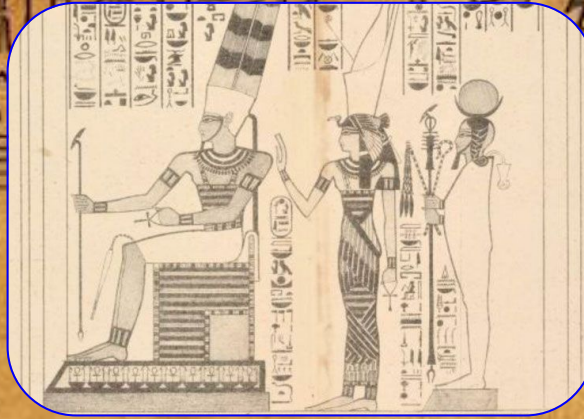


The God's Wife of Amun

Introduction:

The title of The Gods Wife of Amun was one of the most significant and powerful titles that a woman of royal status could hold in Ancient Egypt particularly during the New kingdom and third intermediate kingdom. Not only was the title significant but it was the highest ranking of priestesses in Amuns Cult. The earliest appearance of the rank was in the 12th Dynasty around 1971 BCE and the title continued to be used up until 525 BCE when Cambyses II conquered Egypt and distrusted local priesthoods especially those in Amuns temple.



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Religious Role:

Holding the title consisted of holding significant religious responsibilities. These included participating in temple rituals, performing purification and ceremonial rights, acting as a divine consort to Amun and holding the title 'divine Adoratrice'. (female quasi-royal priestess). The life of The God's Wife of Amun was built around ritual activity and their role to supervise the matters within the temples. One example of a ritual in which The God's Wife would partake in was the sacred awakening of Amun. She would sing hymns and say prayers that would reawaken the god's statue and restore their sacred power. Her movements and actions followed set texts, depicting the rebirth of the world. This ritual was one reason why she was so pivotal to the temple since she was responsible for reviving Amuns sacred spirit.

Political, Economical & Social Influence:

By the time the 25th-26th dynasties came around, The Gods Wife of Amun held much more power. She would be in control of a wide variety of temple estates, command large economic resources and administrative staff as well as influence political succession. Clearly becoming a powerful position to uphold and maintain as the title gave the individual power and control over certain areas of Egypt. Not only was she in control of many estates but she also directed multiple constructions, restoring damaged shrines and even contributed resources to national building efforts. In the political world. The Gods Wife also resolved disputes and even some pharaohs depended on her to maintain loyalty amongst elites.

Significance for Women in Ancient Egypt:

Due to the influences in Religious, Political, Economical and Social areas, the women who held the title of The God's Wife of Amun had, they were incredibly significant, as they were symbol of power, devotion and strength. The Gods Wife of Amun were also expected and appeared to lead celibate lives, living within the temples and produced no heirs, this 'rule' helped to ensure that their personal wealth and influence would not be transferred to rival families, keeping the bloodline pure once again showing their devotion and commitment for the role.. Not only was The God's Wife of Amun inspiring and powerful through her influence and control of political, social and economical scenes. But her importance in temple life really made her an important presence for religious rituals and life in Ancient Egypt.