

G7 (week 2, Thursday)

Kingship and queenship ideology: gender and politics

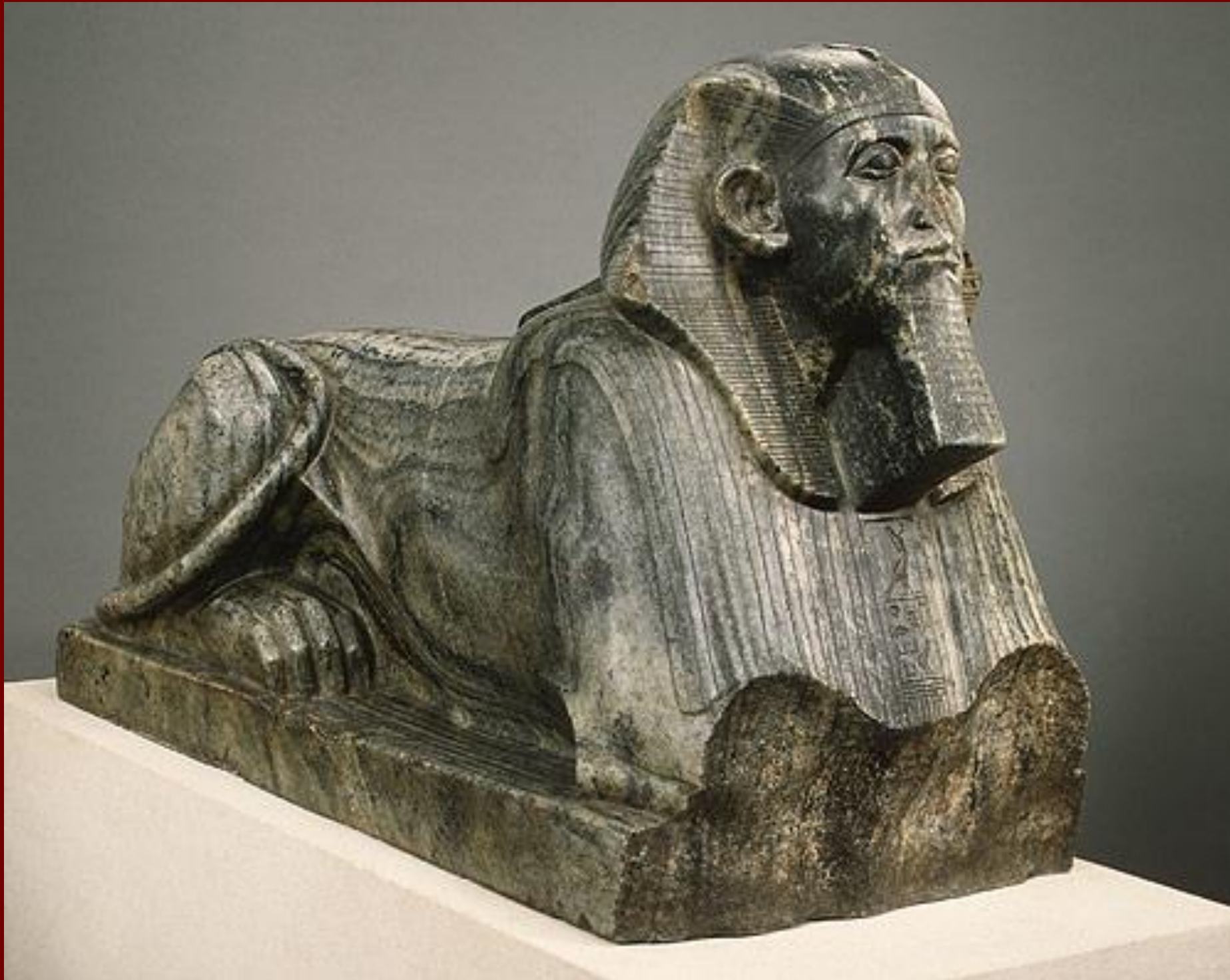
HPAH5013/6013 – Gendered Lives in Ancient
Egypt

Dr. Katharina Zinn

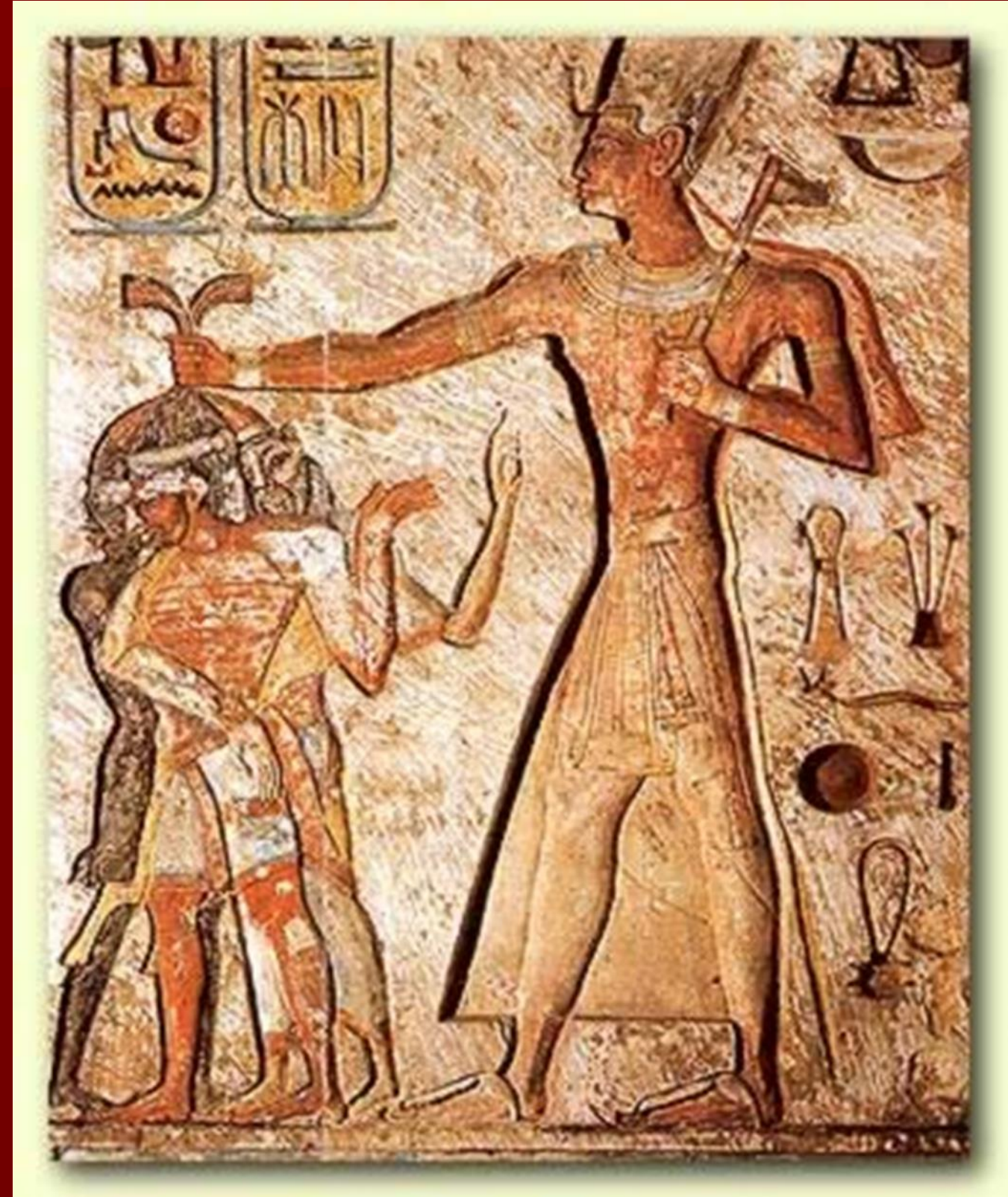
Senior Lecturer for Egyptian Archaeology and
Heritage

Masculinity:

Sphinx of Senwosret III (MMA 17.9.2)



Smiting of the enemy



Ideologies (as represented in aesthetics)

- Becomes apparent in
 - Pantheon → conceptions of gods
 - Temples as spaces of institutionalised religious activity
 - Mythology and creation myths (cosmogonies)
 - Afterlife beliefs
 - Religion
 - Personal piety as direct interaction of humans to gods/divine entities/demons
 - state religion as interaction between gods and king on behalf of the Egyptians (humans)
 - → **(divine) kingship**

The concept of the divine

- → leads on state level to SACRALIZATION OF POWER
 - Royal power as sacred power
 - Means: of **divine** origin
 - To establish the right order Maat
 - Usage of royal / religious propaganda as ideology



The divine
world:

pantheon
ritual
cult
reciprocal interaction
kingship

What does a king have to do in ancient Egypt?

- ❑ No ancient Egyptian treatise on kingship
- ❑ In Ancient Egyptian lists of words ('onomastica'), kings = separate category of beings
- ❑ Role set out in religious composition (Assmann 1970):

'Ra has placed the king on the earth of the living for ever and eternity to judge between men to make the gods content, to make what is Right happen, to annihilate what is Wrong, to offer divine offerings to the gods and voice offerings to the blessed dead.'

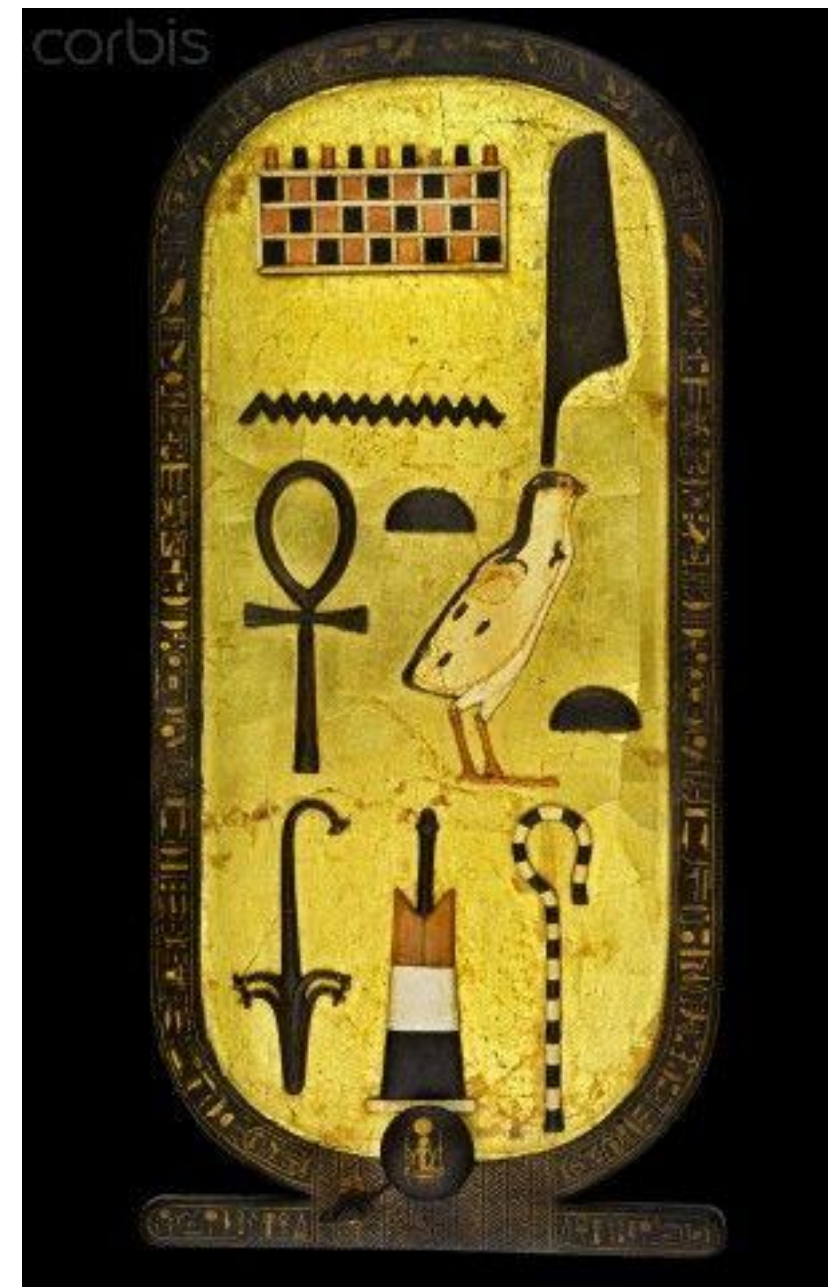


Kingship

- several Ancient Egyptian words for king: nswt and its most common.
- kingship is nsyt
- character of kingship: constant features and change

Kingship – constant features

- First Dynasty to the Roman Period (about 3000BC-AD300) – king is **Horus** (god of order and celestial power)
 - separate 'Horus name'
 - unique manifestation of that god
- Fourth Dynasty to the Roman Period (about 2600BC-AD300), 'son of Ra' – title placed before birth name
- special set of names and titles - by the Middle Kingdom (about 2025-1700 BC) = five
 - Horus name
 - name '(of) the Two Goddesses'
 - Horus-Gold name
 - title nswt bity (dual king) with (throne name) - cartouche
 - son of Ra title with birth name - cartouche

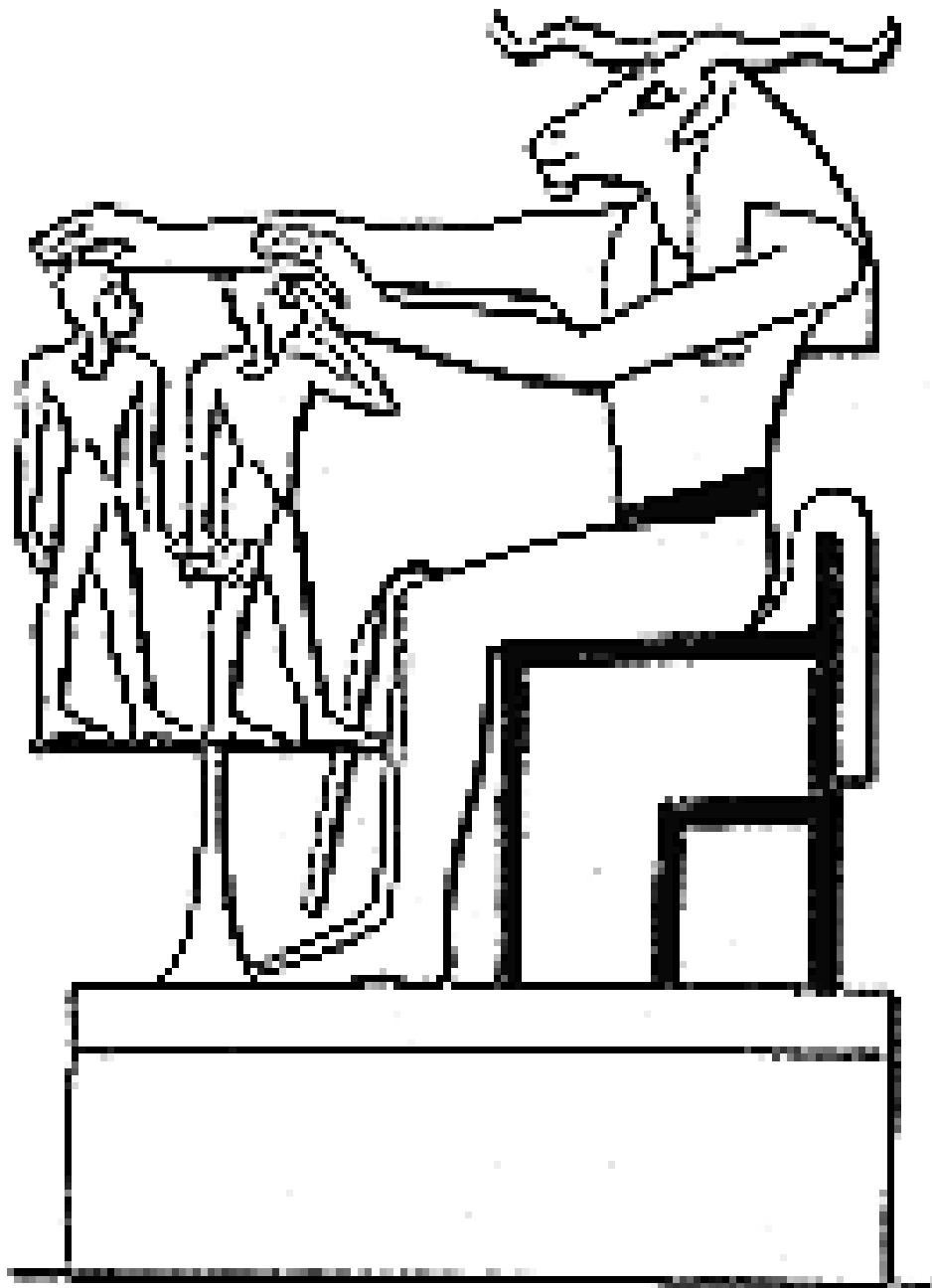


The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

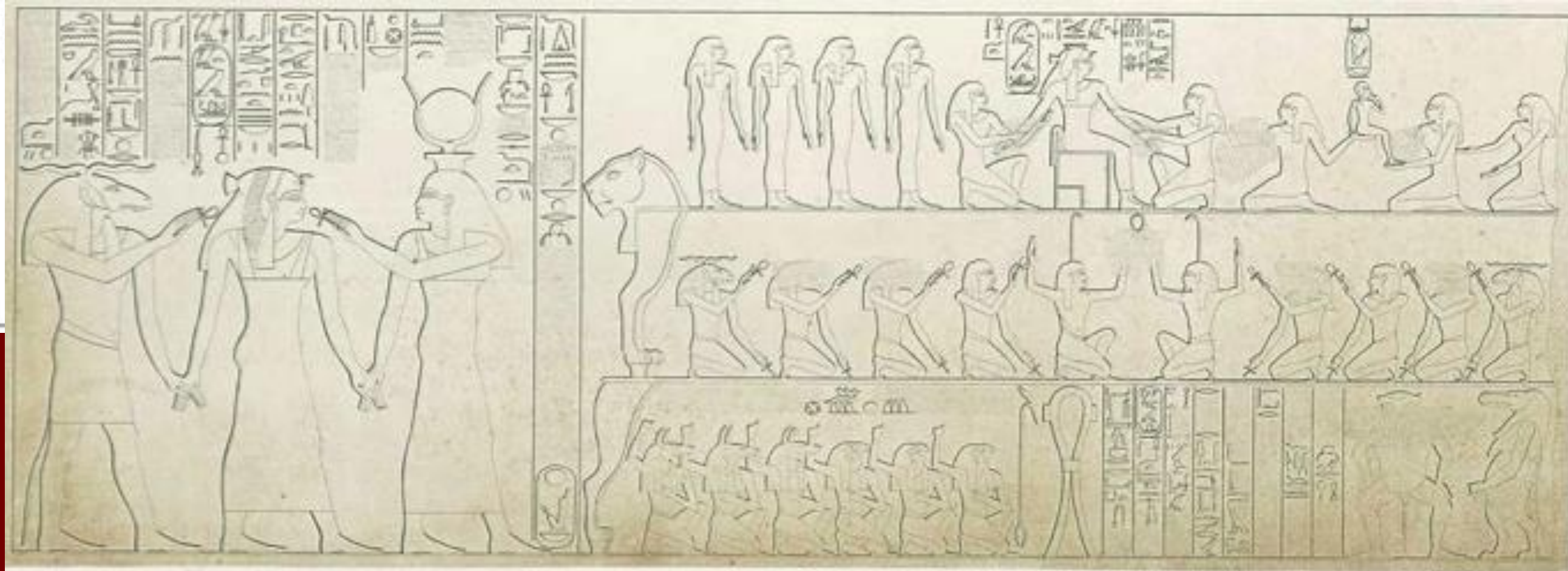
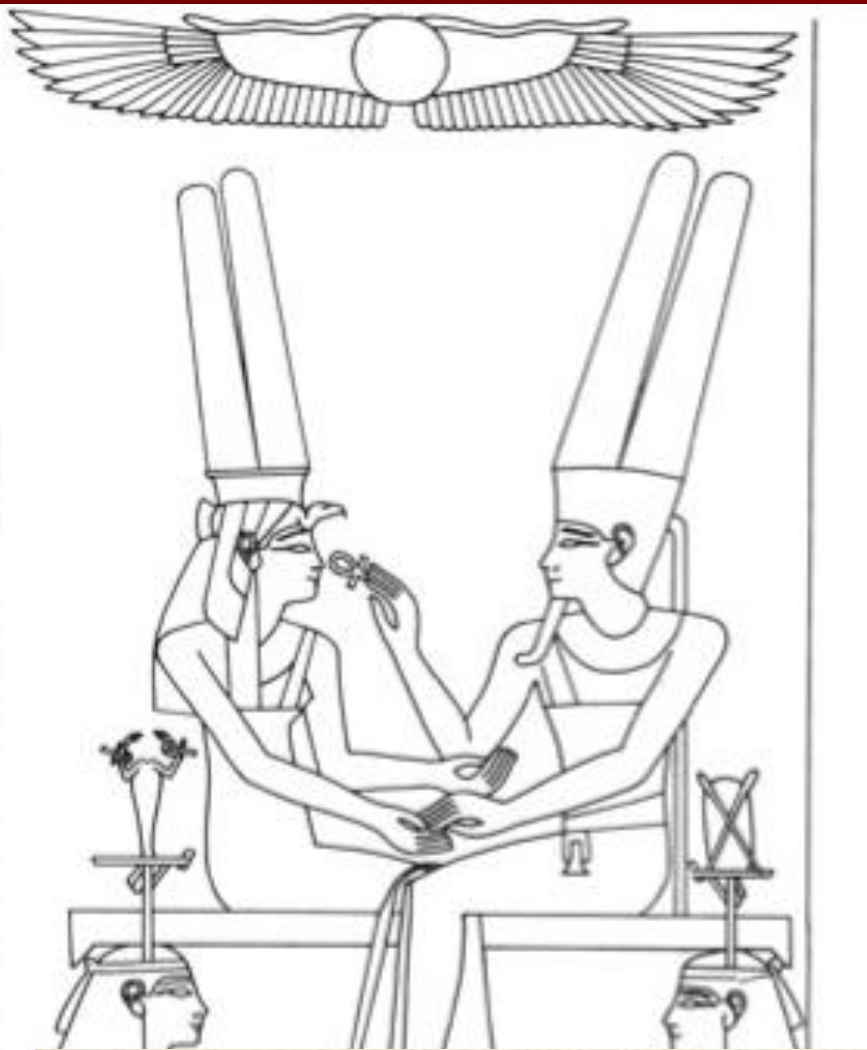
- king is by nature divine
 - he is Horus, and offspring of Ra
- also inhabiting a human body → therefore mortal
- duality of divine character and mortal constraints is the essence of Egyptian kingship

Khnum forms the newborn and his ka on the potter's wheel



- thought that the creator god Khnum created a person's **Ka** (one of the soul aspects) when he created the person on his **potter's wheel**
- Applicable for the king as well as other people

Cycle of divine birth – divine conception and birth

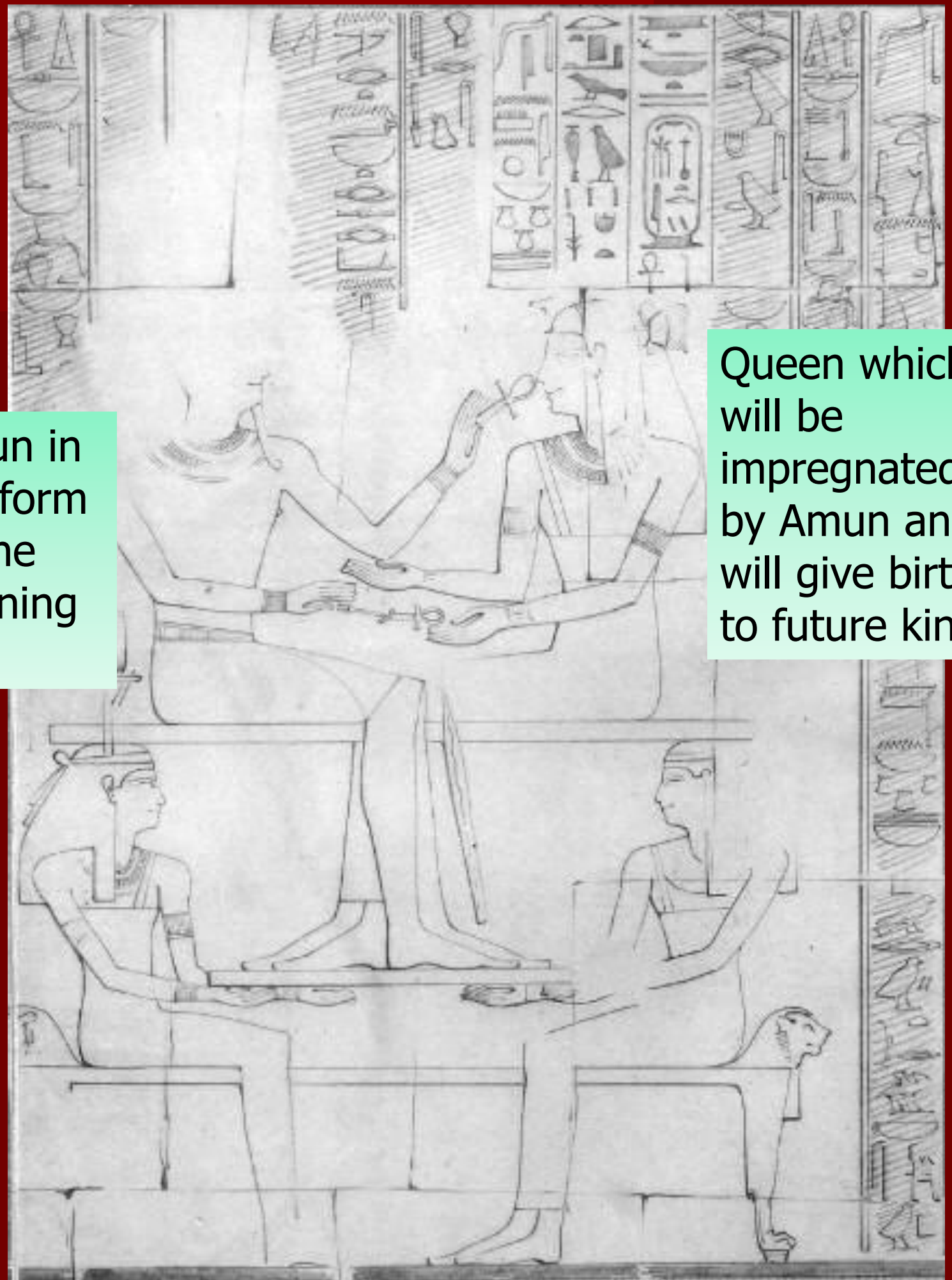


Scenes of “divine birth” → legitimisation?!

- Deir el-Bahari: Hatshepsut
 - The masculine king in a female body
- Luxor: Amenhotep III

Amun in the form of the reigning king

Queen which will be impregnated by Amun and will give birth to future king



The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

- ❑ **The Divine Birth Cycle in Egyptian art**
- ❑ cycle of figurative scenes narrating the divine birth of the king: shows creator-god Amun-Ra taking human form to impregnate queen chosen to give birth to the future king → as human vessel within which purely divine seed of creator can grow → Thoth (god of knowledge/writing) appears reveal the queen that she will give birth to son of creator
 - Deir el-Bahari for Hatshepsut (18th dyn)
 - Luxor for Amenhotep III (18th dyn)
 - in temples of the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods → where the birth of the god Horus is the subject

The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

- Also earlier informal literary version (one copy on a papyrus: Papyrus Westcar, now in the Egyptian Museum, Berlin)
- copy dates to the Second Intermediate Period;
- tale relates the birth of three Fifth Dynasty kings to a woman named Ruddjedet, wife of a priest of Ra in Lower Egypt, during reign king Khufu (4th dyn)
- birth is assisted by goddesses Isis, Nephthys and Heqet, with the god Khnum as their porter

The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

- What are the implications of these narratives?
 - the king is same substance as creator - not human, but divine
 - no such thing as 'royal blood' or a royal family – only the direct descent from sun-god
 - human women are not easily 'sons of Ra' - the sun-god is male, and so his offspring is most naturally also male
 - Nevertheless: several cases where a woman claimed kingship: Hatshepsut (18th dyn), Sobekneferu (12th dyn), Tausret (19th dyn)
 - although the king male, all others in close connection with kingship are female
 - human women in direct physical contact with the sun-god to produce the next king → 'king's mother'
 - Wife of reigning king → 'king's wife'

The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

- ❑ 'king's mother' + 'king's wife' = all-important religious positions in court → the female principle of kingship
- ❑ higher than 'king's daughter' and 'king's son'
- ❑ no king's father existent, as that is the sun-god
- ❑ Exceptional case to create divinity: sun-god chooses a woman who is not wife of the reigning king, her husband is given the title 'god's father' when the child becomes king

The dual king:

Divine kingship and mortality

- ❑ **Questioning the divinity of the king**
- ❑ Never any expression of opposition to the belief in divinity of king
- ❑ but mortality of human body occupied by king during his reign on earth → opportunities for attitudes other than reverence
- ❑ such expression principally in literature: narrative tales may depict a king with qualities inconsistent with behavioural norms
- ❑ Indicated in sources on political history: conspiracies against kings (murder of Ramses III)
- ❑ Such events seem not to have disrupted the structure of kingship and belief in the divinity of the king: human beings have unlimited capacity for adaptation, and devout believers are able to destroy what seems, externally, central to the belief system.

Queens in Ancient Egypt

- ❑ No independent word for QUEEN, but connected / in proportion to the KING: hemet – nesw – “wife of the king”
 - position and importance due to her physical relationship to the king.
- ❑ Position not equal or parallel to that of king: his office = divine as incarnation of HORUS on earth, who inherited the throne from his father, OSIRIS → but some queens were raised to be king
- ❑ Queen could consort with divinity but was not considered divine → therefore no own mythological backing, nor a divine role to fill
- ❑ Slight change of position from NK onwards – queen now more closely associated with the goddesses TEFNUT and HATHOR

Gender and politics: male kings and female queens

- ❑ **Many questions:**
- ❑ Role of kingship
- ❑ Role of queens
- ❑ Female kings
- ❑ office of the God's Wife of Amun
- ❑ How are they involved in politics, religion – what is their divine status?

Women in connection with the king

- ❑ Queens: mother, (principal) wife, (first-born) daughter
→ (well) attested
- ❑ Secondary wives (never higher than king's wife),
concubines → the role of the Harem → less good
attested
- ❑ The role of queens:
 - Religion
 - exercise of power
 - divinity (divine attributes and ideal beauty)
 - the female counterpart of the pharaoh → complementing
the divine role
 - the female king

Queens: mother



- The Queen Mother
- Ankhenesmeryt II and Pepy II Neferkara
- OK, 6th dyn.
- New York, Brooklyn Museum of Art 39.119



mwt-nesw (king's mother)

- ❑ Was medium by which royal power transferred from father to son
- ❑ always also title “daughter of the god,” as reference to her father, the deceased king – passing divine birthright onto her son, legitimisation of his right to rule

Development until end OK

- Dynasty 0 (3300–3100 BCE): mythology and symbolism of kingship already set (king was Horus → stated in first name of titulary: Horus name, wore crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt and royal kilt with bull's tail, held white mace)
- BUT: evidence for titles of queen not yet formed in 1st dyn.
- Symbols + accoutrements of queen not used until the OK
- OK: main royal female symbol (**vulture headdress**), just for queen as mwt-nesw, “King's Mother” (connection to son, not husband!)

Queens: mother



- Turin C2457: Ahmose-Nefertari and Amenhotep I
- protected by winged goddess (in another object replaced by Nekhbet in vulture form)
- figures of mother and son complementing each other
- might be part of a throne or litter for statues of A-N and AI

**Ramesses II &
Ahmose
Nefertari**



Queens: wife



- The Great Royal Wife
- Nefertari, Ramses II, 19th dyn.
- Abu Simbel, small temple (temple of Ibshek), Hypostyl Hall
- New: queen is present at scene of smiting of the enemies

Queens: daughter



- Carved Plaque of Amenhotep III (MMA 44.2.1)
- Princesses Henuttaneb and Isis in front of their parents, playing sistrum
- AIII celebrating jubilee together with Tiye

Queens: princess Isis as daughter AND wife



Insignia of queens – signs of power

- ❑ Msw nswt (OK) depicted wearing the **vulture headdress**
 - = attribute of goddesses in the Old Kingdom
 - Vulture headdress maybe chosen as ancient Egyptian word for both “mother” and “vulture” = mwt
- ❑ By MK both queen and princess wear the **uraeus**: the rearing cobra that adorned and protected the forehead of the king
- ❑ Middle Kingdom royal women could also wear **double plume**

Insignia of queens – signs of power

- ❑ princess Neferu-ptah (Amenemhat III) first to use cartouche
- ❑ From early NK: cartouche = regularly used by queens
- ❑ From beginning of NK: queen held flywhisk (resembles king's flail + hieroglyphic sign mes – “to give birth”)
- ❑ from Amenhotep III ancient Egyptian queen wore sun disk in cow's horns, double plume, and single or double uraeus → standard headgear for queens and goddesses
- ❑ sun disk and horns = symbols of Hathor, as well as double plume (Hathor wore when appeared as a cow)



Titles – signs of power

- end of OK: king had set fivefold titulary
- titulary of the queen never as standardized or as constant
→ only very basic title of *hemet-nesw* did not vary
 - appears in the 2nd Dynasty
- In Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms: queen had different main title and different subsidiary titles accompanying *hemet-nesw*



Titles – signs of power

- Old Kingdom:
 - hemet-nesw
 - Sat-nesw
 - the One who sees Horus and Seth
 - great of affection
 - great of praise
- 4th Dynasty: also held titles of priestess, either Hathor, or priestess of different divine aspects of the king, titles were not used after that

Titles – signs of power

- Middle Kingdom
- two simple and basic patterns
 - “hereditary noblewoman and king’s wife”
 - “king’s wife and She who is joined to the White Crown.”
- Subsidiary titles of a more political nature appeared as well - “mistress of women” and “mistress of the Two Lands”
- end of MK, hemet-nesw weret, “King’s Great Wife” appeared, establishing a clear ranking system within the harem

Titles – signs of power

- New Kingdom most common three titles
 - hemet-nesw weret (“King’s Great Wife”)
 - hemet-nesw (“King’s Wife”)
 - mwt-nesw (“King’s Mother”)
- Many others describing the queen, such as “sweet of
- love,” “ possessor of charm,” and “the one who
- fills the palace with the scent of her fragrance”
- “God’s wife of Amun,” – first held by AHMOSE NEFERTIRY, then HATSHEPSUT
- Office entitled queen to a place in the cult rituals for the god Amun of Karnak temple, and extensive land and income to support her position

Power Queens

□ Ahmose Nefertari

- Ahmose' sister or 1/2 & principal wife, mother of AI
- involved in religious building projects
- ritual offerings by her found listed in many temples
- usually used title god's wife = most important
- important through reign of son & TI
- deified after death
 - a. with Amenhotep I
 - b. oracles
 - c. particularly in DeM

Ahmoose-Nefertari and Amenhotep I (TT26 Khnumemhab, RII)



Power Queens - Hatshepsut

- Became antique role model for modern feminists for being a queen-pharaoh
 - daughter of T1, wife of T2 (half brother)
 - Took on role of King
 - erection of obelisks
 - depiction directly with gods
 - chosen by king as successor
 - divine birth
 - 5-fold titulary
 - male regalia
 - co-regency
 - Passed god's wife role to her daughter Neferura

Hatshepsut
and Amun

male rep.

'daughter of
Amun'





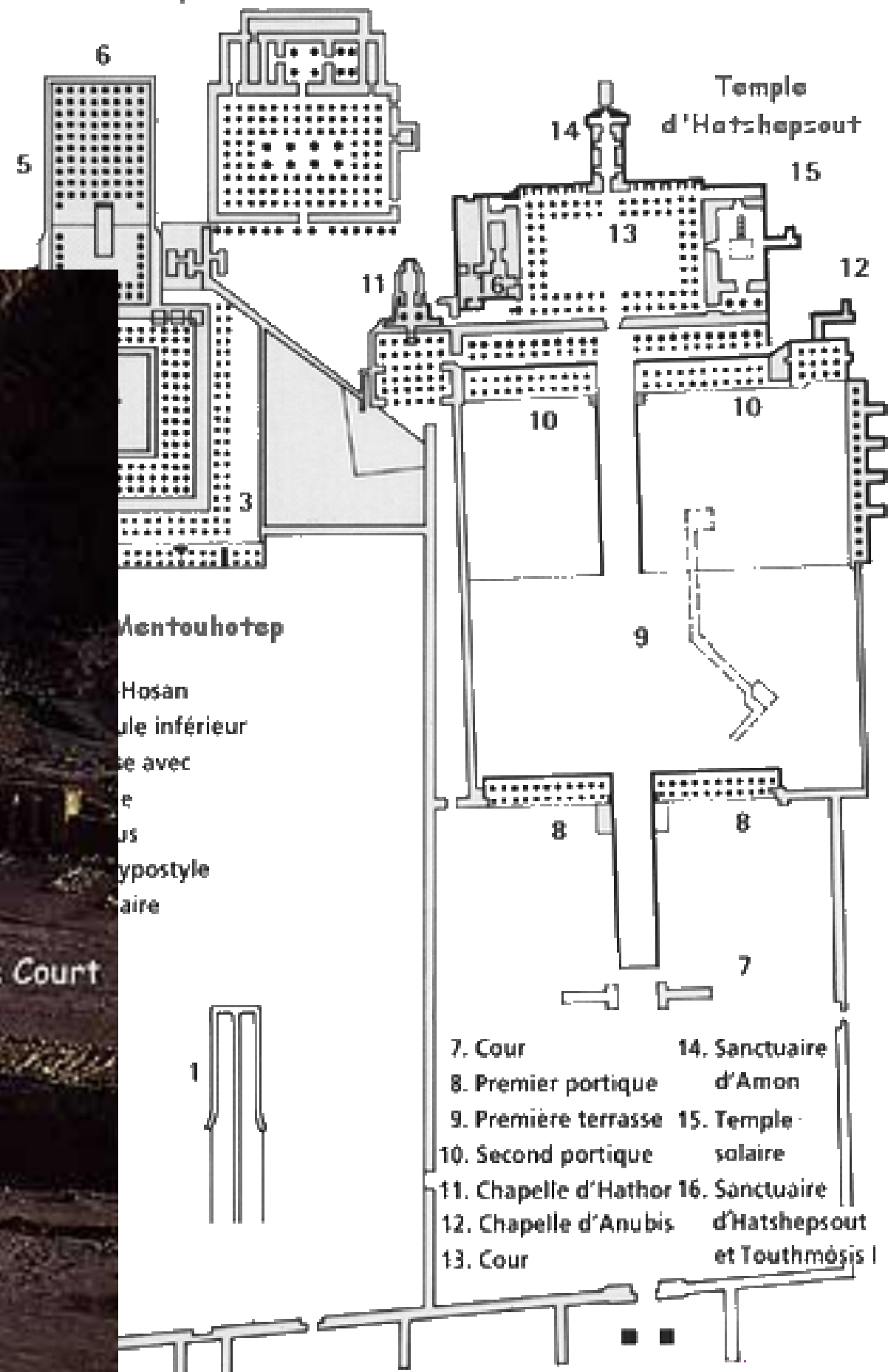
**HATSHEPSUT IN MALE AND FEMALE GARB
FROM STATUARY ERECTED AT
DEIR EL-BAHARI**



Deir el-Bahari



Temple de Thoutmôsis III

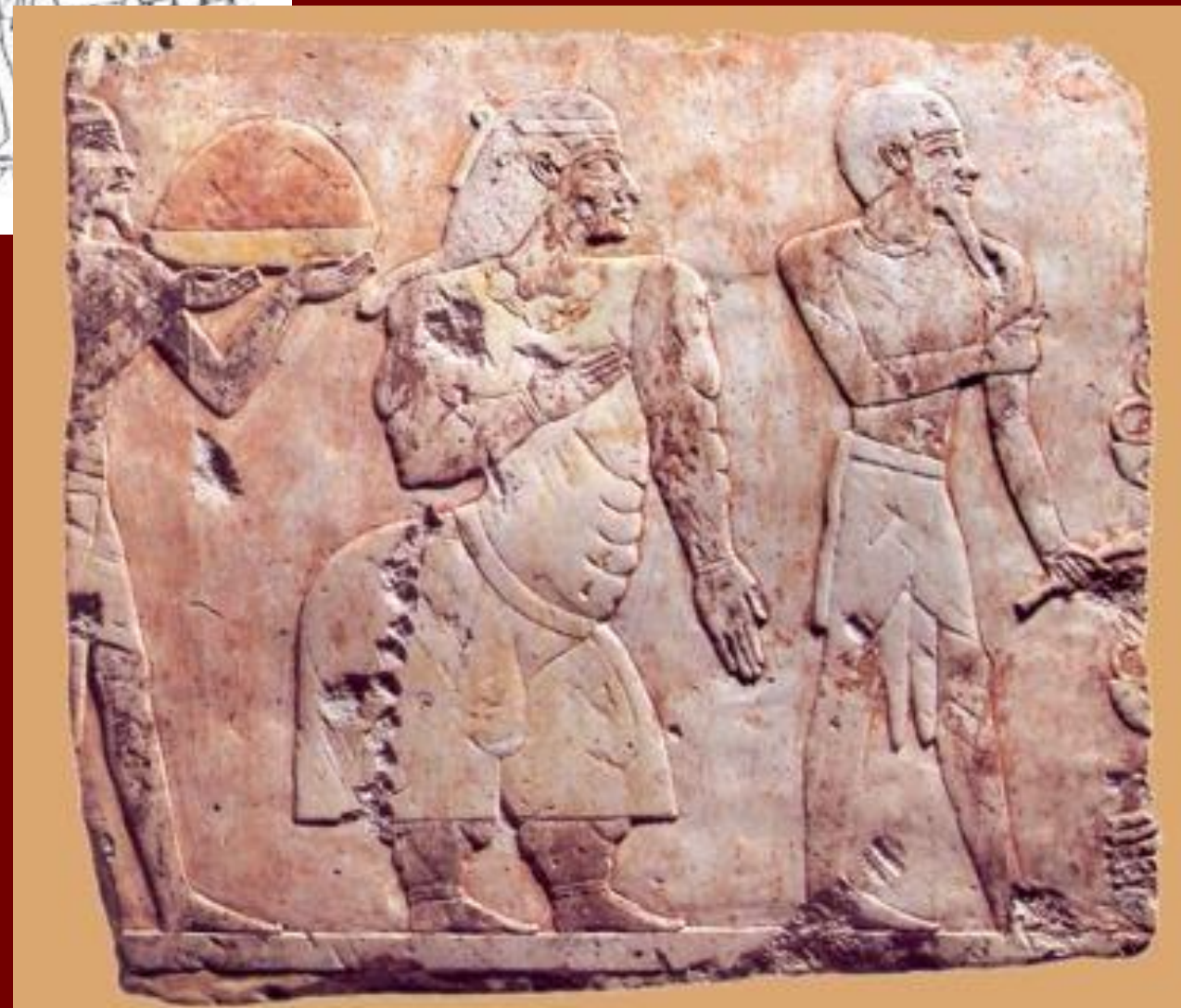
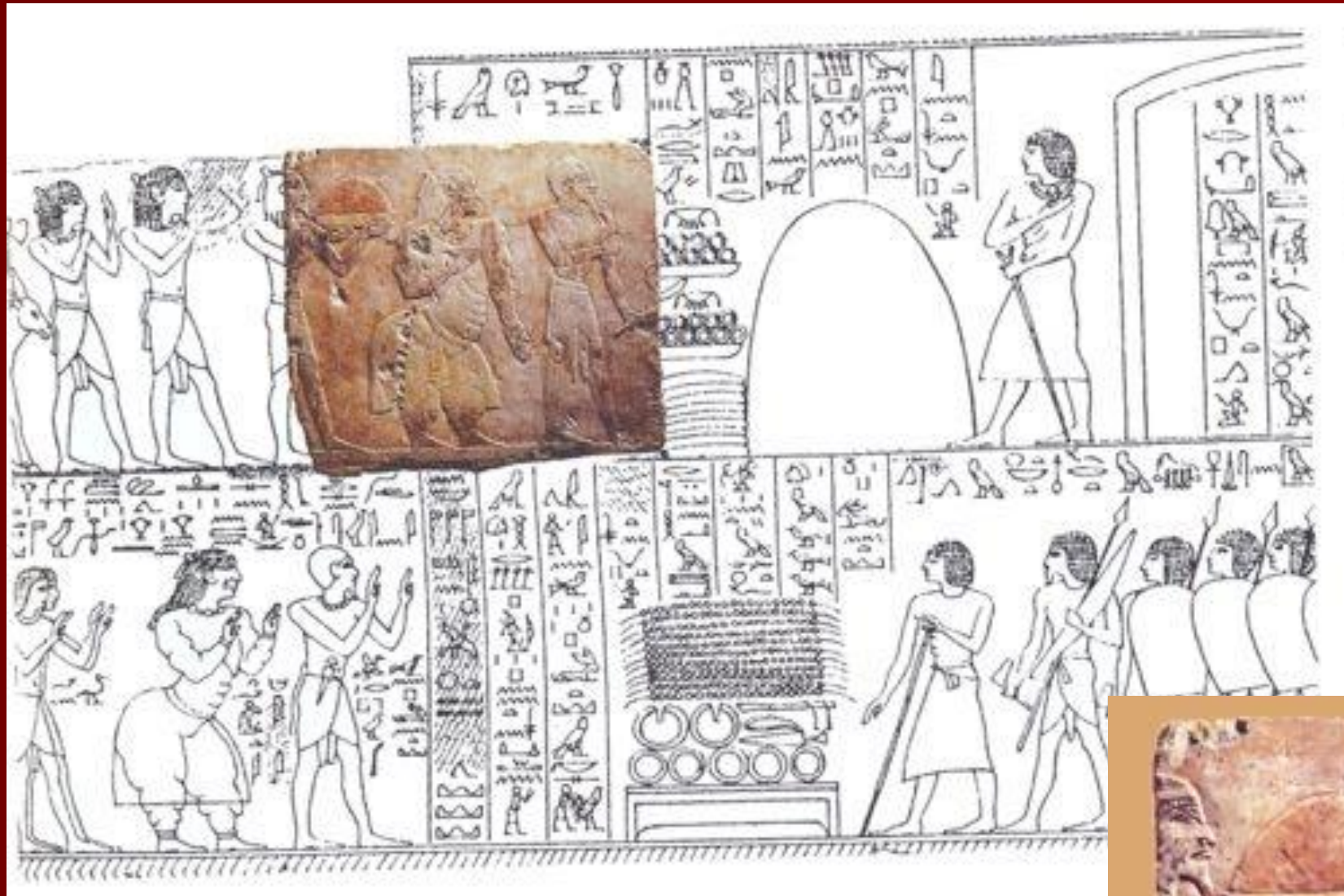


Deir el Bahri :

Light Infantry in peace time: palm-fronds, balanced with weapons and military standards



Queen of Punt

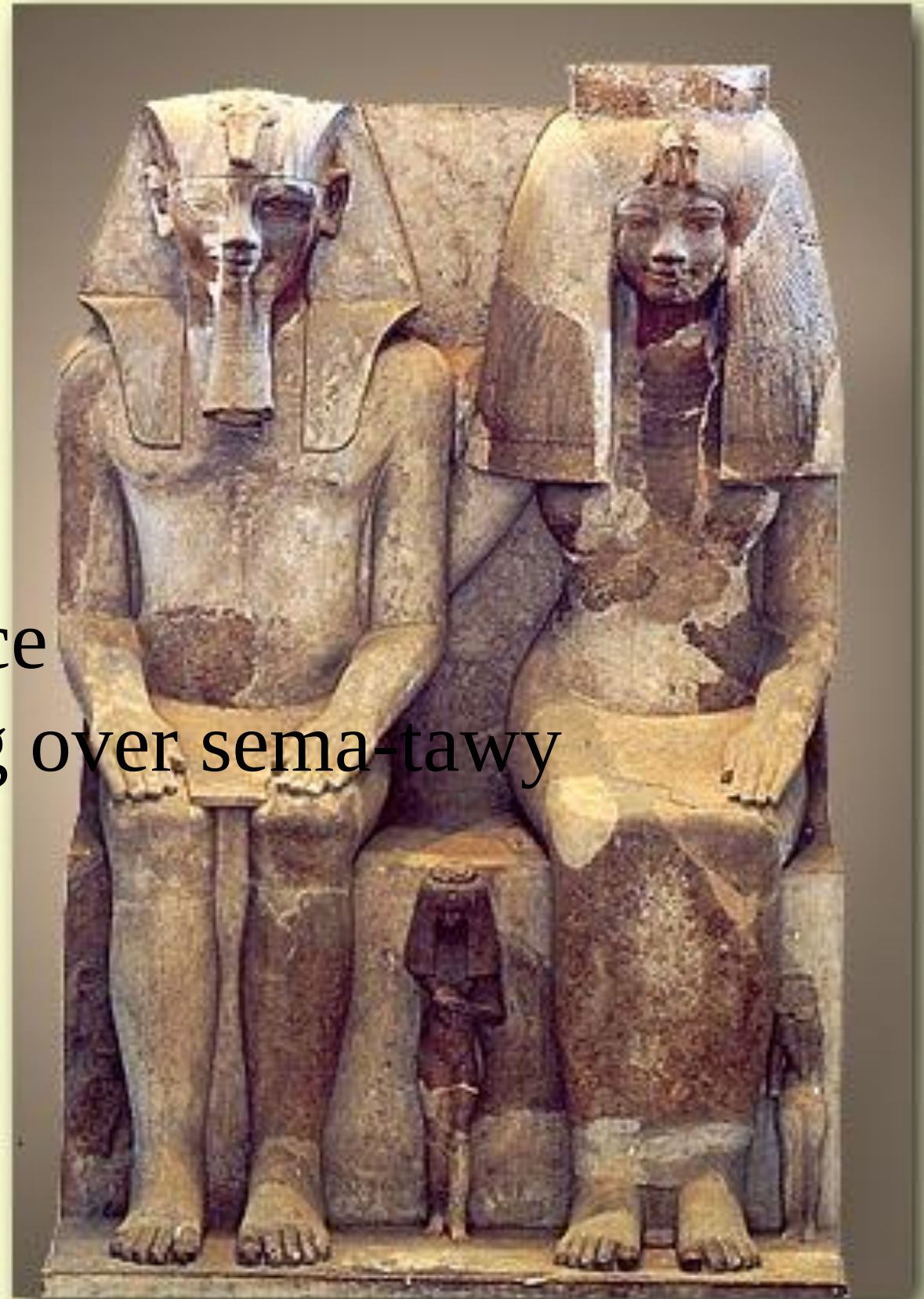




Power Queens????!!!

Tiye (queen AIII)

- principal wife
- non-royal birth
- Kingly
 - a. equal scale
 - b. diplomatic correspondance
 - c. shown as sphinx & sitting over sema-tawy
 - d. pharaonic titulary
- divine equations:
 - a. Hathor
 - b. Maat
 - c. Taweret



The Amarna Letters

- Ancient diplomatic archive discovered at Amarna in 1887
- Bureau of Correspondence of Pharaoh
- 382 tablets known, including some scribal training texts (Mesopotamian myths and epics, Akkadian wordlists, etc.)



Amarna Letter 26

Say to Teye [= *Tiye*], mistress of Egypt: Thus, Tušratta, the king of Mittani [. . .] You are one that knows that I myself always showed love to Mimmureya [= *Nebmaatre*], your husband [. . .] And now you are the one that must not forget your love for Mimmureya, your brother. Increase it for Napkhurreya [= *Neferkheperure*] and maintain it for him.



Nefertiti



Power Queens????!!! – Nefertiti (Akhenaten)

- very different
- did not wear vulture crown (blue tall Tefnut crown instead → only her), but did wear other insignia
- Female element in triads
- kingly
 - Smiting, more kingly crowns, same size, crook & flail, double cartouche
 - co-regent with Akhenaten?, king Smenkhare
 - note overlap with Akhenaten in iconography

Royal women of Amarna



Royal Women in Amarna?

- Far more information about women of this period than any time else in AE
- Married their fathers? – religious marriages, “consumed” marriages → modern scholars in difficulties to explain (modern taboos about incest)
 - Incestuous relationship might be difficult to understand
 - But we have no proof of offspring coming from such a relationship

Tiye with feather crown

- Berlin ÄM 21834 and ÄM 17852
- Face shows characteristic of queen
- Reworked after death of AIII, but in lifetime of Tiye: silver scarf → crown with double feathers → deification



BM EA57399: Shrine stela of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye

From the house of Panehsy, Tell
el-Amarna, Egypt
18th Dynasty, around 1340 BC

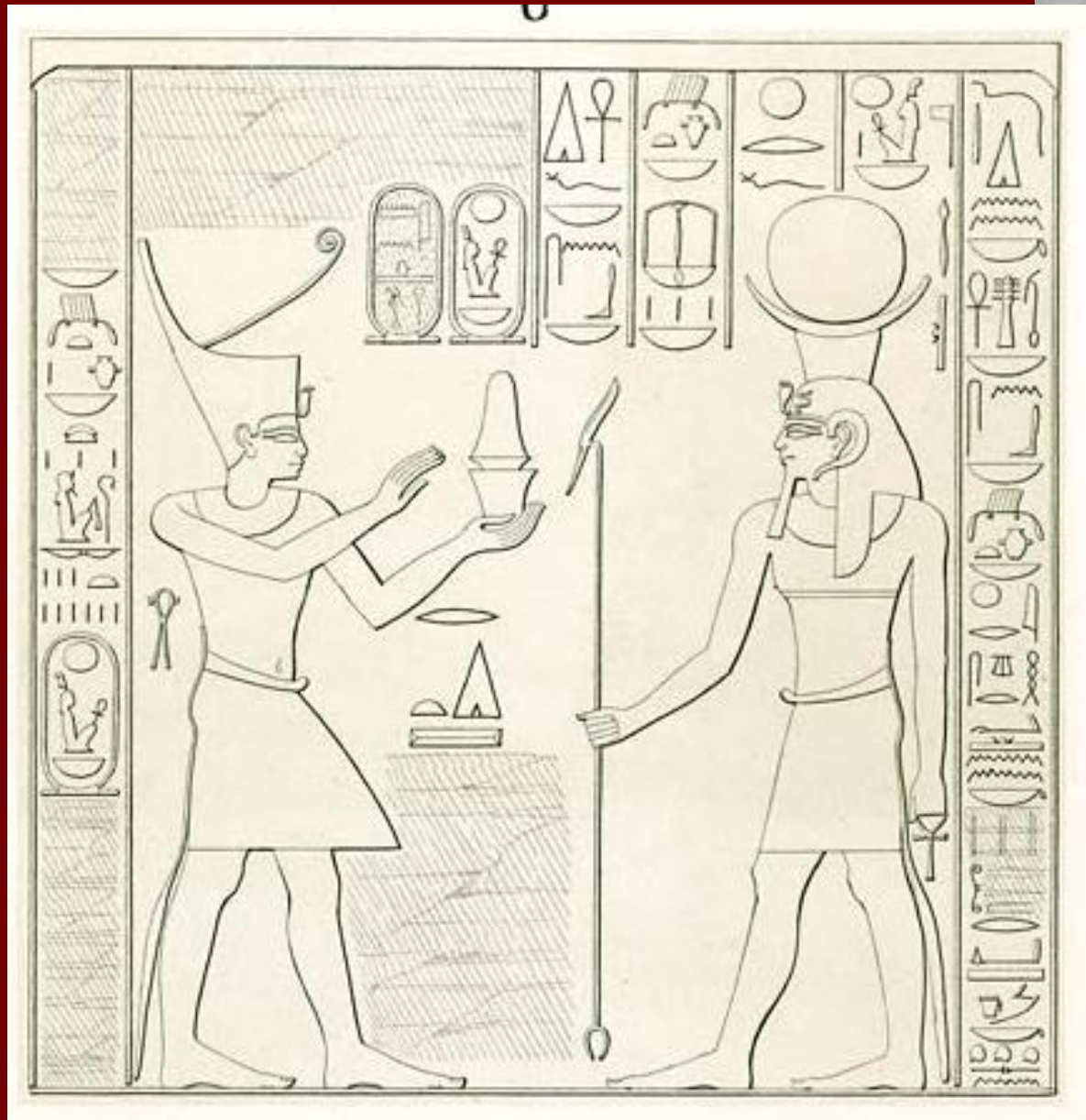
Amenhotep III (1390-1352 BC)
and Tiye beneath the sun disc, in
the style usually confined to
Akhenaten and his officials,
though Amenhotep III did
identify himself with the sun in
the later years of his life

→ deification



Deification of Amenhotep III

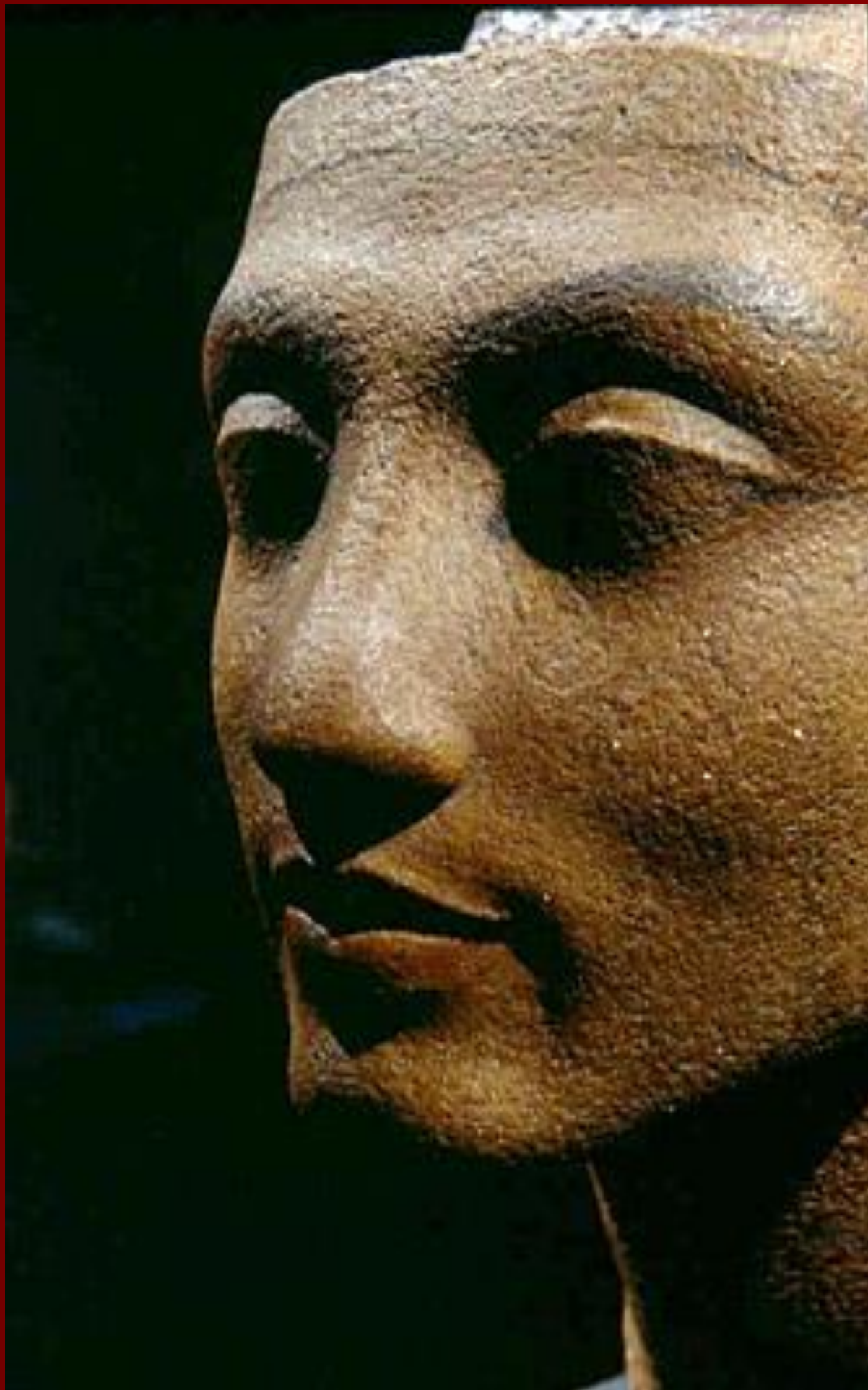
- Worshipped as the sun and Lord of Nubia at Soleb



Deification of Amenhotep III

- Worshipped as the sun and Lord of Nubia at Soleb
- Tiye worshipped as the sun god's consort, Hathor, at Sedeinga





Nofretete Berlin ÄM 21200

- Unfinished bust
- Nefertiti or one of the daughters (Meritaton or Anchesenpaaton married to Semenckare and Tutankhamen)

Queen offering (Nefertiti?)

MMA 1993.326



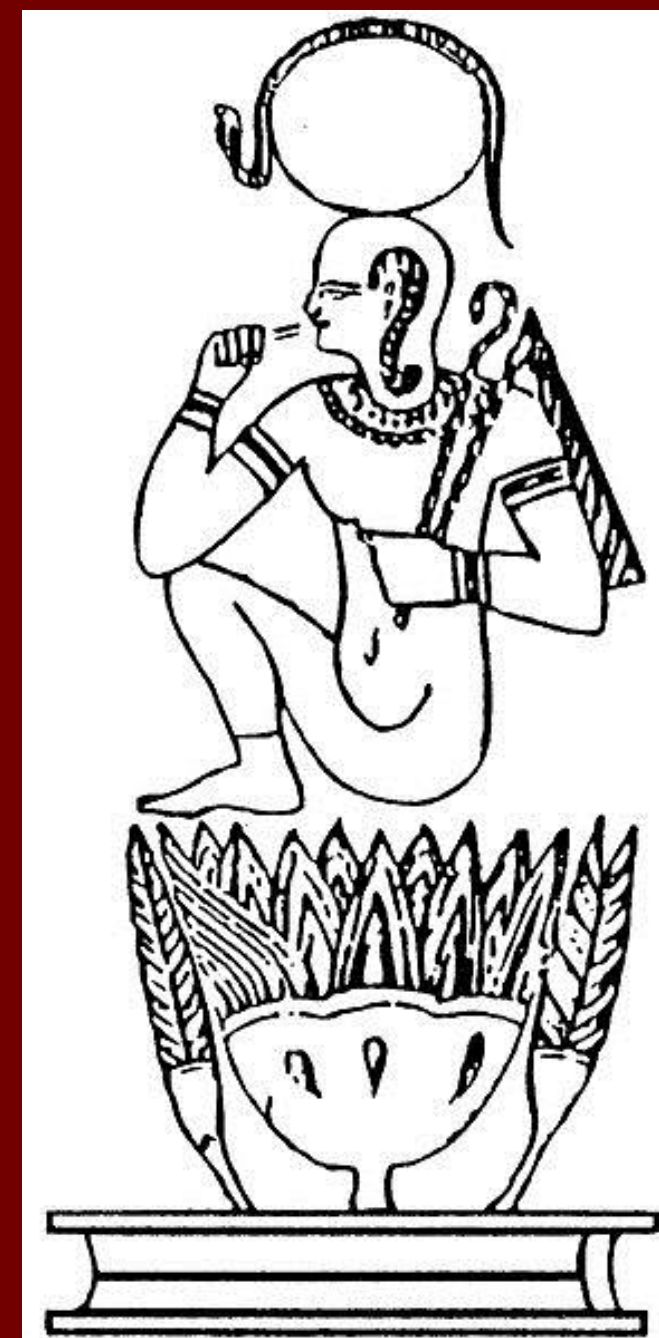
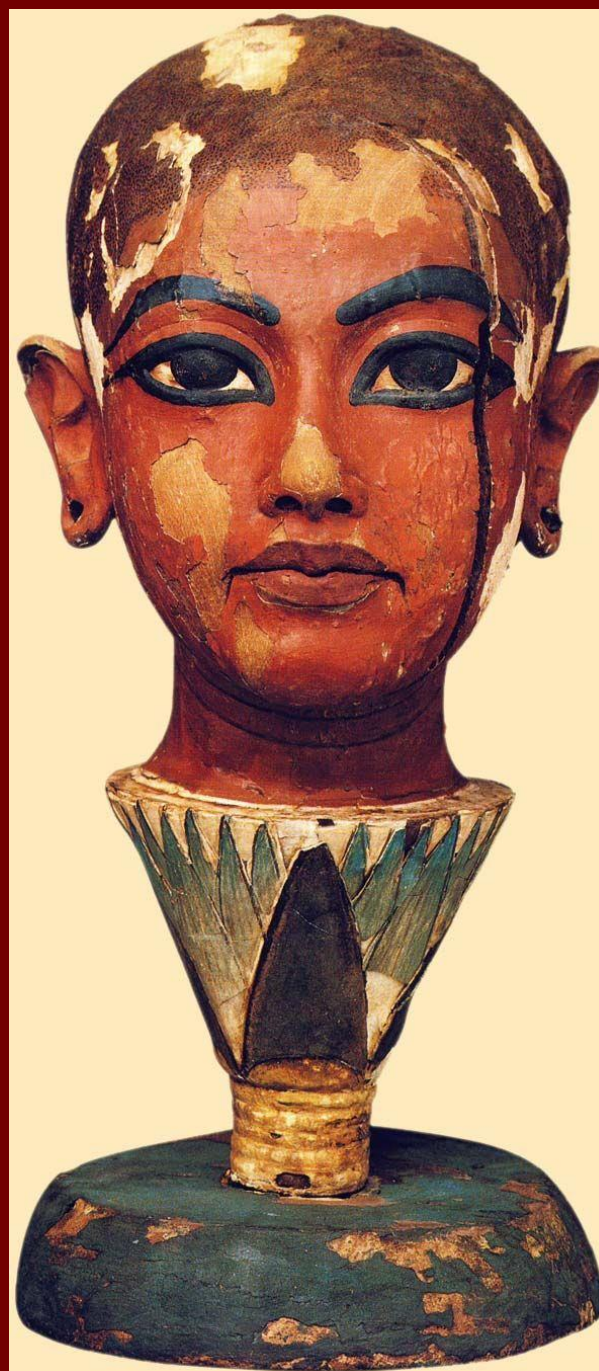
- limestone block (temple scene): king and queen making an offering to Aten.
- face, usually identified as Akhenaten, actually depicts an Amarna queen, probably Nefertiti, following her husband
- king's shoulder just visible at the left side of the block
- Nefertiti wears the royal "afnet" headcloth with a uraeus cobra at the forehead

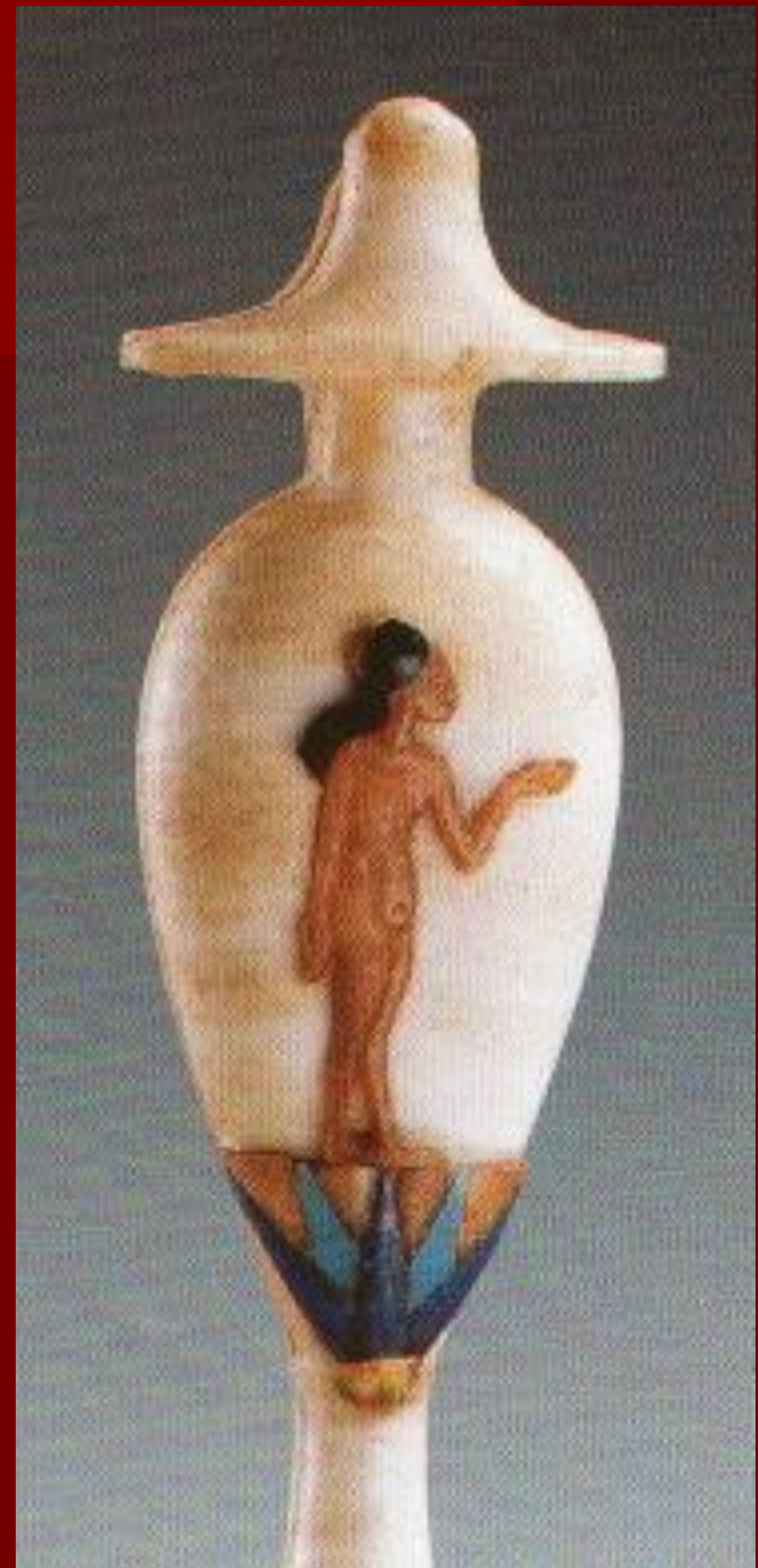
Deification of princesses?

- Just by accident?
- Depiction on the mount like Nefertem on flower?



Fig. 7. Lid of a small box from the tomb of Tutankhamun showing a child and the name of Princess Nefernefrure. Wood with glass inlays. Egyptian Museum, Cairo





Who is who?

- Akhenaten's family:
 - → The King's Daughters of His Flesh
 - Baketaten ???
 - Meretaten
 - Meketaten
 - Ankhesenpaaten
 - Nefernerefuateen-Tahserit
 - Neferneferure
 - Setepenre

Who is who?

- Akhenaten's family:
 - The King's Chief Wife Nefertiti:
 - Kiya
 - Daughters of AIV / Akhenaten – the Tasherit (the younger)
 - Mysterious
 - Meretaten-Tasherit –daughter of Meretaten?
 - Ankhesenpaaten-Tasherit ??? Problematic, on blocks in Karnak and Hermopolis (mother Ankhesenpaaten or Kiya???)