

## The *šbyw* Collar of the Kings, Queens, and Deities in Ancient Egypt: A Question of Significance

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### Abstract

The *šbyw* collar is a unique type of necklace which was widely used during the New Kingdom. The collar consists of one or multiple rows of circular lenticular beads joined by a central clasp. This type of jewelry was often made entirely out of gold, however there are examples of collars incorporating faience and glass such as the one discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamun. *Šbyw* was a type of token of royal favor traditionally awarded to distinguished high officials in the ‘Gold of Honor’ ceremony. The collar has not yet been studied in all its aspects. The most extensive previous study by S. Binder concentrated only on the usage of the collar as a royal reward for private individuals, which is beyond the scope of the present research.

Both archaeological and iconographic evidence indicates that the collar was used by the deities and kings. Not only was the *šbyw* collar used to decorate the aegis of divine barks, but it was also worn by deities such as Osiris, Amun, and Mut. Tuthmosis IV of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty was one of the earliest rulers depicted wearing the *šbyw* collar on a relief from Giza. Additionally, in the tomb of

Kheruef (TT 192), Queen Tiy together with her husband King Amenhotep III were both portrayed wearing the *šbyw*. Thus, this research will endeavor to survey all the archaeological and iconographic evidence of the *šbyw* collar in the royal and divine sphere. Furthermore, the research aims at revealing the significance of the usage of these collars by kings, queens, and deities.

**Keywords:** Collar, necklace, Shebyu, jewelry, New Kingdom.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Jewelry was valued and treasured by ancient Egyptians. It was not only used as a body ornament; but it was also regarded as a means of displaying rank, proclaiming wealth, or denoting social status. Jewelry was fashioned into amulets, items of barter and trade, accessories for daily wear, diplomatic gifts, as well as military awards. (Andrews, 1990, 5; Markowitz, 2001, 201)

Our knowledge of ancient Egyptian jewelry comes from various sources including actual examples of ornaments recovered during

excavations as well as representations of jewelry in two -and three-dimensional art. Textual records provide further insights into forms, meaning and role of the jewelry in the ancient Egyptian culture. (Markowitz, 2001, 201)

According to archaeological and iconographic records a wide range of necklaces and collars made from precious metals and stones were worn by living and dead, by mortals as well as divinities. The present study focuses on one specific type of a distinctive gold necklace, which was widely used during the New Kingdom, called the *šbyw*. The collar is attested as a gift from the ruling king to distinguished high officials in the ‘Gold of Honor’ ceremony<sup>1</sup>. In fact, the term *šbyw* occurred during the New Kingdom only in contexts of royal rewards to high officials. The earliest textual reference to *šbyw* dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, reign of King Ahmose. It is mentioned as *šbw*  in the autobiography of Ahmose-Pennakht as a part of “the Gold of Honor” granted to him by the king for his bravery in battle. (Urk. IV, 38:14, 38: 16, 39: 2; Bryan, 2000, 71; Binder, 2008, 8) Other writing variants include *šbiw* , *šby*  and *šbyw*  were attested in autobiographies and on temple wall-scenes during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Dynasties. (Wb IV, 438)

The *šbyw* of high officials had been studied extensively by Susanne Binder in her PhD entitled ‘The Gold of Honor’. (Binder, 2008) She focused only on the usage of the collar as

<sup>1</sup> The Gold of Honor is a special public ceremony in which distinguished officials received golden gifts for their special achievements from the ruling king. The gifts include *šbyw* collars and sometimes also bracelets and armllets. This special ceremony was commemorated and recorded on various monuments. (Binder, 2008, 1)

a royal reward for private individuals, which is beyond the scope of the present essay. Hence, the research does not cover every aspect of the significance of this collar. The main objective of this research is to offer insights into the function and significance of the collar in the royal and divine sphere. In this respect, a thorough survey of the available archaeological and iconographic sources featuring the collar will be examined.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF *šbyw* COLLAR

The *šbyw* collar was defined by Egyptologists as a necklace consisting of one or multiple rows of circular beads joined by a central clasp. The large and sheer size of the beads of the *šbyw* have led scholars use the term ‘collar’ rather than ‘necklace’. (Brand, 2006, 17)

The actual examples and artistic representations of the collar indicate that the collar came in two main types. The most common type consists of bi-conical or lentiform discs. These circular beads are sometimes large and spherical in shape and in some other instances the rings are oval-shaped. (Fig. 1) The other variant of the collar is composed of flat-shaped beads giving the impression of a flexible tube. (Fig. 2) (Ertman, 1977, 26; Brand, 2006, 17)

*šbyw* was often composed of multi-colored disk beads arranged in sequences of golden, red, and blue. As for the material of which the necklace was made, it was often gold, yet there are examples of collars combining faience, jasper, lapis lazuli and glass such as the collars discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamun. (Ertman, 1977, 26; Binder, 2008, 44)

The earliest artistic representation of the collar in relief comes from the Annals of Tuthmosis III at the temple of Amun Re at Karnak. The

king listed and depicted many valuable gifts including jewelry items to be dedicated to Amun Re. Among the gifts are various šbyw collars featuring different shapes, of which the two types of ornament can be distinguished. Two or three stringed bead necklaces are among the offerings. Some are composed of biconical sheer beads, while other collars are made of flat shaped rings, all executed in raised relief. The various shapes of the central clasp that joins the rows of the collar are noteworthy. (Fig. 3) (PM II<sup>2</sup>, 97-98, Wreszinski, 1923-1925, pl. 33; Schwaller de Lubicz, 1999, pl. 147; Binder, 2008, fig. 11.1)

Another relief from the peristyle hall of Tuthmosis IV now displayed in the Open-Air Museum at the temple of Amun Re at Karnak shows a similar representation. Among the dedicatory offerings presented to the god Amun Re, are two large šbyw collars of two rows of lenticular shaped beads. (Letellier, 1999, 44, fig. 2; Binder, 2008, fig. 11.2) (Fig. 4)

### III. Šbyw OF KINGS AND QUEENS

The following part presents selected representations, statues, and actual examples of the collar in royal context.

#### 1. Royal Šbyw in Two-Dimensional Representations

The selected examples of the following representations follow the chronological order and are catalogued by documenting the name of the king or queen with reference to the location or provenance of the scene.

##### 1.1 Amenhotep II, Tomb of Kenamun (TT 93), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

A scene from the tomb of Kenamun, the chief steward of the king, portrays a cult statue of king Amenhotep II in a kiosk showing him as a Nubian commander wearing a short wig and

a šbyw collar of two rows of large beads. (Fig. 5) (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 191(1); Davies, 1930, pl. 11; Aldred, 1957, 142)

##### 1.2 Tuthmosis IV, Stela, Giza

On a fragment of a stela discovered at Giza, Tuthmosis IV is represented offering two *nw* jars to God *Hr-m-3ht* in the form of sphinx. He is wearing the blue crown and a šbyw collar of two rows. (Fig. 6) (Hassan, 1953, fig. 17; Osman and Omar, 2017, 39 ff.)

##### 1.3 Tuthmosis IV, Dream Stela, Giza

On the lunette of the Dream Stela of Tuthmosis IV, the king is shown in a similar scene as the abovementioned. The scene depicts back-to-back figures of the God *Hr-m-3ht* being worshipped by Tuthmosis, who is incensing and libating. The king is wearing the blue crown on one side and the *nms* headdress on the other. A double šbyw collar decorates his neck. (Hawass, 1993, 177 f.)

##### 1.4 Amenhotep III, Tomb of Heqa-Reshw (TT 226), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

From the west wall of the court of the tomb of Heqa-Reshw comes a scene of Amenhotep III accompanied by his mother Mutemiwa. He is shown seated on a throne inside a shrine wearing the blue crown and a double šbyw over a broad collar. This painting is now on display in the Luxor Museum (no. 101). (PM II, 327 (4); Davies, 1933, 39-40, pls. XLI, XLIII; Bothmer, 1979, no. 101. pl. 7) (Fig. 7)

##### 1.5 Amenhotep III, Tomb of Khaemhat (TT 57), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

A fragmentary scene from the tomb of the royal scribe and overseer of royal granaries Khaemhat depicts the king Amenhotep III enthroned within a kiosk. He is rewarding the owner of the tomb and the officials of Upper Egypt. The high officials wear šbyw collars of four rows, while the king wears a short wig and a golden double šbyw of lenticular beads

above another broad collar. In his hands, the crook, flail, and *ankh* are shown. The fragmentary relief is currently displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin SMPK, no. 14503. (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 116 (15); LD III, pl. 76; Kozloff & Bryan, 1993, 288) (Fig. 8 a, b)

a. Another fragmentary limestone relief from the tomb of Khaemhat shows Amenhotep III wearing the blue crown and a double *šbyw* collar of massive lenticular gold beads. The relief is currently exhibited in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin ÄM 14442. (Fig. 9) (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 115(11), LD III, 77)

#### 1.6 Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy, Tomb of Kheruef (TT 192), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

The tomb of Kheruef, the steward of Queen Tiy offers two representations of the *šbyw* collar. The first of which shows Amenhotep III seated in a kiosk along with his wife Tiy receiving gifts on the occasion of the king's third Heb-sed jubilee. Both the king and his wife are shown enthroned and wearing a double *šbyw*. It is noteworthy that two variants of the collar can be identified in this scene; while the king is wearing a *šbyw* composed of bi-conical beads, Tiy is wearing a necklace of flat-shaped beads. (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 299(8); OIP 102, 1980, pl. 145; Johnson, 1999, 232) (Fig. 10)

#### 1.7 Amenhotep IV, Tomb of Kheruef (TT 192), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

This is the second scene from the tomb of Kheruef, located on the lintel of the doorway passage leading to the court. The scene shows Amenhotep IV accompanied by his mother Tiy. On the right side of the scene, the king is offering wine to Re-Horakhty and Maat. Incense is being offered to Atum and Hathor on the other side. The king is shown wearing the blue crown and a double *šbyw* over a broad collar. He is holding a crook, flail, and

the *ankh* in his hands. (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 298 (2); OIP 102, 1980, pl. 2) (Fig. 11)

#### 1.8 Amenhotep IV, tomb of Ramose (TT 55), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

In the tomb of Ramose, the vizier who served under both Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV, comes another representation of a royal *šbyw*. On the southern part of the west wall of the court, Amenhotep IV is depicted enthroned in a shrine. Behind the king sits the goddess Maat. He is wearing the blue crown, a *šbyw* collar, arm bands, and is holding a crook and flail in his hands. (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 109 (7); Davies, 1941, pl. 24)

#### 1.9 Tutankhamun and Queen Ankhesenamun, Small Golden Shrine of the King, Cairo JE 61481

From the small golden shrine of Tutankhamun exists another scene. Here, Queen Ankhesenamun is accompanying her husband Tutankhamun, who is pouring fragrant perfume into her hands. Both the king and queen are ornamented with double *šbyw* collars. (Eaton-Krauss and Graefe, 1985, pl. xvi, xvii) (Fig. 12)

#### 1.10 Horemheb, Tomb of Neferhotep and Parenenfer (TT 50), Sheikh Abd El Qurna

Horemheb was depicted in the Theban private tomb (TT 50) rewarding the two tomb-owners with golden *šbyw* collars as the 'Gold of Honor'. The king is also wearing a *šbyw* over a broad collar. The blue crown surmounts his head. (PM I<sup>1</sup>, 95 (2); Hari, 1985, pl. VI) (Fig. 13)

#### 1.11 Merenptah, King's Mortuary temple, West Thebes

From the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty mortuary temple of King Merenptah, the king is represented in a scene wearing the blue crown along with a double *šbyw*. (Brand, 2006, fig. 13-25)

### 1.12 Ramses III, King's Mortuary Temple, Madinet Habu

Ramses III was depicted in variant scenes in his temple at Madinet Habu wearing a double šbyw.

a. A scene from the north wall of the treasury room (10) shows King Ramses III offering silver, gold, and temple furniture to Amun Ra and Mut. Ramses is wearing a khat headdress and a double šbyw above a broad collar. (PM II<sup>1</sup>, 509; OIP 83, 1957, pl. 322) (Fig. 14)

b. Another scene from the roof terrace of the temple proper of Madinet Habu shows the king offering incense and libation to Wepwawut. A double šbyw decorates the king's neck. (PM II<sup>1</sup>, 516 (183); OIP 93, 1964, pl. 541)

### 1.13 Ramses IX, Karnak Temple, Eastern wall between pylons 7 and 8

A scene depicted on the eastern face of the eastern wall between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> pylons at the temple of Amun Re at Karnak portrays the high priest Amenhotep being rewarded by King Ramses IX. Both the high priest and the king are shown wearing the šbyw above a broad collar. Amenhotep's collar consists of four rows. The beads of the double šbyw collar of Ramses are not carved indicating that it is made of flat-shaped beads. (PM II<sup>2</sup>, 505; Frood, 2007, 68–77; Binder, 2008, fig. 8. 42)

## 2. Royal Šbyw in Statuary

In the private sphere, numerous statues portray high officials wearing šbyw collars, however very few sculptures are attested in the royal sphere. Examples of private sculptures include the seated statuette of M<sup>c</sup>y, the mayor and overseer of prophets under King Tuthmosis

III<sup>2</sup> (Priese, 1991, no. 54) (Fig. 15) and the statue of T<sup>3</sup>y dating to the post Amarna Period<sup>3</sup> (Saleh and Sourouzian, 1986, no. 153) (Fig. 16).

### 2.1 Steatite Statuette of Amenhotep III, Boston MFA 1970.636

To the researcher's present state of knowledge very few royal sculptures feature the šbyw; and all belong to Amenhotep III. This is a kneeling statuette of Amenhotep III in the guise of the God Neferhotep. The statuette was probably dedicated in the temple of Horus at Edfu to Isis as both wife and mother of Horus. In the form of Neferhotep, the king was considered a powerful intermediary with the goddess Isis. Amenhotep is wearing a short, round wig surmounted by a double crown, a characteristic of God Neferhotep. A double šbyw collar made of large gold beads fits tightly around the neck of the king and rests quite distinctly at the top of the shoulder. The rings of the collar are carefully sculpted. (Fig. 17) (Kozloff and Bryan, 1993, 198)

### 2.2 Steatite Statuette of Amenhotep III, Egyptian Museum in Cairo CG 42084 (JE 37428)

An excellent parallel steatite statuette of Amenhotep III was discovered in the Karnak Temple cachette. Here, the king wears both armlets and bracelets; and around his neck are two šbyw collars. (Bryan, 1993, 65)

### 2.3 Steatite Statuette of Amenhotep III, Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 38596 and Oriental Museum of Durham University in England, N. 496

<sup>2</sup> The statuette is displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin ÄM 19286.

<sup>3</sup> The statuette was exhibited in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 33256 (SR 11720) now displayed in the extension of Luxor Museum.

Also discovered in the Karnak cachette a statuette of King Amenhotep III was reconstructed; the broken head displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 38596 was attached to the torso of the same king that is displayed in the Oriental Museum of Durham University. The statuette is made of steatite and glazed with blue faience, but the glaze has been corroded from the head. The king is also wearing a double šbyw with large spherical beads. (Bryan, 1992, 200; Bryan, 1993, 65)

### 3. Actual Examples of Royal Šbyw Collars

In the private context, the earliest actual example of the collar was found around the neck of a mummified unknown lady in her tomb at Dra Abu Naga dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The collar is now on display in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh A.1909.527.19. The collar consists of four strands of 1653 narrow golden rings. (Aldred, 1971, 198; Roehrig, 2005, 19; Tate *et al.*, 2009, 121-28) (Fig. 2) Another private example was recovered on the mummy of Kha at Deir El Madinah dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. (Curto and Mancini, 1968, 77 ff.; Binder, 2008, fig. 4. 10, 4. 11)

#### 3.1 Šbyw Collars of Tuthankhamon, Dynasty 18

The first recovered royal example of šbyw collars comes from the tomb of Tutankhamun KV 62, which offers a number of various shapes of šbyw collars. The innermost anthropoid coffin of the king (JE 60671) is decorated with double-stranded šbyw of lenticular beads made of gold, jasper, and lapis lazuli with lotus-shaped terminals to tie the collar. (Fig. 18) (Edwards, 1977, 132-33; James, 2000, 89) Another triple šbyw of Tutankhamun was found attached to the golden mask of the king (Carter Cat. 256 A). The beads of the collar are of gold and blue

faience. (Vilimkova, 1969, no. 52; Edwards, 1977, 135) (Fig. 19) Moreover, five šbyw necklaces made of lenticular glass beads were discovered in the antechamber of the king's tomb. (Edwards, 1977, 105)

#### 3.2 Šbyw Collars of Psusennes I, Dynasty 21

Inside the burial chamber of the 21<sup>st</sup> Dynasty tomb of King Psusennes I at Tanis three šbyw collars have been recovered. One collar was discovered around the neck of the king's mummy at his tomb and is now exhibited in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 85571. This impressive collar consists of five rows of more than 5000 flat-shaped gold discs strung together to resemble a flexible tube. The central clasp bears two of Psusennes I's names. Fourteen gold chains ending with lotus buds hang down the collar. The collar weighs almost 6.3 kg. (Saleh and Sourouzian, 1986, no. 240) (Fig. 20) An even larger šbyw of King Psusennes I consists of seven rows of gold beads, weighing about 14 kg. (Aldred, 1971, 238; Tiradritti *et al.*, 1998, 320-21) (Fig. 21) The third consists of five rows of large bi-conical golden beads. The chains hanging from the collar are lost. (Fig. 1) (Aldred, 1957, fig. 104)

## IV. Šbyw COLLAR OF DEITIES

The šbyw collar was not restricted to mortals, it was likewise worn by divinities during the New Kingdom. However, examples of representations of deities wearing šbyw collars are infrequent and scarce.

### 1. Šbyw of Deities in Two-Dimensional Representations

The selected examples of the following representations follow the chronological order and are catalogued by documenting the name of the deity with reference to the dating and location or provenance of the scene.

### 1.1 Osiris, Amenhotep III, Tomb of Meryre

A limestone relief from the tomb of the chancellor and the royal scribe Meryre at Saqqara, dating to the reign of King Amenhotep III shows in the upper register Meryre and his wife Baket-Amun adoring Osiris, who is enthroned inside a kiosk. (Kozloff and Bryan, 1992, 293-294)

Meryre is represented wearing a double *šbyw* collar with large biconical beads executed in raised relief. A double uncarved *šbyw* adorns the neck of Osiris as well. The beads being uncarved indicate their flat shaped composition. The relief is now preserved in the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna AS 5815. (Kozloff and Bryan, 1992, 293-294; Satzinger, 1994, fig. 14) (Fig. 22)

### 1.2 Amun-Re, Ramses II, Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak, Great Hypostyle Hall

On the east side of the west wall, south half of the second pylon, there is a unique representation of Amun-Re sitting on the throne followed by a standing figure of Mut and Khonsu. Amun-Re is wearing a double-plumed headdress along with the *hemhem* crown and double-stranded *šbyw*. The scene depicts a kneeling figure of Ramses II accompanied by fifteen members of the Theban Ennead adoring Amun Re. (Fig. 23) (PM II<sup>2</sup>, 46-47 (157); OIP 142, vol. 1/2, 2018, 77-78, pl. 36)

### 1.3 Ptah, Tomb of Seti II KV 15

The god Ptah is shown wearing the *šbyw* collar on the front face of a pillar in the pillared chamber F, 3 in the tomb of Seti II KV 15. The collar consists of two rows of yellow lenticular shaped beads. (<https://thebanmappingproject.com/>)

### 1.4 Mut, Ramses III, temple of Amun Re at Karnak, 8<sup>th</sup> Pylon

From a scene on the north face of the 8<sup>th</sup> Pylon at Karnak, Ramses III is brought to Amun by Khonsou and Mut. Remarkably in this scene both the goddess Mut and King Ramses III are wearing a double *šbyw*. Both collars are composed of uncarved beads with smooth edges indicating that the beads are of the flat shaped type. (PM II<sup>2</sup>, 174 (519); Brand, 2006, 21)

### 1.5 Re-Horakhty, Ramses III, temple of Amun Re at Karnak, Pylon 8

On the same wall of the 8<sup>th</sup> pylon exists another scene depicting Atum and Re-Horakhty offering jubilees to Ramses III. This is a rare representation of Re-Horakhty wearing a single stranded *šbyw* with bi-conical beads that may be distinguished through the carved details of the discs. Also, as in the abovementioned representation, Ramses is wearing a *šbyw* collar composed of double strings of flat-shaped beads unexecuted in relief. (Brand, 2006, fig. 13-27)

### 1.6 Ptah, Ramses III, Mortuary temple, Madinet Habu, Eastern Gate

Another depiction of Ptah wearing the *šbyw* is found on the south wall of the passage of the eastern gate of Madinet Habu Temple. The scene shows Ramses III offering Maat to Ptah and Sekhmet. This is a unique instance in which two deities and the king are wearing a double *šbyw* with biconical beads. (PM II<sup>1</sup>, 484; OIP 94, 1970, pl. 608)

### 1.7 Ptah, Stela of Nakht-m -mwt, Ramses IX

The votive stela of the dignitary Nakh-m-mwt, depicts the owner of the stela worshipping and offering to the god Ptah, whose neck is decorated with a double stranded *šbyw* collar of large biconical beads executed in raised relief. The stela is currently displayed in the Egyptian Gregorian Museum in Vatican Inv.

No. 289. (Fig. 24) (Botti and Romanelli, 1951, 91–92, no. 136)

## 2. *šbyw* of Deities in Statuary

Apart from relief and painting, a unique and rare representation of the divine *šbyw* was attested in statuary. A ram-headed statue of Amun in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin 2278 features a *šbyw* collar. It probably dates to the reign of Amenhotep III. The neck of the ram-headed god is adorned with a double-stranded collar with large biconical beads. (Spiegelberg, 1926, fig. 3; Pamminger, 1996, 437, fig. 11.)

## V. *šbyw* DECORATING AEGIS OF DIVINE BARKS

The earliest evidence of a *šbyw* collar decorating the aegis of divine barks comes from the alabaster chapel of Tuthmosis IV now displayed in the open-air Museum at Karnak. Amun represented as a ram is adorned with a double *šbyw* made of bi-conical beads carved in relief to feature each single bead. A large Usekh collar can be seen under the *šbyw*. (Pillet, 1924, 59-60, pl. II; Karlshausen, 1995, fig. 6)

From the reign of Tutankhamun onwards the representation of the divine bark of Amun found on the walls of the 8<sup>th</sup> Pylon at the temple of Amun Re at Karnak and on the walls of the colonnade at Luxor temple show a slight alteration in the form of the collar. Usually, the deities' neck is decorated with a triple-stranded collar instead of the earlier double *šbyw*. It consists of large beads worn above a large Usekh collar. (Fig. 25) (PM II<sup>1</sup>, 112; OIP, 112, 1994, pl. 43, 78; Karlshausen, 1995, fig. 8)

A similar scene from the colonnade of Luxor temple dating to the reign of Horemheb shows the aegis of the sacred bark of Amun also decorated with a triple *šbyw*. A pectoral

hanging from the collar was added to the ornament. (PM II<sup>1</sup>, 311; OIP 112, 1994, pls. 5, 12, 14, 46, 56, 63, 108; Johnson, 1990, 30; Karlshausen, 1995, fig. 9)

From the hypostyle hall at the temple of Amun Re at Karnak, Ramses II is portrayed incensing a procession of Theban divine barks. The king is wearing a blue crown with a double *šbyw* collar. The aegis of the three sacred barks of the Theban triad are all decorated with double or triple *šbyw* collars. (Fig. 26) (PM II<sup>2</sup>, 47 (158), OIP 142, 1994, II, p. 105 ff, III, pl. 53)

Not only are the aegis of sacred barks of the Theban triad adorned with *šbyw* collars, however, a scene from the funerary temple of Ramses III at Madinet Habu in the bark chapel of Ramses II (room 14) depicts the king offering incense and libation to the sacred bark of deified Ramses II. The *šbyw* collar decorating the human-headed aegis of the bark consists of four rows and is worn above a large Usekh collar. (PM II<sup>1</sup>; 508 (136); OIP 83, 1957, pl. 335)

In a similar scene from the temple of Seti I at Abydos, the aegis of the sacred bark of Osiris is also decorated with a double *šbyw* worn over a Usekh collar and a pectoral is hanging down the necklace. The beads of the collar are painted in yellow, red, and blue indicating that the collar is composed of gold and faience. (Fig. 27) (Calverley, 1933, pl. 2)

## Discussion

The examination of the vast number of examples of archaeological and iconographic sources of the *šbyw* collar throughout the current research offers some insights into the potential function, symbolism, and significance of the ornament in the royal and divine sphere.

The two variants of the collar, the necklace with biconical large beads and the second type which is composed of flat-shaped discs are traced in royal reliefs, paintings and in three-dimensional sculpture as well as their presence among the royal funerary jewelry.

Despite its usage since the 17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty for an individual (so far) and as a reward from the king to distinguished high officials, the *šbyw* collar has become popular among the royal wardrobe during the New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period.

The majority of the archaeological and iconographic evidence in which the *šbyw* occurs are locations associated with life and afterlife, namely the temples and the tombs. Accordingly, the collar was used by royals during life and after death.

In fact, the collar has made its first appearance as royal jewelry in scenes of private tombs since the reign of Amenhotep II as evidenced from a scene from the tomb of Kenamun. (1.1) Since then, kings were shown wearing the *šbyw* in paintings and reliefs of private tombs, where they were frequently portrayed in elaborately decorated kiosks, accentuated by solar iconography including sporrans and sun-disc uraei. (Kozloff and Bryan, 1993, 198 f.; Johnson, 1998, 85 ff.; Johnson, 1999, 232)

As Johnson has proposed the *šbyw* collar was one of the chief iconographic devices that was used to indicate the king's deified status and his association with the sun god during his life. The *šbyw* is thus a 'solar symbol' linked to the rejuvenation of the king that occurs during the Heb-sed festival and links the king with the sun god Re. (Johnson, 1999, p. 232) Hence, the collar was considered as an aspect of the deification of kings such as King Tuthmosis IV, Amenhotep III, Seti I, and Ramses II. Tuthmosis IV was the first deified king to be

represented with the *šbyw* on a royal stela (no. 1.2) and the Dream stela from Giza (no. 1.3) while offering to God *Hr-m-3ht* indicating his correlation with the sun god. (Hartwig, 2007, p. 122-124)

Most of the evidence of *šbyw* attestations in private tombs come from the reign of Amenhotep III, specifically after his celebration of his first jubilee in year 30. Amenhotep extended the royal use of this collar to demonstrate his own elevation by the sun god. His illustrations wearing the *šbyw* is thus an official statement that the king has united with the sun god during his life according to the funerary theology of the New Kingdom. This might explain the reason why *šbyw* appeared on royal statuary only during the reign of Amenhotep III. (Kozloff and Bryan, 1993, 199)

On the other hand, according to Ertman, the usage of the *šbyw* collars by kings refers to a connection with the cult of God Amon. His assumption was based on the representations of Amenhotep IV wearing the *šbyw* prior to his adoption of the cult of Aten and his subsequent name change. (no. 1.9) (Ertman, 1977, 26)

Nevertheless, the *šbyw* was used in royal context to refer to a 'divine' status of the king. In other words, when a private individual received the 'Gold of Honor' from the king, his social status in the court was exceptionally elevated. For the king, the *šbyw* had a slightly different function; the king was depicted wearing the collar, to show his uplifted status as a deity and to emphasize his divinity and union with the gods. However, this suggestion should be reconsidered in the light that some deified kings did not appear with this collar. Perhaps the use of the *šbyw* in the late New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period became part of the overall trend to the increased adornments which appeared during

the New Kingdom. (Kozloff and Bryan, 1993, 441)

Moreover, according to various tomb and temple representations, the collar was worn by the kings while offering it as a royal reward to the individuals for their exceptional services and efforts. This is evidenced by the rewarding scene of Horemheb in tomb TT 50 (*no. 1.10*) and the rewarding scene at Karnak temple depicting Ramses IX rewarding the high priest Amenhotep. (*no. 1.13*)

The collar was attested frequently in ritual offering scenes on temple walls since the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty during the reign of Ramses II and later during the reign of Ramses III. Offerings presented to various deities include wine, silver, gold, incense, and libation. The king was mainly wearing the blue crown; however, other royal headdresses had occasionally appeared such as the *nms* and the *khat*. To the present state of knowledge of the researcher, no scenes of the king - wearing the collar with the red, white, or double crown alone- are known. It has also been noticed that the *šbyw* was frequently worn above another broad collar, often with the Usekh.

*šbyw* collars were used in the afterlife as well. Various multicolored necklaces were found decorating the royal mummies such as those of King Tutankhamun and King Psusennes I. As the collar was a device referring to the elevated and divine status of the owner during his life, correspondingly it might have signified a change of state in the afterlife. The king must have desired to maintain the same divine status in the hereafter. *šbyw* could have been an essential component of the king's burial and a funerary symbol of unification with the gods in the afterlife. Wearing the *šbyw* as a funerary jewelry may indicate that the dead king had successfully united with the gods for eternity. It might have served as the

burial and mummification rituals which safeguard the royal deceased in his journey with the gods in the hereafter.

The usage of the collar by the queens is quite rare according to the available sources that have been studied and examined so far. Queen Tiy and Queen Ankhnesamun were the only royal wives represented with *šbyw* collars. They appeared in scenes accompanying their husbands who are wearing the *šbyw* collars as well. It is plausible that Amenhotep III and Tutankhamun would use the female equivalent of the collar to signify the uplifted status of their royal wives. It further underscores the extraordinary nature of the royal wives' divinity and identification with their husbands.

The appearance of this collar as a part of the jewelry items among the deities: Amun, Mut, Ptah, Re-Horakhty and Osiris demonstrates that its usage was not restricted to the royal wardrobe. It seems that it was originally adopted by kings and individuals from divine jewelry. From the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty onwards both the god and the king were shown wearing the *šbyw* in the same scene.

*šbyw* collars were also employed with cultic icons. Multi-stranded collars adorned the aegis of divine barks since the reign of Tuthmosis IV. Sacred barks include those of the Theban Triad, the divine bark of deified Ramses II and that of the sacred bark of Osiris.

Unfortunately, in the royal and divine spheres, accompanying texts which may support the interpretation of the iconography are rare and do not refer directly to the symbolism and significance of the collar. New archaeological fieldwork might unavoidably uncover more evidence for the *šbyw* collar in royal and divine sphere aiming at revealing more functions of the distinctive piece of jewelry.

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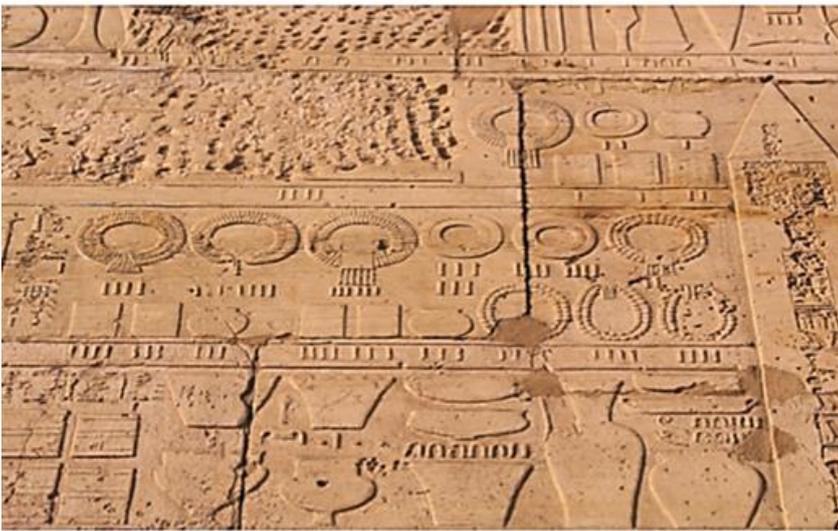
## Figures



**Figure 1:** Sbyw collar of King Psusennes I, featuring biconical beads.  
After: Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs*, 1971, 238, pl. 138.



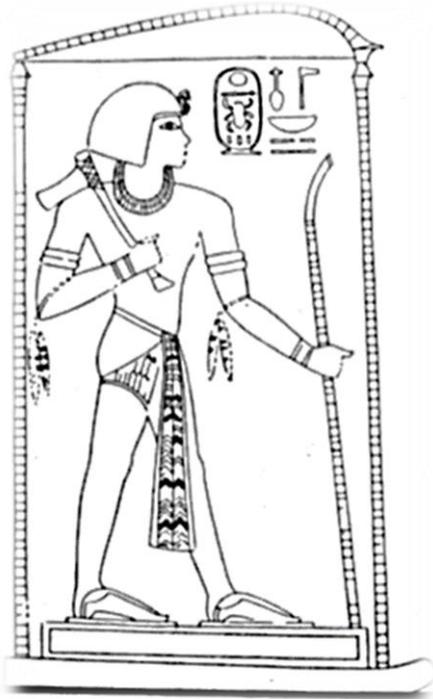
**Figure 2:** Sbyw collar of unknown lady, Scottish Museum in Edinburgh  
After: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/necklace/299731> (accessed on 8/8/ 2022)



**Figure 3:** Gifts of Tuthmosis III dedicated to Amun from his Annals at Karnak.  
After: S. Binder, *The Gold of Honor in the New Kingdom*, 2008, fig. 11.1



**Figure 4:** Gifts dedicated to Amun by Tuthmosis IV Peristyle Hall of Tuthmosis IV. Karnak, Outdoor Museum.  
After: S. Binder, *The Gold of Honor in the New Kingdom*, 2008, fig. 11.2



**Figure 5:** Statue of Amenhotep II from the tomb of Kenamun TT  
After: Aldred, "Hairstyles and History," BMMA 15.6, 142.



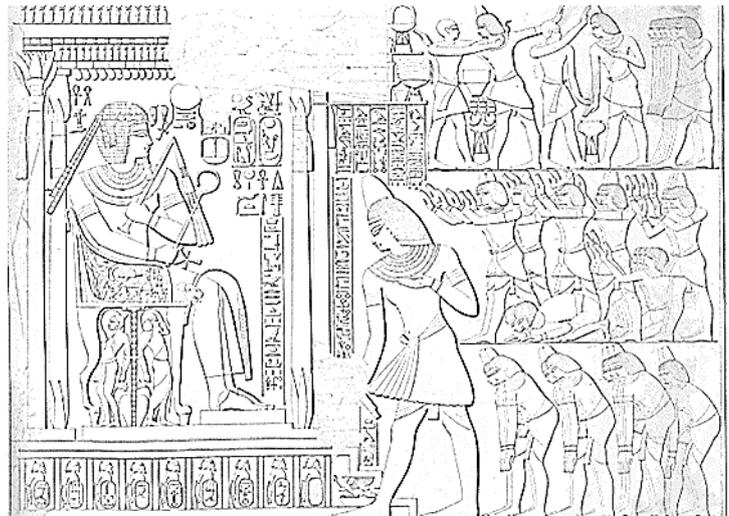
**Figure 6:** Tutmosis IV offering to Horemakhet and wearing double shebyu on a stela found at Giza.  
After: Hassan, The Great Sphinx and its secrets, fig. 17.



**Figure7:** Amenhotep III accompanied by his mother Mutemwia, wearing the Shebyu collar from tomb of Heqa-reshw (TT 226).  
After: Painting by Nina de Garis Davies, MMA 15.5.1



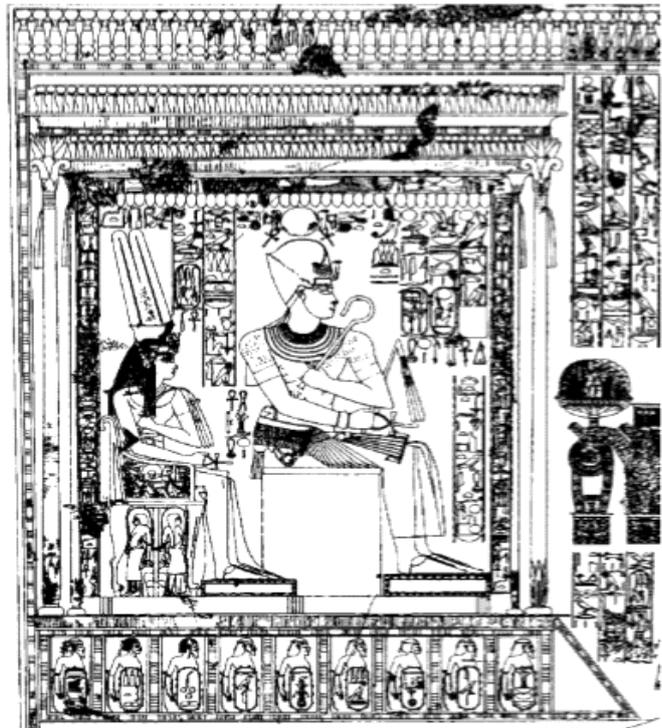
**Figure 8 a:** Fragmentary limestone reliefs of Amenhotep III from the tomb of Khaemhat TT 57. Ägyptisches Museum Berlin no. 14503 After: Kozloff & Bryan, *Egypt's Dazzling Sun*, 1993, fig. 54



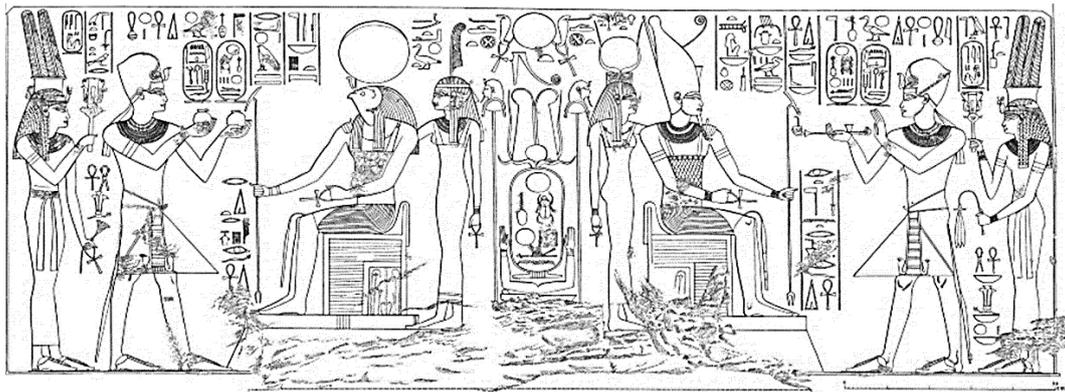
**Figure 8 b:** Scene of Amenhotep III rewarding the tomb owner and officials of Upper and Lower Egypt from the tomb of Khaemhat (TT 57). After: LD III, pl. 76.



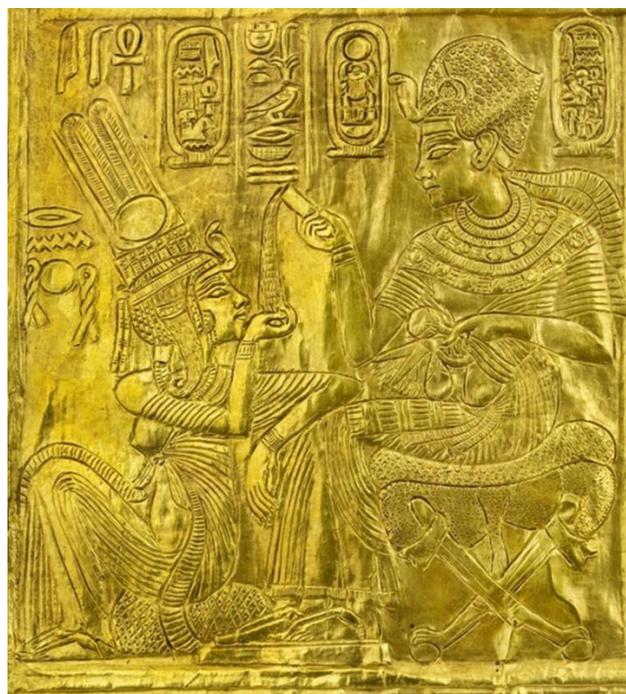
**Figure 9:** Fragmentary limestone reliefs of Amenhotep III from the tomb of the king's scribe Khaemhat at Thebes (TT57). Berlin, Neues Museum ÄM 14442.



**Figure 10:** Amenhotep III with his wife Tiy receiving gifts on the occasion of his third Heb-Sed from the tomb of Kheruef TT 192. After: OIP 102, pl. 45



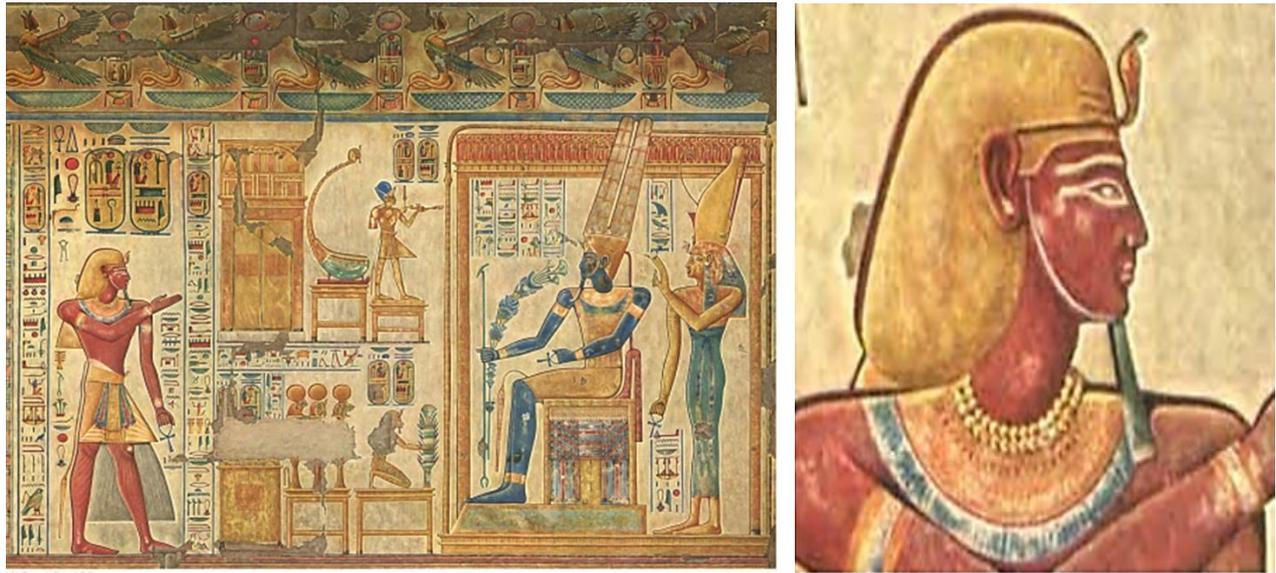
**Figure 11:** Amenhotep IV accompanied by his mother Tiy offering wine to Ra-Horakhty and Maat and incense to Atum and Hathor from the tomb of Kheruef (TT 192)  
After: OIP 102, pl. 9.



**Figure 12:** Gilded wooden shrine with scenes of Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun JE 61481  
After: M. Eaton-Krauss & E. Graefe, *The small golden shrine from the tomb of Tutankhamun*, 1985, pl. xvi, xvii.



**Figure 13:** Horemheb rewarding tomb-owners: Nfr-Htp and PA-rn-nfr (TT 50).  
After: R. Hari, *La tombe thébaine du père divin Neferhotep (TT 50)*, 1985, pl. VI.



**Figure 14:** King Ramses III offering silver, gold, and temple furniture to Amun Ra and Mut. Temple of Madinet Habu.  
After: OIP 83, pl. 322.



**Figure 15:** Statue of *M'ry* wearing Shebyu collar in Berlin Museum 19286.  
After: S. Binder, *The Gold of Honor in the New Kingdom*, 2008, fig. 4.1.



**Figure 16:** Statue of *T'zy* in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 33255.  
After: S. Binder, *The Gold of Honor in the New Kingdom*, 2008, fig. 4.3.



**Figure 17:** Statue of Amenhotep III in the guise of the God Neferhotep at the Museum of Fine Arts at Boston no. 1970.636.  
After: Kozloff & Bryan, *Egypt's Dazzling Sun*, 1993, fig. 20.



**Figure 18:** Shebyu collar on the innermost coffin of Tutankhamun displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 60671.  
After: M. Saleh & H. Sourouzian, *Catalogue of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo*, cat. 175



**Figure 19:** Triple stranded Shebyu of Tutankhamun.  
Vilimkova, *Altägyptische Goldschmiedekunst*, 1969, no. 52.



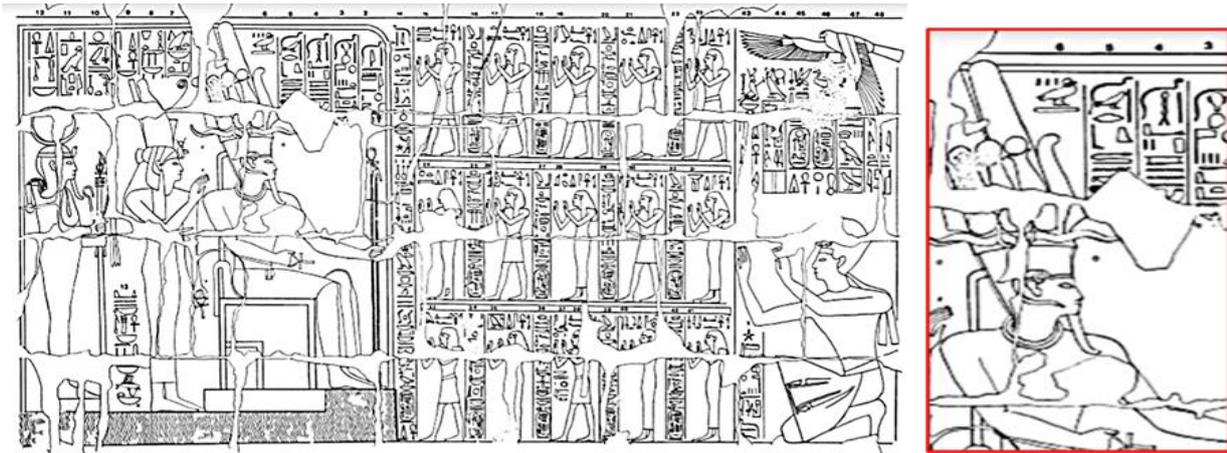
**Figure 20:** Shebyu collar of Psusennes I is displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 85571  
After: M. Saleh & H. Sourouzian, *Catalogue of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo*, cat. 240.



**Figure 21:** Shebyu collar of Psusennes I displayed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo JE 85751  
After: Tiradritti *et al.*, *Egyptian Treasures from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo*, 1998, 320.



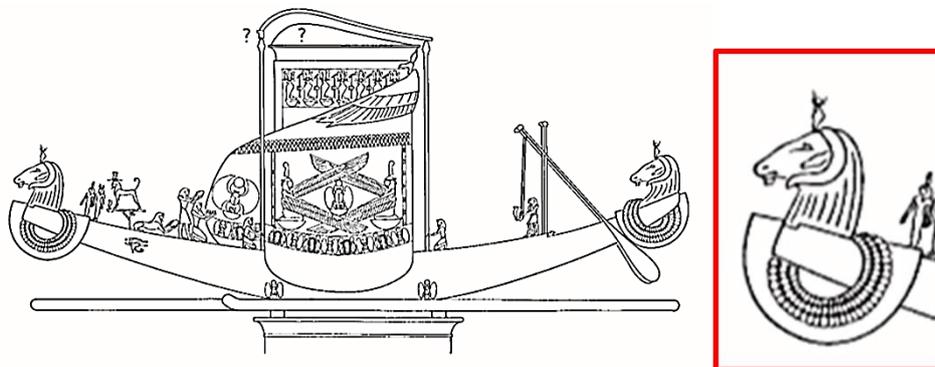
**Figure 22:** Relief from the tomb of Mery-Ra at Saqqara, showing Osiris wearing a Shebyu. Dynasty 20. Kunsthistorisches Muesum Vienna AS 5815,  
After: <https://www.khm.at/objektdb/detail/321251/> (accessed on 20/7/2022)



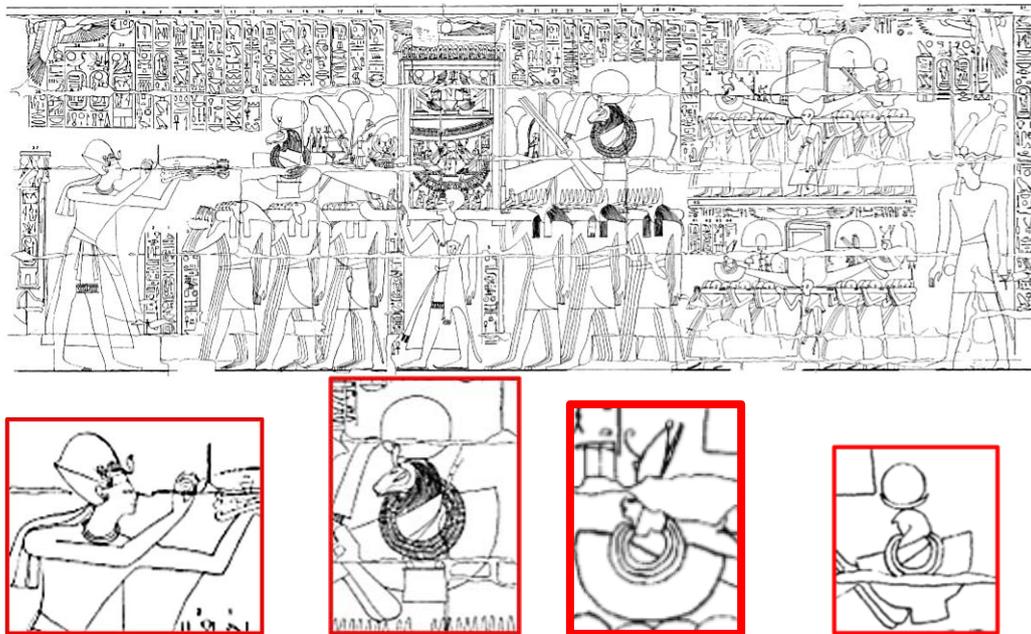
**Figure 23:** Ramses II adoring the Theban Triad with the Ennead. Amun Shown wearing a double shebyu. After: OIP, 142, pl. 36.



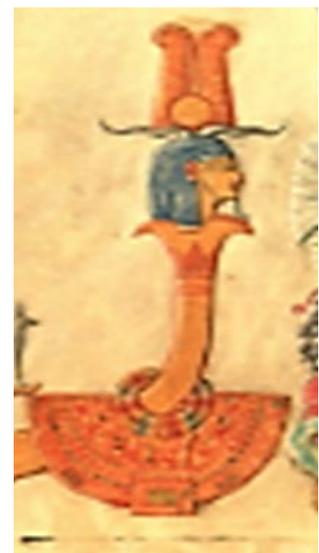
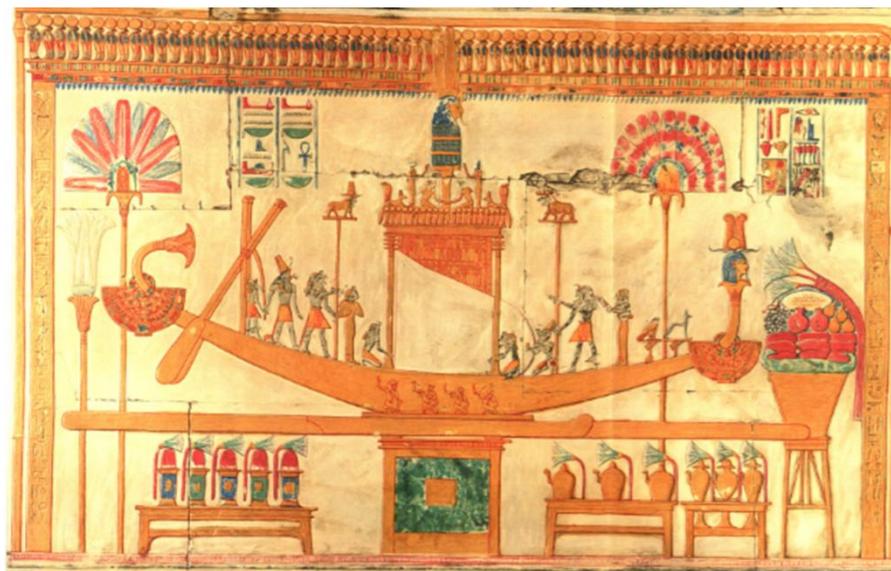
**Figure 24:** Stela of Meryre adoring Osiris who is wearing a shebyu collar, Gregorian Museum at Vatican no. 289. After: Botti and Romanelli, *Le Sculpture del Museo Gregoriano Egizio*, Vatican City, 1951, pl. LXXV.



**Figure 25:** Divine bark of Amun decorated with triple shebyu from the reign of Tuthankhamun; colonnade of Luxor Temple. After: Ch. Karlshausen, *RdE* 46, 1995, fig. 8.



**Figure 26:** Ramses II censuring a procession of Theban divine barks with aegis decorated with shebyu; hypostyle hall, Karnak temple.  
After: OIP 142, pl. 53.



**Figure 27:** Sacred bark of Osiris from the temple of Abydos of Seti I.  
After: M. Calverley, The Temple of Sethos I at Abydos, pl. 2.