

MONKEYS AND CHARIOTS: OBSERVATIONS ON A “SATIRICAL” PRODUCTION FROM DEIR EL-MEDINA AND ELSEWHERE

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ABSTRACT

Beginning in the second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty, a well-known corpus of small figurines are attested that depict monkeys imitating various human activities such as playing music, dancing or driving a chariot. Of these, a special subcorpus of figurines depicting monkeys driving chariots derives predominately from the village of Deir el-Medina. This subcorpus includes a total of thirty figurines, dating from the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the Ramesside period. The purpose of this paper is to present this subcorpus, which has been gathered as part of a doctoral thesis entitled “The Chariot in the Egyptian Mind”. Among the thirty collected figurines, variations are attested, from carefully worked and painted miniature sculptures to rough – and sometimes unfinished – two-faced *bas-reliefs*. Iconographic variants show one or several monkeys on the chariot, the vehicle itself being pulled by horses, lions or dogs. Those figurines can be compared with some figured satirical ostraca from Deir el-Medina and of course with the so-called “erotic” papyrus of Turin. These comparisons allow the “satirical” nature of the figurines to be discussed, as they are in many cases likely mocking the social elites of Egypt – and even in some cases Pharaoh himself –, but in other cases are clearly a kind of toy, given that they were designed to be equipped with small wheels and a pulling string. The paper concludes with reflections on what this production implies about the significance of the chariot in the Ramesside Egyptian mind.

¹ I would like to thank the Organizational Committee of the Deir el-Medina Workshop who accepted my poster presentation at the conference. I am also grateful to Jonathan Maître and Marie-Lys Arnette for their useful comments and remarks, as well as to Todd Gillen for improving the English.

1. INTRODUCTION

Among the archives of Bernard Bruyère that have been made available recently via the IFAO website,² one can find many pages illustrated with sketches from the spruce and skillful hand of the French scholar. Bruyère reproduced in drawings many of the artifacts he found on the site, including some of the tiniest discoveries, and annotated the sketches with relevant information such as colour remains or measurements. The purpose of those drawings was to prepare the material for publication in the well-known series of the *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh*, edited by the IFAO in the DFIFAO collection. In order to offer more than a simple excavation report, Bruyère catalogued many artifacts or inscriptions and often structured them thematically, grouping sketches on the same plates, and consequently produced a very useful tool for the Egyptological community.

In one of Bruyère's notebooks, there is a double page covered with sketches depicting monkeys imitating various human activities [Fig. 1].³ This kind of humorous iconography is well known from ancient Egypt, with examples dating back to the beginning of the Pharaonic period.⁴ Monkeys were considered to be amusing and intelligent animals, and are well attested as being entertaining pets for the social elite, along with cats and dogs.⁵ Small figurines depicting monkeys are especially well-known during the time of Amenhotep III and later in the Ramesside Period: among other activities, dancing or playing music are very common.⁶ They are often used to decorate toiletry items such as kohl pots.⁷ However, as I was especially interested in chariots during my doctoral research, I will focus in this paper on a small sub-corpus of those 'monkey figurines', and therefore only on the lower part of Bruyère's double-page quoted above.⁸

² Larcher, *Les Nouvelles de l'archéologie* 145 (2016), p. 52; Larcher, in Gaber et al. (eds.), *À l'œuvre on connaît l'artisan...*, 2017, pp. 325–45.

³ Archives Bruyère online, *Cahier DEM* 4, 1947–1948, p. 18, cf. http://www.IFAO.egnet.net/bases/archives/bruyere/?id=MS_2004_0164_038 (accessed on 17.04.2021). Only the lower part of the right page is studied further in this paper.

⁴ See recently Maître, *Egypte* 89 (2018), including some of the main bibliographical references on the topic.

⁵ Vandier d'Abbadie, *RdE* 16 (1964); Vandier d'Abbadie, *RdE* 17 (1965); Vandier d'Abbadie, *RdE* 18 (1966).

⁶ See for example Kemp and Stevens, *Busy Lives at Amarna*, 2010, pp. 230–34; Greenlaw, *Representation*, 2011, pp. 23–27.

⁷ Guichard (ed.), *Des animaux et des pharaons*, 2014, pp. 173–77.

⁸ This paper is a revised part of my PhD in Egyptology completed under the supervision of Dr Luc Gabolde and defended on December 9th, 2017 in Paul Valéry-Montpellier 3 University. For the original and unpublished version, see Pietri, "Le char dans la pensée égyptienne", I, 2017, pp. 323–32; II, 2017, pp. 679–721.

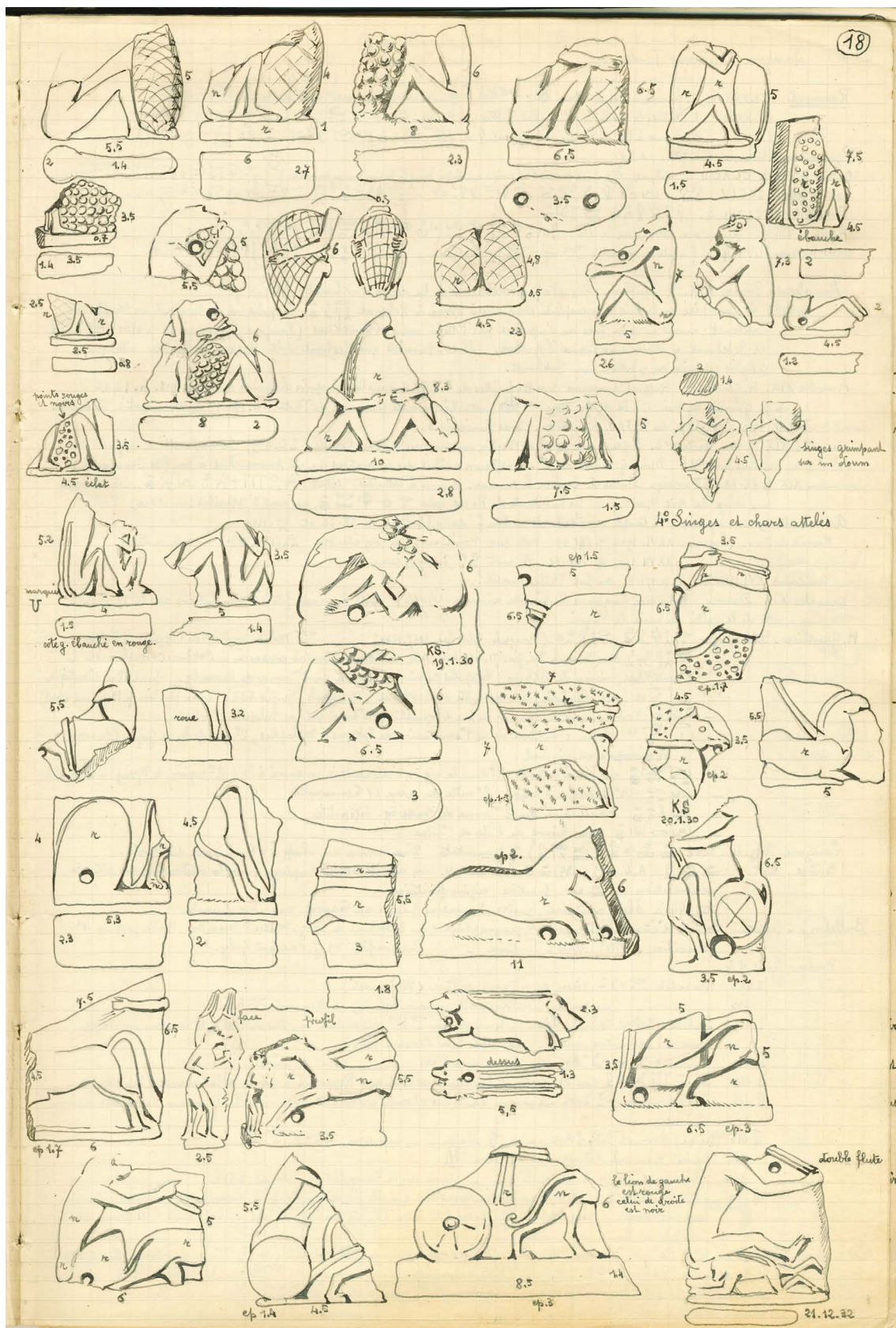


Fig. 1 Sketches by Bruyère depicting monkeys figurine (Photo by Archives Bruyère, MS_2004_0164_038, IFAO)

2. “MONKEYS DRIVING CHARIOTS” FIGURINES: THE CORPUS

The lower part of the second page mentioned is indeed dedicated to a particular iconographic motif: “monkeys driving chariots”. This part of the plate comprises a total of nineteen sketched artifacts and is entitled by Bruyère “Singes et chars attelés”. Some of them were drawn from several points of view, and all were captioned with colour and measurement indications.⁹ These figurines remain still unpublished, with the exception of a quick mention by Bruyère in one of his *Rapports*, where he writes that they were found in the so-called “Grand Puits” of Deir el-Medina.¹⁰ As with the majority of the archaeological remains discovered in the “Grand Puits”, the figurines were likely thrown there as garbage during the Ptolemaic period.¹¹

Fortunately, Bruyère’s hand and comments are precise enough to provide substantial information and allow us to make a small survey of the subcorpus, re-drawing his sketches as clear vector line drawings. However, Bruyère frequently drew only one side view of each artifact.¹²

The location of the nineteen figurines sketched by Bruyère was unknown until Spring 2021, when I was eventually able to locate a number in Deir el-Medina site storeroom M 25. These were documented, inventoried and photographed, and the new data collected were added to the previous notes by Bruyère to produce the following catalogue.¹³ Two previously unknown figurines (#20 and #21), absent from Bruyère’s notebooks, were also discovered in the same storeroom, and therefore added to the corpus. For convenience, each figurine is given here with an identification number (with the format #XX).¹⁴

⁹ R = rouge (red); N = noir (black); B = blanc (white). All dimensions given by Bruyère are in centimeters.

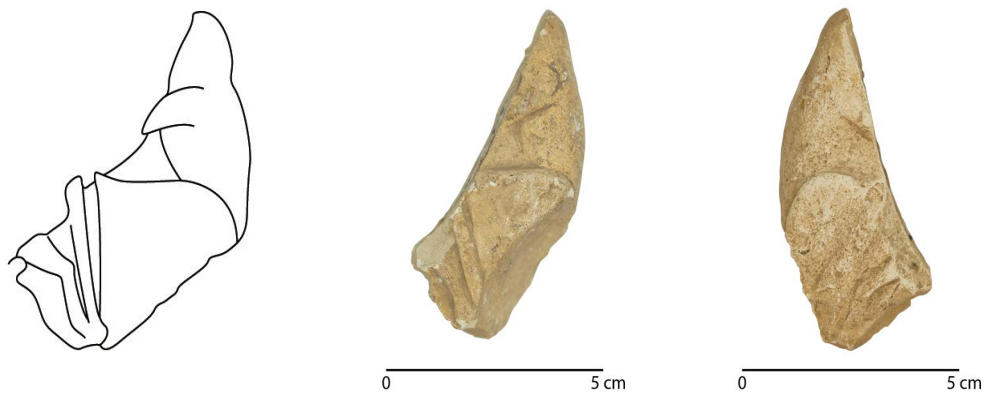
¹⁰ Bruyère, *Rapport*, 1953, p. 37, without any other indication. See however the particular cases of figurine #16 (or #18) and #30 in the list.

¹¹ For a recent discussion on the “Grands Puits” of Deir el-Medina and previous bibliographical references, see now Driaux, *BIFAO* 111 (2011).

¹² Side views indicated in the following catalogue are from the charioteer’s point of view.

¹³ I would like to thank here Cédric Larcher, director of the Deir el-Medina mission, for permission to publish the Deir el-Medina material (re-)discovered in storeroom M 25.

¹⁴ Dimensions are all given in centimeters as follows: H(eight) x W(idth) x Th(ickness). Unfortunately, some of these were not recorded by Bruyère. Dimensions from Bruyère are given first, followed when possible by dimensions recorded in 2021 at Deir el-Medina; the latter are written in italics. In the descriptions, ‘right’ and ‘left’ refer to the charioteer’s point of view.



Figs. 2a-c “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #1. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0047 (Photo by IFAO).

#1 [Figs. 2a-c]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M_25_0047

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x ? x ? / 5.5 x 3.8 x 2.3

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the left side was drawn by Bruyère. The upper part of the monkey-charioteer, the upper part of the chariot’s body and the rear of the horses are preserved, on both sides. One can still note, under the rear part of the horses, the starting point of a small perforation, which is only visible on Bruyère’s drawing. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains, and indeed no colour could be observed.

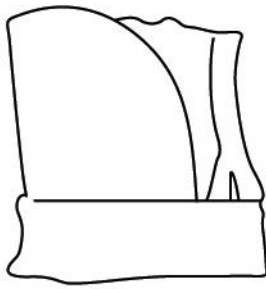


Fig. 3 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #2.

#2 [Fig. 3]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

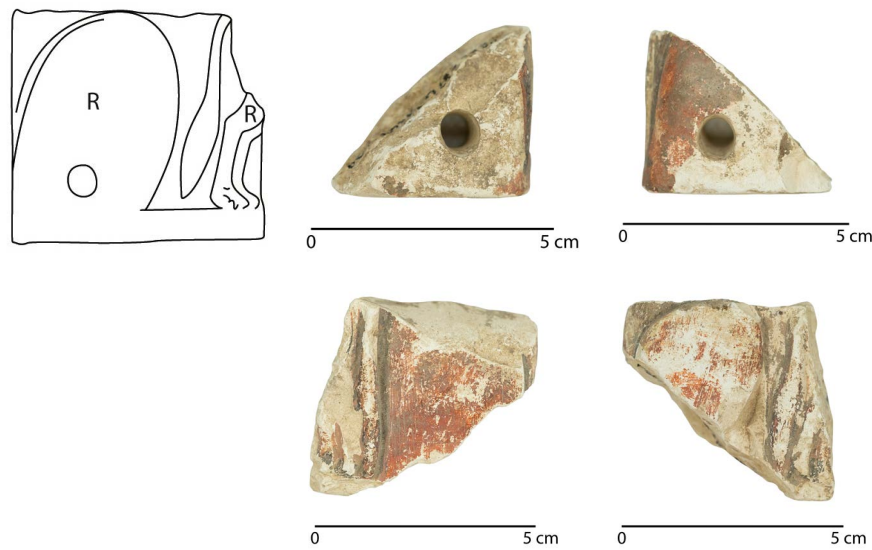
Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 3.2 x ? x ?

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. A (reversed ?) chariot’s body or wheel, and what seems to be the tail of a pulling animal (a horse ?) are still preserved, lying on a kind of rectangular base. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains.



Figs. 4a-e “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #3. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0050+DeM_2021_M25_0051 (Photo by IFAO).

#3 [Figs. 4a-e]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0050+DeM_2021_M25_0051¹⁵

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

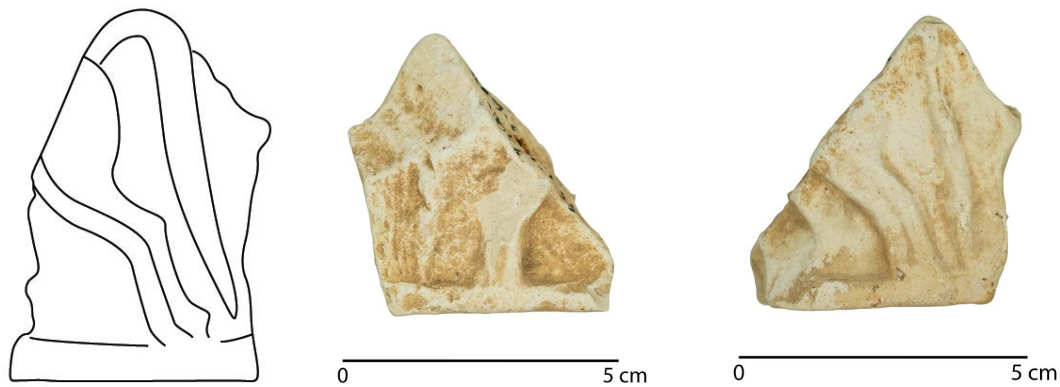
Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 4 x 5.3 x 2.3 / 4,8 x 5 x 2.4

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side and the underside of the base were drawn by Bruyère. On both sides, the wheel and the rear part of the pulling animal – a horse ? – are still preserved, lying on a kind of rectangular base. The wheel and the rear part of the pulling animals were painted in red, according to Bruyère’s captions; the colour is still preserved. A small hole was pierced in the lower part of the vehicle’s wheel.

¹⁵ The fragment was broken after Bruyère’s drawing.



Figs. 5a-c “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #4. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0046 (Photo by IFAO).

#4 [Figs. 5a-c]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0046

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 4.5 x ? x 2 / 4.5 x 3.7 x 2

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the left side was drawn by Bruyère. On both sides, the rear part of a running horse is still preserved, lying on a kind of rectangular base. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains, and no colour could be observed.

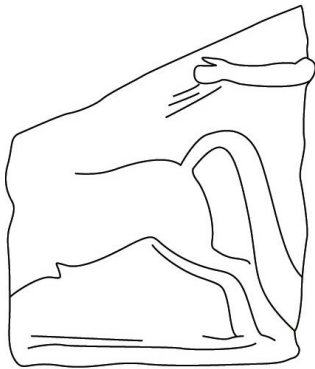


Fig. 6 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #5.

#5 [Fig. 6]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6.5 x 7.5 x 1.7

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the left side was drawn by Bruyère. The major part of a running horse and the arm of a charioteer holding reins are still preserved. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains.

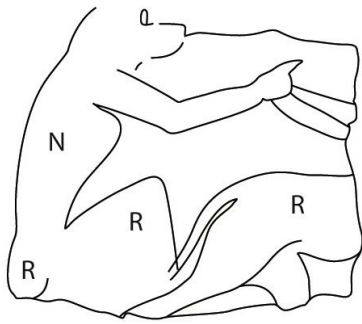


Fig. 7 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #6.

#6 [Fig. 7]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5 x 6 x ?

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. A monkey-charioteer holding reins, the upper part of the body of the chariot and the rear part of a lion pulling the vehicle, are still preserved. According to Bruyère’s captions, the monkey’s body was painted in black, while the upper part of the vehicle as well as the rear part of the lion were painted in red. A small hole was pierced in the lower part of the vehicle’s body.

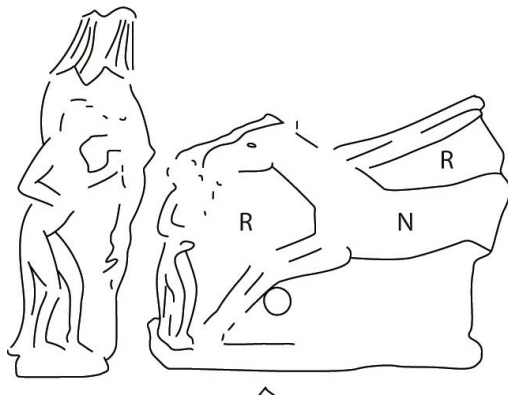


Fig. 8 "Monkey driving chariot" figurine #7.

#7 [Fig. 8]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 3.5 (?)¹⁶ x 2.5

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: The left side and a front view were drawn by Bruyère. On the left side, the major part of a running horse and the charioteer's reins are still preserved. The front side depicts a standing monkey looking to the right. According to Bruyère's captions, the horse's body was painted in black and at least part of the background was painted in red. A small hole was pierced under the forelegs of the horse.

¹⁶ Bruyère's indications seems to be erroneous here. According with his drawing, the width should be around 6.5-7 cm, not 3.5.

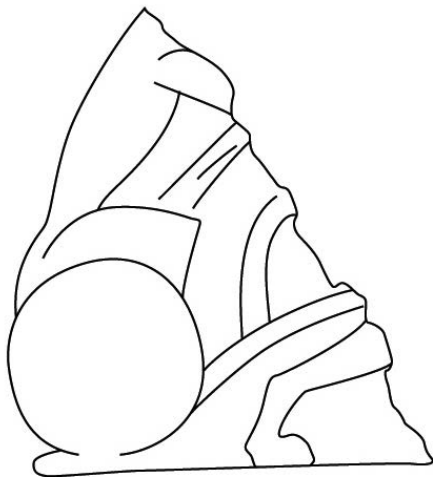


Fig. 9 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #8.

#8 [Fig. 9]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 4.5 x 1.4

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. The rear part of the charioteer monkey standing in the chariot’s body, the wheel and the pole of the vehicle, and the rear part of a lion are still preserved. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains.



Figs. 10a-c “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #9. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0048 (Photo by IFAO).

#9 [Figs. 10a-c]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0048

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 3 x 1.8 / 5.5 x 4 x 1.8

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: The right side and the underside were drawn by Bruyère. On both sides, a part of a running horse’s body and reins are still preserved. According to Bruyère’s captions, both reins and the horse’s body were painted in red, and the background under the horse’s belly was painted in white. Black and red traces can still be observed on both sides.

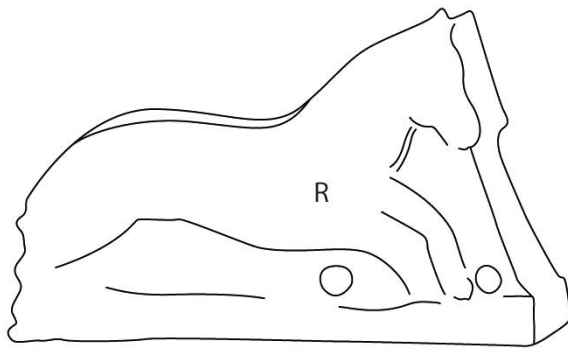


Fig. 11 "Monkey driving chariot" figurine #10.

#10 [Fig. 11]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6 x 11 x ?

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. The major part of a running horse is preserved, and it is also possible to see the shape of a second horse, depicted on the left side. According to Bruyère's captions, the horse on the right side was painted in red. Two holes were pierced on both sides of the forelegs of the horse.

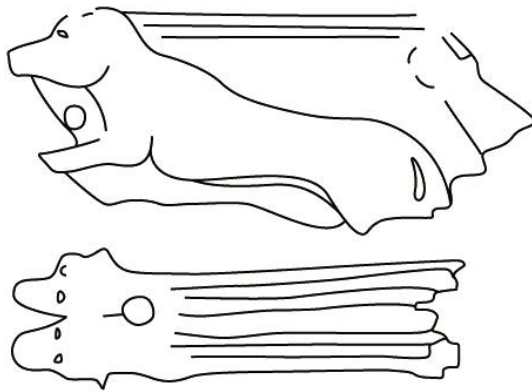


Fig. 12 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #11.

#11 [Fig. 12]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

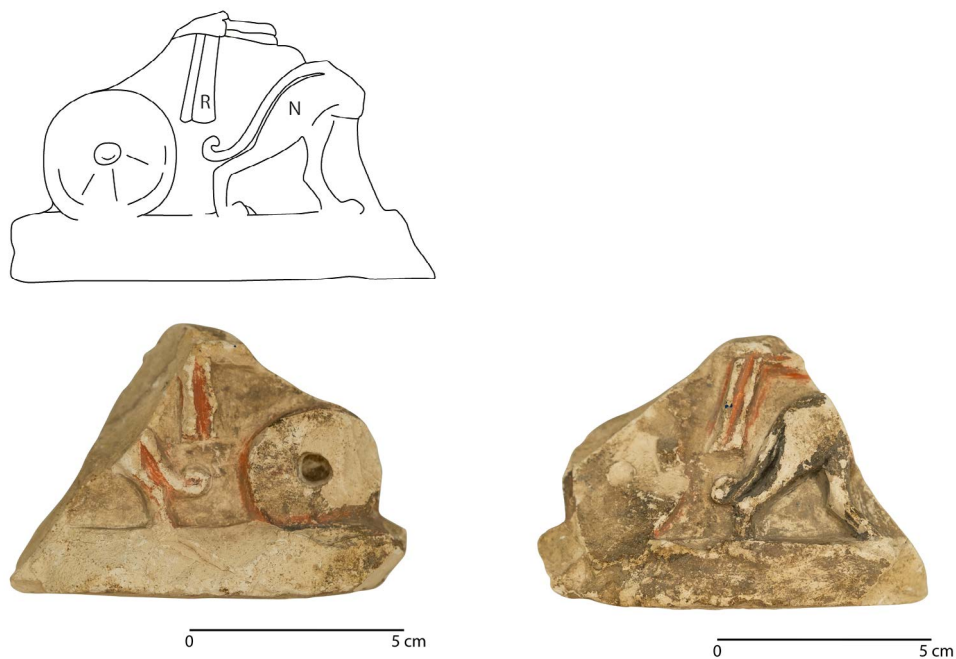
Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 2.3 x 5.5 x 1.3

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: The right side and the top were drawn by Bruyère. On the right side, a running animal (probably a dog?) and reins are still preserved. The top view shows the two pulling animals and their associated pairs of reins. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains. A hole was pierced just under the heads of the dogs, and the top view shows another piercing between the dogs’ necks.



Figs. 13a-c “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #12. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0044 (Photo by IFAO).

#12 [Figs. 13a-c]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0044

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6 x 8.5 x 3 / 6 x 8.5 x 3

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. On both sides, the wheel of a vehicle, the hand of a charioteer holding reins and the rear part of the pulling lion are still preserved, lying on a sort of rectangular base. According to Bruyère’s captions, the reins were painted in red and the lion’s body was painted in black, and the “lion on the left (side) is red”. Indeed, those colours can still be observed on the object.

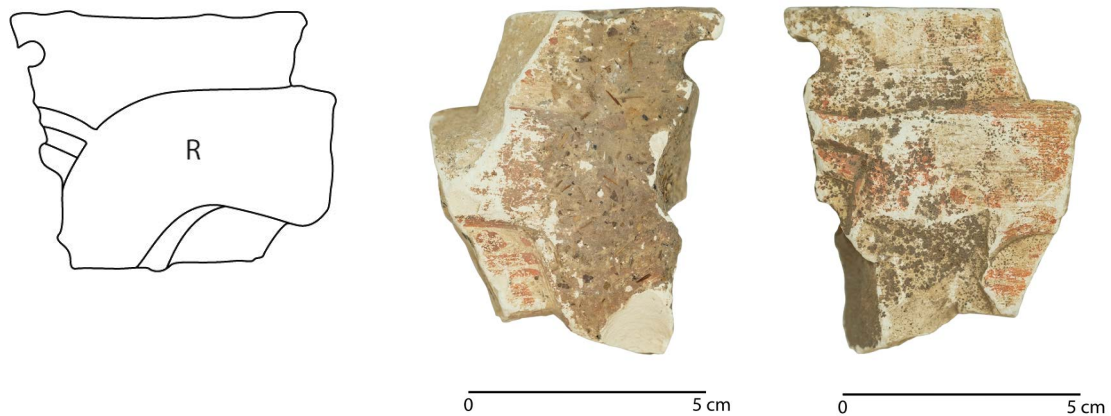


Fig. 14a-c “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #13. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0045 (Photo by IFAO).

#13 [Figs. 14a-c]

Current location and inventory number: DeM_2021_M25_0045

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6.5 x 5 x 1.5 / 6.7 x 5 x 2.5

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. On both sides, the upper rear part of two running animals is still preserved, including the starting point of the tails. According to Bruyère’s captions, the animal bodies were painted in red; the colour is still present on both sides. The starting point of a small hole piercing is still visible, just above the animal tails.

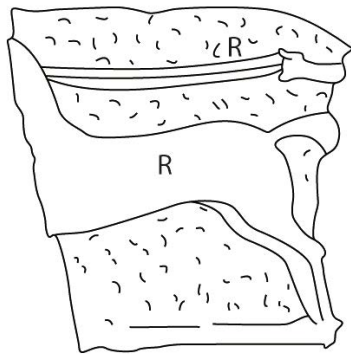


Fig. 15 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #14.

#14 [Fig. 15]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 7 x 7 x 1.5

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the left side was drawn by Bruyère. The arm of a charioteer holding reins and almost the complete horse pulling the lost vehicle are preserved. According to Bruyère’s captions, the reins and horse’s body were painted in red. The background was decorated with some kind of spotted pattern.

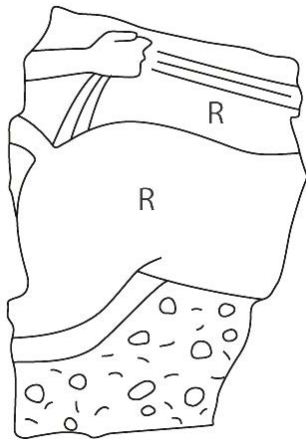


Fig. 16 "Monkey driving chariot" figurine #15.

#15 [Fig. 16]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6.5 x 3.5 x 1.7

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. The hand of a charioteer holding reins and the rear part of a running horse are still preserved. According to Bruyère's captions, the reins and the horse's body were painted in red. The background under the horse's belly was decorated with some kind of spotted pattern.

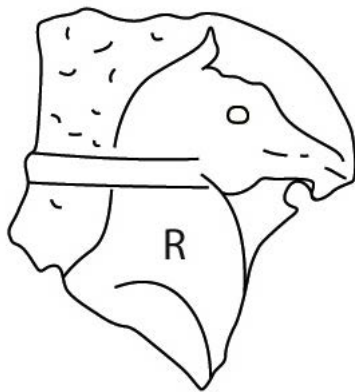


Fig. 17 "Monkey driving chariot" figurine #16.

#16 [Fig. 17]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina, Kom in the southern part of the village, 20.01.1930¹⁷

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 3.5 x 4.5 x 2

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. The head and the neck of a horse and part of the reins are still preserved. According to Bruyère's captions, the horse was painted in red. The background above the horse's head was decorated with some kind of spotted pattern. The starting point of a hole, pierced just under the horse's mouth, is still visible.

¹⁷ According to the handwritten caption by Bruyère ("KS 20.1.30"). Numbers indicate the date of the discovery. Actually, it is not clear if this caption refers to number #16 or #18 of our list. Note that this figurine was discovered in another location, not in the 'Grand Puits' like the others.

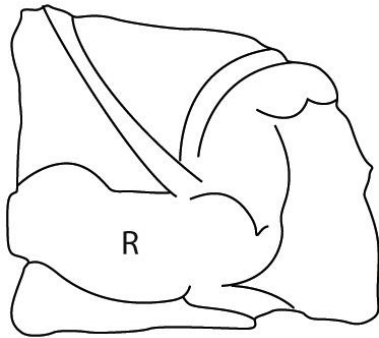


Fig. 18 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #17.

#17 [Fig. 18]¹⁸

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 5 x ?

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. Reins and the main part of a running horse are still preserved. According to Bruyère’s captions, the horse was painted in red.

18 Figurine #17 is very similar to #30, now in the Musée du Louvre, and might actually be the same figurine. However, this would mean substantial errors in the sketches by Bruyère as there are also differences between his two sketches. Moreover, the lack of indications of colour for the background on the sketch of figurine #17 and the absence of the precision of the findspot known in the case of #30, as it is written for #16 (or #18), seems to prove that #17 and #30 are two different objects.

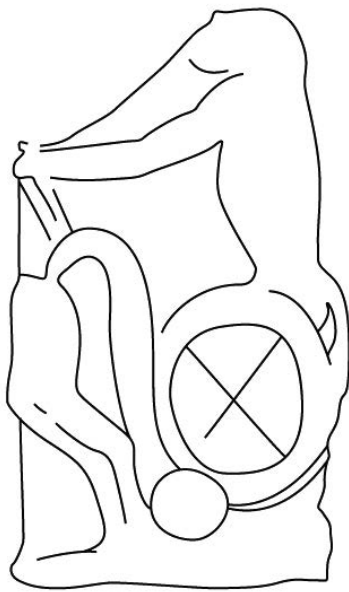


Fig. 19 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #18.

#18 [Fig. 19]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6.5 x 3.5 x 2

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the left part was drawn by Bruyère. The monkey charioteer holding reins, the wheel of the vehicle — the body is absent — and the rear part of a running horse are still preserved. Bruyère did not indicate any colour remains. A hole, pierced under the wheel of the vehicle, is still visible.

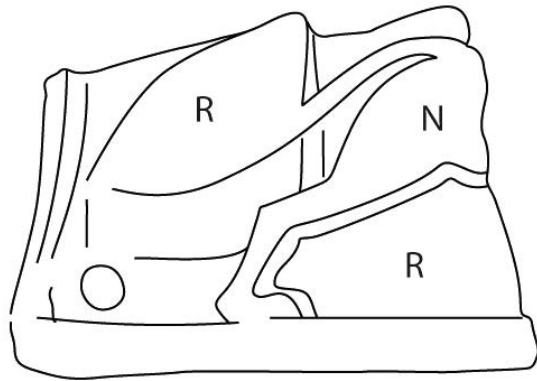


Fig. 20 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #19.

#19 [Fig. 20]

Current location and inventory number: Unknown

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

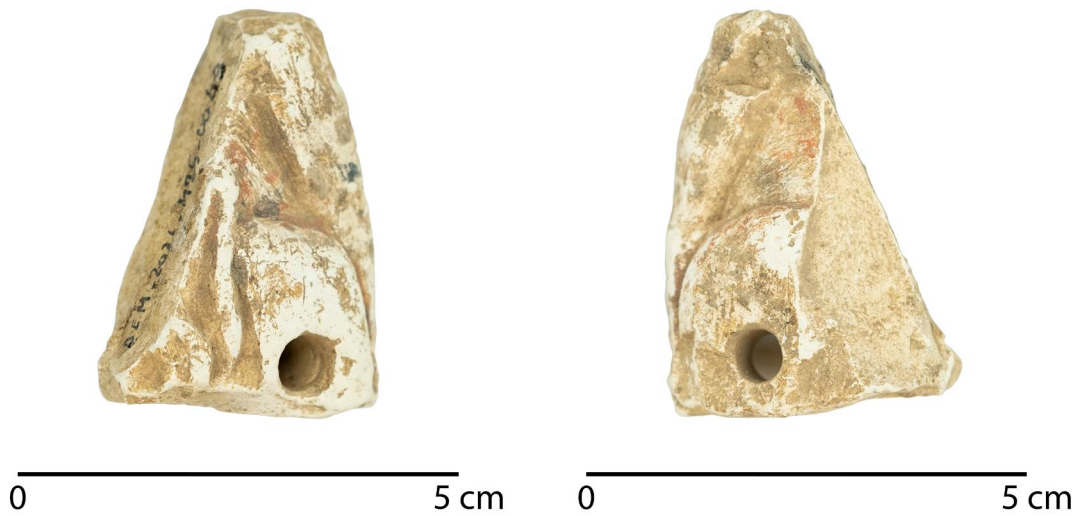
Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5 x 6.5 x 3 (approximately)

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: Only the right side was drawn by Bruyère. The chariot’s body and the rear part of a lion are still preserved, lying on a kind of rectangular base. According to Bruyère’s captions, the vehicle and the background under the lion were painted in red, the lion itself was painted in black. A small hole, pierced under the chariot’s body, is still visible.



Figs. 21a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #20. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0049 (Photo by IFAO).

#20 [Figs. 21a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0049

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

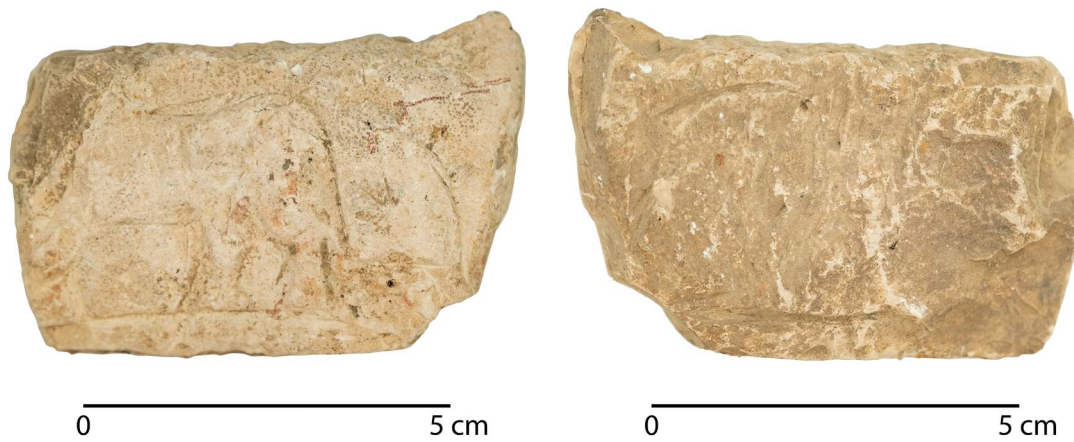
Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 4.2 x 3.4 x 2.2

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: This figurine was not drawn by Bruyère. Both sides depict a charioteer monkey driving a chariot, of whom only the body is preserved. On the left side, the rear part of a horse is also still visible. A hole was pierced in the lower part of the chariot’s body. Black and red traces are still visible on both sides.



Figs. 22a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #21. Deir el-Medina, DeM_2021_M25_0052 (Photo by IFAO).

#21 [Figs. 22a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Deir el-Medina, site storeroom M 25, DeM_2021_M25_0052

Findspot: Deir el-Medina

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: 4.5 x 6.5 x 2

Bibliography: Unpublished

Short description: This figurine was not drawn by Bruyère. It is an unfinished figurine: on the left side only, preliminary lines are engraved in the stone, depicting a chariot pulled by two horses. The reins are slightly visible above the animals, and the rear part of the stone might be the depiction of the charioteer as a monkey.

Beside those twenty-one figurines from Deir el-Medina, it is possible to add nine other examples of similar objects, kept in several museum collections around the world.



Figs. 23a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #22. Bruxelles, Musées Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, E. 07414 (Photo by MRAH).

#22 [Fig. 23a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Bruxelles, Musées Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, E. 07414

Findspot: Amarna¹⁹

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 6.6. x 2 x 2 (approximately)

Bibliography: Unpublished²⁰

Short description: Only the rear part of this sculpted figurine is preserved. A group of at least three monkeys are depicted in the body of a chariot; one is driving the vehicle and holding reins, with the others stand behind him. The wheel of the vehicle and what seems to be a tiny fragment of the pulling animals are still partly preserved. The figurine ends in its lower part in a kind of rectangular base, pierced with a small hole.

¹⁹ Following information given on the MRAH online database, see <https://www.carmentis.be:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=84471&viewType=detailView> (accessed on 14.07.2020).

²⁰ See note 15 above.



Fig. 24 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #23. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 53021
(Photo by Global Egyptian Museum/Egyptian Museum, Cairo).

#23 [Fig. 24]

Current location and inventory number:

Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 53021

Findspot: Amarna

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Painted limestone and wood

Dimensions: 6 x 10.5 (approximately)

Bibliography: Frankfort and Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten II*, 1933, pp. 34, 99, pl. 31, 4; Houlihan, *Wit and Humour*, 2001, p. 64, fig. 58; Greenlaw, *Representation*, 2011, pp. 25–26; Marshall, *Être un enfant*, 2013, p. 154, pl. LVII, 93²¹

Short description: The complete figurine is preserved. It depicts two monkeys in a chariot, pulled by two others monkeys trampling a fifth one. The scene takes place on a kind of rectangular base with two pierced small holes. Through the holes, wooden miniature axles were fitted in order to add miniature wheels in limestone, which can be used to set the figurine in motion. Monkeys were painted in green and red, both colours being used also for the details of the vehicle and the wheels.

²¹ See also the online entry in the Global Egyptian Museum : <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=15587> (accessed on 14.07.2020).



Figs. 25a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #24. Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, E.GA.4595.1943 (Photo by The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge).

#24 [Figs. 25a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, inv. n° E.GA.4595.1943

Findspot: Unknown

Date: New Kingdom

Material: Painted limestone and painted Egyptian faience

Dimensions: 5.5 x 7 (approximately)

Bibliography: Brunner-Traut, ZÄS 80 (1955), pp. 23–24; Marshall, *Être un enfant*, 2013, p. 154, pl. LVII, 94²²

Short description: Both sides of this small limestone plate were decorated with a scene in low relief, depicting a monkey standing in chariot, holding reins to drive the vehicle pulled by horses. Only the head and the rear part of the monkey charioteer are missing. Two holes have been pierced at both ends of the figurine, in order to add “Egyptian faience” miniature wheels. One of the four original wheels is preserved, including the painted details depicting the wheel rim and spokes.²³

²² See also on the Fitzwilliam Museum of Cambridge new online collection database (beta version): <https://collection.beta.fitz.ms/id/object/59047> (accessed on 12.04.2021).

²³ One can notice that seven spokes were drawn, a very uncommon number which might betray some negligence on the part of the craftsman who made the figurine.



Figs. 26a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #25. Liverpool, National Museums (World Museum), inv. n° 1973.2.316 (Photo courtesy of National Museums Liverpool – World Museum)

#25 [Figs. 26a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Liverpool, National Museums (World Museum), inv. n° 1973.2.316²⁴

Findspot: Amarna (?)²⁵

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 8 x 7 x 1

Bibliography: Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian Antiquities*, 1986, p. 28

Short description: The rear part of the figurine is lost. The remaining part depicts on both sides, in low relief and partly sculpted in the round, a harnessed horse with reins. The figurine was pierced twice at the front of the horses and was originally painted – some traces are still visible.

²⁴ I would like to thank Ashley Cooke, Head of Antiquities and Curator of Egyptology, National Museums Liverpool, World Museum, who kindly gave me authorization to publish the two objects of the Liverpool collection, including pictures.

²⁵ Former Henry Wellcome collection, collected before 1936, assumed to be from Amarna but without any evidence to prove it. However, the object was acquired by the Liverpool World Museum together with other artifacts from Amarna. I am indebted to Marion Servat-Fredericq, Project Assistant Curator (Antiquities) in the Liverpool World Museum, for this information. See also on this object the Liverpool National Museums online database: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/horse-and-chariot-figure> (accessed on 14.04.2021).



Figs. 27a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #26. Liverpool, National Museums (World Museum), inv. n° 56.21.852 (Photo courtesy of National Museums Liverpool – World Museum).

#26 [Fig. 27a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

Liverpool, National Museums (World Museum), inv. n° 56.21.852

Findspot: Amarna, North Suburb, House n°. T.35.10²⁶

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 3.3 x 4.3 x 1.7

Bibliography: Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten II*, 1933, p. 99, pl. 31, 6; Bienkowski and Southworth, *Egyptian Antiquities*, 1986, p. 28

Short description: The rear part of the figurine is lost. The remaining part depicts on both sides a running monkey, with reins over its body, lying on a kind of rectangular base. The figurine mixes low relief and sculpture in the round techniques. Details such as the reins and the monkeys’ faces were painted in red, and the monkeys’ bodies were painted in green.

²⁶ The artifact was discovered during excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society in 1928–29. It was then purchased by the Liverpool World Museum from the collections of Norwich Castle Museum in 1956, according to the Liverpool World Museum’s records. I am grateful again to Marion Servat-Fredericq for these clarifications. See also on this object the Liverpool National Museums online database: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/baboon-figure-2> (accessed on 14.07.2020).



Figs. 28a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #27. London, British Museum, EA 21984 (Photo courtesy Trustees of The British Museum).

#27 [Figs. 28a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

London, British Museum, EA 21984²⁷

Findspot: Unknown

Date: New Kingdom

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 9.4 x 2.5

Bibliography: Brunner-Traut, ZÄS 80 (1955), pl. II, fig. 5²⁸

Short description: Except for a small part of the horse’s head on the left side, the figurine is complete. It depicts on both sides, mixing low relief and sculpture in the round techniques, a monkey driving a chariot pulled by horses. Colours are still well preserved: monkeys were painted in red and black, holding red reins, and the horse on the left side is red while the one on the right side is black. The background is ornamented with a black and red spotted pattern. The figurine was pierced twice at the front of the horse, once at the rear.

²⁷ I am grateful to Marcel Maree, Curator at the Department of Egypt and Sudan, British Museum, for allowing me to publish the figurine with photographs. As he kindly indicated to me, a figurine depicting a monkey riding a horse (British Museum, EA 48014), dating back to the Ptolemaic period, is an interesting late parallel to our ‘monkeys driving chariots’ corpus. On this figurine, see Russmann, *Eternal Egypt*, 2001, pp. 168–69, n° 79.

²⁸ See also on this object the British Museum online collection database: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA21984 (accessed on 14.07.2020).



Figs. 29a-b “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #28. London, Petrie Museum, UC 29 (Photo courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL).

#28 [Figs. 29a-b]

Current location and inventory number:

London, Petrie Museum, UC 29

Findspot: Amarna

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 8.5 x 8 x 2

Bibliography: Samson, *Amarna*, 1972, pp. 37–38, fig. 16; Greenlaw, *Representation*, 2011, p. 26, fig. 40

Short description: Only the rear part of this limestone carved miniature plate is preserved. It depicts on both sides a monkey driving a chariot pulled by horses. The rear of the figurine was pierced.



Fig. 30 “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #29. Brooklyn Museum, Gift of the Egypt Exploration Society, 36.885 (Photo by Brooklyn Museum).

#29 [Fig. 30]

Current location and inventory number:

New York, Brooklyn Museum, inv. n° 36.885

Findspot: Amarna

Date: New Kingdom, Eighteenth Dynasty, Akhenaten

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: 8.5 x 10 x 2.8

Bibliography: Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten III*, I, 1951, p. 81; Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten III*, II, 1951, pl. 63, 3

Short description: The figurine is unfinished and roughly blocked out. Nonetheless, one can see that it depicts a monkey driving a chariot pulled by other monkeys. Black paint was used to outline the back and right side.



Figs. 31a-e “Monkey driving chariot” figurine #30.

Fig. 31a © IFAO.

Fig. 31b-c Paris, musée du Louvre, E 12969 (Photo by Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Christian Décamps).

Fig. 31d-e © IFAO.

#30 [Figs. 31a-e]²⁹

Current location and inventory number:

Paris, musée du Louvre, E 12969³⁰

Findspot: Deir el-Medina, P1076, “en bas du Kôm sud des 3 loges”³¹

Date: New Kingdom, Ramesside Period

Material: Painted limestone

Dimensions: 5.5 x 5.5 x 1 (after Bruyère); 6.5 x 7.5 x 2.3 (after the Louvre’s database)

Bibliography: Unpublished

²⁹ **Figs. 31d-e**, from the IFAO archives, show the figurine before its acquisition by the Musée du Louvre.

³⁰ I am thankful to Vincent Rondot, Director of the Département des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Louvre, for the permission to publish this figurine.

³¹ Archives Bruyère online, *Cahier DEM* 2, 1926, pp. 4–5, cf. https://www.IFAO.egnet.net/bases/archives/bruyere/?id=MS_2004_0147_011 (accessed on 17.04.2021). Bruyère gives a short description of the figurine: “un petit fragment calcaire avec cheval sculpté et traces de peintures ocre rouge, en bas du Kom sur des 3 loges”. Note that the Louvre’s database indicates a different provenance (‘quartier sud-est’), see <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010016527> (accessed on 17.04.2021).

Short description: The right side of the figurine was drawn by Bruyère [Fig. 31a]. The rear part of this limestone carved plate is lost. On both sides are depicted harnessed horses with reins, in low relief. Horses were painted in red, and the background shows a black and red spotted pattern.

All the figurines date to the New Kingdom, end of the Eighteenth Dynasty or Ramesside period, based on provenances, stylistic and thematic comparison with other contemporary “monkey figurines” imitating human activities, and taking into account the kind of vehicle depicted on the figurines: the second millennium BC “*biga*” — light chariot pulled by two animals — which is mainly attested in Egyptian sources during the New Kingdom. Those with a known provenance were found in Amarna or Deir el-Medina, and when — rarely — a detailed discovery context is known, it can be connected with household or funerary spaces.

Most of the figurines depict a monkey, either a guenon (genus *Cercopithecus*) or more frequently a baboon (genus *Papio*), driving a vehicle pulled by two horses. In some cases, several monkeys are depicted in the chariot’s body, and horses are replaced by a couple of lions, dogs, or even other monkeys. On one occasion (#7), a monkey is depicted just in front of the pulling animals, dogs in that case; he might be lifting his arms to calm the animals.

From a technical point of view, two different kinds of figurine coexist: a “complete-3D” variety, *i.e.* sculpture in the round; and “pseudo-figurines” consisting of low relief engraved on each of the two sides of the object. Both techniques were often mixed: horses’ and monkeys’ heads were indeed sculpted in the round in several cases, connecting the two sides of the same plate, and suggesting the interpretation of a “half-3D-figurine”. These technical differences might reflect various degrees of quality, but the figurines belong to the same group and share a common function and signification.

Many examples were painted. Red, white, black, or green are the main colours employed — a very common range for New Kingdom Egypt.

Where the figurine is well enough preserved, it is possible to observe a small hole pierced through the front side and the rear side, and sometimes elsewhere in addition. All the examples of this are composed of limestone, but in one case (#24) some painted “Egyptian faience” wheels were designed to be fixed on the artifact, an important clue to understanding their function, as we will see in the next subsection.

2. CHILDREN'S TOYS OR "SATIRICAL" ENTERTAINMENT FOR ADULTS?

In a recent book about children in Ancient Egypt written by Amandine Marshall, these small figurines were mentioned and interpreted as children's toys.³² This hypothesis is mainly based on the holes pierced in the front and the back sides of most of the figurines. Moreover, one example kept in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (#24), as already mentioned above, shows that those holes were used to fit a total of four functional wheels, in this case made in painted "Egyptian faience".³³ In a majority of cases the wheels are lost, together with the miniature axles allowing the user to set it in motion. One can sometimes observe an extra hole on the upper part of the front side, which was probably used to tie a pulling string: such a feature is for instance preserved on a "harpist monkey" figurine from Deir el-Medina.³⁴ The most complete and best preserved example is the one now in the Cairo Museum (#23), a complete 3D-figurine that seems still functional, including the wheels.

However, these toys were probably more than just childish diversions. Considering the cultural significance of the light horse-drawn chariot in the New Kingdom Egypt and Near East,³⁵ their satirical nature seems obvious, and they were likely crafted also to make adults smile. Indeed, they can be compared, thematically speaking, with some "satirical" ostraca or papyri, especially with a vignette of the so-called "erotic" Turin papyrus,³⁶ this latter possessing mainly a "satirical" character.³⁷

At least one figurine, the one from Cairo already mentioned above (#23), may have been directly inspired by contemporary royal iconography. In Amarna, the chariot scenes depicting King Akhenaten and the Great Royal Wife Nefertiti in their vehicles — sometimes even sharing a one — are very common, engraved

³² Marshall, *Être un enfant*, 2013, p. 154.

³³ For a good picture including the wheels, see the Fitzwilliam Museum online collection database quoted above, note 18.

³⁴ Deir el-Medina site storeroom M 25, inv. n° DeM_2021_M25_0054.

³⁵ Among many references, see now about the chariot in Ancient Egypt the general overviews in Ikram and Veldmeijer (eds.), *Chasing Chariots*, 2013 and Ikram and Veldmeijer (eds.), *Chariots in Ancient Egypt*, 2018 with many bibliographical references.

³⁶ Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001*, 1973. P. Turin Cat. 2031 = CGT 55001, see [TPOP Doc ID 202](#).

³⁷ See recently Vernus, in Kothay (ed.), *Art and Society*, 2012 and Andreu-Lanoë (ed.), *L'art du contour*, 2013, pp. 108–17, 332, n° 186.

on the walls of the local temples or tombs.³⁸ The royal couple is followed by his daughters, the courtiers and representatives of the army. As some scholars already highlighted in previous studies, the chariot possesses a strong symbolic, ideological and religious importance during the Amarna Period.³⁹ Thus, it might be indicative that we find the first figurines of “monkeys driving chariots” in Akhenaten’s capital, although future discoveries could change such a view.

As a “satirical” production dating back to the New Kingdom, the “monkeys driving chariots” figurines can be compared with other similar depictions. During the Ramesside period, the people of Deir el-Medina were used to seeing the social elites or the King himself in chariots, either in person or engraved on the walls of the nearby temples. Horses and chariots are among the most frequent themes of the Deir el-Medina figured ostraca, and as such have their own category in the related publications. Chariots are therefore figured – although rarely – in other kinds of “satirical” depictions, such as the so-called “war between cats and mice” scenes, known through ostraca and papyri.⁴⁰

In the “satirical” part of the so-called Turin “erotic” papyrus, chariots are depicted twice. In the first scene [Fig. 32],⁴¹ mice are attacking a fortress full of cats. A strong mouse is figured brandishing a weapon above its head, leading the army of mice and imitating Pharaoh standing in his chariot. Another mouse is holding the reins and driving the vehicle, which is pulled by a couple of obviously female dogs, instead of the usual royal stallions, another funny and not so discrete contribution to the topsy-turvy world where mice are hunting cats. In a second scene [Fig. 33],⁴² a mouse charioteer is depicted driving a chariot, pulled by a couple of docile and harnessed lions very reminiscent of the monkey charioteers on several of the previously described figurines. Monkey charioteers

³⁸ See *inter alia* Krack, in Obsomer and Oosthoek (eds.), *Amosiadès*, 1992, with bibliographical references. About Nefertiti on her chariot, see Köpp, in Peust (ed.), *Miscellanea*, 2008, pp. 34–44; Köpp, *Kemet* 20 (2010), pp. 32–33; Köpp, in Huyeng and Finger (eds.), *Amarna*, 2015, pp. 102–48.

³⁹ Chappaz, *Karnak* 8 (1982–1985); Gabolde, in Bergerot (ed.), *Akhénaton*, 2005, p. 103; Laboury, *Akhénaton*, 2010, pp. 252–58. See also Pietri, *Karnak* 17 (to be published).

⁴⁰ On the “war between cats and mice” and other related animal and satirical depictions, see Brunner-Traut, *ZÄS* 80 (1955); Brunner-Traut, *Altägyptische Tiergeschichte*, 1968; Van de Walle, *L'humour*, 1969, pp. 16–19; Brunner-Traut, *GM* 25 (1977); Vycichl, *BSEG* 8 (1983); Trokay, in Broze and Talon (eds.), *L'atelier de l'orfèvre*, 1992; Flores, in Knoppers and Hirsch (eds.), *Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean World*, 2004; Babcock, *BARCE* 204 (2013); Morenz, *Kleine Archäologie des ägyptischen Humors*, 2013, pp. 163–66.

⁴¹ Andreu-Lanoë (ed.), *L'art du contour*, 2013, p. 103.

⁴² Andreu-Lanoë (ed.), *L'art du contour*, 2013, p. 115.



Fig. 32 Mice attacking a cat's fortress (Cat. 2031 = CGT 55001, Photo by Nicola Dell'Acquila and Federico Taverni/Museo Egizio) (detail).



Fig. 33 Lions pulling a chariot with a mouse-charioteer (Cat. 2031 = CGT 55001, Photo by Nicola Dell'Acquila and Federico Taverni/Museo Egizio) (detail).

and mice charioteers are likely interrelated, being both “satirical” productions mocking the social elite, including Pharaoh himself. Nonetheless, in my opinion the “monkeys driving chariots” figurines and the “war between cats and mice” depictions are a little different, as the main purpose of the first was probably to entertain children with a secondary satirical discourse, the second being far more ironic and used in the social elite production to have a laugh at its own expense.

But such a distinction should not be considered too narrowly. Thus in the “erotic” part of the Turin papyrus, there might in fact be a reference to the popular “monkeys driving chariots” figurines. In the second of the twelve vignettes [Fig. 34],⁴³ one can find a scene depicting a man having sex *a tergo* with a naked

⁴³ Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001*, 1973, p. 53.



Fig. 34 A woman having sex on a chariot (Cat. 2031 = CGT 55001, detail. Photo by Nicola Dell'Acquila and Federico Taverni/Museo Egizio).

woman on a chariot. The man holds a wine vase in his right hand while a sistrum hangs on his right arm. In his left hand, the fragmentary papyrus likely shows him holding the woman's hair. The woman is actually looking backward in his direction, leaning forward and standing on a chariot. Two female servants are tied to the vehicle's draught pole, and another lecherous and naked man raises his left arm in front of them. Above the scene close to the woman's left arm, a leafy branch is depicted, and walking over the vehicle's pole, a small monkey – likely a guenon – witnesses the scene: here is the draughtsman's "easter egg".

The small monkey can probably be identified as the tamed guenon (genus *Cercopithecus*) that were kept as pets in the houses of the social elite of the time: indeed he belongs to the woman on the chariot enjoying life. But the draughtsman was perhaps also thinking of the satirical figurines discussed in this paper, as shown by the numerous references in the vignette to the chariot and its iconographic occurrences in Egyptian art. Hence, the sexual position *a tergo* might have been chosen by the draughtsman here as a reference to the leaning forward position of the charioteer as depicted on many New Kingdom reliefs,

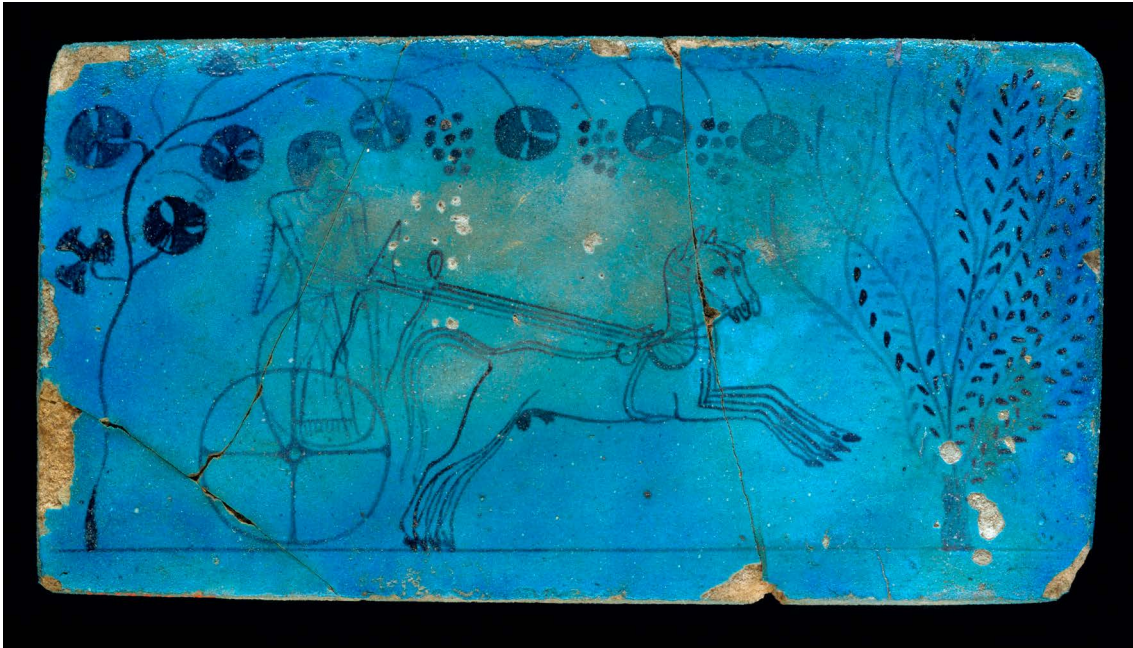


Fig. 35 Egyptian faience plate depicting a man on a chariot. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. n° 17.194.2297 (Photo Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

especially on *talatats* dating back to the Amarna Period.⁴⁴ This attitude is actually a kind of iconographic trick to simulate and emphasize the swiftness of the vehicle in motion. In addition to this, the naked servants in place of the royal stallions are again an obvious iconographic pun referring to the monumental battle scenes depicted on temple walls. The lecherous man raising his arm in their direction is reminiscent of the groom calming horses in New Kingdom scenes.⁴⁵ Moreover, the leafy branch accompanying the scene recalls the decoration painted on an Egyptian faience tablet [Fig. 35] depicting a nobleman on his chariot, enjoying his time under grape vines.⁴⁶ Finally, the scene has also been interpreted as a sexual parody of the imported warrior-goddess Astarte in her chariot,⁴⁷ a seducing hypothesis although the only surely known Egyptian

⁴⁴ E.g. Cooney, *Amarna Reliefs*, 1965, p. 52–54, n° 30. On the significance of this sexual position, see Orriols I Llonch, *TrabEg* 5 (2009).

⁴⁵ E. g. in the tomb of Amenmes (TT42), see PM I²/1, 82 (4); Davies and Davies, *The tombs of Menkheperresonb*, 1933, pl. XXXVI.

⁴⁶ New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. n° 17.194.2297; see Hayes, *Scepter of Egypt*, II, 1959, pp. 168–69, fig. 93; Peck, *Ägyptische Zeichnungen*, 1979, p. 160, fig. 91; Rommelaere, *Les chevaux du Nouvel Empire*, 1991, pp. 66, 92, 162, n° 21.

⁴⁷ See Andreu-Lanoë (ed.), *L'art du contour*, 2013, p. 111, *contra* Schulmann-Antelme, Rossini, *Sacred Sexuality*, 1991, p. 155, who think it is rather an obscene allusion to the queen, or Omlin, *Der Papyrus 55001*, 1973, p. 40, who believes the woman is a prostitute. It has to be noted that other references to religion and myths are well attested in the 'erotic' part of the Turin papyrus.

depiction of Astarte in a vehicle dates to the Ptolemaic period.⁴⁸ Actually, Astarte is already strongly related to horses during the New Kingdom, together with her sister Anat, and both goddesses might rather have been evoked as a couple through the naked yoked servants replacing horses. Thus the whole scene is playing with visual codes and representations of the chariot and horses in Egyptian art, an expected composition considering that the papyrus was produced for the amusement of the social elite, who were definitely the best suited for understanding all the references: among all that defines the elite during the New Kingdom, chariots have a prominent position.

The “monkeys driving chariots” figurines, as children’s toys, are indicative of the degree of integration of the chariot, an imported technology, into the Egyptian civilization. Logically, the vehicle of the king and Pharaonic elites was used to make fun of them in a “satirical way”, critiques that remain quite limited and without any danger for the ruling authority. Being a community favored by Pharaoh himself and comprising the most trained and gifted artists or craftsmen of their time, assembled to carve and paint the king’s tomb in western Thebes, the population from Deir el-Medina was also a kind of social elite. The local “satirical” production, even if it did not spare Pharaoh himself, should therefore not lead to serious consequences, and reveals more a sort of hopeless and grating sense of irony rather than deeply held political criticisms of power.

For the sake of exhaustiveness, the hypothesis should be mentioned that these figurines might have been connected in some way with so-called “popular religion” and as such used for magical or worship purposes. If some of the monkeys should be identified as baboons – which seems to be indicated by their elongated snouts – a possible link with the god Thoth has to be considered. The baboon shape of Thoth appears during the Eighteenth Dynasty, at least under the reign of Amenhotep III,⁴⁹ and afterwards is well attested during the New Kingdom. However, one wonders why Thoth would be driving a chariot, being mainly known and worshipped as the scribe of gods. Thoth is actually known as “the master of horses” (*nb ssm.wt*), but only in a single Ramesside and incomplete source which

⁴⁸ Leclant, *Syria* 37 (1960), pp. 54–58, pl. IVA/B. On Astarte and horses, see recently Hoffmann, *CRIPEL* 27 (2008), pp. 50–51; Schmitt, *WdO* 43 (2013).

⁴⁹ Larcher, *ZÄS* 143 (2016), pp. 60–76.

is difficult to interpret.⁵⁰ A possible relationship between Thoth and horses was also suggested by Dimitri Meeks, because of Thoth's lunar nature and a well attested link between horses and the moon during the Ptolemaic period.⁵¹ But such a relationship seems to be rather a late phenomenon and in my opinion, has nothing to do with our figurines. Considering the present evidence, the hypothesis of votive figurines celebrating Thoth as a charioteer and baboon should be set aside, except perhaps in an allusive, secondary and humorous signification, thus adding another "satirical" level of meaning to this kind of children's toy.

3. CONCLUSION

The "monkeys driving chariots" subcorpus illustrates how an imported technology like the chariot, taken by the Egyptians during the Second Intermediate Period from their Asiatic neighbours, became a common artistic and humorous theme, and was not limited to its military or parade function. This also raises interesting questions about the "satirical" nature of this kind of iconography: as a production from Deir el-Medina probably made by craftsmen and artists to entertain their own children, they actually differ somewhat from the "reverse world" scenes involving mice on chariots, as depicted on ostraca and papyri. The latter ones were rather made to entertain the Egyptian social elite, laughing about itself and Pharaoh in a limited and controlled setting.⁵² Thousands of years later in eighteenth-century Europe, the German sculptor Johann Joachim Kändler (1706–75) and the French painter Jean Siméon Chardin (1699–1779) aimed at similar critiques with their famous "satirical" artworks: the former producing the *Monkey Band* from the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory [Fig. 36],⁵³

⁵⁰ KRI III, 10, 2–7; Habachi, *ASAE* 52 (1952), p. 480, pl. XX; Habachi, *Tell el-Dab'a*, 2001, pp. 61, 186–87, n° 52.

⁵¹ Meeks, in Gardeisen (ed.), *Les équidés*, 2005, p. 55.

⁵² Chariots and chariotry officers are also mentioned and mocked in several literary texts of the New Kingdom, but with different purposes and as a part of the topics developed in the "scribal literature", which aims to critique the hard life of the soldier – among other professions – and the social benefits of being a scribe; see for example Ragazzoli, *ZÄS* 137 (2010). The chariot might also have been used to humiliate and denigrate foreigners who were considered to be 'barbarians' and not able to use it properly, at least from an Egyptian point of view; this may at least be the case in the well-known painted scene of the tomb of Huy (TT40), depicting a Nubian princess in an ox-draught vehicle. On this interpretation, see Burmeister, *JEH* 6 (2013).

⁵³ I would like to thank here Marie-Lys Arnette for pointing out to me the *Monkey Band* and for the stimulating discussion we had on this topic in Cairo.



Fig. 36 *Monkey Band* by Johann Joachim Kändler – Art Institute, Chicago, ref. n° 1946.479
<https://www.artic.edu/artists/35729/meissen-porcelain-manufactory>.

the latter producing *The Monkey Painter* [Fig. 37] and *The Monkey Antiquarian* [Fig. 38].



Fig. 37 *The Monkey Painter* by Jean Siméon Chardin – Musée du Louvre, MI 1033
<https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010059561>.



Fig. 38 *The Monkey Antiquarian* by Jean Siméon Chardin – Musée du Louvre, INV 3206
<https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010066958>.

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