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REMARKS ON THE NAME OF THE WESEKH-COLLAR IN THE OLD KINGDOM

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the different early attestations of the name of the broad collar, wesekh. The earlier studies on this collar, based on the Berlin dictionary, revealed that the name of this broad collar is first attested in the Middle Kingdom. However, studies by C. Ziegler¹ and E. Brovarski,² discuss an earlier attestation of the name in the chapel of Akhethotep (Louvre E 10958 [A]) of the Fifth Dynasty. Nevertheless, they did not track the former points of view regarding the name of the broad collar, nor did they discuss the other attestations,³ as these were not their primary focus. This paper presents different perspectives on the name of the wesekh-collar, examining the various attestations in their contexts. It explores the other forms of writing the name, its determinative, and whether the way of writing the name differs from one cemetery to another. It also evaluates whether *nbw* and *ḥ3t* indicate the wesekh-collar and looks at the relationship between the word and the image.

الملخص

تستقصى هذه الورقة البحثية تفصيلاً البدايات المبكرة لظهور اسم قلادة الأوسع حيث ذهبت الدراسات السابقة استناداً على قاموس برلين إلى أن هذا الاسم ظهر منذ الدولة الوسطى باستثناء اشارات كل من ”زيجلر“ و ”بروفريسكى“، اللذين تناولاً واحداً من المصادر المبكرة والمتمثلة في مقصورة ”اخت حتب“ من الأسرة الخامسة (متاحف اللوفر بباريس 10958E a) والتي ورد عليها ذكر اسم قلادة الأوسع إلا انهما لم يتناولا الآراء المختلفة حول بداية ظهور الاسم كما لم يناقشا المصادر الأخرى المبكرة التي لم تكن محل اهتمامهما لذا تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية الآراء المختلفة حول بداية ظهور اسم قلادة الأوسع كما تناول المصادر المتعلقة ببداية ظهور الاسم في الدولة القديمة كل في سياقه. يناقش كذلك هذا البحث الطرق المختلفة لكتابة الاسم ومخصصاته وإذا ما تشابهت أو اختلفت طرق كتابته من جبانة لأخرى. كما تقييم هذه الورقة إذا ما كانت الفلاند ”نبو“ و ”خات“ مرادفات لقلادة الأوسع من خلال دراسة العديد من المصادر الأثرية ودراسة العلاقة بين الصورة والكلمة.

KEYWORDS

Wesekh-collar, collar of beads, jewellery, Old Kingdom, Pepi II, Deshri, Saqqara.

الكلمات الدالة

قلادة الأوسع، قلادة من الخرز، مجوهرات، الدولة القديمة، بيبى الثاني، دشري، سقارة

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¹ Brovarski, E., “Old Kingdom Beaded Collar”, in: J. Phillips, L. Bell, B. B. William, J. Hoch, R. J. Leprohon (eds.), *Studies in Honour of Martha Rhoads Bell: Ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Near East*, I, USA, (1997), 137-138 [fig. 1].

² Ziegler, C., *Le mastaba d'Akhethetep. Une chapelle funéraire de l'Ancien Empire*, Paris, (1993), 111 [e]; cf. Brovarski, “Old Kingdom Beaded Collars”, 137-138 [fig. 1].

³ Brovarski, “Old Kingdom Beaded Collars”, 142, n. 28; Ziegler, *Le mastaba d'Akhethetep*, 111 [e].

INTRODUCTION:

The broad collar, wesekh was an important piece of Egyptian jewellery, worn by gods and placed on mummies for its magical protection.¹ A relief of the god Geb from the Third Dynasty temple at Heliopolis is probably the oldest attestation. It is kept at the Egyptian Museum in Turin (2671/20).² In the Fourth Dynasty, the elite,³ kings,⁴ and many deities e.g., Sekhmet with Snefru from the valley temple of the Bent Pyramid at Dahshur,⁵ and Hathor and the representatives of the different Egyptian nomes with Menkaure⁶ were shown wearing this collar.⁷ In the Fifth Dynasty, almost every official is represented wearing this broad collar.⁸ The broad collar was also indicated amongst the funerary offerings for the first time in the Sixth Dynasty.⁹ Broad collars were made of different materials such as gold, silver, faience, and various semi-precious stones.¹⁰ The decoration consisted of coloured faience or stone beads in rows between semi-circular or falcon-headed terminals.¹¹ The lowermost row has pendants in the form of insects, flowers, leaves, petals, or buds of flowers.¹²

¹ Handoussa, T., “Le collier Ousekh”, in: *SAK* 9 (1981), 143; Wilkinson, A. *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, London, (1971), 31; Keyser, E-de., “Colliers Ousekh”, *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire* 19 (1947), 85; Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 119; Andrews, C., *Amulets of ancient Egypt*, London, (1994), 96; Bulsink, M., *Egyptian gold Jewellery with a catalogue of the collection of gold objects in the Egyptian department of the national museum of antiquities in Leiden*, Turnhout, (2015), 79 [1.2]. For the offering of the broad collars in the Greek-Roman temples, see Beaud, R., “L'offrande du collier-Ousekh”, in: S. Israelit-Groll, *studies in Egyptology presented to Miriam Lichtheim*, I, Jerusalem, (1990), 46-62. For the representation of broad collars in burials and Egyptian funerary art in the late Ptolemaic and Roman Periods, see Riggs, Ch., “Forms of the Wesekh-collar in funerary art of the Graeco-Roman Period”, *CdE* 76 fasc 151-152 (2001), 57-68.

² Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 31; https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/S_2671/?description=&inventoryNumber=2671 (accessed on 02.01.2022)

³ Junker, *Giza* I, pl. 36 [a], Abb. 51: *Giza* XII, 138 [Abb. 11], 140 [13].

⁴ Fakhry, *The Monuments of Sneferu at Dahshur*, II/1, , Cairo, (1961), 71, [fig. 48], 75 [fig. 54], 97 [figs. 91, 93], 102 [figs. 99-100], 114 [fig. 122], 117 [fig. 127], 120 [fig. 131], 127 [fig. 138], 132 [fig. 153], pls. 16 [a]-17 [b]-18[b].

⁵ Fakhry, *The Monuments of Sneferu at Dahshur*, II/1, 127 [fig. 141].

⁶ Friedman, F. D., “The Menkaure Dyad(s)”, in: S. E. Thompson and P. D. Manuelian (eds.), *Egypt and Beyond*, essays presented to Leonard H. Lesko, Brown, (2008), 117 [fig. 9], 137 [fig. 26]; Friedman, Reading the Menkaure Triads, part I, 21 [fig. 2], 24-25 [figs. 5-6]; Friedman, Reading the Menkaure Triads: part II (multi-directionality), 94-5 (figs. 1-3); Reisner, G., *Mycerinus. The temple of the third pyramid at Giza*, Cambridge, (1931), pls. 38-39, 41-42; Brovarski emphasised that Menkaure himself wears the Snw collar in the group of the Theban nome: Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 147.

⁷ Handoussa, “Le collier Ousekh”, 143; Keyser, “Colliers Ousekh”, 85.

⁸ Keyser, “Colliers Ousekh”, 85; e.g. Junker, *Giza* II, Abb. 28, 33: VI (1943), Abb. 5.

⁹ Handoussa, “Le collier Ousekh”, 144; Keyser, “Colliers Ousekh”, 85; cf. Scenes of making collars and offering them: Wilson, J. A, and Allen, Th. G (eds.), *The Mastaba of Mereruka*, I, OIP 31, Chicago, (1938), pls 29-30, 69, 74-76; It is also represented on the images and statues of the officials: e.g. Junker, *Giza* IV, Abb. 5-11: *Giza* V, Abb. 38: *Giza* VI, Abb. 31-32, 34, 40, 72; Hassan, *Excavations at Saqqara 1937-1938, Mastabas of Ny-'ankh-Pepy and Others II*, Cairo, (1975), 8 [fig. 4], 10 [fig. 1].

¹⁰ Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 31.

¹¹ Handoussa, “Le collier Ousekh”, 144; Andrews, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 119-120; cf. Jéquier, G., *Les frises d'objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, MIFAO 47, Le Caire, (1921), 62-64, figs. 158-169.

¹² Handoussa, “Le collier Ousekh”, 43; Keyser, “Colliers Ousekh”, 85; Jéquier, *Les frises d'objets*, 62-64, 158-170.

Perspectives on the name and the determinative of the Wesekh-collar

According to the Berlin Dictionary, the name of the broad collar  *wsh* ‘broad’,¹ is attested in the Middle Kingdom.² Since then, researchers have indicated that the first attestation of the name of the broad collar dates to the Middle Kingdom:³

“Usekh, the word for the broad bead collar, did not come into use until the Middle Kingdom, although the collar itself was worn throughout the Old Kingdom”⁴

“...son nom *wsh* n'est pas attesté avant le Moyen Empire”⁵

However, a study on 'two broad collars at the Royal Museum of Art and History at Brussels showed earlier than these aforementioned studies that the name was attested once in a tomb from the Sixth Dynasty.⁶

Ziegler and Brovarski indicated that the attestation of the name *wsh* on the chapel of Akhethotep of the Fifth Dynasty is the oldest:

“Notre texte offre l'une des plus anciennes attestations du terme”⁷

“... Is probably the earliest definite occurrence of the word *wsh*.⁸”

Other scholars propose that the determinative of the wesekh-collar ☩ (S11) was not attested before the Middle Kingdom:

“... führt dann im Mittleren Reich zur Unterscheidung zwischen  =*nb*

und dem ähnlichen neuen Zeichen ☩ als Determinativ (eigentlich: Ideogramm) für *wsh* “Halskragen” ”.⁹

However, this sign ☩ (S11) is attested as a determinative for the wesekh-collar from the Fifth Dynasty (see the chapel of Akhethotep below). Furthermore, two attestations from the tomb of Kagemni at Saqqara list the two ideograms, *nbw* (S12) and wesekh-collar (S11) with a hawk or falcon terminal, next to each other in an offering text (see below).

In the following pages, I examine the clear attestations for the name of the wesekh-collar, its determinative, and the context in which these occurred. I also look at the relationship between the word and the image since in specific contexts and certain cases, the ideogram *nbw* could be read *wsh*. Additionally, I examine whether the *h3t*-collar was equivalent to the wesekh-collar or not.

¹ *Wb* I. 365 [16]; Jéquier, *Les frises d'objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, 66, n. 1.

² *Wb* I. 365 [16].

³ Feucht, E., “Halsschmuck”, *LÄ* II, (1977), 934.

⁴ Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 31.

⁵ Handoussa, “Le collier Ousekh”, 143.

⁶ Keyser, “Colliers Ousekh”, 85.

⁷ Ziegler, *Le mastaba d'Akhethetep*, 111 [e].

⁸ Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 142.

⁹ Kaplony, P., *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, Monographien der Abgg-Stiftung Bern 8, Bern, (1976), 21, 95, n. 61.

Clear attestations for the name Wesekh-collar¹

The chapel of Akhethotep

On the right side of the chapel entrance of the Vizier Akhethotep (Louvre E 10958 [A]) of the Fifth Dynasty from Saqqara, a scene shows him standing and watching the transportation of two of his statues.² A vertical column of hieroglyphic inscription lists the gifts, which the king gave to Akhethotep, and contains the name of the wesekh (**fig. 1**). It reads:

‘What his majesty authorized (*rđit*) his (viz. Akhethotep) son, the sole friend and *im3-*
‘Sankhu-Ptah, to withdraw for him (*šd n.f.*): a *wsh*-collar and *šnw*-collar of malachite
(?) and lapis lazuli and a counterpoise (*nht*) and a necklace (*isn*) of malachite (?) and
lapis lazuli (?) to be placed at his neck...’³

The name wesekh  is written with the determinatives of a broad collar  (sign-list S11) with five rows of beads, semi-circular terminals and tie cords,⁴ and a cup/basket (sign-list W10) with stroke (sign-list Z1). The inscription also states the material used to construct the collar i.e., malachite (*w3d šm'w*)⁵ and lapis lazuli (*hsbd*). Finally, the inscription explains that the wesekh-collar is worn around the neck. This attestation is the

¹ Hannig gave a list of the attestations of the wesekh-collar in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period in his dictionary (Hannig, R., *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch. Altes Reich und Erste Zwischenzeit*, Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 98, Mainz, (2003), 382): For later attestations from the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom see e.g.: the cult inventory stela of the Eighth Dynasty from Coptos (JdE 43290), concerning the additional donations and goods which *htp-k3-mnw* makes to the temple of the god Min, presents a reference for the wesekh-collar in the form: *nbw* (=*wsh*) *mh m hsbd* 36? ‘36? wesekh-collars filled with lapis lazuli’ (Goedicke, H., “A cult inventory of the Eighth Dynasty from Coptos (Cairo JE 43290)”, *MDAIK* 50 (1994), 73, 78, fig. 1). Goedicke (*MDAIK* 50, 78 (II, 10) interpreted it differently. Two coffins from Harageh from the tombs of Ukhethetep and Herishef-nekht of the Eleventh Dynasty represents the different ritual objects, including images for wesekh-collar with legends: *wsh n hsbd* ‘wesekh-collar of lapis lazuli’, *wsh n s[bn]* ‘multi-coloured wesekh-collar’ (Engelbach, R., and Gunn, B., *Harageh*, BSAE 28, London, (1923), pls. 67-68). Three coffins of Nekhet-kawi (the inner and outer coffins, Copenhagen NCG AEIN 1585-1586, First Intermediate Period) and Khenty-khety (late Eleventh Dynasty to early Twelfth Dynasty) came from Sedment show images of funerary objects containing wesekh-collars with legends: *wsh n šbn/m šbn* ‘multi-coloured wesekh-collar’, *wsh n w3d* ‘green wesekh-collar’, *wsh m hsbd* ‘wesekh-collar of lapis lazuli’ (Petrie, W. M. F., and Brunton, G., *Sedment I*, BSAE 34, London, (1924), pls. 18, 24-25; Jorgensen, M., *Catalogue Egypt I (3000- 1550 B.C.)*, Copenhagen, (1996), 102-103, 104 (upper)-105 (upper)). The inner coffin of Gemni (Copenhagen NCG AEIN 1615, early Twelfth Dynasty) from Saqqara depicts the pictures of different offerings objects having an image for the wesekh-collar and the legend above reads: *wsx 313000* ‘313000 of wesekh-collar’ (Firth, C. M., and Gunn, B., *Excavations at Saqqara; Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, I-II, Le Caire, (1926), 231, pl. 25 (A); Jorgensen, *Catalogue Egypt I (3000- 1550 B.C.)*, 140-42 (upper image)). The remains of the west wall of the funerary chamber of Ihy at Saqqara (Twelfth Dynasty) represent the frieze of objects including two wesekh-collars and two counterpoises on a stand. The legend above reads *wsh n d'm* ‘wesekh of electrum’ and *wsh n mfk3t (m)nht h3* ‘a thousand of wesekh-collars of turquoise and counterpoises’ (Firth and Gunn, *Excavations at Saqqara; Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, I, 288).

² Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 137; Strudwick, N., *Texts from pyramid age*, in: R. J. Leprohon (ed.), *Writings from the ancient world* 16, Atlanta, (2005), 261; PM III², 634-635.

³ Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 137-138 [fig. 1]; Brovarski's translation is very close to Ziegler (*Le mastaba d'Akhethetep*, 110); Strudwick (*Texts from pyramid age*, 161) translated it differently:

‘His majesty had his son,..., Sankhuptah, bring for him malachite and lapis lazuli in the form of a broad collar, a shenu collar and an ankh counterpoise, and also an izen pendent of malachite to be placed around his neck’.

⁴ Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 142, 153; Ziegler, *Le mastaba d'Akhethetep*, 113 [left].

⁵ Wb I. 267 [5-6]; Ziegler, *Le mastaba d'Akhethetep*, 112 [g]; Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 139; cf. Jéquier, G., *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*. Fouilles à Saqqarah. Le Caire, (1929), 73 [fig. 82].

earliest, according to Ziegler and Brovarski, as the chapel dates to at least the reign of Unas.¹

The Tomb of Kagemni

The tomb of the Vizier Kagemni at Saqqara, who lived at the end of the Fifth Dynasty to the early Sixth Dynasty, references the broad collar.² The sarcophagus chamber of Kagemni has a rectangular sarcophagus-recess. The upper part of the eight walls shows the different offerings and inscriptions, including the *htp-di-nsw* formula with his titles.³ On the upper part of the south wall of the sarcophagus recess, which is broken apart from the surviving lower blocks, offerings including oils, broad collars, and counterpoises are depicted. The first register presents the remains of the oil jars.⁴ The second register shows wesekh-collars with falcon-head terminals—which are also attested without a name in the later tomb of Mereruka⁵—counterpoises and necklaces on stands. A line of hieroglyphic inscription above them reads:⁶



Nbw wsh rdiw [m] http-di-nsw n im3hw hr nsw [...] s3b [...] [...]

'Wesekh-collars of gold given, [as] an offering that the king gives, to the one venerated before the king, the Chief of Justice [...] [...]'.⁷

The third register shows jars of oils and the remains of the text read ‘bringing up ointment...’. The fourth register depicts seven counterpoises on a stand and the remains of another stand. These objects are labelled with a similar inscription to the second register, but the two ideograms of *nbw* (S12) and wesekh-collar (S11B) are written without ‘the sand balls’ (N33A).

It is worth noting that the two ideograms of *nbw* and *wesekh* in the second register refer to three types of depicted objects: *wesekh*-collars with falcon-head terminals, counterpoises and necklaces, while in the fourth register, they refer to one type of object, i.e., the counterpoises. This inscription in the tomb of Kagemni is the only known source in the Old Kingdom in which the *wsh* is written with the ideogram of *wesekh*-collar with falcon-head terminals.

⁸ These collars should be made of ‘gold,’ as nbw (S12) represents a ‘collar of gold beads.’ The two titles of Kagemni, *imy-r prwy hd* and *imy-r prwy nbw*, ‘Overseer of the Two

¹ Ziegler, *le Mastaba d'Akhethetep*; Fouilles du Louvre à Saqqara I, 18.

² Firth and Gunn, *Excavations at Saqqara; Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, I, 20.

³ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 117-121.

⁴ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 121.

⁵ Wilson and Allen (eds.), *The mastaba of Mereruka I*, pls. 30, 32 [lower register with two collars], 69, 76; Brovatski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 154, n. 91.

⁶ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 122.

⁷ This translation could be compared with the text in the tomb of Akhethotep where the material of which the wesekh-collar and the Snw-collar are made came before the name of the collars: Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 137-139 [fig. 1]; three special cases are attested in the Egyptian language where the apposition could be separated from one another by other words. The current case represents the material of which the object is made: Gardiner, A. H., *Egyptian Grammar; being an introduction to the study of hieroglyphs*, Oxford, (1957), 68 (Z [1]). Firth and Gunn translated the two ideograms into ‘collars of gold given...’. They justify this interpretation stating that it is based on that they are written in ‘account style’: Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 122, n. 1.

⁸ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 505 (sign-list S12); Harris, J. R., *Lexicographical Studies in ancient Egyptian Minerals*, Berlin, (1961), 32.

Treasuries' and 'Overseer of the Two Houses of Gold,'¹ reflect his wealth as can be seen by the gold collars, necklaces and counterpoises.

The tomb of Mehi

The tomb of the 'Royal Chamberlain' Mehi at Saqqara,² contemporary to King Pepi II of the Sixth Dynasty, presents a further attestation for the name wesekh. On the northern part of the western wall, there is a representation of the different offering objects in three registers. Each register contains five tables. Each table is loaded with different offering objects. Four broad collars with semi-circular ends and four counterpoises are depicted on two tables. Each pair of broad collars and counterpoises are placed on a table (**fig. 2**). On the first table, the first broad collar is labelled *d'm* 30 '30 (wesekh-collars) of electrum', the second is labelled with the name and number 30 '30 wesekh broad collars'. As for the two counterpoises, only the last one is indicated by name (*m'nht* 30 '30 counterpoises').³ On the second table, the four objects are indicated by the name of the material of which they are made: *hsbd* 'lapis lazuli', (*m*)*fk3(t)* 'turquoise', *hrst* 'carnelian', *w3d sm'w* 'malachite of Upper Egypt'.⁴ The name of the wesekh-collar is written with the determinative of the cup/basket (W10). It is worth mentioning the presence of the name of the wesekh-collar in the tomb of Mehi because there are many other contemporary tombs from the reign of the same King Pepi II in the same cemetery which have representations of the wesekh-collar,⁵ but without the name, which raises questions about the name's absence.

The tomb of Ny-hebsed-neferkare

The tomb of the 'Vizier' Ny-hebsed-neferkare at Saqqara, which is dated to the end of the reign of Pepi II,⁶ also contains the name wesekh. On the west wall of the funerary chamber, there is a representation for the different provisions including the bread, meat, vegetables, and a group of tables carrying eight vases with labels of the seven sacred oils (cf. the tomb of Deshri below) and two wesekh-collars in blue, red, green and yellow. These are labelled by 'wesekh-collar of electrum, lapis lazuli and carnelian'.⁷ Two counterpoises (*m'nht d'm hsbd hrst*) of these two wesekh-collars, two bracelets and three bundles are also depicted.⁸

The tomb of Ima-merire

The tomb of the 'Vizier' Ima-merire at Saqqara, contemporary to the reign of the King Pepi II,⁹ presents a similar example to the tomb of Mehi (see above). The west wall of the funerary chamber features an invocation to Anubis, then the different offering objects, including the seven sacred oils, make-up tools, and jewellery which consists of eight

¹ Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 123.

² Hassan, S., *Excavations at Giza 1934-1935*, VI, part II (text), Cairo, (1948), 144 [114].

³ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73 [fig. 82].

⁴ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73 [fig. 82].

⁵ E.g. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 37 [fig. 39], 38 [fig. 42], 45 [fig. 49], pls. 7, 11.

⁶ Jéquier, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, III, 60.

⁷ Jéquier, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, III, 58.

⁸ Jéquier, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, III, 58. On the east wall is a full list of the different offerings: Jéquier, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, III, 58 [fig. 59].

⁹ Probably, he was born in the reign of the King Pepi I: Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 55.

wesekh-collars and four counterpoises in two rows on four tables. A counterpoise is placed between two wesekh-collars on each table.¹

The legend above the objects on the first table in the first row reads:²

hsbd 22 ‘22 (wesekh-collars) of lapis lazuli,’ (*m*)^c*nht* 22 ‘22 counterpoises,’ *hrst* 22 ‘22 (wesekh-collars) of carnelian’

The legend above the objects of the second table in the first row reads:

d'm 22 ‘22 (wesekh-collars) of electrum’, (*m*)^c*nht* 21 ‘21 counterpoises’, *nbw* 34 ‘34 (wesekh-collars) of gold.’

The legend above the objects of the first table in the second row reads:

d'm  *w(s)h* 22 ‘22 wesekh-collars of electrum,’ (*m*)^c*nht* 22 ‘22 counterpoises’³

The legend above the objects of the second table in the second row reads:⁴

mfk3t nbw 23 ‘23 (wesekh-collars) of turquoise and gold’, (*m*)^c*nht* 22 ‘22 counterpoises’

In the first row, it seems that the legend indicates the types of material of which the wesekh-collars are made including *nbw* which is used in a similar way to *hsbd*, *hrst*, *d'm*, while counterpoises are known by their name without any change in the two rows. In the second row, the name and the material are used to address the wesekh-collars, i.e., *d'm w(s)h* 22 and *mfk3t nbw* 23. However, *d'm*, *mfk3t*, and *nbw*, address the images of the wesekh-collars and the material of which they are made and once the name we(s)ekh is written.

The tomb of Deshri

The sixth attestation is recorded on the walls of the burial chamber of the ‘Sole Friend’ Deshri from his tomb at Saqqara. It is made of painted limestone and is kept at the Egyptian Museum Cairo (SR 2/ 14633, CG 1572; H. 150cm, W. 155cm L. 302cm).⁵

It is dated from the Sixth Dynasty to Middle Kingdom,⁶ though Porter and Moss suggested that this burial chamber dates to the First Intermediate Period.⁷ Based on the similarities of the offering list of this burial chamber with many offering-lists in the tombs of the Sixth Dynasty,⁸ this tomb should be dated to the Sixth Dynasty.

The interior two sides and the back of this chamber (fig. 3) are decorated with scenes of offerings, a false door, and a list of the names of different offerings.⁹ On the right side, the seven oils are represented, showing three jars on seven tables. Above each group of three jars, the name of divine oil is listed.¹⁰ Next to them, the different types of jewellery are shown. A yellow wesekh-collar and a counterpoise are depicted on a table (fig. 4). Above them, it is written:

¹ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 52-53, pl. 52.

² Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 52.

³ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73 [fig. 82] ; for the name of the material before the name of the collar, read above the translation from the chapel of Akhethotep and the tomb of Kagemni.

⁴ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 52.

⁵ Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, CGC N°s 1295-1808, II, 45 [1572], pl. 72 [a]; PM III², 673; Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1934-1935*, VI/II, 147 [126].

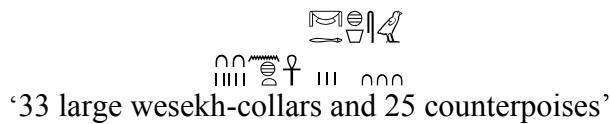
⁶ Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, CGC N°s 1295-1808, 45 [1572].

⁷ PM III², 673.

⁸ Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1934-1935*, VI/II, 147, pls. 115-122.

⁹ Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, CGC N°s 1295-1808, 46-51, pls. 72[b]-74; Maspero, G., *Trois années de fouilles dans les tombeaux de Thèbes et de Memphis*, Paris, (1885), 201.

¹⁰ Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, CGC N°s 1295-1808, 49, pl. 74 [f]; Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1934-1935*, VI/II, pl. 115 [126, bottom].



The name of the wesekh-collar is written with the determinative of the ideogram *nbw* (S12)¹; 3 is an adjective and the number of the objects in this case is 33 wesekh-collars.² The jar before, i.e., *bdt* ‘natron’,³ counts numbers the same.⁴ The yellow colour and the determinative of the ‘collar of beads, S12’ could indicate that the wesekh-collar and the counterpoise are made of gold.

The tomb of Pepyankh (A2)

The tomb of the ‘Mayor and the Sealer of the King of Lower Egypt’ Pepyankh at Meir,⁵ who lived and served most of his life under Pepy II, dates to the late Sixth Dynasty,⁶ and in it the name of the wesekh-collar is shown with an unconventional determinative. On the west wall of room no. 1, which has three internal doorways leading to other rooms, the owner of the tomb is shown standing in the company of his officials, inspecting the work of the craftsmen.⁷ This wall is divided into five registers. The top register shows the manufacture of jewellery. The first worker on the left twists a thread and the text above him reads:⁸



‘Bundling the threads for the stringing of a *wsh*-collar’

Before this worker, a large wesekh-collar and two bracelets are placed on a table. A belt with tassels is placed beneath on another table. Above these objects is written *wʒd dʒm* ‘malachite and electrum’ indicating the material from which they are made.⁹ Two more men are represented in the centre holding the ends of a large wesekh-collar and the text above them reads:¹⁰



‘Stringing a gold-collar by the stringers of the wesekh-collar’

Finally, a man is shown bowing and offering two counterpoises to the owner who stands before him. The text above him reads:¹¹

¹ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, III, 52-53, pl. 52.

² Cf. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 6. It should be read *nbw* 3 rather than *nbw.f*.

³ *Wb* I. 486 (5-9).

⁴ Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches*, CGC N°s 1295-1808, 49.

⁵ Kanawati listed 25 titles for Pepyankh: Kanawati, N., and Evans, L., *The Cemetery of Meir II; the tomb of Pepyankh the black*, ACE rep. 34, Oxford, (2014), 11-12.

⁶ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 18.

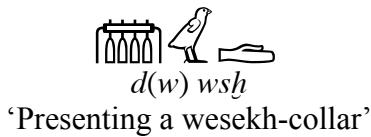
⁷ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 24, pls. 4b-8a, 72 (b).

⁸ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 25, n. 147, pl. 72 (b); Drenkhahn, R., *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten*, ÄA 31, Wiesbaden, (1976), 22 [xx], 43-44. The rest of the registers depict the metal work, directly after the top register, jar makers and statues, and bearers of some objects: Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 25.

⁹ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 25-26, pl. 72 (b).

¹⁰ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 26, pl. 72 (b). See also: Drenkhahn, *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten*, 22, 44.

¹¹ Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 26, pl. 72 (b); Drenkhahn, *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten*, 22.



It is noteworthy that the worker presents two counterpoises, but the text indicates the wesekh-collar. This determinative (S17A), which represents a ‘girdle’ is only attested for the name of the wesekh-collar here. However, this sign (S17A) resembles the sign ‘shoulder-knot’ (S22) and ‘collar of beads’ (S12).¹ Both of these signs alternate with the ‘girdle’.² The scribe probably used this sign (S17A) to indicate the ideogram ‘collar of beads’ (S12). The latter, i.e., (S12), alternates with the ‘girdle’ once in the word for ‘malachite’ which is written in this form .³ This leads to the conclusion that *nbw=wsh* in this context.

The name of the Wesekh-collar and the *ḥ3t*-collar⁴

The earliest attestation for *ḥ3t* is recorded in the tomb of Khenu from the Fifth Dynasty at Saqqara bearing the title: ‘*imy-r3 ḥ3t nt nsw* Overseer of the Khat of the King’. is written with the determinative of collar of beads (S12).⁵ This title is listed among the different titles of the owner on an unfinished wall which has a fragment containing inscriptions with the titles of the owner.⁶ The second attestation is in the pyramid texts (spell 746/passage 2276b).⁷ It is in the pyramid of Queen Neith, the wife of the King Pepi II. The name is fragmented and is written with the determinative of a collar of beads (S12).⁸ E. Feucht assumed that the broad collar, *wsh*, was called *ḥ3t* in the Old Kingdom and Middle Kingdom, and from the Middle Kingdom was known by wesekh.⁹ Her argument is based on the Berlin Dictionary,¹⁰ though the latter identified *ḥ3t* as ‘Art Halskragen’¹¹ with a source reference to a tomb at Beni Hasan.¹² This source, Beni Hasan tomb no. 15, indicates the wesekh-collar twice by the name of *wsh* and *wsh hsbd* ‘wesekh-collar’ and ‘wesekh-collar of lapis lazuli’ in the first row of the scenes of the south wall of the main chamber. The name *ḥ3t* is used to indicate a different object at the end of the same row.¹³ This suggests that the two names, *wsh* and *ḥ3t*, indicate two different objects, at least in this context. The two different terms used in the Old Kingdom also indicate two different objects.

¹ Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 506 (S17*).

² Newberry, P. E., “*ṣsm.t*”, in: *Studies presented to F. L. Griffith*, London, (1932), 316 n. 1, 320 n. 7, pl. 50.

³ Newberry, “*ṣsm.t*”, 320 n. 7; *Wb* IV. 539 (1-3).

⁴ The name of the wesekh-collar is linked to the Snw-collar, as the latter may have survived in the term *wsx* (n) Saw which is attested on some coffins of the Twelfth Dynasty from Gebelein and Meir: Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 160.

⁵ Mariette, A., *Les Mastabas de l'ancien empire*, Paris, (1889), 185 [C]; Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch. Altes Reich und Erste Zwischenzeit*, 923; for the chronology, see: PM III/2, 488.

⁶ Mariette, *Les Mastabas de l'ancien empire*, 185 [C].

⁷ Faulkner, R. O., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*; translated into English (supplement of hieroglyphic texts), Oxford, (1969) &2276(b); Faulkner, R. O., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts; translated into English*, Oxford, (1969), 316 n. 1 & 2276 (746).

⁸ Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts (supplement)*, &2276 (b); cf. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 315 (&48).

⁹ Feucht, “Halsschmuck”, col. 934; Wilkinson offers the same point of view that *ḥ3t* is used to indicate the broad collar, wesekh, though no reference is given: Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 31.

¹⁰ Feucht, “Halsschmuck”, col. 935, n. 19.

¹¹ *Wb* III. 222 [8].

¹² Newberry, P. E., *Beni Hasan II*, London, (1893), pl. 7 [first row, middle].

¹³ Newberry, *Beni Hasan II*, pl. 7 [first row, middle].

The Wesekh-collar and the ideogram *nbw*

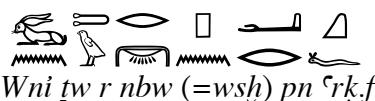
The word *wsh/nbw* could identify the objects depicted in the pictorial representations, though without any commentary, ‘but most often it complements the visual content’.¹ The integration between the word and the image is represented in the relationship between the ideogram, *nbw*, ‘collar of beads,’ (S12), and the image of the wesekh-collar in the scenes of making and presenting jewellery.

Jéquier suggested that the name of the broad collar is always *wsh*.² The close investigation of the different sources from the Old Kingdom suggests that the ideogram, *nbw*, in the scenes of making and offering jewellery, and in relation to the depiction of the image of the wesekh-collar, could be interpreted according to the following alternative options, depending on the context:

- (1) *nbw* must read *wsh*, as the ideogram *nbw* was considered an abbreviation for the word *wsh*,³
- (2) The material, i.e., gold, of which the collar is made, and
- (3) *nbw* indicates generally different objects from the sole wesekh-collar.

The tomb of Wep-em-nefert

The website of the Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (TLA, lemma-no. 49830)⁴ lists an attestation for *wsh* on the east wall of the offering room of Iby, Son of the ‘Secretary of the Toilet-house, Boundary official of Dep, Master of the largesse in the Mansion of Life’ Wep-em-nefert, in the tomb of Wep-em-nefert of the Fifth Dynasty at Giza.⁵ This attestation is represented in a scene of the owner of the tomb, Wep-em-nefert, before his son, Iby, dedicating a ‘will’ to his son, and supervising the different crafts, presented in four registers, of brewing, metal work, sculpting statues, polishing a coffin, making bread, a carpenter’s workshop, and a jeweller’s workshop (fig. 5).⁶ The second scene of the last register from left depicts two dwarfs making necklaces. The first dwarf on the left tells his companion:



Wni tw r nbw (=wsh) pn 'rk.f

‘Make haste concerning this necklace, in order that it may be finished’⁷

The second dwarf answers his colleague saying “as surely as Ptah loves you, I would like to finish it today”⁸. TLA read this sign ☰ (sign-list S12) *wsh*, as it could not be translated as ‘gold’. Here, it indicates the wesekh-collar which is being made. This source should be the oldest attested so far for the reading of *nbw=wsh*.

¹ Cf. Baines, J., “On functions of Writing in Ancient Egyptian Pictorial Representation”, in: P. Taylor (ed.), *Iconography without Texts*, London, (2008), 99.

² Jéquier, *Les frises d’objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, 66, n. 1.

³ Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 142, n. 28; Brovarski, E., *Naga ed-Der in the First Intermediate Period*, Atlanta, (2018), 203, n. 387; Drenkhahn, *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten*, 44; Wb II, 237 (1-3); Jéquier, *Les frises d’objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, 66, n. 1; The nbw ‘collar of beads’ is close to the form of the wesekh-collar with the slight difference that it is less broad: Jéquier, *Les frises d’objets des sarcophages du Moyen Empire*, 61 [fig. 157].

⁴ [⁵ PM III/1, 281-282.](http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla/servlet/GetWcnRefs?f=0&l=0&of=0&ll=49830&db=0&lr=0&mo=1&wt=y&bc=Start(lemma-no. 49830, accessed on the 05.04.2020).</p>
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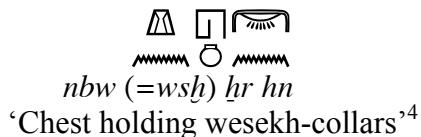
⁶ Hassan, S., *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931*, Cairo, (1936), 190-199 [fig. 219].

⁷ Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931*, 198.

⁸ Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931*, 198.

Relief from the tomb of Methethi (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond 55.6.2)

This relief came from the tomb of Methethi, ‘Noble of the King, Overseer of the department of tenants of the Great House,’ which dates to the Fifth Dynasty (contemporary to Unas), from Saqqara; the tomb was probably in the neighborhood of the pyramid of Unas.¹ The relief is kept at Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond 55.6.2. It shows the inspection of the granary and the treasury before the owner of the tomb who is shown seated on a chair. Four men are represented before him, including the ‘Scribe of the Granary,’ two archivists according to the legend above them, and a sealer who holds a wesekh-collar and beside whose leg is a box.² The text before him and above the box reads:³



There is another legend, šdt nbw (=wsh) ‘taking the wesekh-collar’, behind him which indicates the action of taking the collar from the box to offer it to the owner.⁵ This collar should be made of gold.⁶ This source should be the second oldest known reading of *nbw* as *wsh*.

The Tomb of Meru

In the tomb of the ‘Scribe of the Royal Archives, High Priest’, Meru, at Heliopolis, which is dated to the Sixth Dynasty (contemporary to Pepi II),⁷ a scene on the west wall, which contains an offering formula and offering objects, shows a table in the second register on which three large wesekh-collars are represented. The legend above them reads;⁸



‘220 wesekh-collars of silver (as) an offering that the king gives to the one venerated before the great god Meru’

A pile of straight collars or bracelets and a kilt are also labelled with: nbw (=wsh) n d'm 313 ‘313 of wesekh-collars of electrum’. *Nbw n d'm* should indicate here the objects, i.e., the collars, *nbw n hd* must be read wesekh-collars.⁹

The Tomb of Sobeky

The tomb of Sobeky, ‘Overseer of the Cabinet, Hight Priest’, at Heliopolis, which is dated to the Sixth Dynasty (contemporary to Pepi II),¹⁰ shows on the western wall of the offering

¹ Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 7; cf. PM III/2, 646-648.

² Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 21.

³ Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 21-22, Nr. 2.

⁴ Cf. for this translation e.g. the tomb of Mereruka: Kanawati, and Abder-Raziq, *Mereruka and his Family II: the Tomb of Waatetkhethor*, 32; Kaplony’s translation ‘Halskragen, der in der Kiste aufbewahrt wird’: Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 21, 95, n. 61.

⁵ Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 21-22, Nr. 2.

⁶ Kaplony, *Studien zum Grab des Methethi*, 95, n. 61.

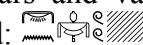
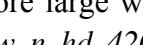
⁷ Daressy, G., “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, in: *ASAE* 16 (1916), 193-220.

⁸ 194; PM IV, 61.

⁹ Daressy, “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, 196. See also the first register.

¹⁰ Daressy, “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, 196.

¹⁰ Daressy, “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, 194; PM IV, 61.

chamber, many offerings. Between the counterpoises of collars and vases in the first register, there are remains of a large wesekh-collar. It is labelled:  nbw (=wsh) n hd 200 [...] ‘200 [...] of wesekh-collars of electrum’.¹ Two more large wesekh-collars in the second register of the same wall are labelled  nbw n hd 420 ‘420 wesekh-collars of silver’.²

The Tomb of Thauty

The tomb of Thauty, ‘District Governor and Nomarch’ of the Sixth Dynasty, who lived in the reign of Pepi II, in the cemetery of Hamra Dom/Gebel et-Tarif (T73) at Dishna/Qena, presents a further example for the relationship between the word and image.³ The subterranean rooms show motifs that are similar to the famous high officials in Saqqara e.g., Mereruka, and Kagemni. On the western south wall of room ‘A’ two rows of wesekh-collars and counterpoises are represented. Between the two rows, there is an offering formula (*htp-di-nsw*), including the titles of the tomb owner, dedicating the objects to the deceased.⁴ Above the first row, the legend reads:⁵



tnw nbw (=wsh) nw d'm hsbd m3' mfk3t [...]

‘Two wesekh-collars of electrum, real lapis lazuli and turquoise [...]’⁶

The images show probably a *šnw*-collar on the right,⁷ wesekh-collars, and counterpoises. The inscription here might indicate the collars with their counterpoises. These collars are made of fine gold, lapis lazuli, and turquoise.⁸

The interior coffin of Djed-Inherit-Ankh/Mery, SF 5023

Two fragmentary boards of the wooden coffin of the ‘District Governor’ Djed-inherit-ankh were found by G. Reisner at Sheikh Farag (SF 5203), which is dated to the Sixth-Eighth Dynasties.⁹ One of them is decorated with the jars of the seven sacred oils, while the other board shows two wesekh-collars, two bracelets, an apron, and a wesekh-collar. The legends above the objects read respectively: *nbw(=wsh) 6 w3rw 6 m(n)fit 12 nbw (=wsh) 20* ‘6 wesekh collars, 6 *w3rw*-bracelets, 12 *m(n)fit*-bracelets, 20 wesekh collars’.¹⁰

¹ Daressy, “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, 202.

² Daressy, “La nécropole des grands prêtres d’Héliopolis sous l’ancien empire”, 202.

³ Säve-Söderbergh, T., *The Old Kingdom Cemetery at the Hamra Dom (el-Qasr wa es-Saiyad)*, Stockholm, (1994), 17-18.

⁴ Säve-Söderbergh, *The Old Kingdom Cemetery at the Hamra Dom*, 55, pl. 36. This south wall shows two registers of bundles which are placed in piles and vessels including the oils on stands. The northern wall depicts decorated false door and massive food offerings. The east wall represents different food offerings and double false door. The west wall is undecorated (Säve-Söderbergh, *The Old Kingdom Cemetery at the Hamra Dom*, 54-55, pls. 32-38).

⁵ Säve-Söderbergh, *The Old Kingdom Cemetery at the Hamra Dom*, pl. 36.

⁶ Cf. The translation of Säve-Söderbergh (the *Old Kingdom Cemetery at the Hamra Dom*, 55): ‘gold, fine gold, true lapis lazuli and turquoise’.

⁷ Cf. Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 143.

⁸ Cf. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73 [fig. 82].

⁹ Brovarski, *Naga Ed-Dér in the First Intermediate Period*, 202-203.

¹⁰ Brovarski, *Naga Ed-Dér in the First Intermediate Period*, 203 (fig. 9.23); cf. the tomb of Iaret south of Saqqara: Maspero, *Trois années de fouilles dans les tombeaux de Thèbes et de Memphis*, 200; cf. Pap 602 Cairo Museum (Posener-Krieger, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum; Fifth Series: the Abu sir Papyri*, pl. 27 [602A]) and JdE 94319 a-p (Posener-Krieger, *Fragments de Papyrus*, in: M. Verner, *the pyramid complex of Khentkaus, Abusir III*, 137-138, pls. 27 (c)-28 (d)).

The ‘collar of bead’ (S12) should not be interpreted as ‘gold’ indicating the material of the collars, because the other two objects, i.e., the bracelets, are labelled by their names (*wɜrw* and *m(n)fit*),¹ not the type of the material.

The tomb of Ankh-nebef

The tomb of Ankh-nebef, ‘Pure-priest of the two hundred’, at Saqqara (contemporary to Pepi II) presents an attestation for the coincidence between the image of the wesekh-collar and the word/term/ideogram *nbw*.² The east wall of the funerary chamber, which is divided into three sections, includes offering tables which are placed into two registers with vases and an offering invocation to Anubis, façade-stela, and a large list of offerings in three rows.³ On the west wall, the frieze band contains an offering invocation to Osiris. Below this text, the different types of funerary equipment are shown on six tables.⁴ The first and second tables depict eight jars and the legends address the sacred oils and incense. The third table represents two wesekh-collars and the legend above them reads respectively *nbw n ȝtt 30* ‘30 precious wesekh-collars’⁵ and *d'm 20* ‘20 (wesekh-collars) of electrum’. The fourth table shows counterpoises with a legend which reads *(m) nht 10* ‘10 counterpoises’, and two bracelets surmounted by an apron and legends *wɜrw 20* ‘*wɜrw*-bracelets’ *m(n)fit 20* ‘20 *m(n)fit*-bracelets’ *bȝh(y)t 10* ‘10 aprons’.⁶ The fifth and sixth tables contain yellow fabrics and bundles. It seems that the legend, *nbw n ȝtt*, which addresses the two wesekh-collars, designates and equals *wsh* and could probably indicate the material, gold, of which they are made.⁷ The other objects, the counterpoise, bracelets, and apron are indicated by their names.

The tomb of Ibi

The tomb of Ibi, ‘Chief of the Estate, Sole Friend’,⁸ at Deir el-Gebrawi from the Sixth Dynasty (contemporary to Pepi I and Pepi II) presents an example for the concurrence between the word *nbw* and the image of the wesekh.⁹ On the north wall of the chapel, east of the offering recess, the owner is represented viewing the craftsmen’s workshop and counting the production of each craft of the residence and outside.¹⁰ Six registers are shown before him. The first register depicts the manufacture and display of stone jars. The second register is the most significant for this discussion. It shows three jars which are labelled ‘smoothing stone vessels’.¹¹ Four dwarfs are represented. Each pair holds the end of a broad collar on a table. Above them are two tables with completed jewellery. The right table with counterpoises and a pectoral is labelled twice *sti nbw*. The left table with two

¹ *Wb* I. 252 [9]; *Wb* II. 80 (10-12).

² *PM* III/2, 679-680.

³ Jéquier, *ASAE* 35 (1935), 135 [fig. 4].

⁴ Jéquier, *ASAE* 35 (1935), 136.

⁵ *Urk* IV, 1648 [15]: 1654 [7].

⁶ Jéquier, *ASAE* 35 (1935), 136; cf. the tomb of S’ankhenptah which was found north-east of the pyramid of Djedkare-Isesi south of Saqqara and contains two wesekh-collars with legends of nbw Dam ‘gold and electrum’: Maspero, G., *Trois années de fouilles dans les tombeaux de Thèbes et de Memphis*, 207. Cf. Brovarski, *Naga Ed-Dér in the First Intermediate Period*, 203; for *bȝh(y)* see: *Wb* I. 422 (5).

⁷ Cf. The designation *nbw ȝtt* ‘precious gold’: *Urk* IV. 1649 [2] and 1654 [7].

⁸ Kanawati listed 50 titles for Ibi: *Deir el-Gebrawi II, the southern cliff; the tomb of Ibi and others*, 11-13.

⁹ Kanawati, N., *Deir el-Gebrawi II, the southern cliff; the tomb of Ibi and others*, ACE rep. 25, Oxford, (2007), 46.

¹⁰ Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi II*, 46-47, pl. 53; Davies, N. de G., *The rock tombs of Deir el-Gebrawi, Tomb of Zau and tombs of the northern group*, I, London, (1902), pl. 13.

¹¹ The rest of the second register shows the carpenters and the sculptors working on wood objects. The third register depicts the preparation of the materials for the manufacture of the jewellery. The fourth register shows the scenes of ship building, while the fifth register represents the scribes recording and the stonemasons. The last register shows his wife and sons: Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi II*, 47-51.

broad collars and a counterpoise is labelled with *mnh nbw*.¹ These legends, according to the Berlin Dictionary, are synonyms interpreting ‘einen Halskragen aufziehen’² and in this case addressing the action of completing the pieces of jewellery. Drenkhahn came to the same conclusion, but added:³

“... Beide Verben sind stets mit *nbw* als Objekt verbunden. Allerdings kann hiermit nicht allein ein Halskragen dieses Typs gemeint sein, sondern auch andere Formen (*wsh*), so dass *nbw* hier eine allgemeine und übergeordnete Bezeichnung für “Halsschmuck” ist..., so dass in beiden Fällen “knüpfen” bzw. “reihe Halskragen auf” für *sti nbw* und *mnh nbw* zu übersetzen ist”

The Tomb of Djau at Deir el-Geberawi

The tomb of Djau, ‘Mayor, Chief of the Estate’,⁴ (contemporary to Pepi II) at Deir el-Gebrawi also shows evidence for the lexicographical issue between the ideogram *nbw* and the image of weseikh-collar. The eastern section of the right panel of the north wall of his chapel represents Djau sitting and supervising the different activities.⁵ Five registers appear before him (see Ibi above). The first register shows two weseikh-collars and the remains of a counterpoise on a table.⁶ They are labelled by *nbw nw [...]* ‘the gold/weseikh-collars of [...].’⁷ *Nbw nw* could indicate the weseikh-collar (*nbw nw hd*), or *nbw n 3tt* (cf. the other attestations above).⁸

Discussion

The early attestations for the name of the weseikh-collar are noteworthy, as they have not been tracked and discussed in detail. They delineate the evolving relationship between the word and the image, when and where the word and the image were used and the context in which they were utilized.

The different scholarly perspectives on the first Middle Kingdom attestation for the name of the weseikh-collar were based on the Berlin Dictionary. In 1947, E. de Keyser pointed out the early reference from the Old Kingdom in the tomb of Mehi at Saqqara, however, the lack of published scenes from tombs with the limitation of the spread and distribution of published material at this time led scholars to follow the Berlin Dictionary.

The early representations of the weseikh-collar show that it is depicted without any label in the Fourth Dynasty,⁹ as it was not included among the funerary offerings and is shown on the statues and images of the deities, kings, and elites. The name is attested in the Fifth

¹ Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi II*, 47, pl. 53; Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el-Gebrawi*, pl. 13.

² *Wb* II, 237 (2-3).

³ Drenkhahn, *Die Handwerker und ihre Tätigkeiten im alten Ägypten*, 44. Kanawati states that *mnh* could indicate ‘a beaded gold collar’ and *sti nbw* indicate ‘a pure gold collar or pendant’: Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi II*, 47.

⁴ Kanawati listed 29 titles for Djau: Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi III*; the southern cliff, the tomb of Djau/Shemai and Djau, 12-13.

⁵ Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi III*; the southern cliff, the tomb of Djau/Shemai and Djau, 43, pls. 62 and 75; Davies, *The rock tombs of Deir el-Gebrawi*, II, pl. 10. The left panel depicts Djau and his son facing each other and their titles are listed above them.

⁶ The rest of the first register shows the manufacture of the statues. The lower four registers represent melting the metal and the carpenters making furniture and ship building: Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi III*, 43-45, pls. 62, 75.

⁷ Kanawati, *Deir el-Gebrawi III*, pls. 62, 75.

⁸ Cf. *nbw n mw*, *nbw n sp 2*, *nbw n sp 3*, *nbw n h3st*, *nbw n stni*: Harris, *Minerals*, 33-36.

⁹ Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 31; Brovarski, *Old Kingdom Beaded Collars*, 142.

Dynasty.¹ This attestation does not mean that the name was applied to all the contemporary representations and attestations or to the later sources.² This could be attributed to the lack of space or the spread of the word, *wsh*, from one cemetery to another.

All the attestations of the name of wesekh come from Saqqara, apart from Meir. They come from tombs and mastabas of high elite officials. They also date to the Sixth Dynasty, except for the chapel of Akhethotep (contemporary to Unas). These attestations were articulated by three means. The first was by writing the name fully, *wsh*. The second was expressed by using the ideogram of the wesekh-collar (S11B) with falcon-head terminal. The third was with the *w+ideogram of the girdle* (S17A) from Meir. As for these three variants, the name of the wesekh-collar is written in the Old Kingdom sources as follows:



The different examples show that wesekh was written with the determinative of the broad collar ☩ (S11) in the chapel of Akhethotep (Louvre E 10958 [A]). The cup/basket (W10) is attested as a determinative in four of the occurrences where the name of *wsh* is written fully. The ideogram of *nbw* (S12), ‘collar of gold beads’, is attested twice as a determinative for the name of wesekh.¹⁰ This may reveal that gold is the material of which it was made and points to an interchangeable relationship. Once the wesekh-collar is described with the adjective ‘³ large’ in the funerary chamber of Deshri. There are parallels for this designation from different periods.¹¹ The only known attestation in which the wesekh-collar is written with the ‘broad collar with hawk terminals’ comes from the mastaba of Kagemni. It is linked to the ideogram of *nbw* indicating the type of the material of which the wesekh-collar is made. Second, presenting a wesekh-collar with falcon head, a royal insignia, could be explained by the fact that it was a gift/an offering from the royal palace.¹² Even *w+girdle* (=*wsh*, S17A), which is only attested in the tomb of Pepyankh from Meir, indicates that S12 and S17A were interchangeable and consequently that *nbw* could similarly sometimes stand for *wsh*. This also explains the strong bond between the two collars and why the word of *nbw* was used to label the images of the wesekh-collar (see below). It also shows the difference between the Memphite and the provincial schools in writing the name of wesekh.

In some cases, when the name of the wesekh-collar, *wsh*, was spelled out fully, the material of which it was made was mentioned. It is mentioned that it was made of malachite and lapis lazuli (the chapel of Akhethotep), gold (the tomb of Kagemni), electrum, lapis lazuli and carnelian (tomb of Ny-hebsed-neferkare), and electrum (tomb of Ima-merire).

¹ See above.

² E.g. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 37 [fig. 39]-38 [fig. 42], 45 [fig. 49], pls. 11, 16; Wilson and Allen (eds.), *The Mastaba of Mereruka I*, pls 29-30, 69, 74-76.

³ Akhethotep, Fifth Dynasty (Unas), Saqqara: Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 142, 153 [fig. 1].

⁴ Mehi, Sixth Dynasty (Pepi II), Saqqara: Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73 [fig. 82].

⁵ Ny-hebsed-neferkare, Sixth Dynasty (Pepi II), Saqqara: Jéquier, *Le monument funéraire de Pepi II*, III, 58.

⁶ Ima-merire, Sixth Dynasty (Pepi II), Saqqara: Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, III, pl. 52.

⁷ Deshri, late Sixth Dynasty, Saqqara: Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches, CGC N°s 1295-1808*, II, (Berlin 1937), 45 [1572], pl. 72 [a].

⁸ Kagemni, late Fifth Dynasty-Sixth Dynasty, Saqqara: Firth and Gunn, *Teti Pyramid Cemeteries*, 122.

⁹ Pepyankh, Sixth Dynasty (Pepi II), Deir el-Gebrawi: Kanawati and Evans, *The Cemetery of Meir II*, 25-26, pl. 72 (b).

¹⁰ It is also attested in the Middle Kingdom; cf. e.g. Newberry, *Beni Hassan II*, pls. 7 [top register], 13 [end of the 5th register left].

¹¹ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 6; Erichsen, W., *Papyrus Harris I; hieroglyphische transcription*, BAe 5, Bruxelles, (1933), 6, 3.

¹² Wilson and Allen (eds.), *The mastaba of Mereruka I*, pls. 30, 32 [lower register with two collars], 69, 76.

The name of the wesekh-collar was also articulated by a fourth method, represented in using the ideogram *nbw* (=*wsh*, S12). The images of the wesekh-collar were captioned with the word *nbw*. This was limited to specific scenes in the representation of jewellery production including the wesekh-collar in the tombs and the coffins. This feature is first attested in the Fifth Dynasty. The ideogram of *nbw* from this context should not be translated ‘gold’, but ‘wesekh-collar’. This was represented by using the word of *nbw* directly to indicate the action of carrying/working on a wesekh-collar (tomb of Wep-em-nefert and the relief from the tomb of Methethi) or depicting a wesekh-collar (interior coffin of Djed-inherit-ankh/Mery SF 5023). It was also shown by using the term of *nbw n hd* (tombs of Meru and Sobeky), and *nbw n d̄m* (tomb of Meru). The latter could also contain a chain of words *nbw nw d̄m hsb̄d mfk̄t* (tomb of Thauty). The term *nbw n ȝtt* (tomb of Ankh-nebef) and *nbw ȝ* (funerary chamber of Shy, contemporary to Pepi II)¹ were also used to represent the wesekh-collar. However, *nbw* could be a general word indicating more than one object among which is the wesekh-collar (tomb of Thauty, tomb of Ibi) e.g. *rdit nbw* ‘giving the gold’ indicating many depicted objects including the wesekh-collars, pectorals, bracelets, diadems, jars, and the material, i.e., the gold, from which they are made.²

In addition to gold, the different materials, of which the wesekh-collars were made, were also used to caption the image of the wesekh-collar e.g. ‘*d̄m* electrum’ (tombs of Mehi and Ima-merire), ‘*hsb̄d* lapis lazuli’ (Ima-merire), ‘*mfk̄t* turquoise’ (Ima-merire), ‘*hrst* carnelian’ (tombs of Mehi and Ima-merire).³ The wesekh-collar was also labelled with a ‘number’ above the image of it without its name,⁴ or with the name as I have indicated above (tombs of Mehi, Ima-merire and Deshri).

To sum up, early studies supposed that the first attestation for the name of the wesekh-collar was in the Middle Kingdom based on the Berlin Dictionary, but different wall scenes from the tombs of the Old Kingdom show that the earliest attestations date to the Old Kingdom and it was written first in the Fifth Dynasty. Six attestations come from Saqqara with only one attestation from Meir. They date to the Sixth Dynasty apart from the chapel of Akhethotep which dates to the Fifth Dynasty. They come from the mastabas of high elites. The name of *wsh* is written fully and is written with different determinatives including the broad collar (S11) with falcon head terminal or semi-circular, collar of gold beads (S12), the cup/basket (W10) and girdle (S17A). The ideogram *nbw* should be read *wsh* in specific contexts. This is attested on certain wall scenes of tombs and interior sides of coffins. The two terms *hbt* and *wsh* are different, as the two early attestations from the royal and non-royal sources of the Old Kingdom indicate that there is no any similarity between the two collars. Both were also addressed in a scene, Beni Hasan tomb no. 15, showing two different objects with two different names. The image of the wesekh-collar is captioned with the words for materials other than gold including *d̄m*, *hsb̄d*, *mfk̄t*, *hrst* indicating the material of which the wesekh-collar is made. The wesekh-collar was also labelled with ‘number’, sometimes with the name of *wsh* or without the name. Future excavations and publications may reveal more attestations for the name of wesekh-collar in the Old Kingdom.

¹ Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 6.

² E.g. the tomb of Akhethotep where the female weavers receive the awards (*rdit hsw*) which are made of gold before the owner of the tomb: Junker, *Giza V*, 52, Abb. 9 [2nd and 3rd register, 13 b]; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery*, 33, fig. 22.

³ E.g. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pl. 12.

⁴ E.g. Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, pls 6, 14.

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PLATES

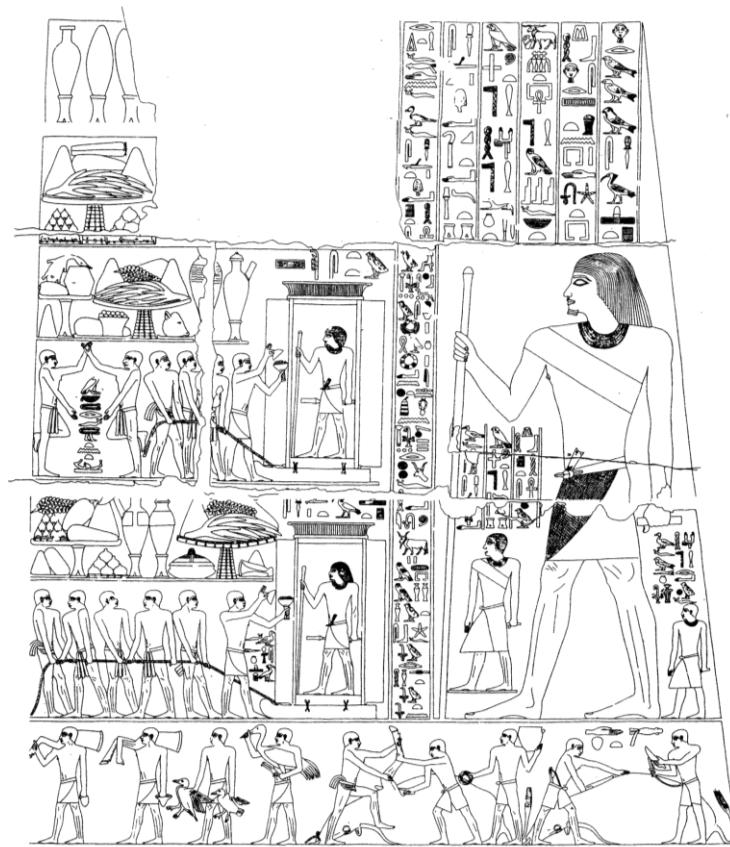


Fig. 1 Hieroglyphic inscription lists the name of the *wsh* broad collar, chapel of Akhethotep (Louvre E 10958 [A])
Brovarski, Old Kingdom Beaded Collars, 138 [fig. 1]

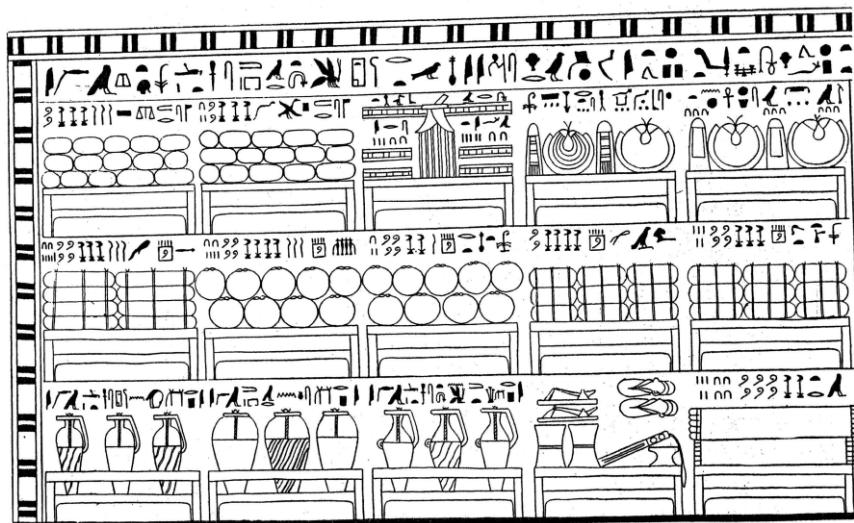


Fig. 2 Caption of *wsh* 30 above a broad collar [top right], tomb of Mehi, Saqqara Jéquier, *Tombeaux de particuliers contemporains de Pepi II*, 73, fig. 82.



Fig. 3 Burial chamber of Deshri (Egyptian Museum Cairo: SR 2/ 14633, CG 1572)
Courtesy of Egyptian Museum Cairo, photograph by Ahmed Ameen



Fig. 4 Caption of *wsh* 33 above wesekh-collar [middle], burial chamber of Deshri
 (Egyptian Museum Cairo: SR 2/ 14633, CG 1572)
 Courtesy of Egyptian Museum Cairo, photograph by Ahmed Ameen



Fig. 5 Making jewellery [last register] including the broad collar at the tomb of Wep-em-nefert, Giza
 Hassan, *Excavations at Giza 1930-1931*, 191, fig. 219.