

Block 7

A1

The so-called dark years – The closing years of the reign of Akhenaten

HPAH5003/6003: Amarna – Materiality of a
religious revolution

AHAR7005: Akhenaten and Amarna:
Religion, culture and people

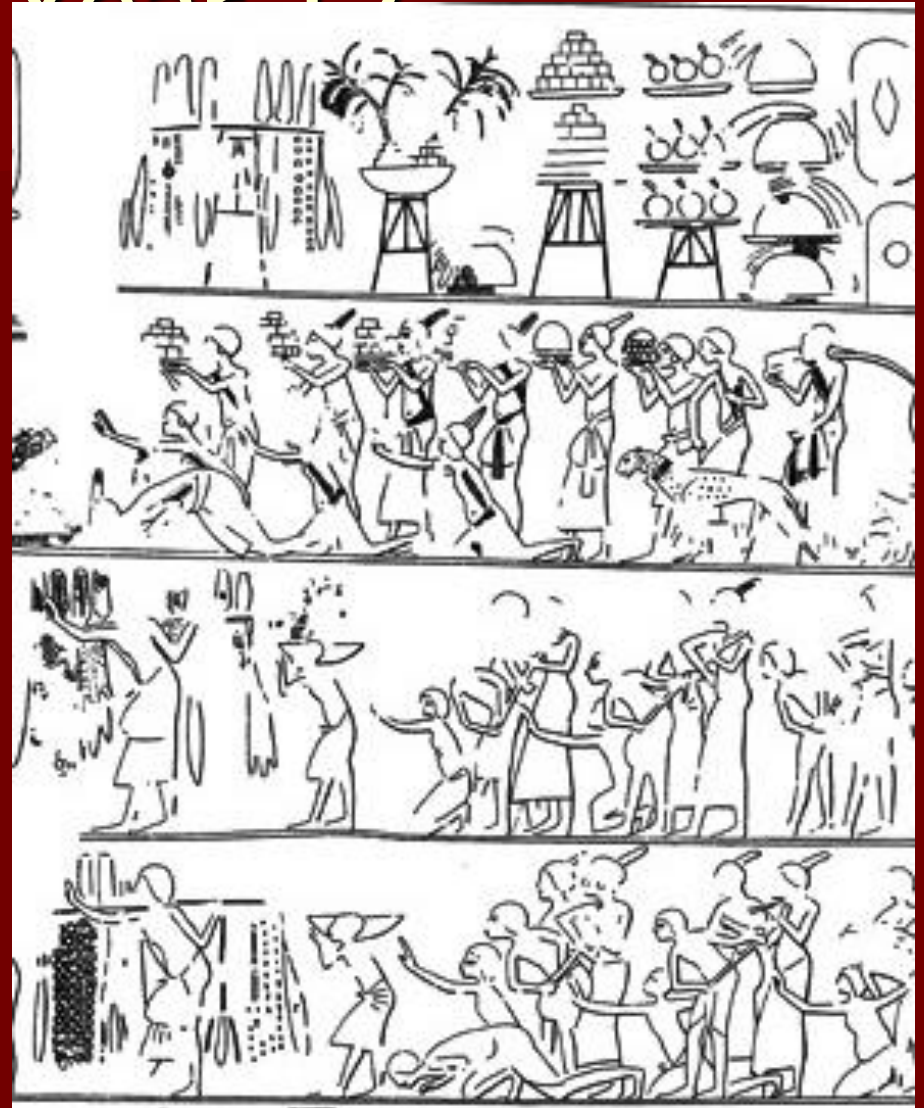
Dr Katharina Zinn

Readings

- Van der Perre, A. (2012). Nefertiti's last documented reference (for now). In: Seyfried, F. *In the Light of Amarna: 100 years of the Nefertiti discovery*. Berlin: Staatliches Museum. 195-197.
- Allen, J.P. (2009). The Amarna succession. In: Brand, P. (ed.): *Causing His Name to Live. Studies in Egyptian Epigraphy and History in Memory of William J. Murnane*. Leiden: Brill. 9-19.

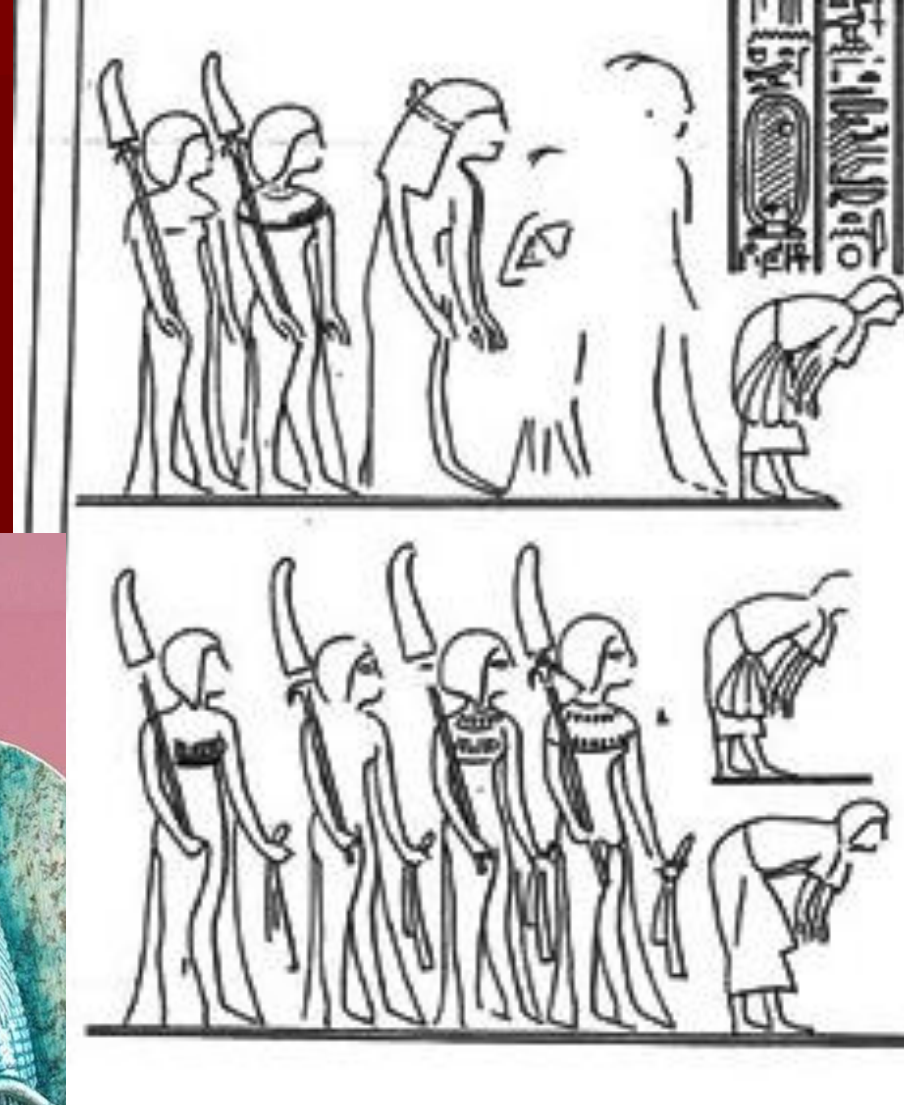
Regnal Year 12

- Reception of foreign tribute (the “durbar”)



Regnal Year 12

- Reception of foreign tribute (the “durbar”)
- last time Akhenaten, Nefertiti, 6 daughters seen together
- Death of Tiye about this time



Regnal Year 12

- Reception of foreign tribute (the “durbar”) last time Akhenaten, Nefertiti, 6 daughters seen together
- Death of Tiye about this time
- Revolt in Nubia
- Possible occurrence of plague



The disappearance of Kiya

- Depicted with a daughter [///////-aten] behind her



The disappearance of Kiya

- Depicted with a daughter [/////]-aten behind her
- Disappears in art work circa Regnal Year 14
- Name removed from texts, esp. at the North Palace
- Images recarved as Meritaten, who was



The disappearance of Kiya

- This occurred with other deceased members of the royal family!
- may have been standard



The disappearance of Kiya

- This occurred with other deceased members of the royal family!
- may have been standard
- However funerary goods reused!



ROYAL INCEST

???

**→ SEE ALSO LECTURE:
WOMEN IN AMARNA**

Royal incest

- Akhenaten apparently took at least three of his daughters as wives



Royal in

- Akhenaten apparently took at least three of his daughters as wives
- Meritaten (1st daughter; later wife of Smenkhkare)



Royal incest

- Akhenaten apparently took at least three of his daughters as wives
- Meritaten (1st daughter; later wife of Smenkhkare)
- Meketaten (2nd daughter)



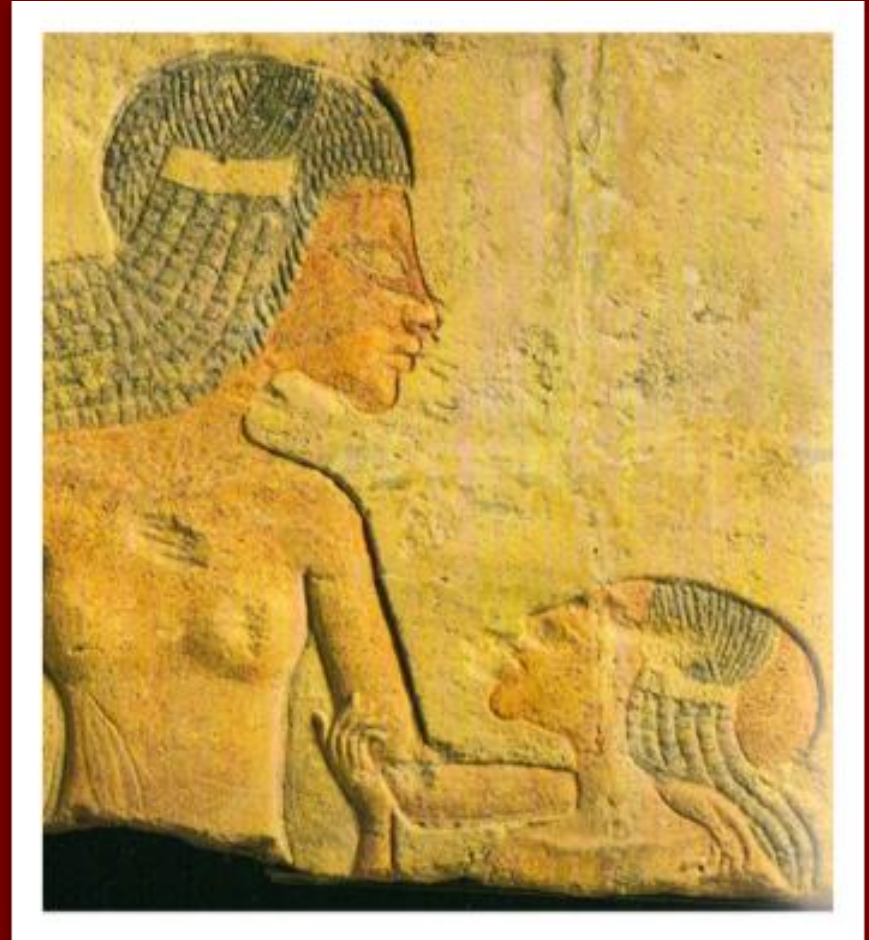
Royal incest

- Akhenaten apparently took at least three of his daughters as wives
- Meritaten (1st daughter; later wife of Smenkhkare)
- Meketaten (2nd daughter)
- Ankhespaaten (3rd daughter; future wife of



Royal incest

- Each known to have had a daughter
- Meritaten-ta-sherit ("the younger")
- Ankhensapaaten-ta-sherit



Royal incest

- Each known to have borne a daughter
- Meritaten-ta-sherit ("the younger")
- Ankhensapaaten-ta-sherit
- One line of interpretation: Meketaten died in childbirth delivering a 3rd child ($\approx$ Regnal Year 14; approx. 12 years old)



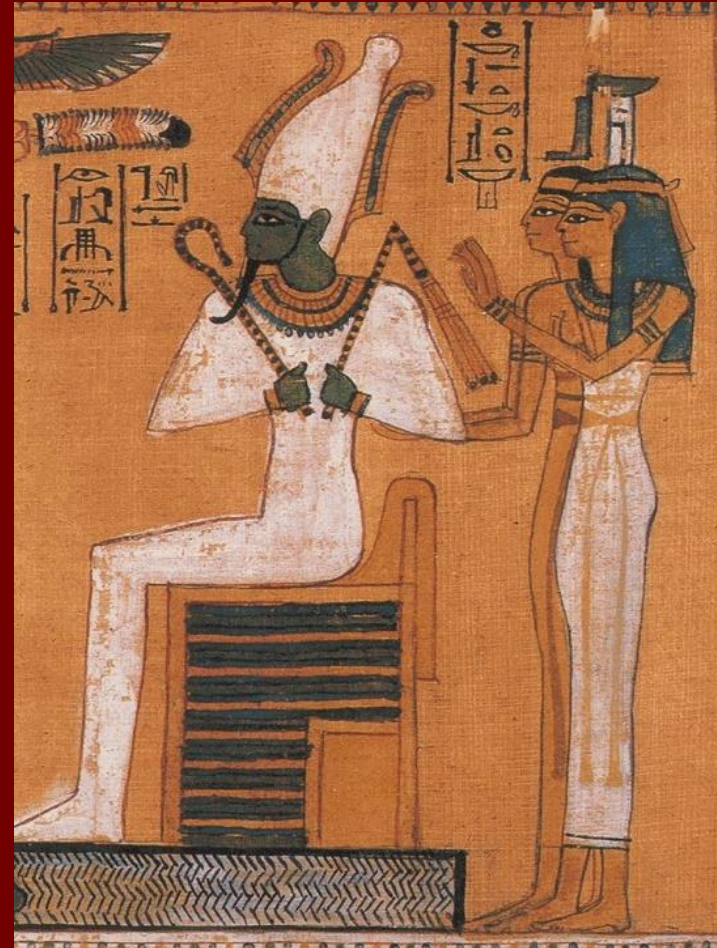
Royal incest

- Typical age of marriage in Egypt was about 13 (10-14) years (time of puberty), so NOT unusual
- “childhood” is a rather recent notion, even in the west
- Don't forget that on average most people, even kings, were dead by 30



Royal incest

- Brother–sister relationships in the royal family were not uncommon
 - Hatshepsut + Thutmose II
- Had religious basis; based on “divine” behavior (Osiris + Isis)



Royal incest

- Brother–sister relationships in the royal family were not uncommon
- Had religious basis; based on “divine” behavior (Osiris + Isis)
- However, Father–daughter relationships, even in the royal family, were not “normal” in be



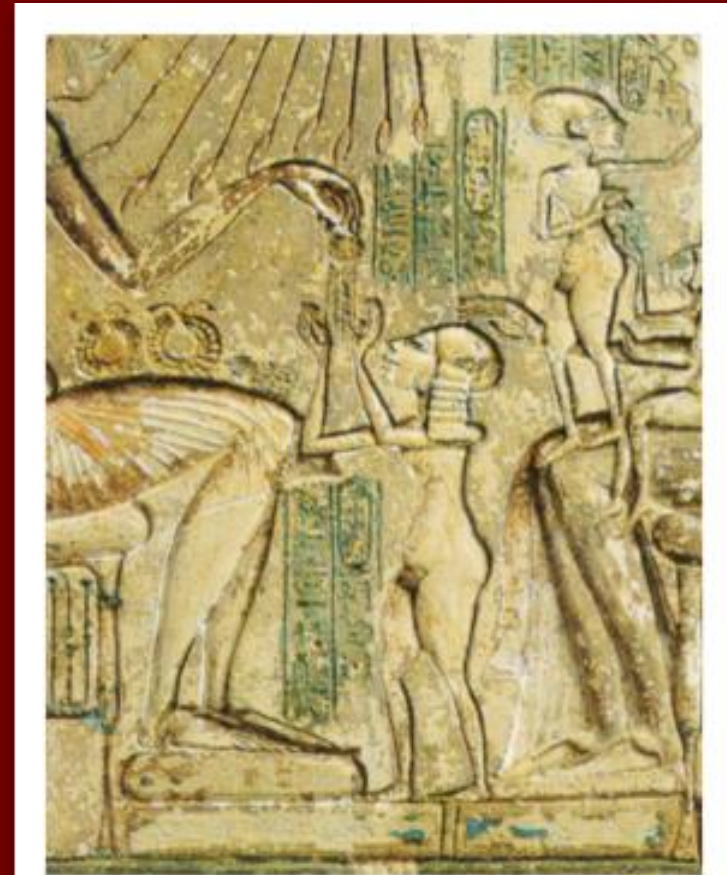
Royal incest

- Amenhotep III set a precedent when he made his daughter Sitamun “Great Royal Wife” while Tiye still lived
- Not sure what Akhenaten’s ideological justification may have been
 - DISCUSS



Royal incest

- Amenhotep III set a precedent when he made his daughter Sitamun “great royal wife” while Tiye still lived
- Not sure what Akhenaten’s ideological justification may have been
 - Keeping up feminine side of his religion?



Royal

- Amenhotep III set a precedent when he made his daughter Sitamun “great royal wife” while Tiye still lived
- Not sure what Akhenaten’s ideological justification may have been
 - Keeping up feminine side of his religion?



Akhenaten as god: his divinity

- The reception of foreign tribute ("durbar") is dated to Regnal Year 12 of the Aten (not Akhenaten!) in the tomb of Huya
- May indicate that Akhenaten was associating himself with the Aten as god on earth



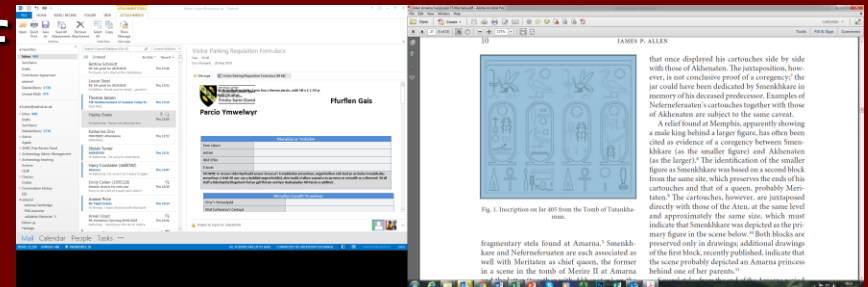
The divinity of Akhenaten

- Also about the time that a coregent, Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten, appears in the record
- following Amenhotep III's precedent of assuming "divinity" and simultaneously taking a human coregent?
- Who was the coregent?



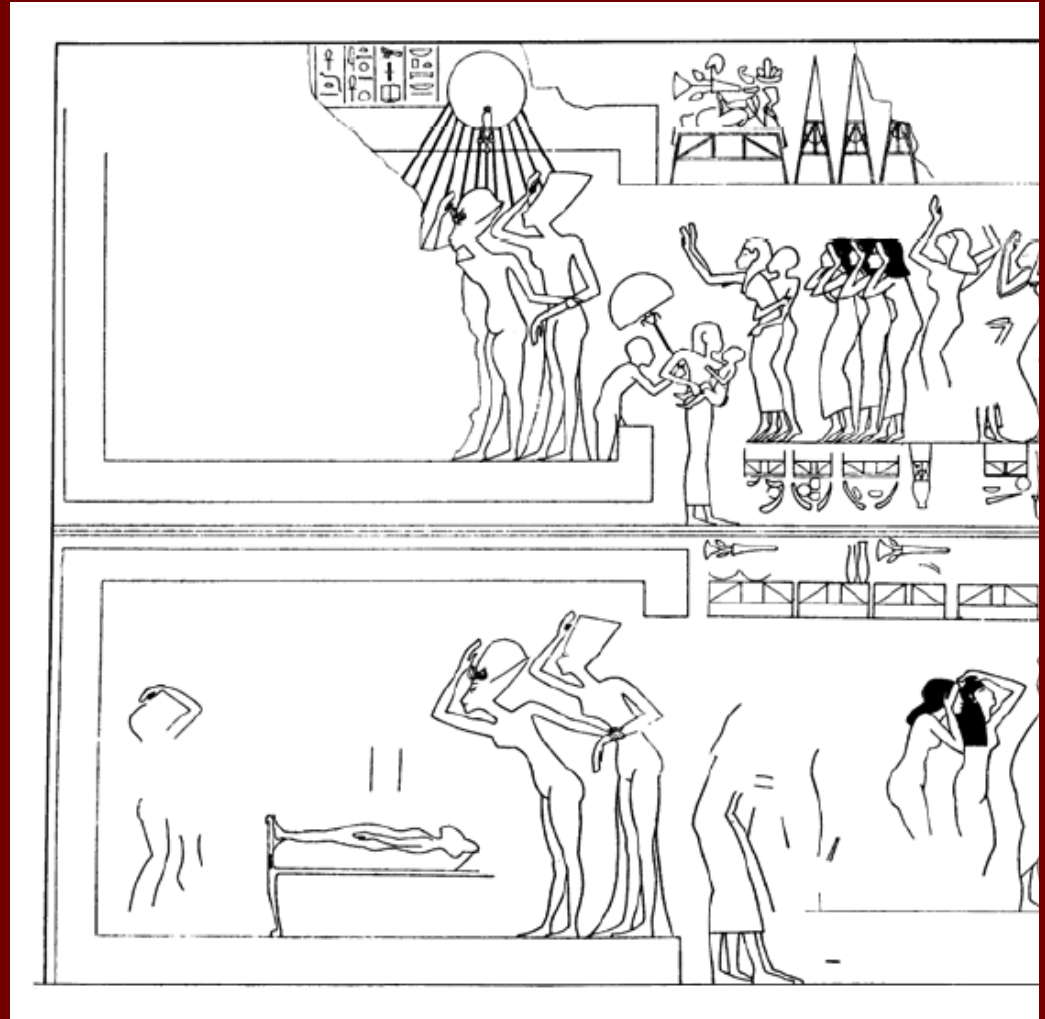
Corengency??? with ???

- calcite globular vase from the tomb of Tutankhamun bears full double cartouche of Akhenaten with full double cartouche of Smenkhkare
- *only* object to carry both names side by side.



The disappearance of Nefertiti

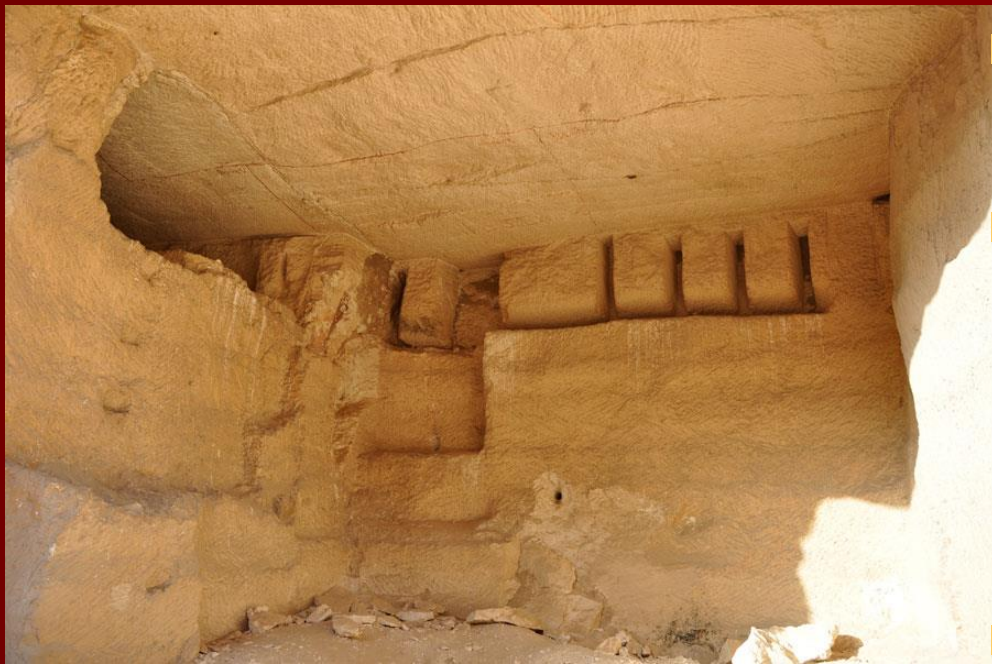
- Nefertiti disappears from the historical record circa Regnal Year 14
- Last depicted at funeral of Meketaten
- BUT – 2011: NEW evidence?



New evidence! - Dayr (Deir) Abu Hinnis



- east bank of the Nile, few km north of Dayr al-Barsha
- extensive archaeological site, three wadis with more than two hundred limestone quarries
- Exploitation started in NK,
- subterranean galleries and open air quarries
- gallery quarries were re-used by monks and hermits in the Early Christian Period



- **The Amarna Period (ca. 1353-1336 B.C.)**
- Thousands of unpublished **hieratic inscriptions** found on the ceilings of these quarries: names, graffiti, dates, and quarry marks
- ceilings are covered with yellow/red ochre lines → looking on quarry marks and dates → information on quarrying techniques, work progress and –organization
- → blocks with dimensions of approximately 55-60cm x 25-30cm (in situ) → **talatat blocks**



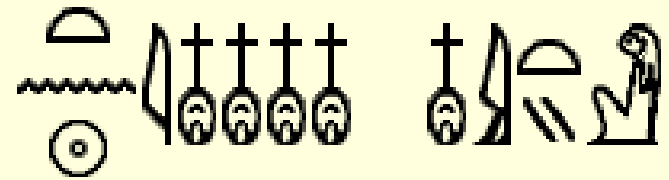
blocks with inscriptions referring to Akhenaten, Nefertiti and the Amarna temples



FIG. 3 Detail of the inscription "year 16"



FIG. 4 Detail of the inscription with the cartouche and Nefertiti's name.



Neferneferuaten Nefertiti

Nfr nfrw itn Nfr.t jy.tj

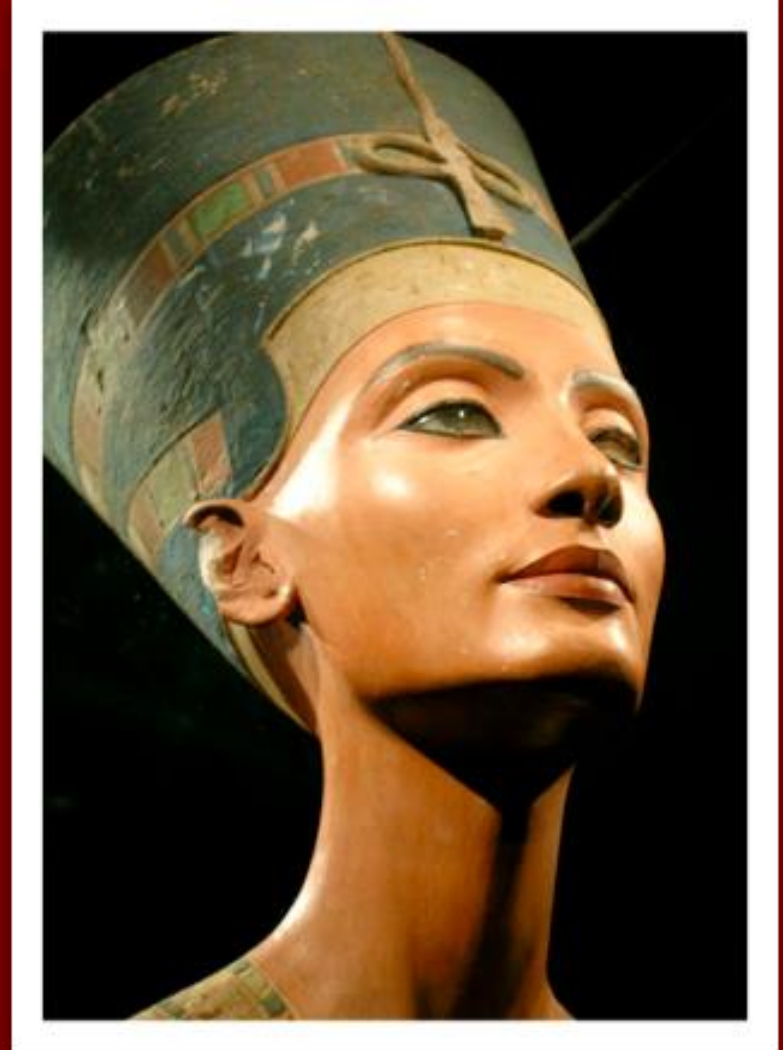
The disappearance of Nefertiti

- Nefertiti disappears from the historical record circa Regnal Year ~~14~~ 16
- Old idea of her living in Disgrace in the North Palace due to confusion with erased texts now known to be those of the deceased Kiya
- thus no evidence of disgrace!



The disappearance of Nefertiti

- victim of plague?
- roughly the same period other potential victims disappear (i.e. daughters, Tiye, Kiye)
- Her disappearance from the record simply due to her death $\approx$ Regnal year 16?
- cf. treatment of Kiye at



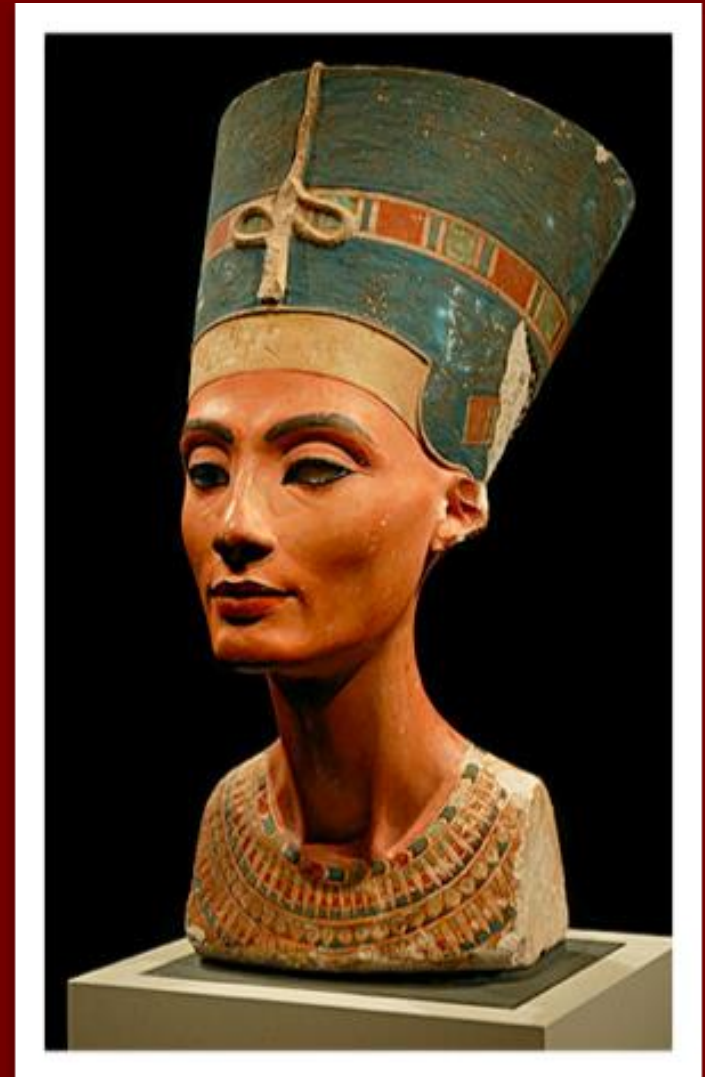
Nefertiti as king?

- Another possibility is that Nefertiti became Akhenaten's coregent, Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten, and "disappears" as queen → installed around durbar (regnal year 12)
- Already suggested in 19th century by Gaston Maspero



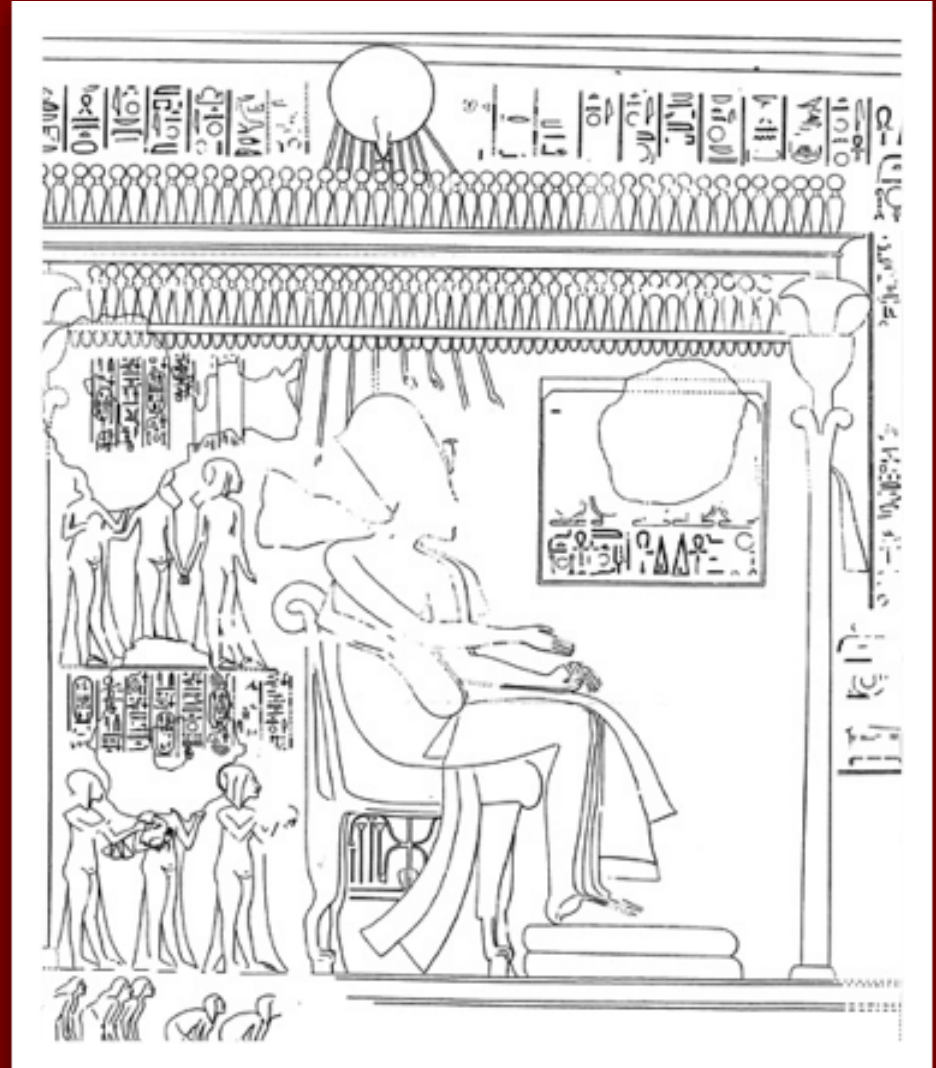
Nefertiti as king? Evidence

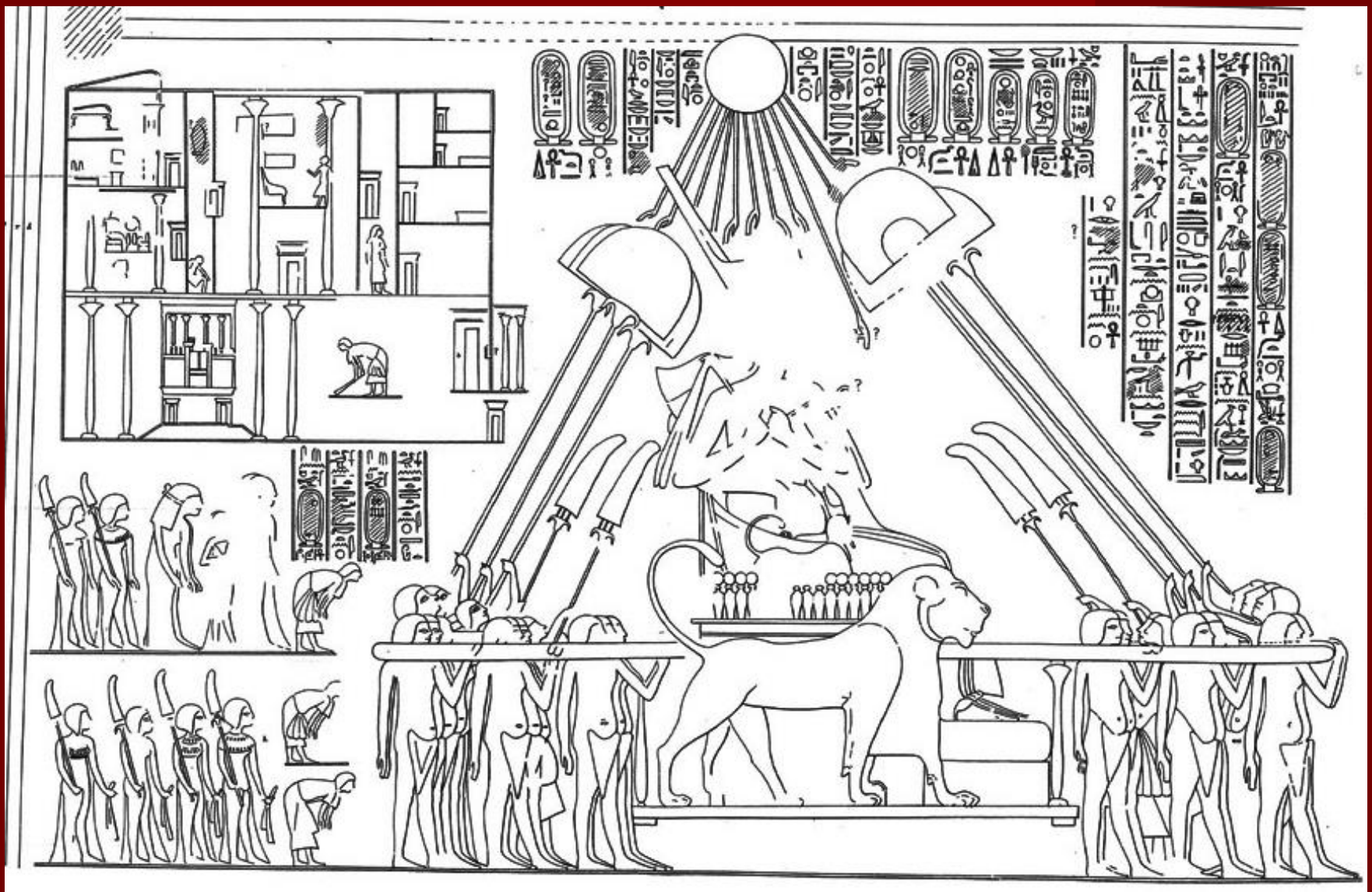
- compare names
“Ankhkheperure
Neferneferuaten” and
“Neferneferuaten
Nefertiti”



Nefertiti as king? Evidence

- compare names
“Ankhkheperure
Neferneferuaten” and
“Neferneferuaten
Nefertiti”
- Iconography of
Nefertiti in very close
association with
Akhenaten not typical
of earlier periods



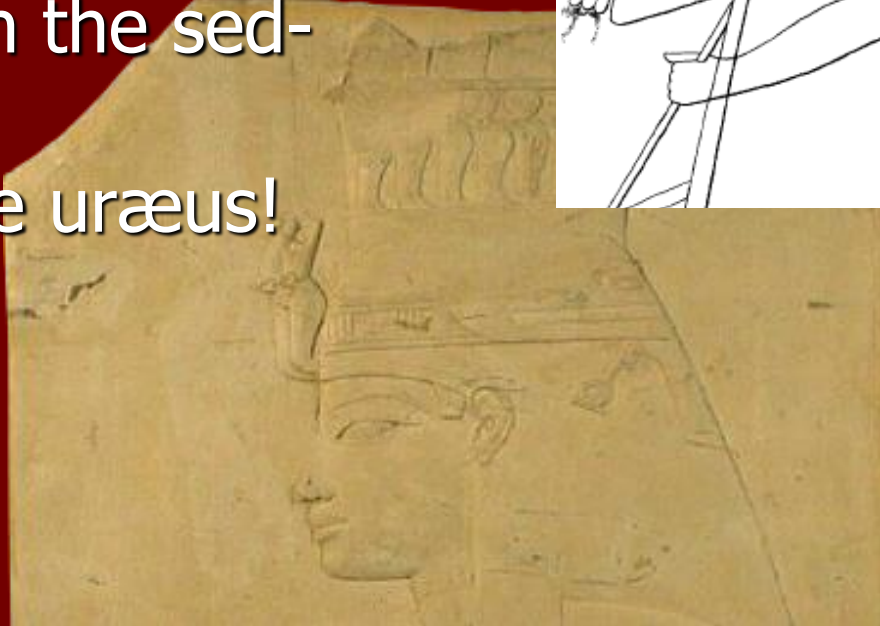


TOMB OF HUYA

Nefertiti as king?

Evidence

- However, Tiye had similarly been closely associated with Amenhotep III
- Participated in the sed-festival
- Even wore the uræus!



Nefertiti as king? Evidence

- Most convincing evidence comes from iconographic evidence depicting her acting in a kingly role
- Offering to the Aten



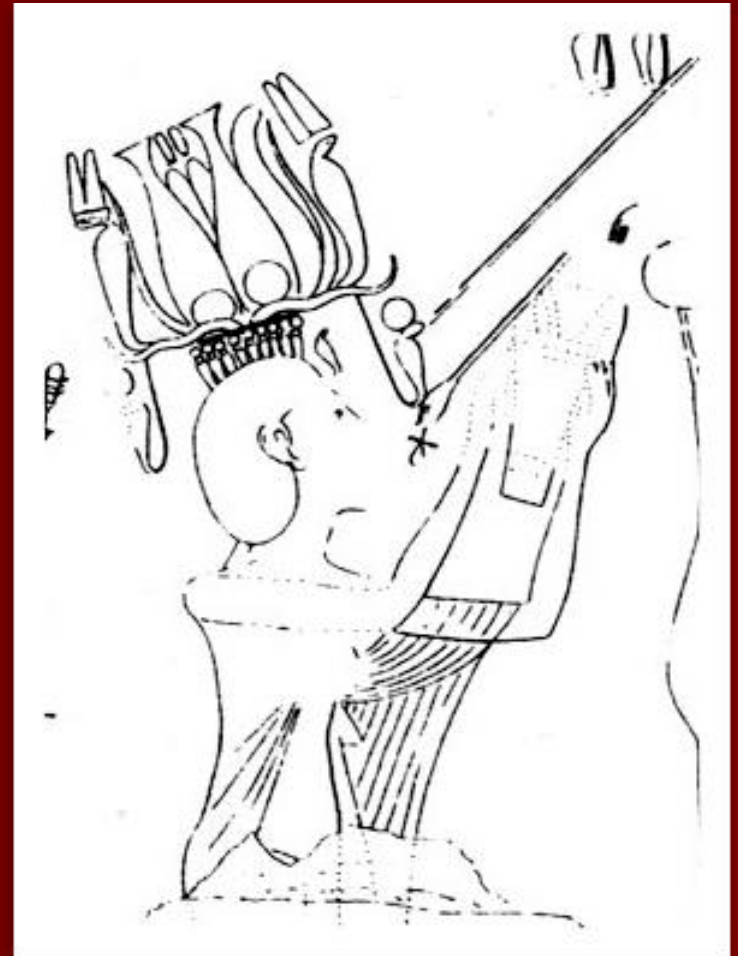
Nefertiti as king? Evidence

- Most convincing evidence comes from iconographic evidence depicting her acting in a kingly role
- Offering to the Aten
- Ritually smiting enemies



Nefertiti as king? Evidence

- Most convincing evidence comes from iconographic evidence depicting her acting in a kingly role
- Offering to the Aten
- Ritually smiting enemies
- appropriation of kingly attributes (crowns,



A visitation of The plague?

- epidemic disease (debate as to what exactly) was present in Egypt, the Ægean, Cyprus, Anatolia, and the Levant
- Many royal deaths & “disappearances” circa regnal Years 13–17
- plague mentioned in Amarna Letters 11–35

MY BROTHER, DO NOT BE CONCERNED THAT YOUR MESSENGER HAS STAYED 3 YEARS IN MY COUNTRY [CYPRUS], FOR THE HAND OF NERGAL [GOD OF PESTILENCE] IS IN MY COUNTRY AND IN MY OWN HOUSE. THERE WAS A YOUNG WIFE OF MINE THAT NOW, MY BROTHER, IS DEAD.

—EA 36

A visitation of The plague?

- Egyptians call plague “the hittite disease”
- hittites blame the Egyptians . . .

[



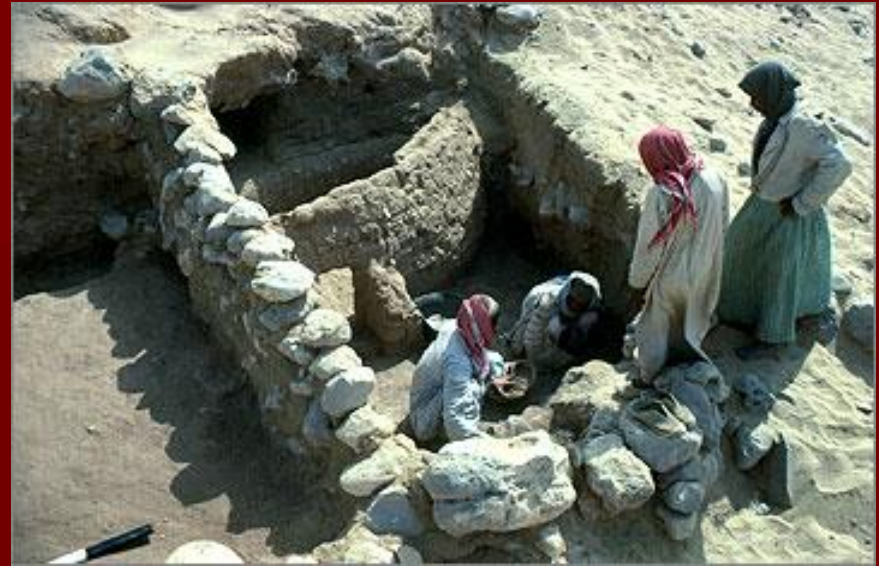
A visitation of The plague?

- Egyptians call plague “the ḫittite disease”
- ḫittites blame the Egyptians . . .
- “plague prayer” of Ḫittite king Muršilliš, son of Šuppiluliumaš
- Hittites used infected rams as biological weapon?

[BUT WHEN THEY (CHARIOTEERS OF THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT) BROUGHT BACK TO THE LAND OF ḪATTI, THE PRISONERS WHICH THEY HAD TAKEN, A PLAGUE BROKE OUT AMONG THE PRISONERS AND THESE BEGAN TO DIE. WHEN THEY MOVED THE PRISONERS TO THE LAND OF ḪATTI, THESE PRISONERS CARRIED THE PLAGUE INTO THE LAND OF ḪATTI.

A visitation of The plague?

- Firm evidence for the plague in Egypt is difficult to come by
- Rats and fleas known from the workmen's village at Amarna
- No "plague pits" or any other archaeological evidence of epidemic
- Nevertheless, clear textual references

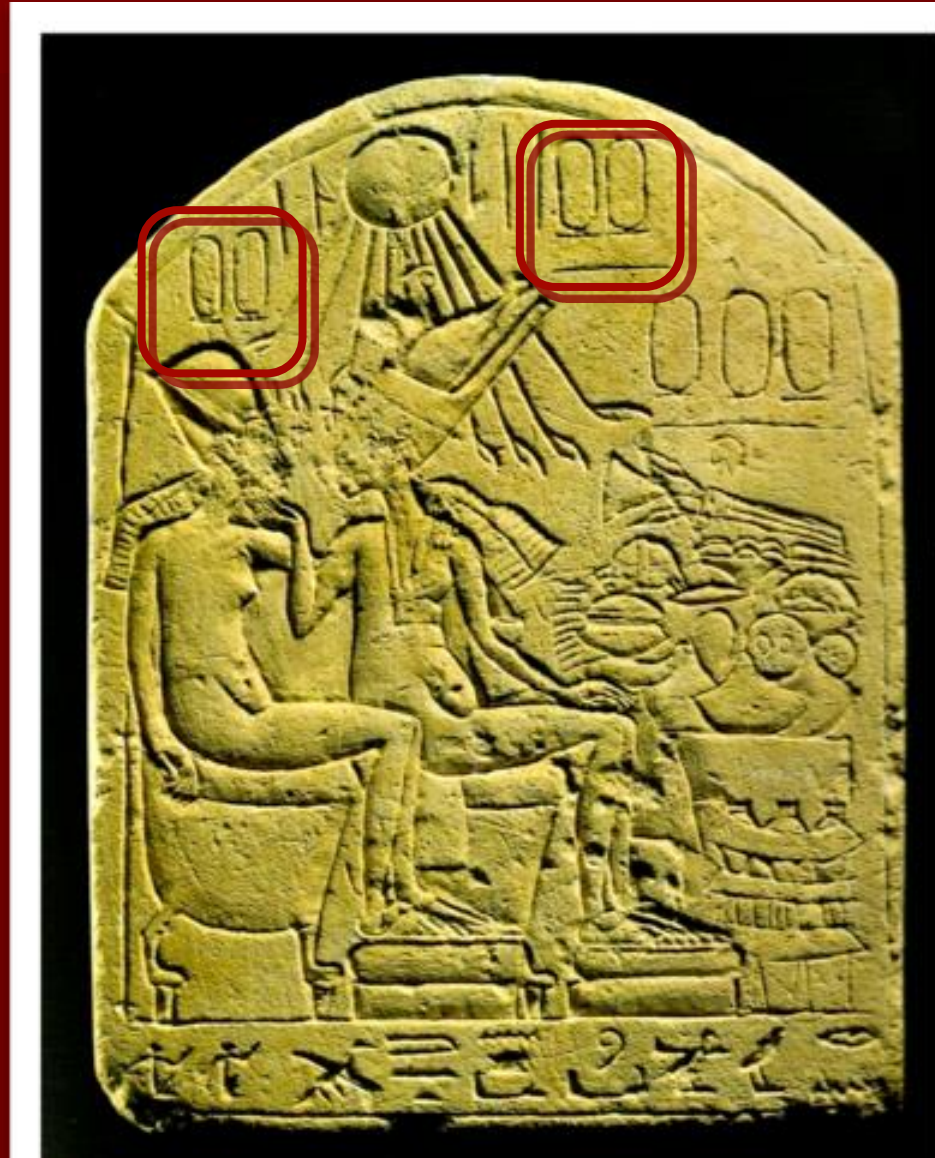


Neferneferuaten

- Is “Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten” and “Neferneferuaten” Nefertiti”?
- Only certainty is that “ Neferneferuaten” is common to both
- Nefertiti disappeared from the record (just) before Akhenaten’s death (in Regnal Year 17 → last mentioning by wine jar label)
- Nothing more is proven!

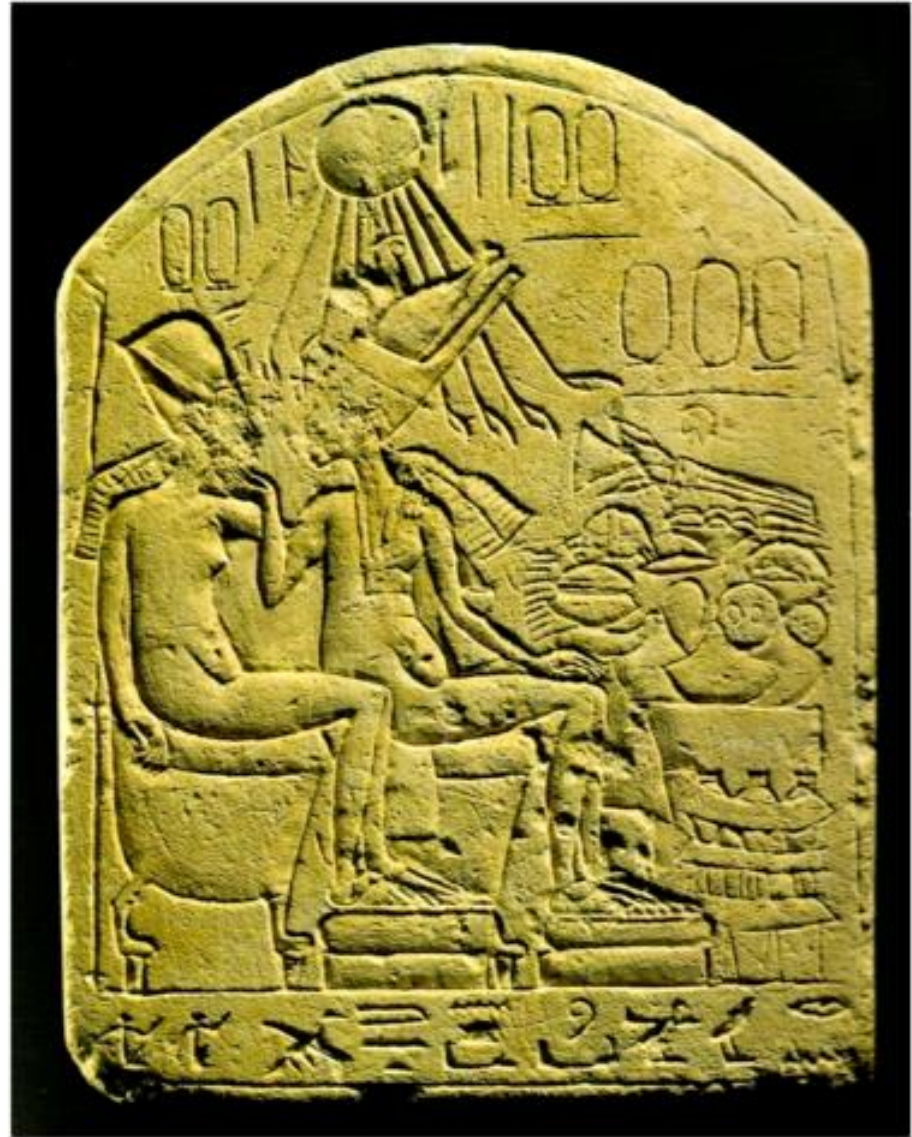
Neferneferuaten

- Stela Berlin 17813 clearly shows Akhenaten with a coregent
- 2 sets of royal cartouches (3rd set for the Aten)
- Akhenaten in the Blue crown; coregent in the double crown



Neferneferuaten

- Thought by many to represent Akhenaten and Smenkhkare
- often cited as “the first known” homosexual couple
- Full name is Ankhkheperure Smenkhkare
- Variant of Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten?



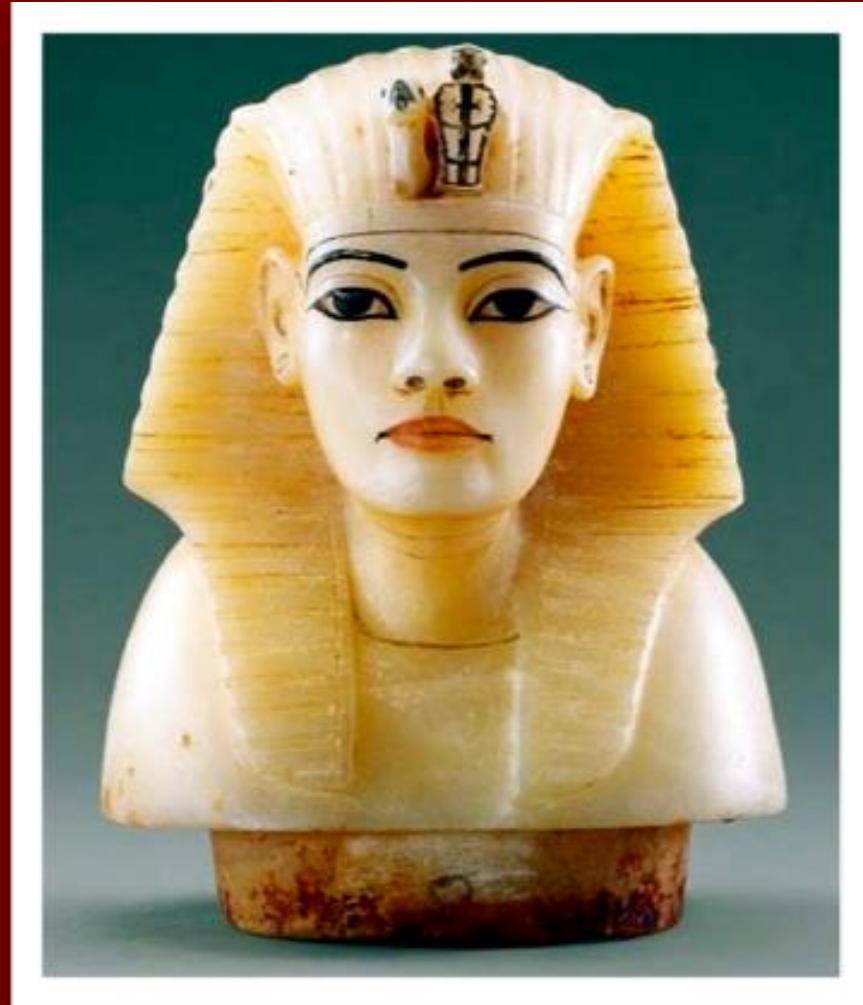
Neferneferuaten

- Stela Berlin 20716 clearly shows Akhenaten with a female coregent (“king”) wearing the blue crown
- indicates this cannot be Smenkhkare (contra Reeves)



Neferneferuaten

- Stela Berlin 20716 clearly shows Akhenaten with a female coregent (“king”) wearing the blue crown
- indicates this cannot be Smenkhkare (contra Reeves)
- Female canopic lids from Tutankhamun’s burial are resued

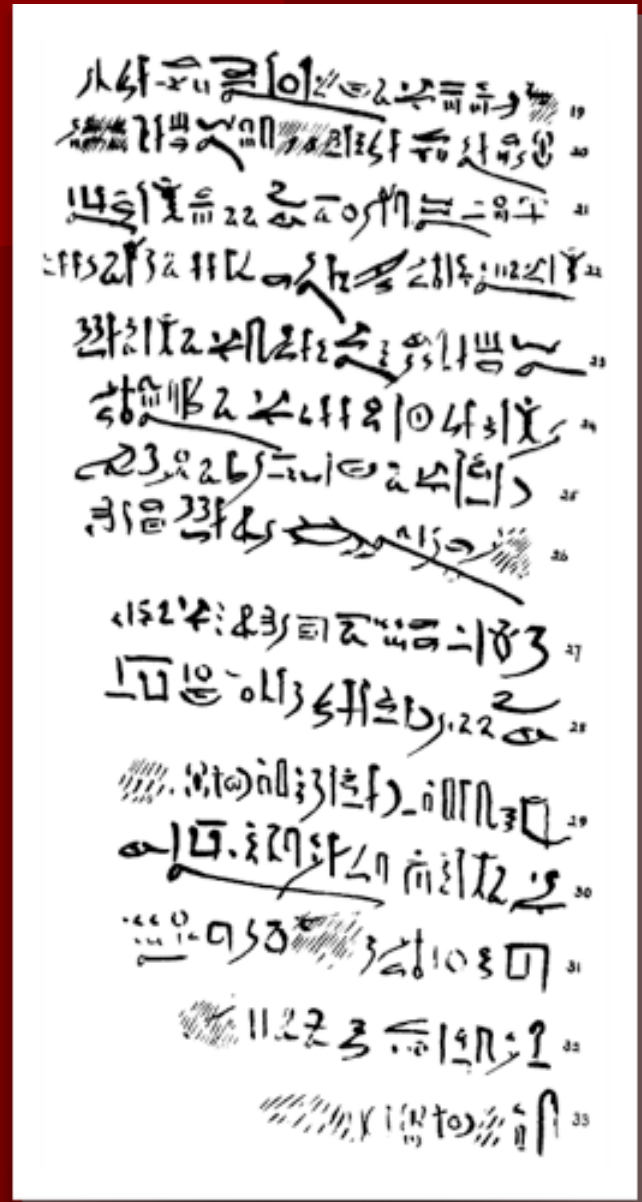


Neferneferuaten

- ❑ Texts also indicate a female is involved
- ❑ “ankhkheperure” often written as “ankhetkheperure” (Feminine form)
- ❑ “effective (fem.) for her husband” (3ḥt n ḥj=s)
- ❑ “desired (fem.) of Waenre” (mr.t w'-n-r')
- ❑ “alive (fem.) forever” (ḥ.tj dt)
- ❑ Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten is someone other than Smenkhkare ???, and a woman

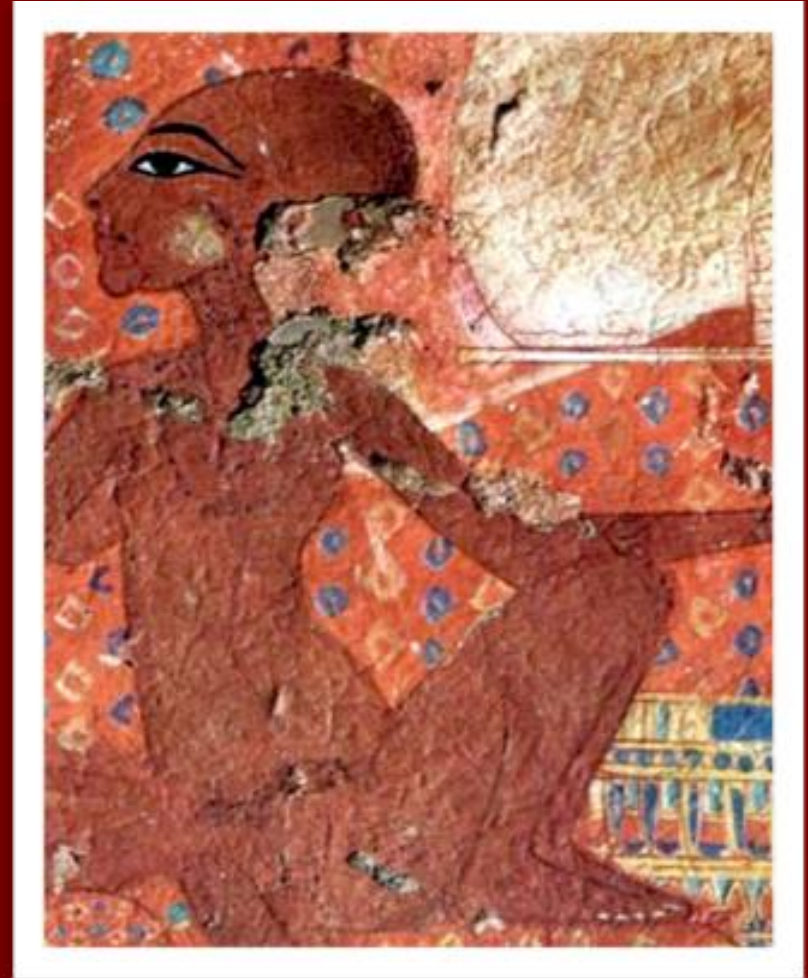
Neferneferuaten

- Hieratic text from Thebes (Tomb of Pare) mentions Regnal Year 3 of Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten
- Not certain if this is concurrent with Akhenaten's reign or to be placed after his death
- reference to the god Amun by a priest of Amun argues it is to be dated afterwards



Neferneferuaten

- One other possibility:
Neferneferuaten ta-Sherit,
the 4th daughter of
Akhenaten and Nefertiti (J.
P. Allen)
- Likely turned 13 about
Regnal year 16–17, and
appointed to the coregency
about the same time
- reigned about 3 years, with
prob. 1 as coregent



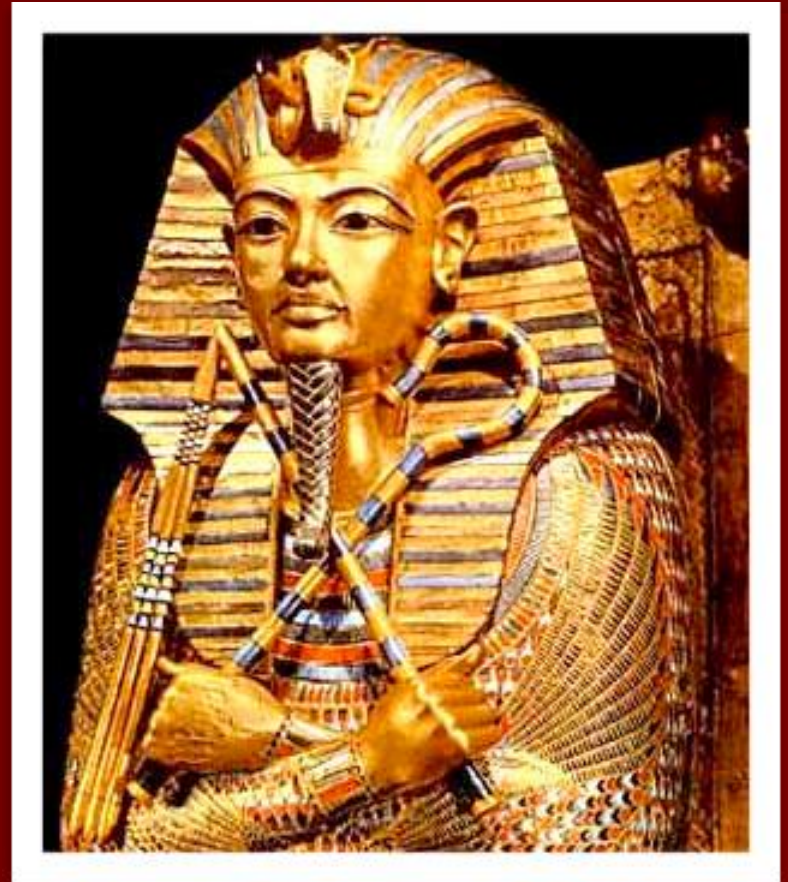
The Death of Akhenaten

- last dated text from Akhenaten is found on a wine jar docket dated to RY 17
- replaced with “regnal Year 1”, presumably Neferneferuaten or (less likely) smenkhkare
- Did not rule more than 17 years!



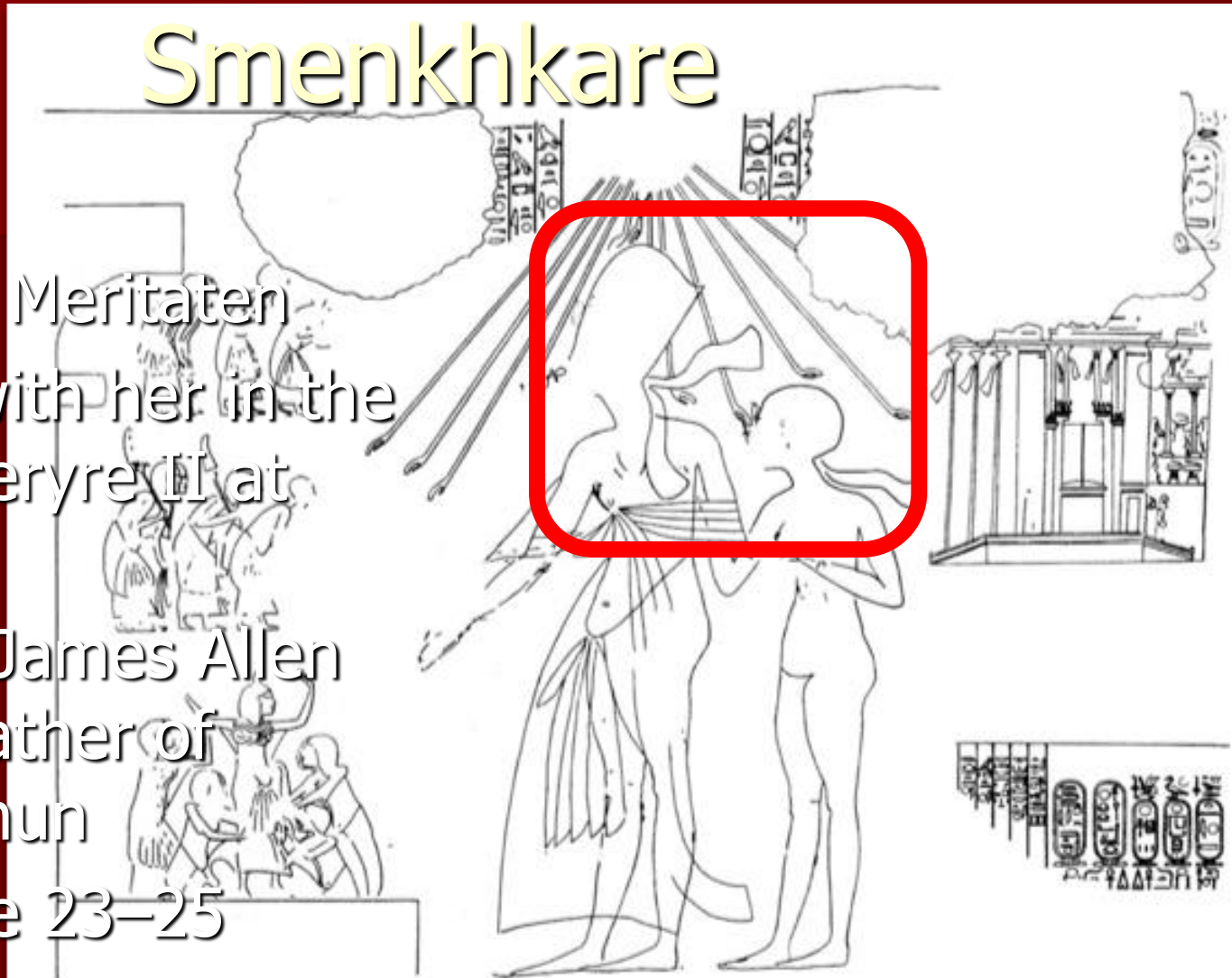
Smenkhkare

- followed on to the throne at Amarna after the death of Neferneferure
- Did not reign more than one year
- Who is he?
 - Nefertiti?
 - Son of Amenhotep III and Tiye, and therefore brother of Akhenaten?



Smenkhkare

- married to Meritaten
- Depicted with her in the tomb of Meryre II at Amarna
- According James Allen probably father of Tutankhamun
- Died at age 23–25
- Buried in KV 55?



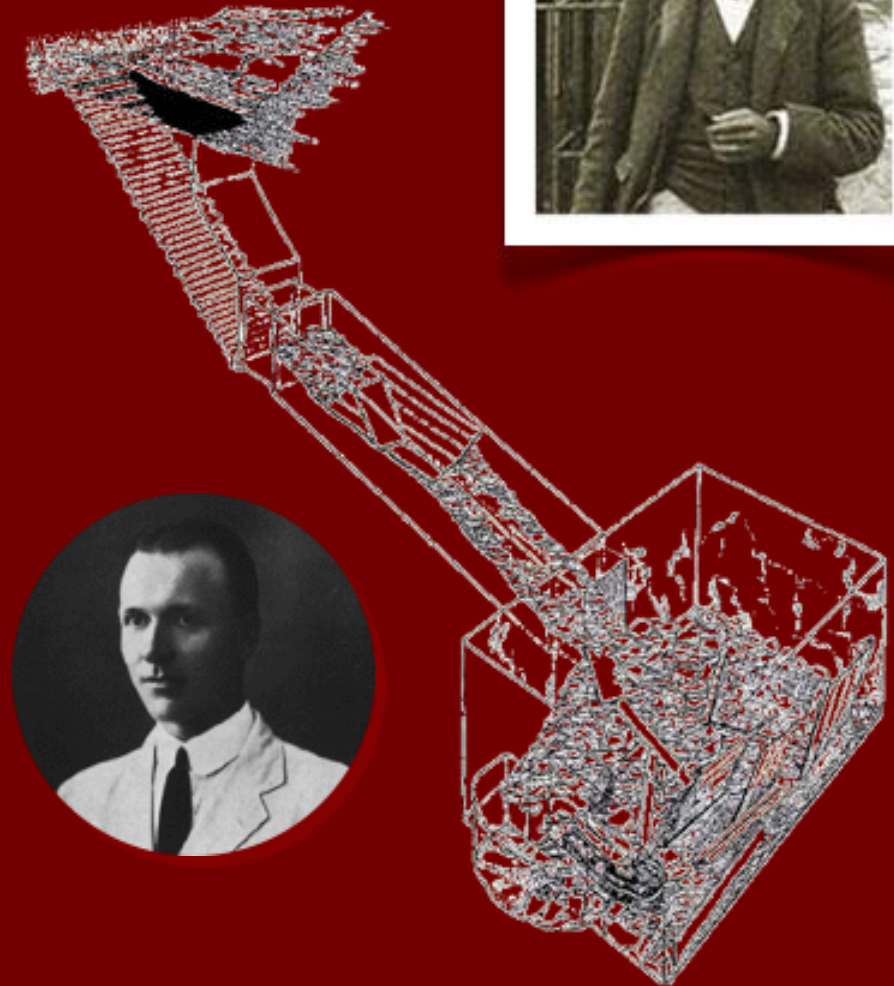
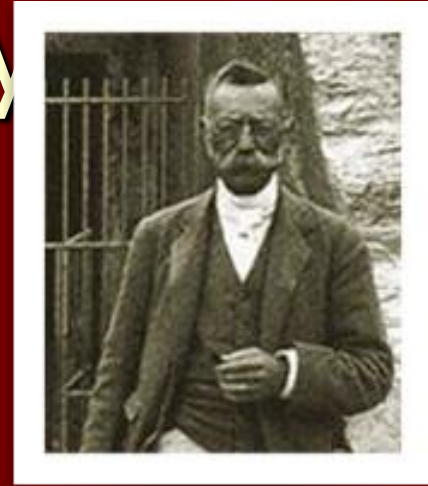
2011: MET symposium on Horemhab (“under discussion”)

King	Approx years
Akhenaten	17 yrs
Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten	2+ yrs
Ankhkheperure Smenkhkare	1–2 years
Tutankhaten/Tutankhamen	10 years
Ay	3 years
Horemheb	14 years

KV 55

KV 55: The discovery

- ❑ Located in the valley of the kings, opposite the tomb of Tutankhamun
- ❑ Discovered and cleared in 1907 by Theodore Davis and Edward Ayrton



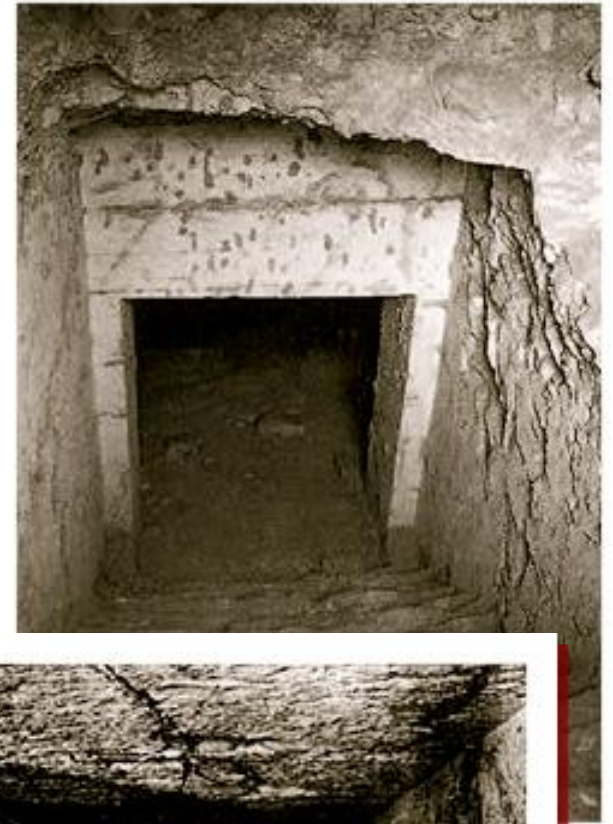
KV 55: The discovery

- Located in the valley of the kings, opposite the tomb of Tutankhamun
- Discovered and cleared in 1907 by Theodore Davis and Edward Ayrton
- rushed excavation lead to an almost complete loss of context and data



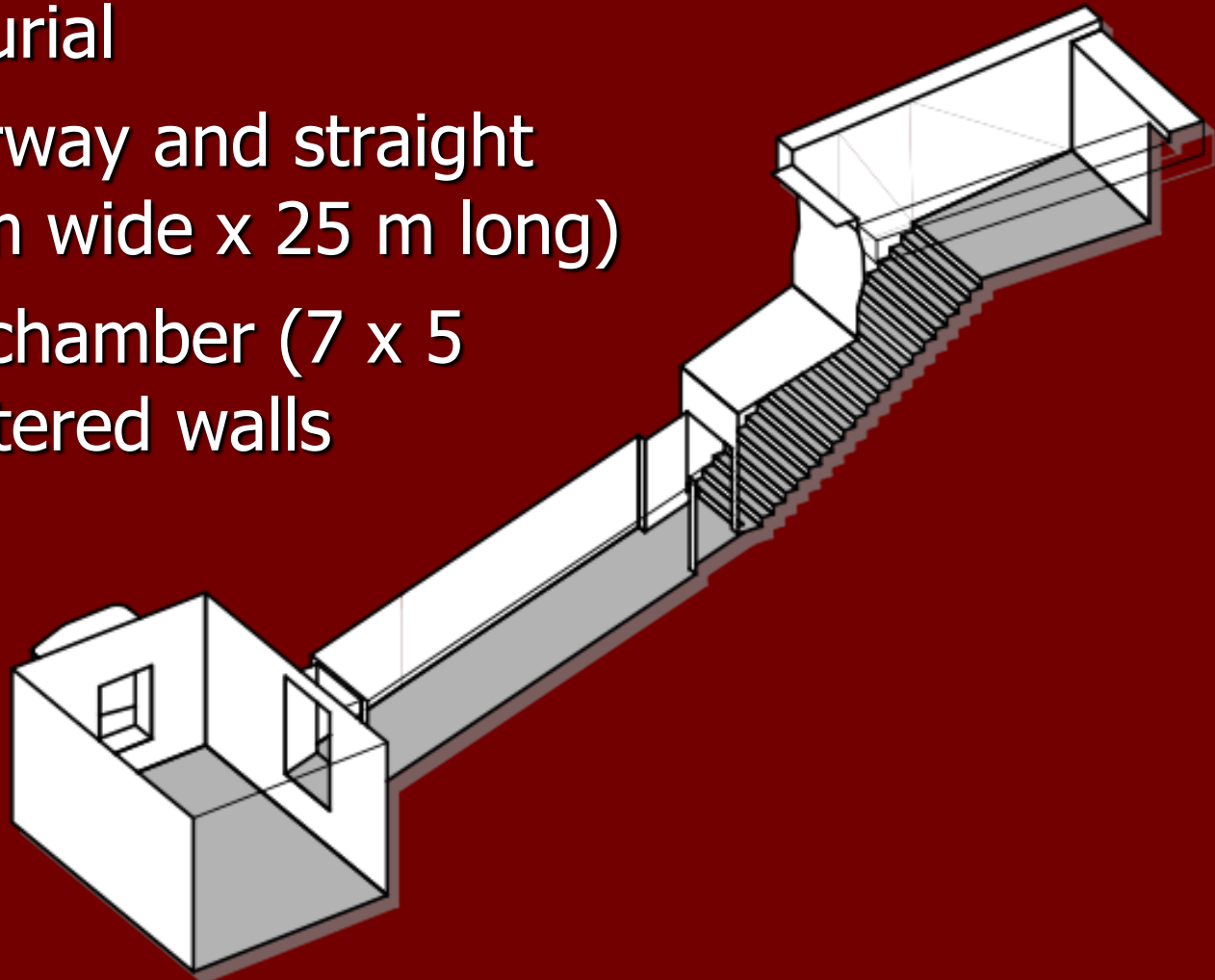
KV 55: The disc

- ❑ Still had part of the original plaster sealing with name of Tutankhamun
- ❑ entered at least once soon after, but filled
- ❑ Later covered by rubble from the tomb of Ramesses IX
- ❑ Davis insisted it was the tomb of Queen Tive



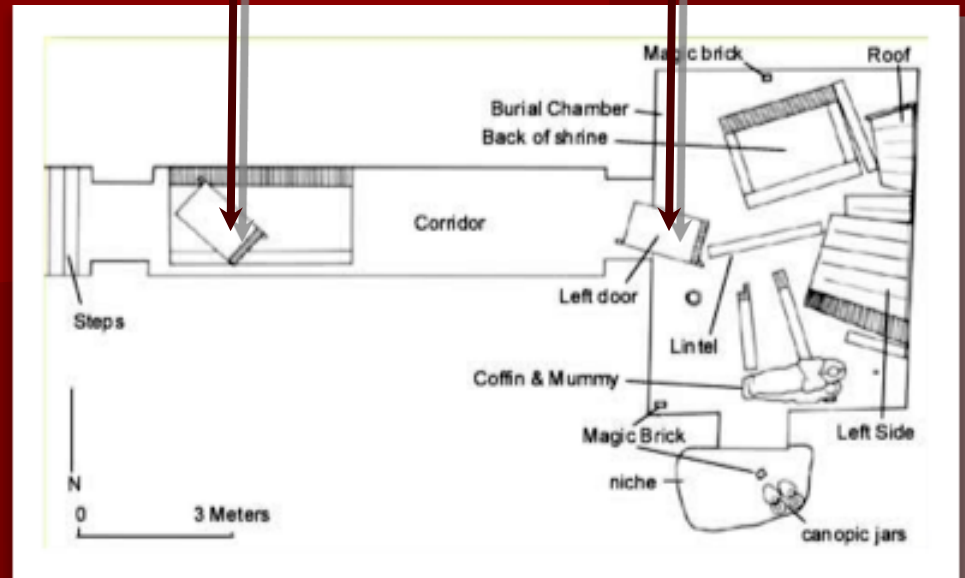
KV 55: Layout

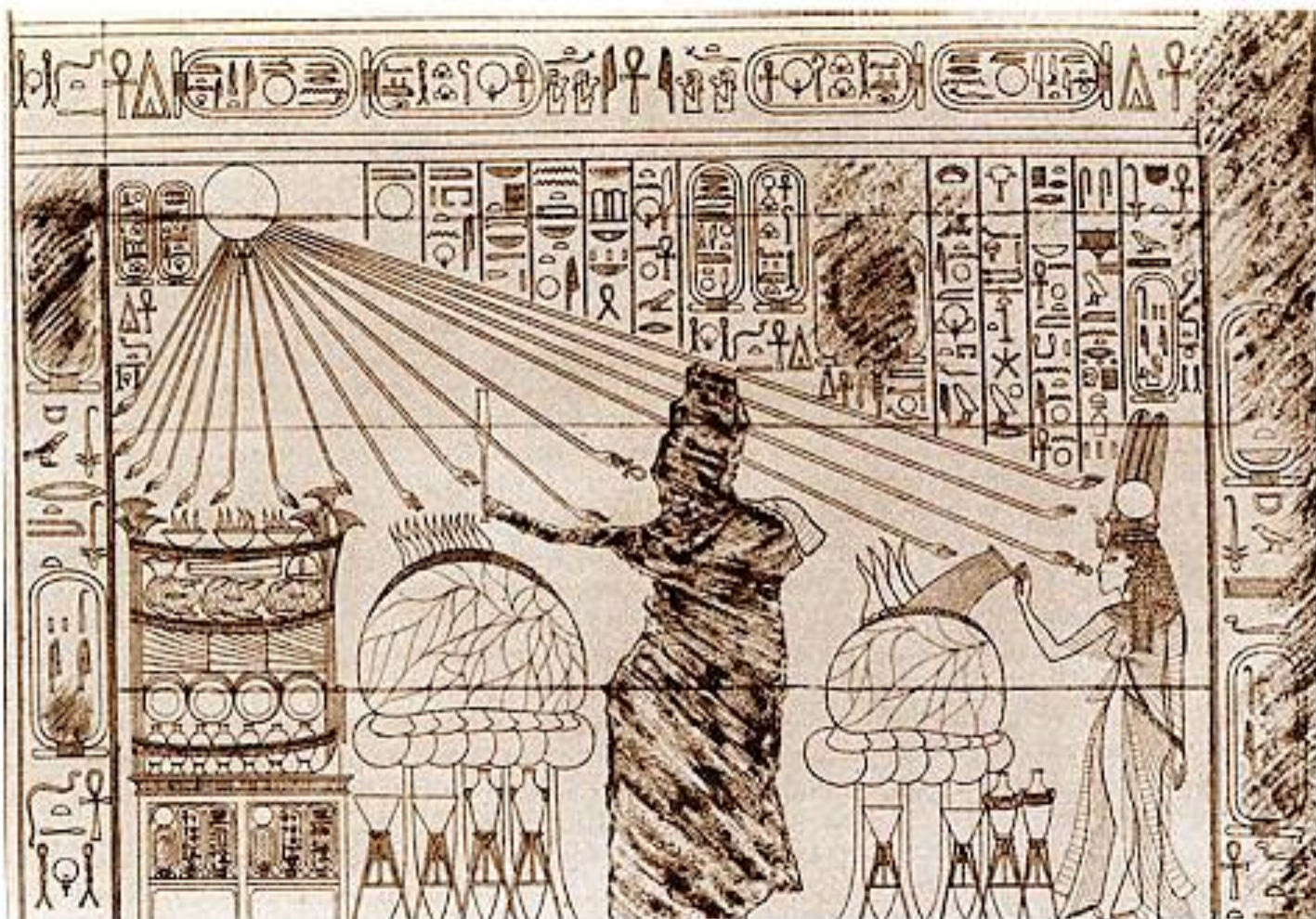
- unused royal tomb used for an emergency burial
- entrance stairway and straight corridor (1.8m wide x 25 m long)
- Single burial chamber (7 x 5 meters); plastered walls
- “niche”



KV 55: Contents

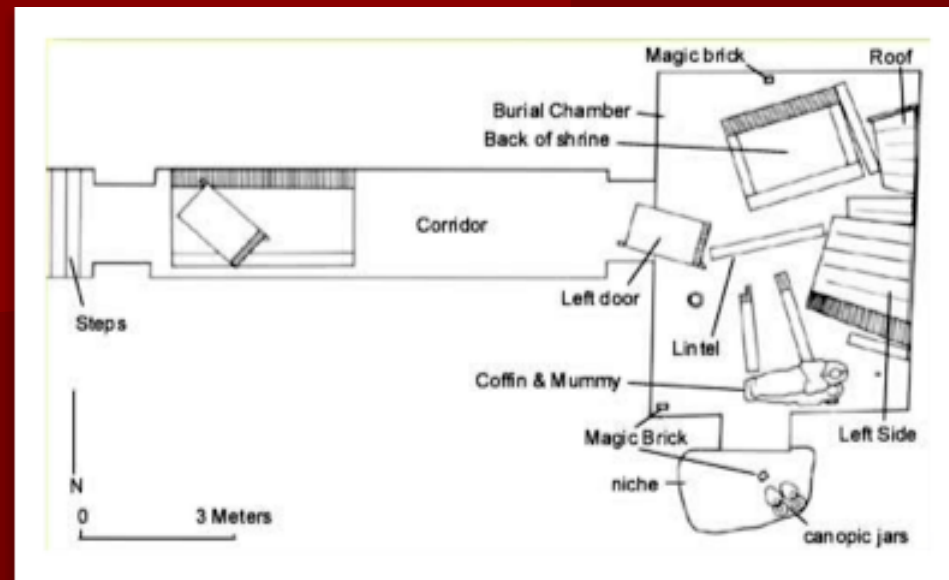
- corridor: shrine doors intended for Tiye and made by Akhenaten
- Other parts of the shrine found inside the tomb
- apparently an early attempt was made to dismantle and move the shrine





KV 55: Contents

- Small objects such as tools for the “opening of the mouth” ceremony with name of Tiye & Amenhotep III
- Contents lead Davis & Aryton to suggest Tiye was the owner of the tomb



KV 55: Contents

- ❑ “niche” on north side used to store canopic jars with traces of Kiya’s name
- ❑ “niche” was actually the beginning of a corridor, indicating this was to be a typical I-shaped royal tomb



KV 55: Burial Chamber

- ❑ burial chamber a shambles due to water seepage & “plundering”
- ❑ parts of shrine, but also a lion-headed bier (destroyed) and a coffin
- ❑ “magic bricks” with name of Akhenaten



KV 55: Coffin

- coffin made of wood, gold, and inlaid with glass and stones
- hands held a crook and flail, indicating royalty
- face and cartouches carefully removed!
- “nubian” wig indicated a woman, long thought to be Kiya



KV 55: Coffin

- However, “nubian” wig was worn by males, including Akhenaten
- Rediscovery of gold bands from the coffin indicate that the coffin was indeed made for Akhenaten himself
- need not have been used by Akhenaten



KV 55: mummy

- ❑ Other possible explanation:
- ❑ only “missing” royal male personage is Smenkhkare
- ❑ Age of 20–25 years is also inline with that of what is known of Tutankhamun, which might then be his son (close relationship proven by DNA)



KV 55: mummy

- ❑ mummy collapsed into dust, left only skeleton
- ❑ initial examination indicated a woman (Tiye? - Davis)
- ❑ later examination indicated that of a male
- ❑ Confirmed in 1998 and 2000
- ❑ Reeves (and others) claim this must be the body of Akhenaten
- ❑ however, individual was aged 20–25; too young!



KV 55: what do we really know?

- at least 31 different hypotheses about KV55 and its occupant
- process of elimination makes it likely smenkhkare was buried there hastily due an early death
- later reopened, perhaps accidentally and then resealed after systematic

