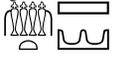


*Lights on the Royal Guard through the Significance
of Two Titles  Hnty-š and  Šmsw*

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Abstract

The concept of royal protection in ancient Egypt was not only of great significance, but it was a variable, in accordance with the events of the times. The royal guards have an essential role throughout the Egyptian times in the service of the king or in securing them during their daily life work likewise in war but unfortunately, we don't know that much about ancient Egyptian guards. But with a few bits and pieces of information in historical records, like scenes on tomb walls and titles, we can still get an idea of ancient Egyptian guards and their duties. In spite of the large number of titles known from the Old Kingdom, none of these has been made an interpretation of or deciphered to signify 'guard', in the feeling of a person whose obligation was to give security to a man or a place. However it is unfathomable that no such people existed so as to secure the king, the royal family, the top administrators, the palaces, the rich temples, and so forth. While the presence of 'royal guards' would have been important in all periods, it should have been particularly so during the Old Kingdom, when the country did not have a standing armed force or police power to keep up open request. Amid times of inconvenience or potential inconvenience, for example, a change of dynasty or an argument about progression, for instance, the presence and loyalty of the guards would no doubt have been essential. It may assume that the mission of the 'royal guard' in ancient Egypt does not go beyond the idea of 'protection' and that it belongs only to the military side, but by studying and analyzing

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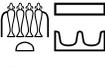
the functions of the holders of the title of ḥnty-š and šmsw, make sure that 'protection' is a function with broad meaning, property protection was not limited only to the person of the King only, but also military and religious and civil institutions. Ḥnty-š had responsibilities related to the Egyptian frontiers. They executed the king's orders and protected funerary property. They also attached to royal mortuary temples, where they performed services for the deceased king. Their responsibility as in guarding, making the king's way, and in attending. They acted as escorts to the king in victory celebrations, military reviews and hunting events. The man who holds the title Šmsw could perform different tasks. They likewise associated with the working of the two most imperative organizations: the treasury and the granary. Their exercises in the Nubian fortresses involved administrative tasks too. They participated in the mining and paramilitary expeditions, the reward ceremony and in accompanying the royal procession in Tell El Amarna scenes. The šmsw show, through the texts of Ramesses II, a significant military strategic role of the royal bodyguard and it was one of their most critical roles. The royal protection including: the protection of the Egyptian borders, funerary temples and participation in the celebrations of victory, military ceremonies, mining campaigns and hunting. In addition the implementation of royal orders, including sending correspondence to the provinces or persons and many other public works in the sites and fortresses.

Keywords: Ḥnty-š, Šmsw, royal guard, royal bodyguard, royal protection, palace guards, follower, attendant, retainers.

Introduction

The royal guards have an essential role throughout the Egyptian times in the service of the king or in securing them during their daily life work likewise in war but unfortunately, we don't know that much about ancient Egyptian guards. But with a few bits and pieces of information in historical records, like scenes on tomb walls and titles, we can still get an idea of ancient Egyptian guards and their duties. In spite of the large number of titles known from the Old Kingdom, none of these has been made an interpretation of or deciphered to signify "guard", in the feeling of a person whose obligation was to give security to a man or a place. However it is unfathomable that no such people existed so as to secure the king, the royal family, the top administrators, the palaces, the rich temples, and so forth. While the presence of "royal guards" would have been important in all periods, it should have been particularly so during the Old Kingdom, when the country did not have a standing armed force or police power to keep up open request. Amid times of inconvenience or potential inconvenience, for example, a change of dynasty or an argument about progression, for instance, the presence and loyalty of the guards would no doubt have been essential.

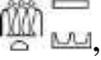
The research includes:

-The definition of  *hnty-š* and  *šmsw* as two titles of the royal guards which were discussed by the Egyptologists.

- Military and non-military role of the  *hnty-š* and  *šmsw* as royal guards in securing the kings.

-The relative rank of the supervisory levels of the two titles the  *hnty-š* and  *šmsw*

1- Definition of Term *hnty-š*

The title , , , ,  *hnty-š* has traditionally been translated as "tenant" or "tenant landholder"⁽¹⁾ that is, a person somewhat involved in agriculture and in the provisioning of the palace or of a temple. Holders of this office appeared suddenly and in relatively large numbers in tombs dated to the late Fifth Dynasty.⁽²⁾

"Employé" is a proposed translation from the analysis of the "Abusir papyri" which demonstrated the wide involvement of these officials in various daily rituals, and accordingly she opted for a more general translation of the office as "employee". She also concluded that the young *hnty-š*, qualified as "cadets", were probably responsible for transport, while the older ones served as guards.⁽³⁾

Kanawati mentioned that the *hnty-š* seem to be mainly occupied with transport, escorting and guarding. He added that *hnty* is literally "one who is in front of", perhaps a "watcher", an "escort" or a "guard"⁽⁴⁾. That is in agreement with Schott, who shows in his study of wall scenes in funerary temples of the Fifth Dynasty kings that the *hnty-š* acted as escorts to the king in victory celebrations, military reviews and hunting events.⁽⁵⁾ The term "attendant" almost absolutely depicts the office of *hnty-š* more precisely than that of "tenant landholder". Nonetheless, "attendant" is an exceptionally expansive term, which may infer that the individual it depicts was called upon to perform different,

⁽¹⁾ *Wb.* III, 310-311; Baer, K. Rank and Title, pp.272-73

⁽²⁾ The *hnty-š* was presumably provided land in the absence of money for recompense of their services to the state. In Sabni I's case the land assigned to him was in both Upper and Lower Egypt. Clearly a high ranking individual like Sabni would not have plowed the land himself, especially as in his case, it is located in two parts of the country. He probably farmed out the land and received a certain amount of the harvest in return. See: *Urk.* I, 140, 209; Junker, H. Die Mastaba des Nfr (Nefer), pp.15-22

⁽³⁾ Posener-Kriéger, P. Les archives, p.577ff, 580-81

⁽⁴⁾ Kanawati, N. Conspiracies in the Egyptian Palace, p.16

⁽⁵⁾ Schott, S. "Aufnahmen vom Hungersnotrelief", p.11

unspecific errands. In all cases *ḥnty-š* appears to be an independent and specific title, the main duty of which seems to be the provision of security and may be better translated as "guard". With the start of the Sixth Dynasty, and maybe because of occasions which occurred in the court, we see that the *ḥnty-š* began to hold other assorted positions inside the palace, some of which no doubt put them in a close and more "intimate" relationship with the king. Titles related to feeding, bathing and clothing the king were combined with that of *ḥnty-š*.⁽⁶⁾

On the other hand, Roth has rejected the translation of the title as "tenant landholders" and proposed the term "attendant",⁽⁷⁾ since it proposes the relationship of individual support of the king that is by all accounts the distinctive element of the office. She indicated in more clarification that the interpretation of the title *ḥnty-š* as "attendant" is unconventional. Individuals who held the title *ḥnty-š* were additionally connected to royal mortuary temples.

They performed many services which serve the human side of the king such as: dressing, feeding his cult statue and transferring food.

⁽⁶⁾Roth, A.M. Palace Attendants, p.40

⁽⁷⁾After a careful examination of a gathering of tombs that grouped along the northern edge of the great Western Cemetery, west of the Great Pyramid, Roth yield decisions about that: The title *ḥnty-š* was headway at the end of the fifth Dynasty. Interminably, it was worthy by acclamation to a building as opposed to an individual: either to the royal residence, as in this group, or to the morgue sanctuary of a ruler. The majority of the engraved tombs had a place with authorities bearing the title *ḥnty-š pr-ʿ3* or one of its supervisory dimensions. Whatever its strict importance, this title unmistakably involved individual support of the living ruler that was performed in his royal residence. She has along these lines interpreted it "royal residence orderly." Membership in the corps of royal residence *ḥnty-š* appears to have been an essential for owning a tomb in this group, and as a rule the extent of the mastaba related to the tomb proprietor's position in that pecking order. Exhibits the conveyance of tombs of *ḥnty-š pr-ʿ3* and their administrators inside the greater Western Cemetery, demonstrating that the bunch mulled over here without a doubt addresses an unordinary gathering of such authorities, however it is in no way, shape or form the main piece of the Giza necropolis where the owners of this title could be covered amid this period, see Roth, A. Palace Attendants, pp.40-42.

2- The Role of the  *Hnty-š*

By examining the duties performed by these officials Fischer concluded that they were not only preoccupied with farmlands but also executed the king's orders, protected funerary property, and in general had a wide range of other responsibilities and were closely connected with the court.⁽⁸⁾

Kanawati mentioned that, it is exactly in these terms that the official Weni describes the tasks entrusted to him when he was promoted to the office of "The overseer of the *hnty-š* of the palace" during the reign of the king Pepy I. He says "I did that which his Majesty would praise, in providing protection, in preparing the king's way and in preparing the daises". Later in his career, as a sandal-bearer under Merenre, Weni mentions that "His majesty praised me for the watchfulness and vigilance, which I showed in the place of audience".⁽⁹⁾ Doret translates these responsibilities as "in guarding, making the king's way, and in attending".⁽¹⁰⁾ Schott shows that the *hnty-š* acted as escorts to the king in victory celebrations, military reviews and hunting events. A group of holding long batons is clearly shown accompanying King *Sahure* in a desert hunting expedition depicted in his funerary temple.⁽¹¹⁾ (Fig.1) Occasionally holders of the title *hnty-š* were also dispatched by the king with objects or messages to the provinces. Thus *Ībi* (Pai) of Naga ed-Deir mentions that "the *hnty-š* of the king gave me my coffin".⁽¹²⁾ *D'w* (Djau) of Deir el-Gebrawi makes an identical statement as follow:


iw rdi.n hm.f int hnty-š ht krs [...].n D'w pn

⁽⁸⁾Fischer, H.G. Dendera, pp.170-71; Posener-Kriéger, P. Les archives , p. 577ff

⁽⁹⁾Kanawati, N. Conspiracies in the Egyptian Palace, p.16; Sethe, K. *Urk*, I,100:9-11,105:17-19

⁽¹⁰⁾Doret, É. *The Narrative Verbal*, pp.25-26

⁽¹¹⁾Borchardt, L. *Das Grabdenkmal*, pp.79, 92, 123-24, pl. 17

⁽¹²⁾Dunham, D. *Naga-ed-Dêr Stelae*, p.59, no. 46; Sethe, K. *Urk.*, I, 142-5.

"His majesty caused that the custodian of the royal domain should bring the coffin of woodfor this *D'w* (Djau)" ⁽¹³⁾

The *hnty-š* seems to be mainly occupied with transport, escorting and guarding. In this regard it is of specific significance that a few managers of the palace guards joined this title with the obligation regarding weapons. Thus, both of *Nfr -msdr -hww* (Nefer-mesdjer-Khufu) and *Ny-htp-ptḥ* (Nyhetepptah) took the title  *imy-r h3w* "overseer of weapon", ⁽¹⁴⁾ in addition to their titles *imy-r st hnty-š pr-ʿ3* "the assistant overseer of the palace attendants" and *imy-r hnty-š pr-ʿ3* "the overseer of the palace attendants". ⁽¹⁵⁾ In addition, *Imy-st-k3* (Imysetka) ⁽¹⁶⁾ was administrator of the two places of weapons.

On the other hand *Tttw/Iwn-mnw* (Tjetetu/Iunmin) ⁽¹⁷⁾ held three titles identifying with the "entry of the deserts/foreign lands". He was *imy-r hnty(.w)-š* "overseer of the guards", *imy-r st hnty(.w)-š pr-ʿ3* "overseer of the department of the palace guards", and guard and priest of Teti's pyramid. He also appears to have had responsibilities related to the Egyptian frontiers, as *imy-r mdwt nbt š3zt nt r-ʿ3 h3st* "overseer of every secret word belonging to the entry of the foreign land" and *[hry-sšt]3 n nyswt m wdt-mdw nbt [š3zt] n(t) r-[ʿ3 h3st]* ⁽¹⁸⁾ "one who is privy to the secrets of the king in every secret command belonging to the entry of the foreign land". ⁽¹⁹⁾

That these guards had some soldierly preparing might be comprehended from Weni's memoir, where he expresses that he led an immense Egyptian armed force six times against the

⁽¹³⁾ *Urk.* I, 146:10; Breasted, J.H. *Ancient Records*, I, 172; Sayce, A.H. "Gleanings", p.66; Davies, N.de.G. *Deir el Gebrāwi*, pl.13

⁽¹⁴⁾ Kanawati, N. *Conspiracies In The Egyptian Palace*, p.19; Roth, A.M. *Palace Attendants*, p.165, fig.206

⁽¹⁵⁾ Badawy, A. *The Tomb of Nyhetep-Ptah*, p.7, figs. 10, 14

⁽¹⁶⁾ Junker, H. *Grabungen*, p.209ff.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Kanawati, N., McFarlane, A. & Maksoud, N. *Excavations at Saqqara*, p.29

⁽¹⁸⁾ Andrés, D. "Bringing Treasures and Placing Fears", p.133

⁽¹⁹⁾ Kanawati, N. *Conspiracies*, p.126

Asiatics.⁽²⁰⁾ Although Weni plainly expresses that his decision was because of the trust the ruler had in him, which more likely than not been urgent under Pepy I, it stays unfathomable that such a responsibility, especially the illustration of the plans of assault that he specifies, would be given to somebody with no military involvement with all. Another contemporary of Weni, *Ny- 'nh-ppy* (Niankhpepy),⁽²¹⁾ an overseer of the palace guards, guard of Pepy I's pyramid, who additionally held the title of "administrator of the royal residence monitors", says that he was the best of the considerable in fighting.⁽²²⁾

Although all officials could be called upon during the Old Kingdom to join the armed force in the midst of war, as expressed by Weni, there probably been some staff with military mastery who could prepare these men in the utilization of arms and who could lead them in fights. A similar work force could serve in different posts amid peace time, including the arrangement of security and related issues.

The fact that the guards were also involved in feeding, bathing, clothing, or even entertaining the king, does not negate or contradict their security duties. In fact the protection of the king everywhere, and of royal institutions, must have required a great deal of organization, certainly at some times more than others.⁽²³⁾

3- The Relative Rank of the Supervisory Levels of the Title *Hnty-š*

It's known that the relative ranks of the supervisory levels of the office of *hnty-š*. Accordingly the ranks of the owners of the tombs in the hierarchy are recognized. The foremost supervisory ranks in this arrangement are, from most noteworthy to least:⁽²⁴⁾

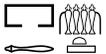
⁽²⁰⁾Urk, I , 101:9ff

⁽²¹⁾Hassan, S. Saqqara , pls.1–23; N.Kanawati , Egyptian Palace , pp.39-41

⁽²²⁾Hassan, S. Excavations at Saqqara, pp. 1-23

⁽²³⁾Kanawati, N. Egyptian Palace , p.18

⁽²⁴⁾Stadelmann, R. "Die *hnty- š*", pp.156–57, n.1.

| The title | Transliteration | Translation |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
|  | <i>imy-r hnty-š pr- ʒ</i> | Roth: "overseer of palace attendants" Kanawati: "overseer of the palace guards" |
|  | <i>imy-r st hnty-š pr- ʒ</i> | Roth: "assistant overseer of palace attendants" Kanawati: "overseer of the department of the palace guards" |
|  | <i>šḥd hnty-š pr- ʒ</i> | Roth: inspector of palace attendants Kanawati: "superintendent of the palace guards" |
|  | <i>imy-ḥt hnty-š pr- ʒ</i> | Roth: "assistant inspector of palace attendants" Kanawati: "under-supervisor of the palace guards" |
|  | <i>hnty-š pr-ʒ</i> | Kanawati: "(Ordinary) Palace guard" ⁽²⁵⁾ |

The translation of these ranks is just intended to make the spots of holders of titles in the order clearer and don't really mirror the exacting significance of the Egyptian.⁽²⁶⁾ From the analysis of the Abusir papyri Posener-Kriéger concluded that the young,

⁽²⁵⁾Roth, A. Palace Attendants, p.40; Kanawati, N. Conspiracies In The Egyptian Palace, p.20

⁽²⁶⁾Sinclair, N. The development and decline of provincial rule, pp.265-308; Roth, A.M. Palace Attendants, p.40; Kanawati, N. Egyptian Palace , p.20; Stadelmann, R. "Die hnty-š", pp.156–57,157, n.1.

qualified as "cadets", were probably responsible for transport, while the older ones served as guards.⁽²⁷⁾

A few of the owners of the tombs hold more than one title in the chain of command. Probably as the consequence of promotions they got over the span of their careers. Such advancements have all the earmarks of being reliably to happen continuously. Advancements from one level of the chain of importance to the dimension above may have been the event for developing and explaining the tomb.⁽²⁸⁾

The evidence suggests that this department was joined at a young age, Weni, for example, says that he was a "young adult" under King Teti and that he held the office of "superintendent of the palace guard".⁽²⁹⁾ Roth has already noted that the children and retainers depicted in the tombs of the palace guards (whom she calls "palace attendants") at Giza bear similar titles to those of the tomb owners. For instance, *Ny-^hnh-pt^h* (Ni-ankh-ptah) represents six sons in a row, presumably in order of age, carrying offerings of meat and fowl to his seated figure. All sons are named, but only the first four bear titles, all relating to the palace guards; the eldest was "overseer of the department", the following two were "superintendents" and the fourth was "under-supervisor".⁽³⁰⁾

The examination of the evidence strongly suggests that the department of guards was rapidly expanding particularly at the end of the Fifth Dynasty and in the first half of the Sixth.⁽³¹⁾

The position of guard was in a general sense a male occupation. However, very uncommon occasions of female guards are known. For instance, *R-r-mw* (Ra-ra-mu) at Giza, who held the generally unobtrusive title of under-supervisor of the palace guards, had one son and one daughter, who were at the most

⁽²⁷⁾Posener-Kriéger, P. *Les archives du temple*, p.2, pp.580–81

⁽²⁸⁾Roth, A.M. *Mastaba of Akh-Meret-Nesut*, pp.83–87

⁽²⁹⁾*Urk.* I, 98:12; Feucht, E. *Das Kind in alten Ägypten*, 1995

⁽³⁰⁾Davies, W., El-Khouli, A., Lloyd, A., & Spencer, A. *Saqqâra, Tombs I*, pp. 6–7

⁽³¹⁾Kanawati, N. *Egyptian palace*, p. 21

that simple female guards do not appear more often in the tombs of the higher-ranking officials as wives, daughters or retainers.⁽³³⁾

4- Definition of Term šmsw⁽³⁴⁾

The term  šmsw has been identified in most of dictionaries of the ancient Egyptian language as "retainers", "servants" and "followers". This meaning had been accepted by many Egyptologists as A.Gardiner,⁽³⁵⁾ A.Badawi, H.Kees,⁽³⁶⁾ R.Faulkner,⁽³⁷⁾ and K.Bard when she cleared up the concept of an "army" in the Old and Middle Kingdoms she said, "Various specially appointed military titles are resolved, yet the position of their officeholders can't be determined. So, there was no authentic table of association. At the point when the incidental pictorial portrayals of furnished warriors are joined by clear descriptive inscriptions, they are essentially marked "retainer" (literally, "followers" šmsw).⁽³⁸⁾

S.Quirke stated that this title showed a position connected to one of the high- ranking officials or to offices, whether non-military personnel or military, regardless of whether regular citizen or military.⁽³⁹⁾ D.Stevanovic added that the followers were utilized by nearby dignitaries or by the royal court: they could be people in charge of their lord's security or servants.⁽⁴⁰⁾

⁽³³⁾Kanawati, N. Egyptian Palace , p.22ff

⁽³⁴⁾šmsw /šms:It is a colloquial word in the Arabic language. It pronounces "شمامسة /شَمَّاس".It means "SMSE" in Coptic and "Deacon" in English. It is derived from the Greek word *diákonos* (δίακονος). It is a standard old Greek word Refers to several meanings, for example: servant, waiting-man, minister, or messenger. See: W.E.Crum, A Coptic Dictionary, p.567a; Cerny, J. Coptic etymological dictionary, p.245; Liddell, H. & Scott, R. An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon, 2000.

⁽³⁵⁾Wb. IV, 485; Gardiner, A. Egyptian Grammar , p.595

⁽³⁶⁾Badawi, A. & Kees, H. Handwoerterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache , p.247

⁽³⁷⁾Faulkner, R.O. A Concise Dictionary, p.247

⁽³⁸⁾Bard, K.A. Encyclopedia of the Archaeology, p.145

⁽³⁹⁾Quirke, S. "The Regular Titles", p.122

⁽⁴⁰⁾Stevanovic, D. "Smsw", p.233

On the other hand some dictionaries added that term  *šmsw* refers to the concept of the royal bodyguard, as well as its meaning of "retainers", "servants" and "followers" as R.Hannig,⁽⁴¹⁾ L.Lesko,⁽⁴²⁾ E.Budge⁽⁴³⁾ and in *Wb* term , , ,  *šmsw* refers to the bodyguard of the king.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Moreover, some Egyptologists have agreed with that significance as D.Hones who observed that the term *šmsw* "retainers" refers to the officials who played the role of the bodyguard of the king.⁽⁴⁵⁾ R.Faulkner mentions that the "retainers" of the king came to remain battle ready, and clearly comprised his household troops or bodyguard in the insurgency that pursued the collapse of the Old Kingdom.⁽⁴⁶⁾ A.Erman stated that the "retainers of the king" were the royal bodyguard in the Middle kingdom.⁽⁴⁷⁾

A.Fakhry argued that the title  *hry šmsw n hm.f* "the Overseer of the retainers of his majesty" means "The Commander of the bodyguard of the king" in the time of the Eighteenth dynasty.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Accordingly, term *šmsw* has been recognized as "retainers", "servants" and "followers" but it refers to the concept of the royal bodyguard for the first time in the times of the first Intermediate Period and was used until the Ramesside period as well. The "Retainers" may have started out as the royal bodyguard, but in later times their role was to issue rations to troops and act as letter-carriers.⁽⁴⁹⁾ J.Černý emphasized this last role when he said "in the Ramesside period the *šmsw* appear much of the time to be letter-bearers, and it is conceivable that the four men of this rank who went through the Wadi-el-

⁽⁴¹⁾ *Wb*, IV, p.486, 5

⁽⁴²⁾ Hannig, R. *Die Sprache der Pharaonen*, p.823

⁽⁴³⁾ Lesko, L. *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, III, p.153

⁽⁴⁴⁾ *Wb*, IV, 486,5

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Jones, D. *An Index of titles*, p.991

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Faulkner, R.O. "Egyptian Military Organization", p. ʸ

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Erman, A. *Life in ancient Egypt*, p.103

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Fakhry, A. "Tomb of Paser", p. 392

⁽⁴⁹⁾ David, A. *A Year in the Life of Ancient Egypt*, p. 216

Allaki did as such to convey correspondence from or to mining region".⁽⁵⁰⁾

5- The Role of the šmsw

The pharaoh couldn't however encircle himself with the essential capacity to implement his will when obliged to do as such. A class of military "attendants" or actually "followers of his majesty" along these lines emerged. They were proficient officers, the first of whom we have any information in ancient Egypt. In organizations of hundred men each they garrisoned the castle and the fortresses of the regal house from Nubia to the Asiatic frontier. How various they may have been, it is presently difficult to decide. They framed in any event the core of a standing armed force.⁽⁵¹⁾

R.Faulkner believed that  šmsw "retainers" appear to be initially to have been a non-military category of individual attendants on the ruler or personages of high degree.⁽⁵²⁾ Yet in the time that pursued the fall of the Old Kingdom the "retainers" obviously established nomarch bodyguard or household troops.⁽⁵³⁾

Amid the First Intermediate era, the followers of a nomarch, who were at first servants, started conveying weapons and shaped the packs of nearby civilian army; these comprised of little and chose gatherings of men, trusted by their lords and being along these lines an essential factor in times of crisis. Among the records of this period are the inscriptions written by the nomarchs of the Hare nome, which confirmed that the šmsw serving under the nomarch *Nehri* in his rebellion against his sovereign.

In an inscription for the fifth year of of *Nehri*, his son *Kay* lets us know of his offer in the contention:

⁽⁵⁰⁾Černy, J. "Graffiti at Wadi El-Allaki", p.57

⁽⁵¹⁾Breasted, J. A History of Egypt, p.167

⁽⁵²⁾ Narmer macehead represents three of the body-guard with long staves. see: Quibell, J. Hierakonpolis I, p. 9, pl.XXXVI, B

⁽⁵³⁾Faulkner, R.O. "Egyptian Military Organization", pp.38-39

*iw spd.n.i d3mw.i n hrđw šm.kwi r 'h3 hn' niwt.i ink ir [...].s
m šdyt š3 iw [...] hn' .i wpw- hr šmsw.i md3w w3w3t [...]*

"I made ready my troops of young men; I went to fight in company with my city. I acted as its [rearguard] in Shedyt-sha, though [there was none] with me except my retainers, Medja, Wawat..."⁽⁵⁴⁾ During the early Middle Kingdom they acted as members of the retinue of nomarchs.⁽⁵⁵⁾ S.Smith characterized that the man who holds the title *šmsw* could perform different tasks and *šmsw* of the Middle Kingdom were an elite military corps under royal authority.⁽⁵⁶⁾

The tale of  *S3-Nh3t* (Sa-Nehat) which takes place during the time of king Senusret I, in the Twelfth Dynasty, sheds light on the job of the *šmsw* during the Middle Kingdom as a loyal follower of the king accompanying and participating in the military campaigns.⁽⁵⁷⁾


ink šmsw šms nb.f

"I am a follower who follows his lord"⁽⁵⁸⁾

The stela of  *In-it.f-ikr-Imny* "Antefoker-Ameny", which found in the Wadi Gawasis, dated to the reign of Sennsert I , provides evidence that guards also participated in paramilitary expeditions. It states that Ameny's men were divided into a military section and a civil section. The first

⁽⁵⁴⁾Faulkner , R.O. "The Rebellion", p. 61; Griffith, F.L. El Bersheh, II, Graffito VII, pl.XXIII

⁽⁵⁵⁾Stevanovic, D. "šmsw", p.233

⁽⁵⁶⁾Smith, S. Sealing Practice, p.191

⁽⁵⁷⁾Blackmann, A. *Middle-Egyptian stories*, p.2; Parkinson, R. *The Tale of Sinuhe*, p.21; Allen, J. *Middle Egyptian Literature*, p.389

⁽⁵⁸⁾Follower: as per customary Middle Kingdom practice, the official title of the man is set preceding his name. Follower is an official title assigning a man who truly stood quickly close by or behind his superior, either as attendant or as bodyguard, Tale of Sanehat: Glossary for specific points- Section 1

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/sanehat/comments.html>; See another translation; "I am a member of the bodyguard of his lord" Budge, E.A.W. *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, p.155

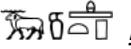
headed by the general, with 50 (*šmsw n nb* 'w.s). "retainers of the Lord", 500 soldiers of a royal crew (*nhw n nd* 'w.s), and 3200 soldiers of a town regiment (*nhw n niwt*).



šmsw n nb nh wd3 snb 50

"50 retainers of the lords L.P.H" ⁽⁵⁹⁾

Similarly, the previously mentioned quarrying inscription of Ameny son of Mentuhotep in Wadi Hammamat, during the reign of Senusert I, states that the expedition consisted of 18,538 men, including 30 royal guards (*šmsw n nb* 'w.s) , and warriors (*h3wty*), namely 300 soldiers of a royal crew of Thebes (*nh n tt nt hk3 W3st*) and 700 soldiers of a provincial regiment (*nh n sp3t*), as well as 17000 corvee laborers (*hsb*). The royal guards each received thirty loaves of bread over thirty days, while the warriors each received only fifteen loaves. ⁽⁶⁰⁾

During the Twelfth Dynasty, the guard played an important role. The nomarchs of Beni Hasan had their equipped retainers in participation upon them. They served as followers and guardians. They appeared to participate in many scenes. The tomb painting of  *hnmw-hotp* (Khnum-Hotep II) at Beni Hassan (tomb BH 3), which a related inscription dates to year six of Senusret II, provide an important glimpse in determining one of *šmsw* roles through the scene of hunting. Some of them being armed as archers and others with axe and shield. ⁽⁶¹⁾ Another scene from the tomb of  *Dhwty-hotp* (Tehuti-hotep), prince of the nome of Hermopolis, shows Djehuty-hotep represented in heroic size, with his attendants, following the statue. One of an armed

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Sayed, A. "Discovery of 12th Dynasty", pp.169-173, pl. 15 d-f et 16 a-b; Vandersleyen, C. Ouadj our w3d wr, , pp. 51, 58, 132-5, 245; Leclant, J. "L'exploration des côtes", p. 399

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Brian, M. The Ancient Egyptian Economy, p.31; Peden, A. The Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt, p.36

⁽⁶¹⁾ Newberry, P. Beni Hasan, I, pl.XXX; Faulkner, R. "Egyptian Military Organization ", p. 38

attendant carrying a spear and battle-axe. Another one bears a shield of dappled bullock's hide and another a large fly-flap.⁽⁶²⁾

Inscription of  *Imn-m-hzt* (Amenemhat), which cut on the rocks in Wadi-Hammamat, showed that he was a  *shd šmsw* "A commander of followers" under the King Amenemhat III. His titles occupy two lines, of which the first concern is:


šms nb.f r nmt(w)t.f

"Who follows his lord in all his steps".⁽⁶³⁾

This frequently used sentence refers to the soldiers' keenness to confirm their escorts to the king and to guard them during his war campaigns, which we shall see using them in many different forms throughout the 18th Dynasty.

In contrast to the Ramesside military, officers of the 18th Dynasty who ended up their career as state officials did barely refer to their former military ranks. A Stereotype often used in biographies or tomb inscriptions to describe active military service was to present themselves as royal retainers or followers of the king at the king's feet to foreign countries on campaigns to Nubia or Canaan.⁽⁶⁴⁾ (Fig.2)

During the New Kingdom period, descriptive sentences were added to the title that depicts the holder as having accompanied the king everywhere inside and outside the country. The use of these texts was common through the time of King Thutmose III, Amenhotep II and continued during the reign of Thutmose IV, for example:

⁽⁶²⁾ Newberry, P. El Bersheh, I ,p.17, pl.13

⁽⁶³⁾ Couyat , J. & Montet, P. "Les inscriptions hiéroglyphiques", p. 48, Nr. 43; J.Breasted, Ancient Records, I, p.313.

⁽⁶⁴⁾García, J. Ancient Egyptian Administration, p.709

Inscription of  *I'h-ms-pn-Nhb.t* (Ahmose –Pen-Nekhbet) at El Kab:



iw šms.n.i nsw[yw bit]yw ntrw hpr.n.i [hr.sn r iwt].sn hr h3st rsyt mh̄tt m bw [nb hpr.n].sn im

"I followed the kings of upper and lower Egypt, the gods; I was with their majesties when they went to South and North country, in every place where they went"⁽⁶⁵⁾

Inscription of  *Sn-n-mwt* (Senenmut)-Tomb TT71 -Sheik Abd El Qurna- reign of Hatshepsut.



šms nsw hr h3st rsyt mh̄tt izb(t) imn(t) w b(t)

"The follower of the king to the south, north, western and eastern foreign country"⁽⁶⁶⁾

Inscription of  *Nb-n-Kmt* (Neb-en-kmet)-El-Khokha- reign of AmenhotepII.



šms nb.f r nmtt.f hr mw hr t3 hr h3s.wt nb(w).t

"The follower of his lord at the king's feet over the water, on the earth and to all foreign countries".⁽⁶⁷⁾

Another role for *šmsw* shows through the tomb of  *Mry-R* Mery-ra, Tomb N.4, North group of Tell El-Amarna, where a The procession of King Akhenaten visiting his god the Sun-disk, moves out of the courts of the royal palace Preceded by two of runners with staves hurry to clear the way for the king's chariot. On either side is the bodyguard on foot, running; Egyptian soldiers and Asiatic mercenaries armed with a wide range of

⁽⁶⁵⁾ *Urk* IV, 32 – 42; Breasted, J. *Ancient Records*, II, § 25,11

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Helck, W. *Urk.*, 43 – 45; Sethe, K. *Urk.*, IV, 414.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ *PM* I, 340; *Urk*. IV,997; see other forms: Guksch, H. *Königsdienst*, p.58

weapons.⁽⁶⁸⁾ The men of the royal guard, shown on three rows as follows: The top row is formed of six standard bearers. In front of them are four members of different races as follows: an archer, a man with a spear, a man with a rounded axe and finally another archer. These guards were of different nationalities: Nubian, Asiatic and Libyan. The second register is consisted of soldiers carrying various weapons: a spear, an axe and a shield. They are followed by a man with a baton. On the third register are four men carrying a kind of flail. They followed by a man with a baton. There are four figures directly below these rows of guards: two forerunners of the guard, greeted by two members of the temple staff.⁽⁶⁹⁾(Fig.3)

Another scene indicates a different mission for the groups of guards within the spectator crowd where the crowd attending the reward ceremony of  *Iy (Ay)* is clearly represented in little particular groups, sorted out in superimposed registers. As indicated by Davies, at the top of the upper register are the two royal chariots.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Some foreigners are represented on the second row as indicated by conventional iconography: Nubians, Libyans and Asians soldiers formed their bodyguard. They are accompanied by Egyptian interpreters.⁽⁷¹⁾(Fig.4) Akhenaten and Nefertiti in a chariot abandon one of the Aten temples on the upper register. They head towards a fortified building, flanked by a running bodyguard Controlled by Mahu "the Chief of police of Akhetaten". On the Lower register, the royal couple drives along a road, again joined by Mahu and his bodyguard.⁽⁷²⁾ (Fig.5) The officials have an even more difficult task than the king. Not only Mahu and his fifteen police, but also the plump vizier and his deputy, feel obliged to run before the chariot. The gait of these

⁽⁶⁸⁾Erman, A. *Life in Ancient Egypt*, p. 64

⁽⁶⁹⁾Davies, N. de G. *Amarna I*, pl.XV.

⁽⁷⁰⁾Davies, N. de G. *Amarna VI*, p. 22, pl. XXIX; Schaden, O. "Paintings in the tomb of king Ay", pp.102-3.

⁽⁷¹⁾Erman, A. *Life in Ancient Egypt*, p. 117.

⁽⁷²⁾Kemp, B. *Ancient Egypt*, p. 287; *Davies, N.de. G. Amarna IV*, pls XX, XXII

two is suggestively constrained in comparison with that of the active policemen.⁽⁷³⁾

During the Ramesside period, another objective for *šmsw* shows through the texts of Ramesses II. It referred to the significant military strategic role of the royal bodyguard, before the beginning of conflict at Kadesh. The royal bodyguard accompanied the king personally in his marching to Kadesh, before the arrival of the divisions of the Egyptian army to the battlefield. The royal bodyguard was at the head of the Egyptian army, while all the divisions of the army were marching behind the king and his bodyguard by several miles.⁽⁷⁴⁾



ist hm.f w hr tp.f hn šmsw.f

"Now, his Majesty was all alone, with his followers"⁽⁷⁵⁾

In another section of the Poem indicates that the bodyguard was the only troop that was by the side of the king in the critical moments of fighting. Hence, Ramesses II has blamed the officers and soldiers of his army because they had left him to fight alone in the battle, as follows:⁽⁷⁶⁾



ist inh p3 hrw n n3 hr n ht(3) n3 šmsw n hm.f nty r gs.f

"Then the foes from the fallen one of Hatti surrounded his majesty"s followers who were by his side"⁽⁷⁷⁾

We find that Ramesses II has favored the brave role of the royal bodyguard in fighting by his side as follows:⁽⁷⁸⁾



⁽⁷³⁾Davies, N. de. G. Amarna IV, p.16

⁽⁷⁴⁾Kitchen, K. Pharaoh Triumphant, pp. 53-55; Breasted, J. The Battle of Kadesh, pp. 25-27

⁽⁷⁵⁾KRI. II, 20-23; KRITA. II, 4.

⁽⁷⁶⁾Breasted, J. Ancient Records, pp.34-35.

⁽⁷⁷⁾KRI. II, 119; KRITA. II, 17

⁽⁷⁸⁾Kitchen, K. Pharaoh Triumphant, pp.60-61.



ntsn n3 gmy(w) m hnw p3 hrwyw [hn' kdn]

Mnn3 p3y.i kr'w.i

m-di n3y.i wdpw⁽⁷⁹⁾ m hnw nty r gs.i

"It was they whom I found amidst the strife, with the charioteer Menna, my shield-bearer and with my household butlers who were at my side".⁽⁸⁰⁾ (Fig.6)

6- The Relative Rank of the Supervisory Levels of The Title *šmsw*

The *šmsw* of early Middle Kingdom administration were divided in the Late Middle Kingdom into those who belonged to the military sector *šmsw n hk3*, *šmsw n rmn tpy*, *šmsw rryt* and *šmsw*, usually now called, sealers, those who followed their master not with weapons of protection, but with items of attire, such as sandals.

The holder of the title *šmsw n hk3* "guard of the ruler" was a member of the elite unit and therefore, perhaps, the bodyguard of the ruler himself. The inscription of Khusobek clearly shows that this title belongs to military sphere. Inscriptions Wadi Hammamat 61, 17 and 42 also suggest that *šmsw (n hk3)* soldiers had a privileged position in royal expeditions. As palace military officials, they were ranking higher than the leaders of the local administration. In the lists of expedition participants *šmsw n hk3* were placed right after high-ranking dignitaries, such as nomarchs and *h3tyw-* and their daily rations were larger than those allotted to ordinary members of the

⁽⁷⁹⁾From the previous text Schulman, A.R. concluded that term  *wdpw m hnw* "household butlers" or "butlers of the residence" which has been mentioned only in the time of Ramesses II, in his text on the Battle of Kadesh, was also referring to the bodyguard of the king or a part of them at least, according to their military role. See: Kuentz, Ch. *La Bataille de Qadech*, p.161,177; Schulman, A. "The Royal Butler Ramessesemperre", p. 123; *KRI*, II, p. 84; *KRITA*, II, pp. 3, 4, 17.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ *KRI*, II, 83-84; *KRITA*, II, 11-12.

expedition.⁽⁸¹⁾ According to Berlev, the *šmsw n ḥkꜣ* could be called *šmsw* during the early Middle Kingdom. Based on the fact that one *šmsw* was at the head of the expedition attested in the inscription Wadi el Hudi 6, Berlev states that this was an abbreviated form of the title *šmsw n ḥkꜣ*, the full form of which was attested only during the reign of Senusert III. Until that time the ruler's bodyguards were simply called *šmsw*.⁽⁸²⁾

šmsw n rmn tp and its extended variant *šmsw n ḥkꜣ n rmn tp* could be interpreted as the designation of "the first, best soldier"-being under the command of the *šmsw n ḥkꜣ*, that is exactly what they were. S.Quike translated the title *šmsw n rmn tp* as "guard of the first battalion". *šmsw rryt* was part of the civil administration. The holders of this title were persons in charge of securing in the palace.⁽⁸³⁾

It has identified the comparative rank of the supervisory levels of the title *šmsw* through the following texts: Stela of  *ḥw-sbk* (Khu- Sebek) Manchester Museum 3306, from Abydos and dated to the time of Senusert III. It contains the autobiography of Khusobek called Djaa, which records that he trained as a warrior (*ḥwty*) alongside Senusert III at the Residence , and that he was appointed to the (royal guard) *šmsw n ḥkꜣ* and given sixty men (*rdi n.i tp s 60*). He served with the king on campaign in Nubia, and was subsequently promoted to inspector of the guard (*shd šmsw*) and given 100 men (*rdi n.i tp s 100 m mfkꜣ*).⁽⁸⁴⁾

⁽⁸⁵⁾

"His majesty caused that I be appointed to be a royal guard"⁽⁸⁶⁾



⁽⁸¹⁾Stevanovic, D. "šmsw", pp. 237-238

⁽⁸²⁾Berlev, O. "Les prétendus "citadins", p.23ff

⁽⁸³⁾Stevanovic, D. "šmsw", p.236

⁽⁸⁴⁾Muhs, B. The Ancient Egyptian Economy, p.81

⁽⁸⁵⁾Mariette, A. Catalogue général, pp.157, 167, 197, 221

⁽⁸⁶⁾Garstang, J. El Arabh, pp.32-33, pl.5.; Breasted, J. Ancient Records, I, 306, §§.686,687

ḥ'.n rdi .n fr šḥd šmsw

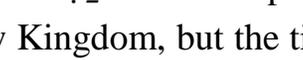
"He appointed (me) inspector of the guard"⁽⁸⁷⁾

C.Vogel assumes that the aforesaid numbers perhaps represent concrete information about the size of the battalions the šmsw - commanders could have been in charge of. However, she points out that there is no other testimony that could confirm this thesis.⁽⁸⁸⁾

Based on source, Berlev states that the holders of the šḥd šmsw title were in command of šmsw n ḥkz. Under the same command were šmsw rmn tp and šmsw, its subordinates.

The chief supervisory titles are, from most elevated to least:

| The title | Transliteration | Translation |
|---|-----------------|---|
|  | šḥd šmsw | -A commander of followers -inspector of the guard |
|  | šmsw n ḥkz | -guard of the ruler |
|  | šmsw n rmn tpy | guard of the first battalion ⁽⁸⁹⁾ |
|  | šmsw | -Follower -Attendant -Guard -A member of the bodyguard |

Although the title šḥd šmsw "inspector of the guard" did not use during the New Kingdom, but the title  ḥry šmsw n ḥm.f "inspector of the guard of his majesty" was replaced to refer to command guards. Both of Mn-ḥpr-R served under Thutmes III and Amenhotep II and P3-sr served under Amenhotep II held this title.⁽⁹⁰⁾

⁽⁸⁷⁾Breasted, J. translated (šmsw n ḥkz) as "attendant of the ruler" and (šḥd šmsw) as a "commander of attendants", Breasted, J. *Ancient Records*, I, 303

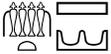
⁽⁸⁸⁾Vogel, C. *Ägyptische Festungen*, p.105

⁽⁸⁹⁾Ward, W. *Index of Egyptian administrative*, No.1524, p.176, 1982.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ *Urk IV*, 994,10; 1455,14

Conclusions:

The role of the royal guard in ancient Egypt has overtaken the military side, where the texts proved that property protection is a broad concept, contained many tasks, including the military, civil and religious aspects. In fact the protection of the king everywhere, and of royal institutions, must have required a great deal of organization, certainly at some times more than others. The concept of protection in ancient Egypt was a variable, in accordance with the events of the times. Although the position of guard was in a general sense a male occupation but very uncommon occasions of female guards are known.

 *hnty-š* appears to be an independent and specific title, the main duty of which seems to be the provision of security and may be better translated as "guard". *hnty-š* have had responsibilities related to the Egyptian frontiers. A few managers of the palace guards joined this title with the obligation regarding weapons and it had affirmed that these guards had some soldierly planning from the texts of the Old Kingdom. They executed the king's orders and protected funerary property. They likewise connected to the mortuary temples of the kings. They performed administrations for the deceased king such as: dressing, transferring food, and feeding his cult statue. Their responsibility as in guarding, making the king's way, and in attending. They acted as escorts to the king in victory celebrations, military reviews and hunting events. The holders of the title *hnty-š* were also dispatched by the king with objects or messages to the provinces.

The man who holds the title *šmsw*  could perform different tasks. They likewise associated with the working of the two most imperative organizations: the treasury and the granary. Their exercises in the Nubian fortresses involved administrative tasks too. They participated in the mining and paramilitary expeditions, the reward ceremony and in accompanying the royal

procession in Tell El Amarna *scenes*. In light of source, it may be proposed that the tasks of various categories of *šmsw* –soldiers involved more than just military service, paying little heed to whether they were privates or command staff. They could have been in the service of various offices, which clarifies their validation on the monuments of officials from almost all administrative sectors, but also in the service of the temple. Finally, the fact that the guards were additionally engaged with feeding, bathing, clothing, or even entertaining the king, does not discredit or repudiate their security obligations.

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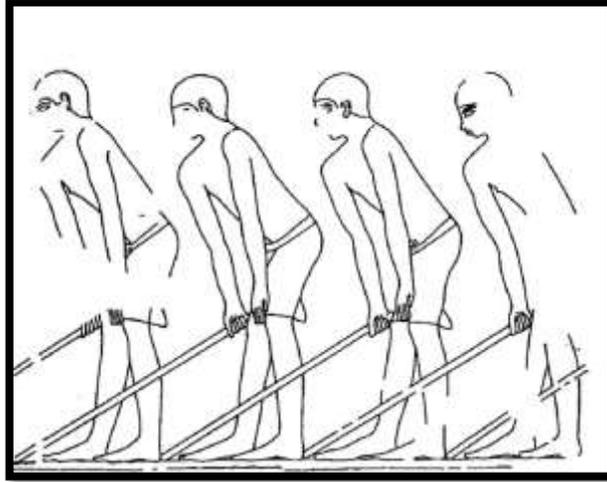


Fig.1 Accompanying King Sahure in a desert hunt scene, a number of officials holding batons are clearly designated as *ḥnty-š* (After Borchardt, L. *Das Grabdenkmal*, II, pl.17)

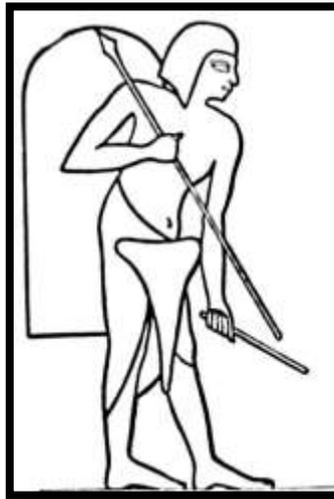


Fig.2 Soldier of the time of the close of the 18th dynasty (After Erman, A. *Life in Ancient Egypt*, p.104)

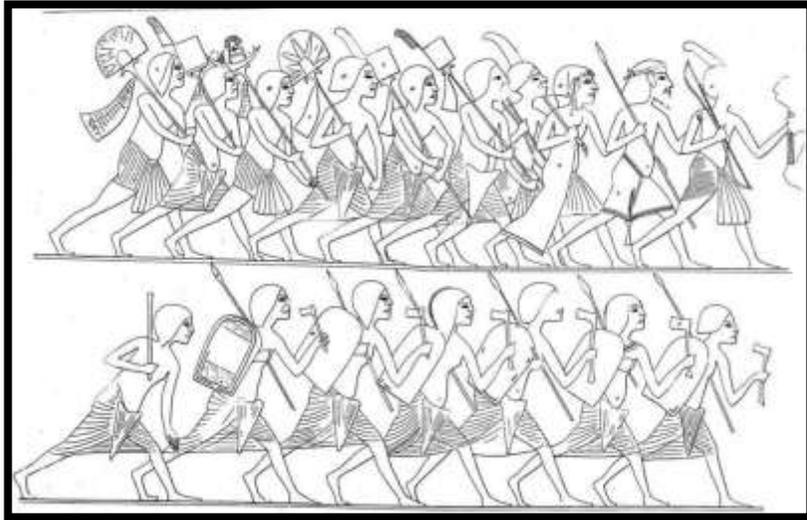


Fig.3 The royal guard, shown on three rows. Photo by:
(After *Davies, N.de.G. El Amarna I, pl.XV*)

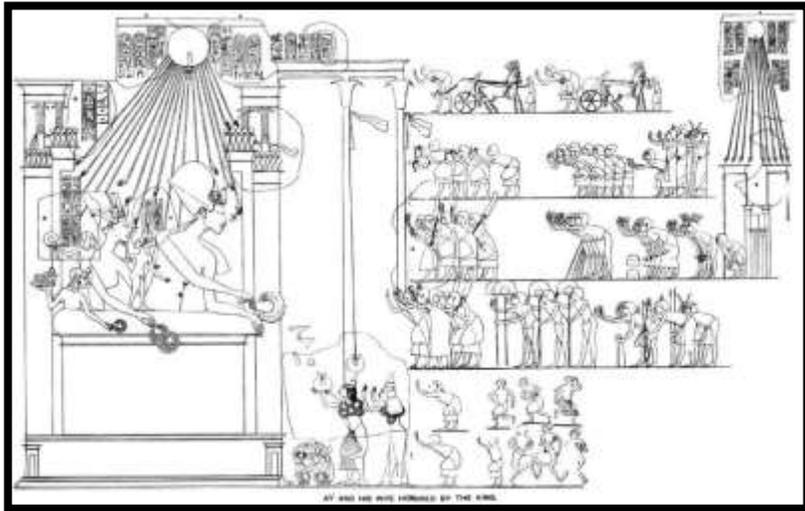


Fig.4 Groups of guards within the spectator crowd where the crowd
attending the reward ceremony of  Ay (Ay)
(After *Davies, N.de.G. El Amarna VI, pl.XXIX*)

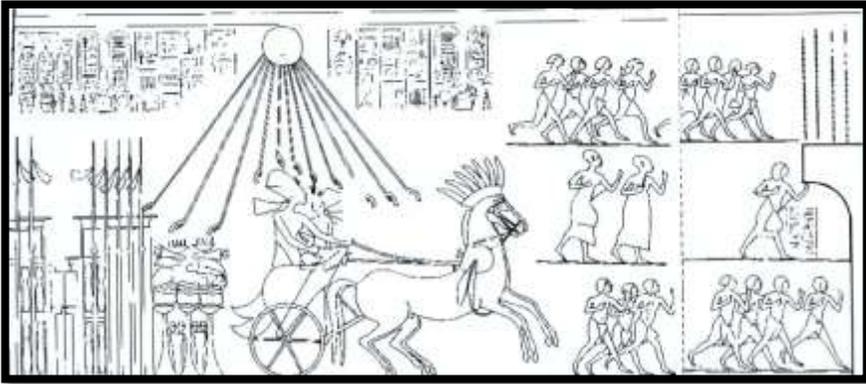


Fig.5 A famous bas-relief in the tomb of Mahu, shows Akenhaten with his wife Nefertiti travelling by chariot with Mahu running ahead with the bodyguard.(after Davies, *N.de.G. El Amarna*, IV, pl.XX)

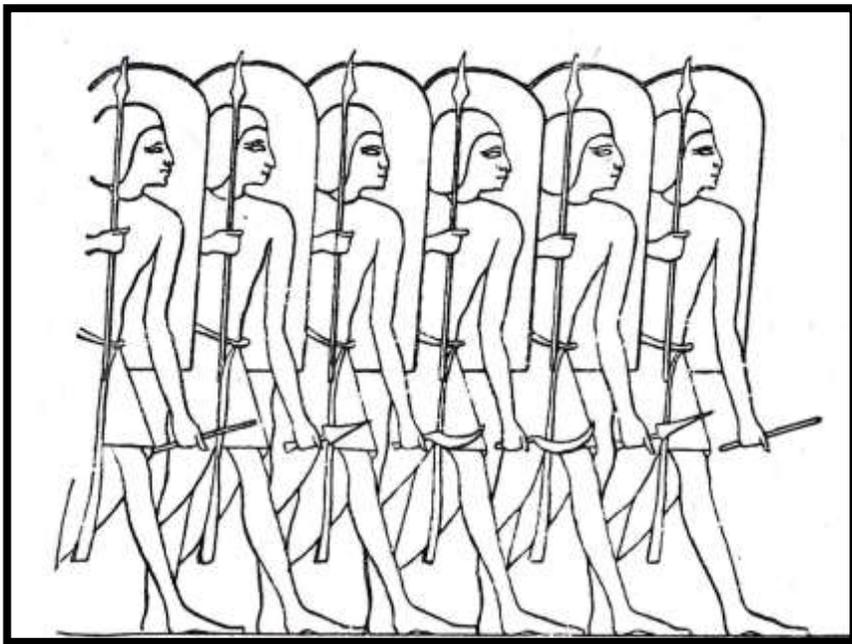


Fig.6 Egyptian warrior forming a bodyguard for Ramesses II
(After Erman, *A. Life in Ancient Egypt*, p.546)

أضواء على الحرس الملكي من خلال دلالات لقبين

Šmsw و Hnty-š

• د. نجلاء فتحي أحمد شهاب

الملخص:

إن مفهوم الحماية الملكية في مصر القديمة لم يكن ذو أهمية كبيرة فحسب، بل كان متغيراً وفقاً لأحداث العصر. ولم تقتصر مهمة "الحرس الملكي" في مصر القديمة على الحماية المنوطة بالجانب العسكري فقط، بل إنه بدراسة وتحليل وظائف كل من حاملي لقب Hnty-š و Šmsw تأكد أن "الحماية" هي وظيفة ذات مدلول واسع وأن الحماية الملكية لم تكن قاصرة فقط على شخص الملك فقط بل على مؤسساته العسكرية والدينية والمدنية أيضاً.

لقد شغل حاملي لقب Hnty-š العديد من الوظائف الخاصة بالحماية الملكية منها: حماية الحدود المصرية والمعابد الجنائزية والمشاركة بالحضور في الاحتفالات بالنصر والمراسم العسكرية والصيد وتنفيذ الأوامر الملكية ومنها إرسال المراسلات للمقاطعات أو الأشخاص.

ومن جانب آخر لعب حاملي لقب Šmsw دوراً استراتيجياً عسكرياً هاماً كقوات "الحرس الملكي الخاص" من خلال معارك الملك " رمسيس الثاني" ويعد ذلك أحد أهم أدوارهم. وارتبط العديد من الوظائف الإدارية لحاملي اللقب بمؤسستين رئيسيتين في مصر القديمة وهما: "الخزانة" و"صوامع الغلال"، بالإضافة إلى دورهم في المشاركة في حملات التعدين وأمدادات الجيش والعديد من الأعمال العامة الأخرى في المواقع والحصون

الكلمات الدالة:

Šmsw ؛ xnty-S ؛ الحارس الملكي ؛ الحارس الملكي الخاص ؛ الحماية الملكية؛ حراس القصر؛ التابع ؛ الحضور؛ الخدم.