


The protection role of the *Iouf* group in the burial chamber in the Valley of the Queens

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Abstract

The tombs in the Valley of the Queens contain many paintings for the gods and goddesses. Most of these paintings are representing the protector gods to protect the deceased from any evils during his afterlife journey.  *Iouf* group was one of these protective groups of gods.


This study focuses on *Iouf* group which aims to illuminate the name, the shape, the roles, and the depictions of this group in the burial chamber in most tombs of the Valley of the Queens, such as in the tombs of Queen Sat Re (QV 38), the wife of Ramses I and Queen Tyti (QV 52), the wife of Rameses III. *Iouf* is a group of protective gods that consists of one monkey and two baboons to protect the deceased. They are also represented in the "Book of the Dead," "The Book of the Two Ways," and "*Imy Duat*".

Keywords: Baboons, God Atum, God Thot, God *hepri*, *Imy-Duat*, *Iouf*, Queen Tyti, The Book of the Dead, The Valley of the Queens.

Introduction

Many deities are responsible for protecting the deceased like goddess Isis, Serket, Neith and by several deities in the form of monkeys and baboons. They participated in the defeat of many enemies like the great serpent Apophis, especially in the Book of Gates.¹

Iouf

 *Iouf* is a group of protective deities for the deceased who were represented in many burial chambers in the tombs of the Valley of the Queens. This group consists of *cercopithecical* monkey and two baboons. This group appeared in many tombs in the Valley of the Queens and in the afterlife books.² (Fig.1)

¹ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, London, 2003, P.221.

² Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage de la Vallée des Reines", *the horizon studies in Egyptology*, volume III, 2009, p.6.



Fig.1: The group of *Iouf*, from the tomb of Sat Re (QV 38).

After : Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage de la Vallée des Reines", *the horizon studies in Egyptology*, volume III, 2009, PL.I.

The name of *Iouf*:

iwf is the body of the Sun-God Atum at night, or the dead body.³ *iwf* appears in the first hour of the book of *Imy-Duat*. It was written as *ifw*, *ifw* or *ifi*, this word does not only mean the body of the sun; but it also means the "soul of the sun god" and the nocturnal sun.⁴

The shape of the *Iouf* group of gods:

Iouf group was represented in the burial chambers in many tombs in the Valley of the Queens, like in the tomb of Queen Tyti (QV 52). It was also represented in some royal sarcophagi at Tanis, some afterlife books such as the "Book of the Dead", "the Book of the Two Ways" and "*Imy Duat*". This group consists of one monkey and two baboons. The monkey is standing in front of them and holding the arrow; his weapon was called "*rwd*", the two baboons are seated and put their hands on their knees while they are looking forward.⁵

The Monkey in Ancient Egypt *gf*, *ky*:

The monkey in hieroglyphs was called *gf* or *ky*.⁶ Ancient Egyptians knew many types of monkeys according to the bones which discovered at

³ Gardiner, Alan, *Egyptian Grammar, being an introduction to the study of Hieroglyphs*, 3rd edition, Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1957, p.618.

⁴ Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p.6.

⁵ Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.1.

⁶ Gardiner, Alan, *Egyptian Grammar*, p. 460.

the animal's cemeteries, but the most famous types of monkeys were the Green Monkey and the Barbary macaque. Both species are descending from the main subfamily of the Old-World Monkeys. They were imported from Northwestern Africa or brought to Egypt as tribute to the Kings of Egypt. The Green Monkey was the most common type of monkeys in Ancient Egypt.⁷

During the Old kingdom, the monkey was not considered sacred, but it was so welcomed as a pet and for amusement. Many scenes showed dwarves holding a monkey.⁸ There is a calcite statue of a seated monkey bearing the name Narmer; it is the oldest example of a monkey from ancient Egypt.⁹ In the Pyramid Texts, it was described as 'red of ear and purple of hindquarters'; this coloration is sometimes applied in representations of the god to express his violent nature.¹⁰

In the Middle Kingdom, the monkey with the arrow was shot a bow on the tail of the serpent *Apophis*, it was mentioned in the "Book of the two ways". (Fig. 2)¹¹ *Apophis* is a symbol of evil powers, who fights against the sun god Re.¹² The monkey was sometimes appeared in the form of a human being with a bow pulling on the tail of a serpent Apophis, accompanied with the four sons of Horus Imset, Hapy, Duamutef and Qebehsenuf.¹³



Fig.2: Apophis, Tomb of Ramses I (KV 16), the Valley of the kings.

After: <https://www.livescience.com/animals/snakes/ancient-egyptian-papyrus-describes-dozens-of-venomous-snakes-including-rare-4-fanged-serpent>

The monkey was also a member of the *Iouf* group which was one of the protector gods in the burial chamber at the Valley of the Queens. The monkey in this group was

⁷ Chris, McIntyre, *Zambia*, Bradt Travel Guides, 2016, p. 511.

⁸ Veronique Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece*, OUP Oxford, Mar 21, 2013, P. 125.

⁹ Jane Roy, *The Politics of Trade: Egypt and Lower Nubia in the 4th Millennium BC*, BRILL, 2011, p. 267.

¹⁰ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, P.196.

¹¹ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p.2.

¹² Lurker, Mnafred, *The gods and symbols of Ancient Egypt*, London, 1980, p. 107.

¹³ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.5.

represented as a monkey with a bow or throwing an arrow. One of God Atum's functions was assumed by the monkey in this group; when the god shot the arrow, it was compared to the sun's rays, which were used by the sun god Atum to fight chaos and enemies.¹⁴ (Fig. 4)

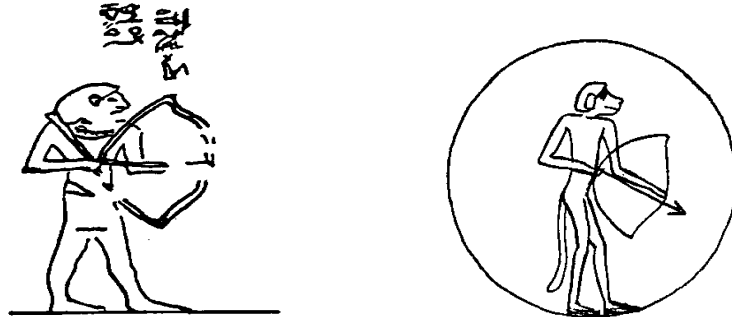


Fig.4: A monkey holding an arrow.

After : Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p. 8.

When the monkey draw with the bow, it means that it takes on the role of Atum as the sun god during the appearance of the sun at the hottest hours of the day, so there is a religious relationship between the monkey and Atum. This monkey and Atum (the archer) in this group were called *Iouf*, which is an alternative name for monkey and Atum. The sun god fights his enemy with the strongest noonday rays. This small monkey was also the symbol of the solar flesh transformation, which would express protection.¹⁵

In the New Kingdom, the monkey replaced Atum in the Heliopolitan Gods. In some texts, this monkey is accompanied by nine squatting monkeys, which are smaller than the other monkeys. This evidence shows that the monkey was considered "the lord of the ennead," like Atum. Among the nine gods, the monkey was a representative of Atum. In the Late period tombs, the name *Iouf* is always reserved for one of the nine monkeys. The monkey was also parallel to God Atum inside the solar disc, as seen in the tomb of Ramses IX (KV6).¹⁶

From the eighteenth Dynasty until the twenty-sixth Dynasty, the monkey played an important role in the solar cult. There is other evidence showing the relationship between *Iouf* and the solar cult, such as his appearance in the first hour and the tenth hour in the book of the *Imy Duat*.¹⁷

The monkey has also been represented in the form of a human with the sun god since the twenty-first Dynasty, which confirms that the monkey replaced the sun god.¹⁸

¹⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Atum als Bogenschütze", *MDIAK* 14, 1957, p. 22.

¹⁵ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.11.

¹⁶ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p.2.

¹⁷ Yoyotte, Jean, Prêtres et sanctuaires du nome héliopolite à la Basse Époque, *BIFAO* 54, 1954, p. 108.

¹⁸ Brunner-Traut, *Contes d'animaux, Ägyptische Tiermärchen*", *ZÄS* 80, 1955, p. 31.

The monkey was considered a symbol of the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. He was associated with many gods, like god Atum, the four sons of Horus, Re, *hpri* beetle and Thot.¹⁹ The monkey replaces the *hpri* beetle as Atum's partner in the "eternal movement" of the solar disc. (Fig.5) Atum, as a nocturnal God, can attribute to himself the functions of *hpri* who creates himself.²⁰



Fig.5: A Monkey being worshipped inside the solar disc.
After : Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p. 3.

The monkey was the master of the underworld ferryboat. The king aspires to this god's power in the afterlife and is associated with the god directly. So, the monkey also replaced the sun in his boat.²¹

The oldest known representations of an archer named Atum date from the thirteenth Dynasty and the Persian period.²² In addition to his solar functions, the monkeys in the Persian era took on the duties of the judge and accompanied Atum in the court of the afterlife; this was depicted on two sarcophagi.²³

This god held several titles, such as the son of Horus and the one who created himself. The title "The Bowstring of the Great in the City" was an expression to describe the monkey who held the arrow during the Ptolemaic period to connect him with the archer-Atum-Monkey. The monkey was represented with a feather on the head during the Ptolemaic period.²⁴

Archaeological attestations of monkeys:

In the Valley of the Kings, there is an animal tomb (KV51) which contains some mummified animals such as monkeys and baboons, most probably dating to the reign of Amenhotep II; they are actually exhibited at the Egyptian Museum. (Fig.6)²⁵

¹⁹ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.6.

²⁰ Myśliwiec, Karol, *Studien zum Gott Atum*, p. 81.

²¹ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p.4.

²² Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p.1.

²³ Maspéro-Gauthier, *Sarcophages de l'époque persane et ptolémaïque*, Cairo, 1914, p. 51.

²⁴ Brunne-Traut, Atum als Bogenschütze, *MDIAK* 14, 1956, p. 22

²⁵ <https://egypt-museum.com/mummy-of-baboon>



Fig.6: An embalméd monkey from the tomb (KV51) in the Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Egyptian Museum CG 29837.

After: www.flickr.com/photos/museumsecrets/5269076899/lightbox/

In the tomb of Ramses IX (KV 6), the monkey is paralleled to the sun god. It appears to worshipping the sun god, especially in the passing hours during the morning and evening.²⁶

There is a graffiti inscription in the Red Mountain near Cairo from the Ramesside period depicting two standing monkeys worshipping at the sides of an obelisk. (Fig.7)²⁷

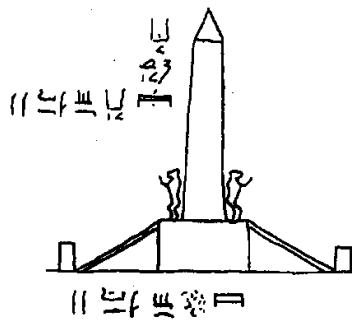


Fig.7: Two worshipping standing monkeys at the side of an obelisk.

After : Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p. 4.

²⁶ Myśliwiec, Karol, *Studien zum Gott Atum*, p. 84

²⁷ Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophagi", P.3.

In the tomb of Sennedjem, the two monkeys are worshipping gods Ra and Ra-horakhty. They are representing the two phases of the sun. They had a divine role and a lot of sun god aspects.²⁸

The monkey was represented over the cosmetic pots,²⁹ like the glazed Kohl vessel from the eighteenth Dynasty, now exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1989.281.101).³⁰



The monkey was represented over the cosmetic pots of the Kohl vessel.

After: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548505>

There are two small statues in the Egyptian Museum made of gilded wood, they represent a doctrine holding an arrow from the eighteenth Dynasty. They were originally inside an obelisk, but they are placed in front of the obelisk. They may have served as amulets. They were also painted in many inscriptions during the Greco-Roman period.³¹

A religious representation of a monkey appeared at the fifth gate of the Book of Gates, in the judgment hall of Osiris. In front of the seated Osiris was a boat with a pig and two monkeys are holding sticks in the boat's front.³²

Monkeys are depicted with arrows in astronomical scenes and writings from the Greco-Roman era. The hottest hours take the form of a monkey. In the temple of Dendara in the time of Tiberius, the diurnal hours are represented by solar boats which transport the solar god to the center of the solar disk. In the Chapel of Osiris, the solar

²⁸ Myśliwiec, Karol, *Studien zum Gott Atum*, p. 88.

²⁹ Barba, Mendoza, *Artifacts from Ancient Egypt*, ABC-CLIO, Oct 5, 2017, p. 17.

³⁰ www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548505


³¹ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.7.

³² Mark Smith, *Following Osiris: Perspectives on the Osirian Afterlife from Four Millennia*, Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 316.

god takes another form every hour, at the seventh hour he appears as a monkey crowned with a solar disc.³³




At Edfu, there is an astronomical frieze from the reign of Ptolemy VII that represents the seventh hour of the day in the form of a monkey shooting an arrow at his head, a scarab. Sometimes the monkey takes the place of the scarab.³⁴

On the ceiling of the Hypostyle at the Temple of Philae during the reign of Ptolemy VII, the seventh hour was depicted in the form of a man with a monkey's head shooting an arc and in the eighth hour shows a god with the head of a monkey.³⁵

In the temple of Hibis, there is a scene of an anthropomorphic god in the form of a human body with a monkey-headed man wearing an apron. The god holds an arrow in his right hand with the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt and a bent bow with an arrow. He is defined by the title as , *Itm hr ib n niwt.f*, "Atum, who resides in his city".³⁶

In a Greco-Roman tomb at Nag Hammadi where goddess Nut was depicted with twelve solar discs–nocturnal hours inside her body, a monkey-archer occupies the tenth disc. So, he is here in the “right” place of Atum. It is evident that a monkey with arrow and bow plays the role of Atum. It plays an important role during the acclamation of the sun.³⁷

The Baboons in Ancient Egypt

In Ancient Egypt, the sacred baboon was called  *i n̄*³⁸, there are other names for baboon like  *n̄*,  *n̄*.³⁹

The most common two kinds of baboons were the Hamadryas Baboon and Anubis Baboon or Olive Baboon.⁴⁰ The Egyptians knew and worshipped the baboons since the pre-dynastic Period. Baboon's skeleton was found in the pre-dynastic royal cemetery at Hierakonpolis.⁴¹

³³ Daressy, "Les formes du soleil aux différentes heures de la journée", *ASAE* 17, p. 200.

³⁴ Brunner-Traut, "Atum als Bogenschütze", *MDIAK* 14, p. 21.

³⁵ Daressy, *ASAE* 17, p. 205.

³⁶ Fekri, Magdi, " Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", p. 9.

³⁷ Myśliwiec, Karol, *Studien zum Gott Atum*, Band I, Die heiligen Tiere des Atum, Hildesheim, 1978, p. 89.

³⁸ Gardiner, Alan Henderson, *Egyptian grammar: being an introduction to the study of hieroglyphs*, Oxford University Press, 1957, p. 461.

³⁹ Faulkner, Raymond, *A concise dictionary of Middle Egyptian*, London, 2017, p. 13.

⁴⁰ William H. Kimbel, Lawrence B. Martin, *Species, Species Concepts and Primate Evolution*, Springer Science & Business Media, 2013, p. 76.

⁴¹ Jane Roy, *The Politics of Trade: Egypt and Lower Nubia in the 4th Millennium BC*, BRILL, 2011, p. 267.

In the Pyramid Texts, the baboons were the powerful guardians of the sky during the Old kingdom. Baboons' appearances in the Pyramid Texts and later in the 'afterlife books' show their importance as a mythological forces in the Egyptian religion, with spells existing both for protection from the god and for the utilization of his powers.⁴²

In the *Imy Duat*, Baboons were the guards who “open the first gate of the *Duat* for the boat of Ra”. Four baboons were also sitting on the corners of the Lake of Fire in the *Duat*. The pool inside the sanctuary of the temple is surrounded on all four sides by fire signs with four baboons on its corners. The baboons guarding the entrance and the lake of fire inside the sanctuary are two of the strongest signs of a deliberate similarity between this temple and the image of the *Duat*.⁴³

In the New Kingdom, baboons had great religious importance. They were represented hundreds of times; some of these scenes related to God Thoth, who was the lord of the moon. The baboon God was known as the god of writing and wisdom (Fig.8).⁴⁴



Fig.8: God Thoth in the form of Baboon

After: Gahlin, Lucia, *Gods, and religion of Ancient Egypt*, London, 2011, p. 116.

He took the specific role of recorder of the judgments in the court. The deceased took his power from the power of Baboon. In addition to his duties as judge, he accompanies Atum in the court of the afterlife. (Fig.9)

He was described as the heart or the tongue of Re. He was also the protector of the deceased against evils in the afterlife. The baboon shaped amulets demonstrate that the god's power was required both in life and in the afterlife.⁴⁵

⁴² Fekri, Magdi, "Les protecteurs du défunt dans la salle sarcophage", P.5.

⁴³ Ramzy, Nelly, The genius loci at the great temple of Abu Simbel: hermeneutic reading in the architectural language of ancient Egyptian temples of Ramses II in Nubia, *Journal of Ancient History and Archeology*, 2015, p. 48.

⁴⁴ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, p. 215.

⁴⁵ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, p. 216.



Fig.9: The court of the afterlife, the baboon–God, the book of the dead.

After: Scalf, Foy, *Book of the dead*, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2017, pl. III.

In the Book of the Dead, the deceased seeks to become identified with baboons in the process of his transformation into an eternal son of Osiris. They were usually associated with the penis and were portrayed as male baboons with a prominent sexual member.

The behavior of the god is often aggressive, so he is sometimes identified with Seth, the god of chaos and destruction. Despite Baboon's vicious nature, his great power could be used against snakes and other harmful creatures to control their danger.⁴⁶ Baboons are always facing the rising sun to welcome the sun, so they are connected with Ra. Many Egyptian texts link monkeys to Ra, for example, in the Egyptian Book of the Dead.⁴⁷ (Fig.10) (Fig.11)



Fig.10: The sun is greeted by the deities and baboons.

After: Vernus, Pascal, *The gods of Ancient Egypt*, Tauris, 1998, p. 145.

⁴⁶ Wilkinson, Richard H., *The Complete Gods and Goddesses*, P.216.

⁴⁷ Vannini, Sandro, Mysteries of Ancient Egypt's sacred Baboons revealed, *Scientific American*, 2021, p. 50



Fig.11: The sun is greeted by a group of baboons, papyrus of Userhat.

After: Taylor, John, *Spells for eternity*, London, 2010, p. 114.

Archaeological attestations of baboons:

The Baboon was represented in statues, amulets, and scenes as decorations for religious or daily life purposes. There is a scene for the Anubis baboon from the tomb of Tepemankh at Saqqare from the Old kingdom.⁴⁸

They were also represented in many scenes on the walls of Deir El Bahari temple while they were in the sailing boat arriving from Punt to Thebes as a tribute.⁴⁹

There are twenty-two baboons decorating the frieze of the entrance of Abu Simbel temple, but only twelve remained.⁵⁰ The baboons are usually standing under the obelisks like the Luxor temple to welcome the sun.⁵¹ (Fig.12)



Fig.12: The baboons welcoming the sun.

(After: <https://www.alamy.com/egypt-luxor-luxor-temple-baboons-at-the-base-of-the-obelisk-image396672344.html>)

⁴⁸ William Charles Osman Hill, *Primates: comparative anatomy and taxonomy, Volume 8*, University Press, 1953, p. 8.

⁴⁹ Frederick Monderson, *Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir El Bahari*, AuthorHouse, 2007, p. 33.

⁵⁰ Solleh, Kumba, *The Damby Tradition of the Kone People of Sierra Leone West Africa*, AuthorHouse, 2011, p. 213.

⁵¹ <https://www.alamy.com/egypt-luxor-luxor-temple-baboons-at-the-base-of-the-obelisk-image396672344.html>

On the walls of the tombs of the Valley of the Queens, the Baboon sometimes holds knife to protect the deceased from evils in the form of man with a baboon head, such as in the tomb of prince Khaemwaset (QV 44). (Fig.13)⁵²



Fig.13: The baboons as protectors of the deceased.

The Valley of the Queen, Khaemwaset tomb (Qv 44)

Conclusion

The *Iouf* group of gods is one of the most important groups of gods who help the deceased face the evils and enemies during his afterlife. In some tombs in the Valley of the Queens, there are many representations of the *Iouf* group, such as the tomb of Tyti (QV 52).

Monkeys and baboons were used for protection purposes from pre-history until the Greco-Roman period; their importance appeared through their roles, monuments, amulets, inscriptions, and mummies.

From the forms and the roles, the reason for representing these gods in the burial chamber of the deceased were appeared. The monkey who is holding the arrow to fight the enemies of the deceased, is considered here as the god Ra with his hot rays during the fighting of his enemies. The baboon is also the sign of protection for the deceased because of his aggressiveness and power. His relationship with the sun god Ra, gives the power and protection for the deceased.

⁵² Eric H. Cline, David B. O'Connor, *Thutmose III: A New Biography*, University of Michigan Press, 2006, p. 321.

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- <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548505>
- www.flickr.com/photos/museumsecrets/5269076899/lightbox/
- www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548505

دور مجموعة الايوف في حماية المتوفى في غرفة الدفن في وادي الملكات

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الملخص

تعتبر مجموعة آلهة إيوف من أهم مجموعات الآلهة التي تساعد الميت على مواجهة الشرور والأعداء خلال حياته الآخرة. وفي بعض المقابر بوادي الملكات يوجد تمثيلات كثيرة لمجموعة اليووف مثل مقبرة تيتي (QV 52).

تم استخدام القروود والبابون لأغراض الحماية منذ عصور ما قبل التاريخ وحتى العصر اليوناني الروماني؛ وظهرت أهميتهم من خلال أدوارهم وأثارهم وتمائمهم ونقوشهم وموميواتهم. ومن الأشكال والأدوار ظهر سبب تمثيل هذه الآلهة في حجرة دفن المتوفى. القرد الذي يحمل السهم لمحاربة أعداء المتوفى، يعتبر هنا الإله رع بأشعته الساخنة أثناء قتال أعدائه. كما يعتبر البابون علامة حماية للمتوفى بسبب عدوانيته وقوته. علاقته بإله الشمس رع تعطي القوة والحماية للمتوفى.

الكلمات الدالة: قرد البابون، الإله أتوم، الإله تحوت، الإله خبر، كتاب الايمي نوات، ايوف، الملكة تيتي، كتاب الموتى، وادي الملكات.