, tomb of Mry Rꜥ, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 1, pl. 18, pillared hall.

Tomb of P3 nḥsy, El-Amarna

Location: east wall¹⁰⁷

The major scene on the wall depicts Akhenaton standing in his chariot, followed by the queen driving her chariot. The princesses also follow in chariots on smaller scale. The military escort is shown in front of the king and in the register below.¹⁰⁸ Fragments of the greeting crowd remain at the top of the wall.¹⁰⁹ The palace is depicted in the top right-hand corner. This is where two doorkeepers can be detected; one to the left side and the other to the right side (fig. 5).

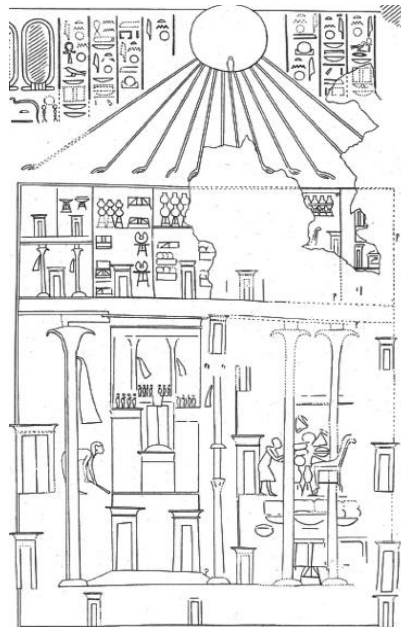


Fig. 5. Detail of the east wall, tomb of P3 nḥsy, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 14.

¹⁰⁷ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 14, east wall.

¹⁰⁸ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, 18.

¹⁰⁹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, 19.

Tomb of *Mry R^c II*, El-Amarna

Location: south wall, east side¹¹⁰

The wall depicts the bestowal of golden necklaces on *Mry R^c II* as proof of royal favor. Besides the main scene showing the façade of the royal palace, and some parts of the palace interior. A doorkeeper is shown leaning with one leg bent and leaned against the door at his back while waving his arm. He is seemingly talking to the house-boy sprinkling the floor with water from a jar (fig. 6).

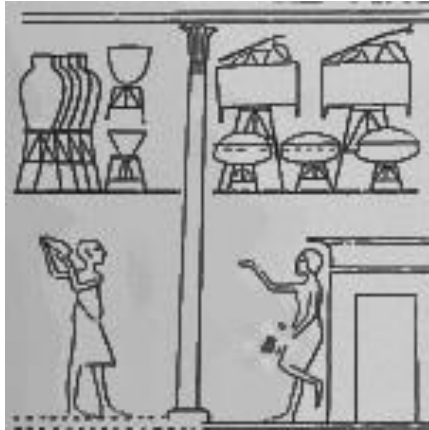


Fig. 6. Detail of the south wall, east side, tomb of *Mry R^c II*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, pl. 36.

Tomb of *Hwy³*, El-Amarna

Location: west wall¹¹¹

The wall shows the royal palanquin with the palace and its interiors occupying part of the scene. The details show a sleepy doorkeeper in the corridor,¹¹² while another is figured sweeping the floor with a type of brush (fig. 7).

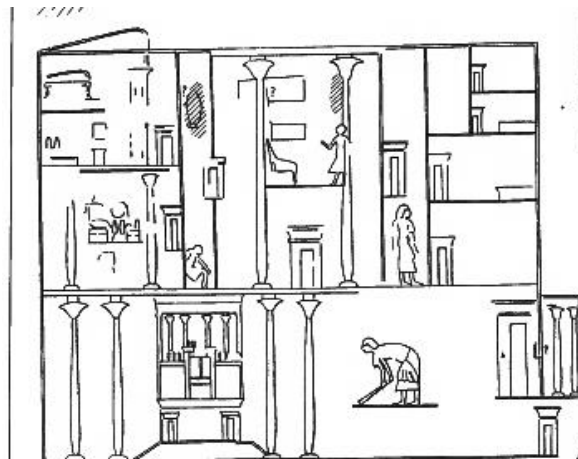


Fig. 7. Detail of the west wall, tomb of *Hwy³*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, pl. XIII, palace interiors.

¹¹⁰ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, 38, pl. 33, detail in pl. 36, south wall, east side.

¹¹¹ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, 10, pl 13.

¹¹² Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, 10, pl 13; LD III, 106 a.

Tomb of *Mḥw*, El-Amarna

Location: front wall, south side.¹¹³

The wall depicts *Mḥw* overseeing the guard-houses of which the inner arrangement appears as three stores. The ground floor seems to be used for the food storage; while the room above is apparently a guard room where a doorkeeper stands in front of the doorway holding a stick (fig. 8).¹¹⁴

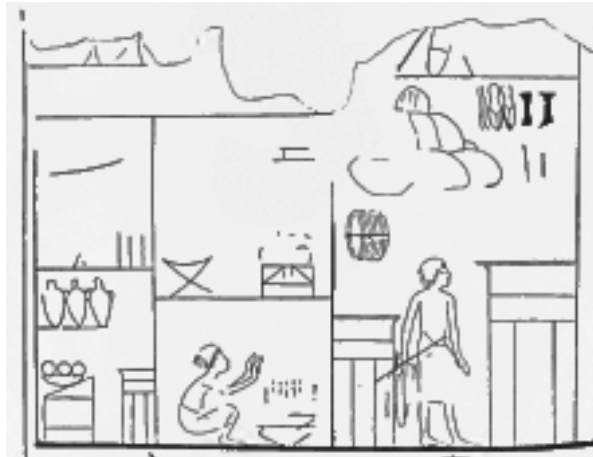


Fig. 8. Detail of the south end wall, tomb of *Mḥw*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 4, pl. 25.

Tomb of *P3 rn nfr*, El-Amarna

Location: west wall¹¹⁵

The scene on the west wall depicts the bestowal of rewards on *P3 rn nfr*. In the lower register, servants are shown heading to the stores, carrying off jars and baskets. To the right side of the file stand two guardians (fig. 9). To the left side, another guardian seems to be registering the articles brought in. His figure was described by Davies as being that of a scribe.¹¹⁶ Yet, it is likely to be that of a guardian; doorkeepers proved to have been assigned the duty of registering visitors' names in paralleled scenes.



Fig. 9. Detail of the west wall, tomb of *P3 rn nfr*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 4.

¹¹³ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 4, pl. 25, south end wall.

¹¹⁴ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 4, 17.

¹¹⁵ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 4, west wall.

¹¹⁶ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 4.

Tomb of *Twtw*, El-Amarna

Location: west wall, south side¹¹⁷

The major scene on the wall depicts *Twtw* receiving promotion from the king.¹¹⁸ The interiors of the palace show several varied postures of doorkeepers. One is engaged in cleaning the floor with a type of brush, while two others are shown, each sitting on a cushion in front of a door. A fourth guardian is depicted standing while leaning with one leg against the door at his back (fig. 10). This posture parallels the ones shown in the tombs of *Mry R^c II* (fig. 6)¹¹⁹ and *Iy* (fig. 14a).¹²⁰



Fig. 10. Detail of the west wall, south side, tomb of *Twtw*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 17.

On the south side of the same wall in the lowest register,¹²¹ chariots convey officials to and from the palace.¹²² A guard standing at the gate seems to be verifying the identity of those wishing to enter (fig. 11). In the same register, a doorkeeper is depicted using a kind of brush for sweeping the floor (fig. 12).



Fig. 11. Detail of the west wall, south side, tomb of *Twtw*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 20.

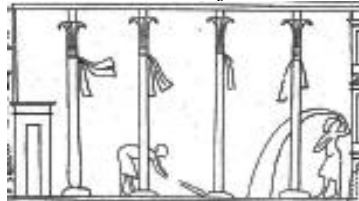


Fig. 12. Detail of the west wall, south side, tomb of *Twtw*, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 19.

¹¹⁷ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 19, west wall, south side.

¹¹⁸ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 12, 13.

¹¹⁹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 2, 38, pl. 33, detail in pl. XXXVI, south wall, east side.

¹²⁰ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28, north wall, doorway.

¹²¹ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 20, west wall, south side

¹²² Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 13; pl. 20.

The tomb of Ty, El-Amarna

Location: north wall, doorway¹²³

The main scene on the wall is dominated by the balcony of the royal family. The palace is depicted with one building apparently comprising a storehouse for servants.¹²⁴ Another building shows the harem quarters assigned to female servants (fig. 13). Male doorkeepers are only depicted by the doors in varied poses; one is eating while another is sleepy. Female musicians and servants are shown inside, some engaged in eating.

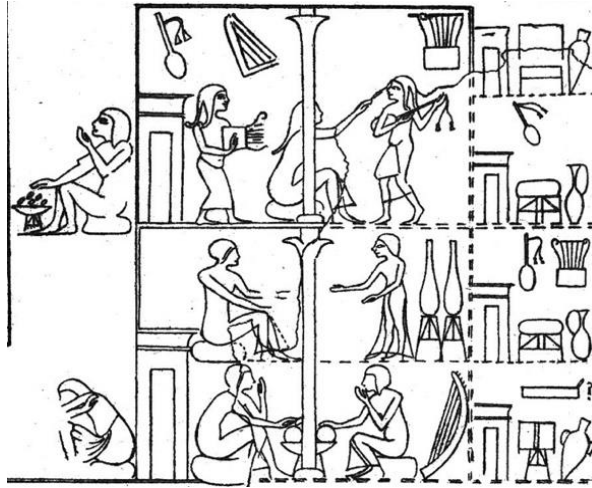


Fig. 13. Detail of the doorway, tomb of Ti, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28.

The scenes on the architrave also show female musicians inside the harem.¹²⁵ A doorkeeper is shown outside, chatting with another person while leaning with his leg against the door at his back (fig. 14a). Another doorkeeper is shown outside, sitting on a cushion (fig. 14b). In the same scene to the left, a doorkeeper standing at the door, is seemingly talking with a person before allowing him in (fig. 14c).¹²⁶

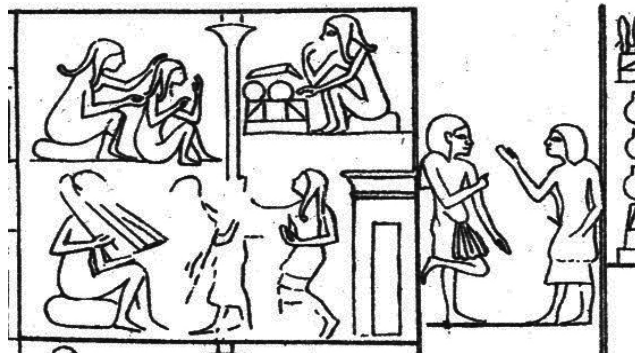


Fig. 14a. Detail of the north wall, architrave, tomb of Ti, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28.

¹²³ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 20, pl. 28, north wall, doorway.

¹²⁴ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 19, pl. 28.

¹²⁵ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 19, pl. 28, north wall, architrave.

¹²⁶ Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, 19, pl. 28, north wall, architrave.

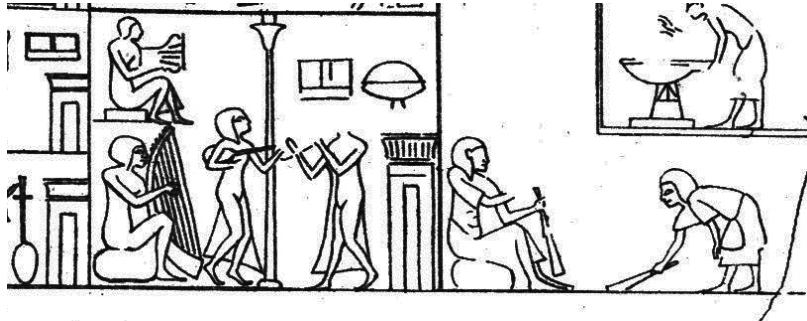


Fig. 14b. Detail of the north wall, architrave, tomb of Ti, El-Amarna

After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28, left side.

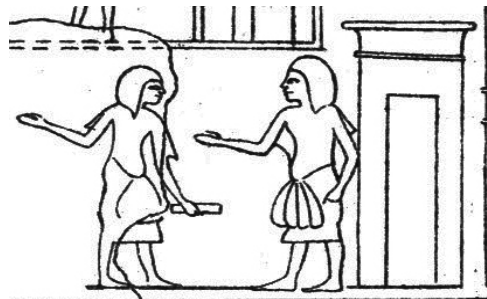


Fig. 14c. Detail of the north wall, architrave, tomb of Ti, El-Amarna

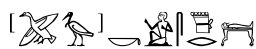
After: Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28, left side.

Tomb of *Ini-iti.f*, Dra^c Abu el-Naga, Thebes (TT 155)¹²⁷

Location: hall, back wall

The right part of the back wall bears a wall painting showing wine jars being carried off to a cellar. The four jar carriers are supervised by an overseer (fig. 15). The latter calls out the jar carriers to hurry: ‘Move on! We will scorch ourselves (out here in the sun)’.¹²⁸ The last one carrying the heavy jar on his shoulder adds: ‘Behold, the load is heavy’.¹²⁹

The first jar carrier had reached the door but found it closed. Having not received any response after knocking at the door, he addressed the colleague behind him saying:



[p3 b3]k sdr

The servant (i.e. the doorkeeper) is sleeping.

His companion guessed that the doorkeeper should be drunk, and thus adds:



[p3 b3]k sdr¹³⁰

¹²⁷ The tomb dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty (reign of Hatchepsut, Thutmose III). Guglielmi, *Reden, Rufe und Lieder*, 87.

¹²⁸ Houlihan, *Wit & humour in ancient Egypt*, 49.

¹²⁹ Säve-Söderbergh, T., *Four eighteenth Dynasty tombs*, Private Tombs at Thebes I (Oxford, 1957), 18; Guglielmi, *Reden, Rufe und Lieder*, 89; Houlihan, *Wit & humour in ancient Egypt*, 49.

¹³⁰ The right end of the sub-scene was copied and published by Wilkinson, J., (*The manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians*, ed. Birch, Volume I (London, 1878), 388, no. 165).

access.¹⁴¹ A doorkeeper stands in front of a building, while a woman and two children are shown passing by. Being discontented by the children, the guardian seems to be chasing them away with the stick (fig. 16).

In the same tomb provisions for the banquet are being brought into a room.¹⁴² Two doorkeepers watch the men bringing in the feast supplies (fig. 17).



Fig. 16. Detail of the west wall, south side, tomb of *Nfr-hotep*, Thebes
After: Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, pl. 14.

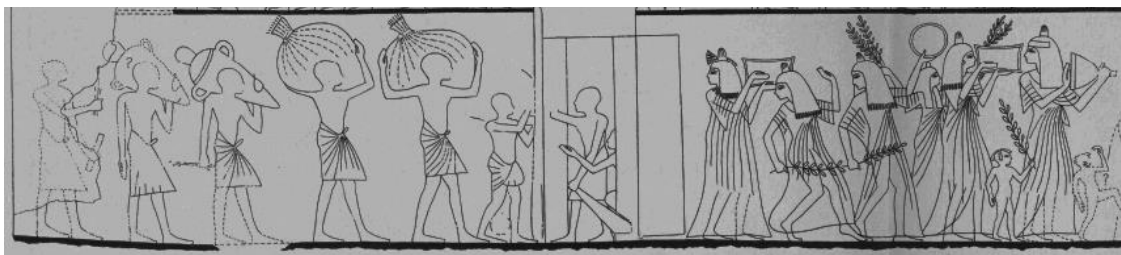


Fig. 17. Detail of the west wall, south side, tomb of *Nfr-hotep*, Thebes
After: Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, pl. 18.

The main scene on the west wall shows *Nfr-hotep* leaving the palace in a chariot. A sub register shows small scaled figures among which is a doorkeeper holding a scribe's palette indicative of his duty to note visitors' names.¹⁴³ The porter is further shown lifting a stick (fig. 18).¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, 25.

¹⁴² Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, 27, pl. 18.

¹⁴³ See Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, 22.

¹⁴⁴ Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, 22, pl. 16.

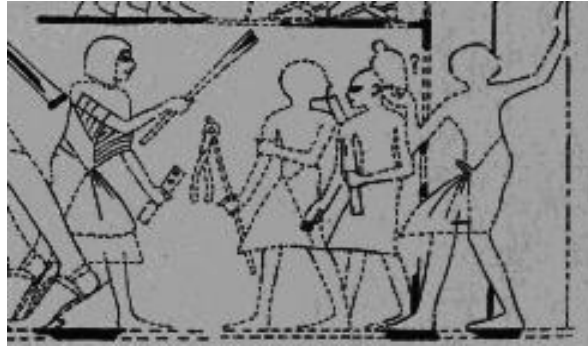


Fig. 18. Detail of the west wall, tomb of *Nfr-hotep*, Thebes
After: Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, pl. 16.

Relief block Berlin inv. 13297

Originally from a New Kingdom tomb-chapel at Saqqara

The block dates to the Eighteenth or the Nineteenth Dynasty,¹⁴⁵ and bears a major scene depicting a file of priests. A frontal representation of a sleepy doorkeeper shows him standing on one leg and leaning against the doorpost. He seems to be stationed there during his master's funerary ceremonies (fig. 19).¹⁴⁶ The sleeping attitude is accentuated by the doorkeeper's closed eyes marked in frontal view.¹⁴⁷



Fig. 19. Berlin, inv. 13297, originally from a New Kingdom tomb at Saqqara
After: Martin, *Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom*, pl. 69.

Were block statues representations of porters?

Leprohon¹⁴⁸ suggested that block statues were three dimensional representations of porters sitting on the ground before the door. Yet, it is questionable whether all

¹⁴⁵ Martin, G. T., *Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom from the Memphite Necropolis and lower Egypt* (London, 1987), 27, 28, pl. 24.65.

¹⁴⁶ Morenz, *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors*, 83; Houlihan, *Wit & humour in ancient Egypt*, 47, fig. 44; Volokhine, Y., *La frontalité dans l'iconographie de l'Égypte ancienne*, CSEG 6 (Geneva, 2000), 35.

¹⁴⁷ Morenz, *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors*, 83.

¹⁴⁸ Leprohon, "Gatekeepers of This and the Other World", 81.

holders of the title *iry-ꜥ3* functioned as doorkeepers. Two block-statues dated to Ramesses II and belonging to *Min ms* (Brighton Museum at the United Kingdom)¹⁴⁹ and *Pi3y* (M. Albert Husson collection in Lyon)¹⁵⁰ provide related information. Both statues bear inscriptions confirming the identity of their possessors, each designated as *iry-ꜥ3* ‘doorkeeper’ of a divinity, or of its temple.¹⁵¹

On the block statue of *Min ms* he manifests himself as ‘doorkeeper of the temple’:



*In-ḥry imi wi m pr.k*¹⁵² *rwꜥ*¹⁵³ .*kwi*

ḥr ꜥ3 wr ḥt m ḥtmw.f wn.tw.f

*n ḥr.k iw ink p3.f iry-ꜥ3*¹⁵⁴ .*ꜥ3*

O Onouris! Place (i.e. allow) me in your temple, being durable at the great door, whether it is closed or whether it is opened in front of you, (for) I am indeed¹⁵⁵ his doorkeeper.¹⁵⁶

The inscriptions confirm that *Min ms* was doorkeeper of the temple (*pr*) of *In-ḥry* or of the great portal (*ꜥ3 wr*) of that temple.¹⁵⁷

The inscriptions on the block statue of *Pi3y* likewise reveal his identity as doorkeeper as follows:



*ink p3y(.t)*¹⁵⁹ *iry-ꜥ3*

I am (your) doorkeeper.

The translation of the text *p3y(.t) iry-ꜥ3* hint at being doorkeeper of the goddess *Wrt ḥk3w*, i.e. of her temple. The reading $\Rightarrow .t$ of the second person feminine singular is

¹⁴⁹ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 136, n. 1, pl. XXI.

¹⁵⁰ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 138 ff., pl. XXII.

¹⁵¹ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 141.

¹⁵² The phrase *imi wi m pr.k* in this context means ‘accept my statue in your temple’. The statues make allusions to both the real life of their possessors and to their life in the Netherworld. See Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 146.

¹⁵³ *Wb* II, 411, (25).

¹⁵⁴ The sign 𓆎 was seemingly confused instead of 𓆏 . Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 137.


¹⁵⁵ For the construction *iw* + independent pronoun, here *iw ink*: Erman, A., *Neuägyptische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1880), § 520; Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, § 468, 3.

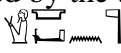
¹⁵⁶ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 137.

¹⁵⁷ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 141.

¹⁵⁸ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, pl. XXIII, K.


¹⁵⁹ Clère, “Deux statues ‘gardiennes de porte’, 140, n. 1. Cf. Erman, *Neuägyptische Grammatik*, § 68 ; *Wb* V, 337.

implied by the graphical occurrence \Rightarrow on the same statue in  $msdr.t$ 'your ear'.

Min ms, the owner of the Brighton statue, was 'first prophet of *In-hry*' at Abydos, and held the titles 'royal scribe', 'chief lector priest of the lord of the two lands', 'chamberlain of *Šw* and *Tfnwt*', in addition to 'treasurer of the king of Lower Egypt', 'sole friend', and '*sm* priest'.¹⁶⁰ The doorkeeper of a temple *iry-ꜥ3 n hwt-ntr* could be a person of high rank. An example is highlighted by the text on a stela from Edfou,¹⁶¹ where a temple doorkeeper is designated as ¹⁶² *iry ꜥ3 n hwt-ntr wꜥb* 'doorkeeper of the temple and priest *wꜥb*'.¹⁶³ Following the Middle Kingdom, placing statues in temples was a privilege granted by royal favour, only acquired by governors and high priests.¹⁶⁴ Clère¹⁶⁵ came to the conclusion that *Min ms* should have been designated by the title *iry-ꜥ3*, but was not professionally a doorkeeper. It was rather his statue that should have been intended to act as doorkeeper of the temple. The situation is conversely different with *Pi3y* as he held the title *sꜥm-ꜥ3* 'servant', and should have acted as porter. Another statue of *Pi3y* (Louvre E 124) that may also be dated to Ramesses II,¹⁶⁶ bears the inscription identifying him as *iry ꜥ3 m pr-nsw* 'doorkeeper of the palace'.

These examples confirm that not all statues bearing the title *iry-ꜥ3 n hwt-ntr* 'temple doorkeeper' functioned as doorkeepers. It is noteworthy that the above discussed examples of block statues are further completely different in function than the doorkeepers pictured in tomb scenes. The latter acted as real guards to the entrances in palace interiors and store rooms. Besides, unlike palatial contexts, doorkeepers of the temples were never depicted in representations.¹⁶⁷ A thorough investigation of block statues bearing the title *iry-ꜥ3* is therefore anticipated for future research.

Types of guard posts

The doorkeeper was evidently responsible of guarding and protecting an area of which the entrance was closed or walled. The function of the guard posts was to keep watching the people entering or coming out of a place.¹⁶⁸ Varied types of buildings appear to give access to entry according to the guarded area. The term ¹⁶⁹ *inbt*

¹⁶⁰ Helck, W., *Zur Verwaltung des Mittleren und Neuen Reichs*, PdÄ 3 (Leiden, 1958), 454-5.

¹⁶¹ The stela which is actually in Cairo belongs to a man who served under Ahmos until Thutmosis I. *Urk.* IV, 29.

¹⁶² *Urk.* IV, 30, 6.

¹⁶³ Clère, "Deux statues 'gardiennes de porte'", 142.

¹⁶⁴ Sourouzian, H., "Tempelstatuen", in W. Helck and E. Otto (eds.), *LÄ VI* (Wiesbaden, 1986), 411, 412.


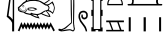
¹⁶⁵ Clère, "Deux statues 'gardiennes de porte'", 143, 145.


¹⁶⁶ Ouda, A. M., "The statue of 'The Doorkeeper of the Palace' *Pi3y* (Louvre E 124)", *SAK* 44 (2015), 294.

¹⁶⁷ An example is the representation of the temple of Aton in the tomb of *Tꜥh-ms* at Amarna. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. Part 3, pl. XXX.


¹⁶⁸ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 135.

¹⁶⁹ *Wb* I, 94, 15, 16; 95, 1-3.

should refer to the royal necropolis guard posts.¹⁷⁰ , var.  *inbt* is translated ‘fortification, fort, guard house’.¹⁷¹ In this respect distinctions should be made between fortified walls and watch posts.

As ‘the tomb’  *p3 hr* is not indicated in pictorial expressions, it is difficult to confirm whether the same applied to the royal tomb entrance. However, it can be assumed that providing guards to secure a place depended on the nature of the guarded area. Kinds of buildings might have been varying in type and shape (i.e. fortress like, station, hut, etc.). There should have been a guarded defensive and inspection station or watch post; supposedly even five as per the interpretation of *t3 5 inbt*.¹⁷² The latter were interpreted as being possibly series of small forts or guardhouses that topographically had to be passed in sequence by anyone following the route to or from the tombs of the kings.¹⁷³ Most likely such stations might be assimilated to guarded inspection points, the function of which was to secure the passage along the valley leading to the royal tombs.¹⁷⁴

The doorkeeper’s workplace

The texts provide very little information as to the doorkeeper’s location.¹⁷⁵ Tomb iconography is not much telling either, and we do not know whether the doorkeeper only worked in the place or lived in it. The question arises whether the doorkeeper was a watchman based at a specific place. The only sources of information available are the New Kingdom attested representations. However, whether doorkeepers remained close to the gateway, or they were allowed inside, remains hypothetical. By whom were they employed seems also a question worth investigating. The *iryw-3* of the tomb were employed by the regional administration.¹⁷⁶ Whether or not the doorkeeper was the proprietor of his own  *t* ‘house, room’,¹⁷⁷ also ‘workplace’¹⁷⁸ where he could stay and sleep,¹⁷⁹ remains improbable. The structure called *t*; being a building outside the village proper,¹⁸⁰ and *t iry 3* ‘the room of the

¹⁷⁰ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 142.

¹⁷¹ Lesko, L. H.; Switalski-Lesko, B., *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, Volume I, 2nd ed. (Providence, 2002), 38. See Edgerton, W. F., “The strikes in Ramses III’s twenty-ninth year”, *JNES* 10, 3 (1951), 139, n. 10.

¹⁷² Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 126, 138.

¹⁷³ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 126, 138. However, the specific area in which *t3 5 inbt* was located has not been agreed upon. See Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 128, 129.

¹⁷⁴ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 107, 126.

¹⁷⁵ Goecke-Bauer, “Untersuchungen zu den ‘Torwächtern’ von Deir el Medine”, 134.

¹⁷⁶ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 113.

¹⁷⁷ Lesko; Switalski-Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian* I, 67.

¹⁷⁸ For the functional meaning of the word *t*, see Demarée, R. J., “A House is not a Home”, in A. Dorn and T. Hofmann (eds.), *Living and Writing at Deir el-Medine: Socio-historical embodiment of Deir el-Medine texts*, AH 19 (Basel, 2006), 66.


¹⁷⁹ Demarée, “A House is not a Home”, 65.

¹⁸⁰ Demarée, “A House is not a Home”, 65.

doorkeeper' were mentioned in descriptions of royal tombs.¹⁸¹ Černy mentioned 't *iryw ʒ* 'booths of the *iryw ʒ*' of the Valley of the Kings.¹⁸²

In attested New Kingdom representations, the doorkeeper is never shown in a specific station or booth. He was rather depicted outside the entrance to the place he was supposed to keep guarding. It may be assumed that the doorkeeper should have been living either in close proximity to the place he was supposed to guard or in the same place.

It is not possible to determine with certainty whether doorkeepers resided in the place before the reign of Ramesses XI.¹⁸³ However, in Deir el-Medineh doorkeepers were considered among the personnel of the outside or the 'exteriors' in O. Berlin K, v^o 6-7; i.e. 'who do not live in the village'.¹⁸⁴ The doorkeeper *h^c-m-wʒst* was even reported accused of having entered the village proper without the permission of the guard.¹⁸⁵

In papyrus Salt 124, dated to Sety II, Determining a specific place where seemingly doorkeepers were to be found was called  *tʒ st n nʒ iryw-ʒ* 'the place of the doorkeepers'. This confirms the proposition of the presence of a doorkeepers' workplace. The text in the papyrus specifies the place of the doorkeepers as follows:



*pʒw pʒy.f šri*¹⁸⁷ *pd*¹⁸⁸ *r hʒt.f*
r tʒ st n nʒ iryw-ʒ

His son ran away from him

to the place of the doorkeepers.¹⁸⁹

Ranking the doorkeeper's position

The position of the doorkeeper seems to have been basically a male occupation. Very rare instances of female guards are known.¹⁹⁰ In tomb representations, parts of the

¹⁸¹ Černy, J., *The Valley of the Kings : fragments d'un manuscrit inachevé*, BdE 61 (Cairo, 1973), 28 f.; Demarée, "A House is not a Home", 64.

¹⁸² Černy, *The Valley of the Kings*, 28, 29, n.1.

¹⁸³ Valbelle, D., *Les ouvriers de la tombe : Deir El-Médineh à l'époque ramesside*, BdE 96 (Cairo, 1985), 126.

¹⁸⁴ Valbelle, *Les ouvriers de la tombe*, 126.

¹⁸⁵ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 96.

¹⁸⁶ Černy, J., "Papyrus Salt 124 (Brit. Mus. 10055)", *JEA* XV (1929), pl. XLIII; Sauneron, S., *Textes et langages de l'Égypte pharaonique : cent cinquante années de recherches, 1822-1972 : hommage à Jean-François Champollion*, Volume III, Bde 64 (Cairo, 1974), pl. 8, recto.

¹⁸⁷ *Wb* IV, 525, (12). The phrase following *pʒw* is in apposition to the demonstrative pronoun. See Černy, "Papyrus Salt 124 (Brit. Mus. 10055)", 248, n. 26.

¹⁸⁸ *Wb* I, 501, (5), 566.

¹⁸⁹ Černy, "Papyrus Salt 124 (Brit. Mus. 10055)", 245.


¹⁹⁰ Roth, A. M., *A cemetery of palace attendants: Including G 2048-2099, G 2230+2231, and G 2240. Based upon the recording of the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts*, Giza Matabas 6 (Boston, 1995), 151, fig. 80.

harem were depicted separated by a door from other palace areas. This precaution was elucidated by the presence of male doorkeepers outside the doors.¹⁹¹

As for the status of the doorkeeper of the tomb, in O. IFAO 351, 2 he followed the gardener and the wood-cutter and preceded the potter and water-carrier.¹⁹² In O. Gardiner 249, 6 a doorkeeper was ranked below the water-carrier, gardener, fisherman and washerman, and above the gypsum-worker and the potter.¹⁹³ Ventura highlighted the fact that the *iryw-ʿ3* of *p3 hr* or of *p3 htm* were almost illiterate, and had to operate according to what they were told to do.¹⁹⁴

Ration lists from Deir el-Medine village recorded small payments received by the doorkeepers.¹⁹⁵ Yet, Papyrus BM 10068 recorded that a doorkeeper and a chief doorkeeper possessed houses of their own.¹⁹⁶

Conclusion

The nature of the doorkeepers' duties certainly varied according to the place to which they were attached, and also according to the concerned era. The definition of the institution to which the doorkeeper was attached is therefore of importance in interpretation. As for the *pr-nsw* for example, the vizier manages the control of the doorways.¹⁹⁷ Leprohon¹⁹⁸ discussed the function of the  *w b k*¹⁹⁹ 'priest who has entry' in temples.

It seems that such a profession was inherited as porters of the tombs in the community of Deir el-Medineh were often the guardian's sons.²⁰⁰ The title *iry ʿ3 m pr-nsw* 'doorkeeper of the palace' was an administrative title that could be inherited by the son from his father.²⁰¹

Admittance to some places was restricted, yet it is tempting to consider that mundane places would not have required access barring. However, the doorkeeper seems to have been the only barrier to access in all the cases. On the stela MMA 57.95:5 the overseer of the Labour Compound *imy-r hnrt* states that he was *iry ʿ3 hr ntt iwtt* 'one who acted as a door for what is and what is not'.²⁰² The person acting as *iry ʿ3* was associated with the doorkeeper whose tasks included observing people going into and

¹⁹¹ E.g. Davies, *The Rock tombs of El Amarna*. Part 6, pl. 28, doorway.

¹⁹² Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 170, n. 5.

¹⁹³ Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 170, n. 6.

¹⁹⁴ Ventura, *Living in a city of the dead*, 115.

¹⁹⁵ McDowell, A. G., *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: laundry lists and love songs* (Oxford, 1999), 54.

¹⁹⁶ Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 165, (vo. 1, 22, 23).

¹⁹⁷ Van den Boorn, G.P.F., *The Duties of the Vizier: Civil Administration in the Early New Kingdom* (London, 1988), 74.

¹⁹⁸ Leprohon, "Gatekeepers of This and the Other World", 77.

¹⁹⁹ *Wb I*, 283, 11.

²⁰⁰ Černý, *A Community of workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside period*, 168; Valbelle, *Les ouvriers de la tombe*, 126.

²⁰¹ Ouda, "The statue of 'The Doorkeeper of the Palace' *Pi3y* (Louvre E 124)", 284.

²⁰² Fischer, H. G., "The inscription of *In-it.f*, born of *Tjfi*", *JNES* 19, 4 (1960), 265, n. [o]; Leprohon, "Gatekeepers of This and the Other World", 78.

outside of the house, buying some commodities for the inhabitants, transporting goods to persons living outside the house and doing small reparations.²⁰³

Precautions were further taken in order not to leave the house without being guarded.²⁰⁴ The writer of O. Cairo 25670 asks a female friend or relative to leave *Imn-m-wi3* stay in his house so he can watch it.²⁰⁵

The studied scenes and texts allow more specifications to be added to the information known about doorkeepers. Unofficial documents proved to have been as informative as official ones. In comparison with the information provided by the texts, representations offer a wide spectrum allowing more details to be explained.

The doorkeeper was absent from representations during the Old and the Middle Kingdoms. The only existing three dimensional representations are the Middle Kingdom models encountered in the tomb of *Mkt-R^c*. Whereas all the written sources concerning doorkeepers date to the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Dynasties, representational material mostly date to the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Dynasties; mostly from the Amarna period. The representations depicting doorkeepers all date to the Eighteenth Dynasty, with only two examples dated to the Nineteenth Dynasty.

The occurrence of the motif merely in New Kingdom representations prompts several observations. Unlike other workers and artisans, the doorkeeper's work was in the palace interiors and store rooms which were not subject of depiction before the New Kingdom. The originality of the subject in the New Kingdom renders the doorkeeper's motif an interesting addition to the scene repertoire of daily life activities, this time within the palace.

As for the gestures, the doorkeeper's figures were depicted freely moving, not formalized in any way. The motif is one of the less frequently encountered figures, unconventionally depicted leaning with one leg at the wall behind. The figure did not follow specific seated or standing attitudes, nor was it stylized. The studied scenes allow to conclude that the number of doorkeepers operating in the palace interiors was variable (e.g. figs. 4, 5, 10, 13). In representations depicting the harem interiors every door was being guarded by a doorkeeper (figs. 13, 14a, 14b). The examples depicted are enlightening; the scenes showing the doorkeepers are all depicted in the interior areas.

The doorkeeper was shown in the scenes as an anonymous figure. He was depicted as a small-scaled genre motif; reflecting his duties and his social position. He was in all cases shown in front of, beside or behind the door. His main duty was to guard against unauthorized persons. In the representations concerning palatial contexts and storehouses, there are no guarded stations; rather merely a door marking the entrance where the doorkeeper was usually situated. Female guards were probably assigned to

²⁰³ Janssen, Jac. J., *Village Varia: Ten Studies on the History and Administration of Deir-el-Medina*, EgUit 11 (Leiden, 1997), 55; Goecke-Bauer, "Untersuchungen zu den 'Torwächtern' von Deir el Medine", 142.

²⁰⁴ McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt*, 66.

²⁰⁵ Allam, Sch., *Hieratische Ostraca und Papyri aus der Ramessidenzeit*, Urkunden zum Rechtsleben im Alten Ägypten I (Tübingen, 1973), 67, (34); McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt*, 66.

guard the intimate parts of the royal harem.²⁰⁶ Nevertheless, they do not appear on tomb walls as their male counterparts.

When it comes to the definition of the functions and roles of a workman depending on the various details in pictorial representations, some information may be absent, but may be complemented by the texts. With regard to records on ostraca and papyri, it may be concluded that what the doorkeeper did was possibly just guarding the doorway or occasionally assisting other workmen.²⁰⁷

The stylistic analysis and artistic conventions adopted in picturing the doorkeeper's motif *en miniature* in both models and representations pinpoint his relatively modest role. It is a genre motif visually reflecting social settings *par excellence*. The position of the doorkeeper within the workmen community may be reconstructed by referring to several indices. His poses and attitudes do not point to a high ranked position. He sits on the floor, stands by the door, and just holds a stick or a type of brush for sweeping the floor,²⁰⁸ and only in a few cases, a palette. Besides, he bears no sorts of weapons, yet sometimes keeps a stick nearby.

The duties assigned to doorkeepers could therefore be detected to have been basically the following:

- to ensure watch posts
- to observe limited access
- to ward off undesirable persons

The figure of the doorkeeper remains a code of exceptional representations, unattested before the Amarna period. Bodily movement was deliberately depicted, and the skilfully represented motif enjoyed an obvious freedom in its representation, adding to its charm. The main characteristics of the doorkeepers' representations are the following:

- absence of formalised figures
- freedom of movement
- unrestricted gestures or attitudes
- unformal poses

Concerning their place of residence, it seems probable that doorkeepers remained inactive in their work places when they were freed from work instead of moving back to their houses. Such information should be taken into consideration when reconstructing the doorkeepers' functions related to their figured attitudes. An in depth study of the details makes us wonder whether the dormant representations of doorkeepers were napping while being work-free. Besides, the doorkeeper was occasionally shown angrily provoked by passersby. In the tomb of *Nfr-ḥtp* at Thebes

²⁰⁶ Kanawati, N., "A Female Guard Buried in the Teti Cemetery", BACE 12 (2001), 66, 67.

²⁰⁷ Janssen, *Village Varia*, 55.

²⁰⁸ It is noteworthy that the representation of *P3-ḥr-n-ḥnsw* is one of the cleared depictions of the brush held in his right hand. Guilhou, "Génies funéraires, croquet-mitaines ou anges gardiens ? Étude sur les fouets, balais, palmes et épis en guise de couteaux", 383, fig. 42.

the doorkeeper seems to be chasing away the children attending a garden party with the short stick.²⁰⁹

The representational material including the doorkeeper allow to confirm the information of access barring to the private areas of the royal palace or storage areas. The doorkeeper's presence conveys the information that some people were authorized to enter while others were banned from entry or unauthorized. The representations also allow to conclude that categories of persons that were allowed to have access were the following:

- specific designated officials
- the personnel or servants who were to perform their work
- specific invited guests

The reconstruction of the doorkeeper's duties enables to provide supporting evidence for the interpretation. In figurative documents the studied details highlight the role of the doorkeeper, in addition to the artistic conventions adopted in picturing the motif. Their postures and attitudes would rather be interpreted as aspects of realism, especially that most of the concerned representations date to the Amarna period. Interpreting the iconography and the interplay of motifs in the scenes enable a better understanding of the doorkeeper's role. The studied scenes studied provide conclusive evidence as to the reading of the entire compositions.

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²⁰⁹ Davies, *The tomb of Nefer-hotep at Thebes I*, 25.

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تداخل العناصر التي تعكس مهام حارس البوابة

الشكل والوظيفة

رانيا يونس مرزبان

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المخلص	معلومات المقالة الكلمات المفتاحية
<p>يشكل حراس البوابات جزءً من مجتمع العمال تكاد تكون المعلومات متوفرة عنه بشكل عرضي. وتشير العناصر المصورة لحراس البوابات إلى دورهم في حراسة المكان بأسلوب فعال. وعلى الرغم من أن العناصر المصورة بحجم صغير تبدو وكأنها لا تضيف إلا القليل من المعلومات، إلا أنها تعد ذات قيمة في إضافة معلومات قيمة عن حياة الأفراد. وأحد هذه العناصر هو حارس البوابة والذي كان تصويره لا يتم بغرض إضافة عنصراً زخرفياً، وإنما كان استخدامه له دوراً وظيفياً. إن موضوع البحث الحالي متعلق بتعريف وتتبع ودراسة أوضاع حراس البوابات في المجتمع المصري القديم من خلال تفسير تداخل استخدام العناصر المتعددة في المناظر. وفي هذا السياق فإن الحركات المصورة لحراس البوابات وإيماءاتهم والأدوات الخاصة بهم تعد مصادر قيمة للمعلومات. وبخلاف العمال والحرفيين، فإن عمل حارس البوابة كان يتم داخل القصر وفي المخازن. ونظراً لحدائث الموضوع وإضافته خلال الدولة الحديثة، فإن العنصر المصور لحارس البوابة هو إضافة ملحوظة في المناظر التي تصور أنشطة الحياة اليومية، والتي صورت في تلك الحالة داخل القصر. إن تفسير العناصر الأيكونوجرافية وتداخل استخدام العناصر في المناظر يتيح حتماً فهماً أفضل لدور حارس البوابة.</p>	<p>حراس البوابة؛ العناصر المصورة؛ الواقعية؛ الحركات.</p>
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