IMAGES OF A GENDERED KINGSHIP: VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF HATSHEPSUT AND HER INFLUENCE ON IMAGES OF NEFERTITI

Kristina Marie Hilliard, B.A.

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APPROVED:

Nada Shabout, Major Professor
Denise Baxter, Committee Member
Mickey Abel, Committee Member
Jacqueline Chanda, Chair of the Division of Art Education and Art History
Robert Milnes, Dean of the School of Visual Arts
Sandra L. Terrell, Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

I investigate why gendered images of Hatshepsut influenced androgynous images of Nefertiti in New Kingdom Egypt and how Nefertiti and Akhenaten used their images in the promotion of their monotheistic religion; through a contextual, stylistic and feminist examination of the images. Hatshepsut cultivated images of herself to legitimize her rule in relation to canonical kings before her. Similarly, Nefertiti represented herself as a figure indiscernible from Akhenaten, creating an image of female co-rulership. Although the visual representations of both Hatshepsut and Nefertiti differ, the concepts behind each are analogous. They both manipulated androgyny to create images displaying powerful women equal in status to male Egyptian kings.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Hatshepsut (ca. 1479-1458 BCE) ruled New Kingdom (eighteenth dynasty) Egypt as a female king for roughly twenty years, a significant reign for any ancient Egyptian king. Only three other women in ancient Egypt ruled as pharaohs of Egypt before Hatshepsut, Queen Meryt-Neith (first dynasty), Queen Nitocris (sixth dynasty), and Queen Sobeknofru (twelfth dynasty). These early women ruled in the early Dynastic age for less than three years each, leaving few records or imagery of their rule; thus Hatshepsut is the first female king to rule for an extended period of time and create a female king identity.¹ Hatshepsut demonstrated her power as a female king over Egypt through numerous portraits of herself she commissioned; the most notable of these are her statuary depicting her as a male king, employing aspects of androgyny.

Hatshepsut’s visual representations frequently display her physically in male form and some portray her female likeness adorned with canonical male king accoutrements.

Similarly, Nefertiti (ca. 1367-1350 BCE) ruled as an unofficial co-ruler with her husband Akhenaten, the pharaoh of ancient New Kingdom Egypt. The two ruled as partners in the eyes of the public because they were displayed as such in the monuments and temples throughout Egypt.² The royal couple frequently commissioned images depicting themselves in an androgynous manner, in similar likenesses and hierarchy, contrary to previous attributes within Egyptian imagery. Nefertiti and Akhenaten’s imagery were drastically different from traditional pharaonic imagery, but

analogous to Hatshepsut's public imagery because their images are androgynous due to the indiscernible figural identity within them.

I should clarify at this point that I employ the term masculine to denote traditional pharaonic imagery which embody physically male traits. Conversely, I use the term feminine to describe physically female traits. I use the term androgyny to describe a figure that evokes both gender identities, masculine and feminine, yet indiscernible as to the gender of the figure.

I describe Hatshepsut, as a female king ruling New Kingdom Egypt to delineate the fact that she was female, as opposed to the predominant male gender of ancient Egyptian kings. Only kings/pharaohs ruled Egypt. Traditional queens were not acknowledged as rulers of Egypt and served instead as wives or mothers to pharaohs. Thus it was uncharacteristic for Hatshepsut to rule as king in ancient Egypt. On the other hand, I describe Nefertiti as a co-ruler due to her equality in status and power shared with her husband Akhenaten. Moreover, I argue that Nefertiti and Akhenaten used androgynous images of themselves to promote their new monotheistic religion, Atenism, by infusing both genders into one image of a pharaoh/deity.

I argue that Akhenaten was influenced by the androgynous characteristics used in Hatshepsut's visual representations. Akhenaten was attracted to Hatshepsut who had broken with tradition due to his zest for revolution and change, and because the two kings ruled in New Kingdom Egypt only a hundred years apart during the eighteenth dynasty, allowing little room to forget about Hatshepsut's great achievements and numerous public portraiture. Therefore, it is very likely that Akhenaten and Nefertiti
learned of Hatshepsut and became influenced by her imagery employing aspects of androgyny, and created an androgynous style of art during their rule promoting queen and king equality as well as their new monotheistic religion.

As the only powerful female king before Nefertiti, Hatshepsut provided a female king icon for Nefertiti to emulate through Hatshepsut’s copious public imagery throughout Egypt. Hatshepsut’s images were not just a break with tradition, but instead a beginning for female kings, establishing a precedent of female power. Hatshepsut became neither male nor female, but instead an icon of ancient Egypt as a female king. Nefertiti advanced the aspects of androgyny in Hatshepsut’s images by implementing imagery of herself embodying both male and female genders, breaking from traditional queenship imagery.

Further, Akhenaten and Nefertiti created androgynous imagery of themselves in order to persuade their Egyptian subjects to embrace Atenism. Their androgynous imagery combined both genders in a way that no specific gender type was represented or needed, an image of both genders incorporated into one figure. Akhenaten and Nefertiti promoted their new monotheistic religion throughout their public imagery, breaking away from previous canonical representations of the kingship, by a perceived oneness through gender unity. Throughout ancient Egyptian history, pharaohs were considered gods over Egypt, Nefertiti and Akhenaten ruled as equals elevating both to the status of gods, enabling the Egyptians to accept the new monotheistic religion while adhering to their traditional concepts of king, queen, and multiple gods. Nefertiti and
Akhenaten’s visual representations displayed androgynous figures to create one multi-gendered figure representative of the one god, Aten.

I contextualize the images of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti in terms of the social and political events contemporary to each in order to examine why gendered images of Hatshepsut influenced androgynous images of Nefertiti in New Kingdom Egypt and how Nefertiti and Akhenaten used the images in promotion of their monotheistic religion. In addition, I explore the role of monotheism in relation to the images of Nefertiti, because such a drastic change in worship could influence the change in style in the Amarna period from traditional pharaonic art styles. Through a juxtaposition of the images of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti with canonical images, the influence of Hatshepsut’s visual representations on Nefertiti’s images is evident. Additionally, I examine the symbols and accoutrements depicted in traditional kingship visual representations in comparison to that of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti to further my analysis of the images. I contend that Hatshepsut’s dual-gendered imagery influenced the androgynous imagery of Akhenaten and Nefertiti who used their androgynous imagery to promote their new monotheistic religion Atenism by representing one gender as one god.

It is necessary to take ancient portraiture seriously because public images of pharaohs were used as propagandistic tools to promote their power and authority over Egypt. In ancient Egypt, literacy was exclusive to the upper- and elite classes of society, thus allowing public pharaonic images to function as state propaganda. Visual representations such as monuments and relief sculptures displayed of pharaohs were

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powerful messages to the whole of Egyptian society who would view colossal depictions of their kings, elevating the pharaohs to gods. The public pharaonic imagery created larger-than-life immortal representations of the pharaohs for the Egyptian people to revere. These monuments were made to last forever, just as the deified kings were considered immortal. Pharaonic imagery was accessible to all Egyptian people and spread throughout Egypt to promote the king’s power and is an integral aspect of political propaganda.

I have chosen to concentrate on a selection of images of my discretion that demonstrate the typical imagery associated with each ruler, including the gender ambiguity and representational power attributed to each. I examine public statuary of Hatshepsut originally located in various geographical locations of Egypt as well as both private stelae and public statuary of Akhenaten and Nefertiti also originally located in different areas of Egypt as well. I contend that these visual representations were integral in the construction of identity and promotion of power for Hatshepsut, Akhenaten, and Nefertiti because of the prominence of these images in the public eye. This study gleams a further understanding of the gendered role of kingship in ancient New Kingdom Egypt, and creates valuable insights into the kingship imagery and how Akhenaten and Nefertiti, influenced by Hatshepsut’s portraiture, used visual representations to aid in their creation of a monotheistic religion. The relevance of this study is centered on developing a further understanding of gender itself and its relation to ancient Egyptian thought because gender in ancient Egypt is not a widely researched topic in scholarship.
Feminist scholarship has neglected to discuss Hatshepsut's influence on Nefertiti and Akhenaten's imagery, or the use of androgyny in Amarna artwork. Few feminist scholars have discussed ancient Egyptian women, and are generally inconclusive as their research negates recent Egyptological discoveries and conclusions in the case of ancient Egyptian women. Additionally, the notion I introduce through my examination of Hatshepsut's influence on imagery of Akhenaten and Nefertiti is not discussed in available text on ancient Egyptian queens and kings.

Nancy Luomala discusses the power that women had in ancient Egypt based on the heiress theory, in which it was believed that women were the deciding factor in determining the right to kingship, as the Egyptians practiced brother-sister marriages to keep the royal line within a family. Gay Robins, a leading Egyptologist has concluded that this is incorrect, the Egyptians rarely practiced brother-sister marriages and the royal lineage did not pass through the female. Further, Luomala states that both Hatshepsut and Nefertiti's images and buildings were destroyed because their power

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4 Feminist texts on the topic of ancient Egyptian women have focused primarily on feminist views, not recent scholarship on the lives and social function of women in ancient Egypt. Primarily, feminist texts have neglected to address the context of images of powerful ancient Egyptian women, such as why exactly were these images created and what do they represent in terms of the social structure and belief system of Egyptian society at that time. I am using Egyptological sources, rather than feminist texts regarding these topics, to provide a basis of contextual, socio-political knowledge of ancient Egyptian society and the figures represented in order to accurately examine these images and women. Recent knowledge and Egyptological research has provided a drastically different view of the ancient Egyptians and women than what was originally believed; thus I have consulted recent study of the material in order to remain as accurate as possible in my examination of these images.


and right to the throne was offensive for the male kings who ruled after these women. Luomala does not address the possibility that the women’s images may have been destroyed for other reasons; such as Nefertiti’s monotheistic images may have been offensive to later Egyptians who did not believe in Atenism. My argument addresses the power of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti, but through a contextualization of their royal imagery.

Joyce Tyldesley, an Egyptological scholar, discusses the reign of all ancient Egyptian kings in *Daughters of Isis*. Tyldesley employs an Egyptological approach to her study and provides a current examination of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti yet only discusses their imagery briefly and does not conduct an extensive iconographic and stylistic analysis. Tyldesley’s work is essentially an historical record rather than an examination of power, and does not address Hatshepsut’s influence on Nefertiti, nor does the author mention Akhenaten. I use Tyldesley’s material as part of my Egyptological study; however, I examine the images iconographically and stylistically as well as juxtaposing the imagery with traditional pharaonic portraiture.

Gay Robins, a leading Egyptologist negates the heiress theory and discusses how Hatshepsut was able to obtain kingship in “The God’s Wife of Amun in the 18th Dynasty in Egypt.” Robins’ article is an important document of the history of Hatshepsut, but does not address Hatshepsut’s imagery, nor does Robins examine Nefertiti and any influences of Hatshepsut upon her. I use aspects of Robins’ article to address my

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7 Luomala, 28-29.
argument of the influence of Hatshepsut's imagery and cultivation of a king identity upon Nefertiti’s visual representations.

Lana Troy, another leading Egyptologist, states that “the kingship was an androgynous construct in which it was possible to identify both male and female models.”

Troy examines the gendered aspect of the kingship and examines the equality in power and image that Nefertiti and Akhenaten shared. Additionally, Troy discusses the gendered accoutrements used by kings and queens throughout ancient Egypt. However, Troy does not discuss possible influences of Hatshepsut’s imagery on Nefertiti and Akhenaten, as my study examines. Further, Troy’s article does not perform a stylistic analysis or juxtaposition of imagery for Hatshepsut or Nefertiti and Akhenaten. My study does address these aspects and analyzes the royal imagery between the canonical king representations and Hatshepsut and Nefertiti’s gendered imagery.

Dorothea Arnold, a leading Egyptologist, discusses Akhenaten and Nefertiti, providing a stylistic and iconographic analysis of the pair’s images yet does not relate the imagery to Atenism in The Royal Women of Amarna. Arnold discusses Atenism and does examine the religion within the artworks, yet neglects to fully address the propagandistic qualities of the equality of the two as the couple’s promotion of Atenism within the imagery. My study examines the equality and the promotion of Atenism through the royal imagery. Arnold does discuss the similarities between traditional

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8 Lana Troy, “She For Whom All That is Said is Done: The Ancient Egyptian Queen,” in Ancient Queens: Archaeological Explorations, edited by Sarah Milledge Nelson, 93-116, (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 2003), 93.
9 Ibid., 101.
10Ibid., 104-112.
Egyptian religion and the Amarna imagery, but not the use of androgyny to create one ruler for one god.

I employ a feminist perspective based on Egyptology for this investigation, as I examine the gender roles of the kingship, using Egyptological scholarship exploring female queens and kings. In general scholarship has neglected to examine gender roles of the kingship in terms of androgyny, an area that I build upon. Texts discussing Nefertiti fail to include a discussion of Akhenaten’s monotheistic religion and the effect of the Amarna style on Nefertiti’s portraits, and subsequently her role in the kingship. Therefore, this study is a unique contribution to the feminist study of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti and Akhenaten, in terms of their use of gender in public imagery.

The difficulty in depicting and conceptualizing female rulers is examined in many other cultures and periods of time and thus can be applied to my study of Egyptian female kings. I have examined feminist texts corresponding to queenship identity in order to correlate my study with current Feminist research and use these feminist scholars as models for my investigation in the imagery and concept of gender in relation to Hatshepsut and Nefertiti. My research augments feminist research in terms of queenship because I explore not only the role of the queen and king, but the imagery and concepts associated with it.

Theresa Earenfight discusses the various roles of queenship in medieval Aragon, “unlike kingship, however, which assumed direct rulership, queenship encompassed a spectrum of ruling practices bounded by two extremes, a queen ruling in her own right
and outright prohibition of female rulership.” Aragonese kings were frequently away on conquests, leaving many queen-lieutenants to rule in their stead. The busy monarchy developed a type of co-rulership of queens acting as lieutenants which met their needs. Similar to ancient Egyptians’ practice of regents ruling in place of the rightful king until they were of age, the Aragonese utilized the same kind of temporary leadership. Aragonese queens, however, did not have the option to take over the rule permanently as Hatshepsut successfully did. Their position is more akin to Nefertiti’s unofficial status as co-ruler.

Claire Richter Sherman examines the iconography of Jeanne de Bourbon, the French queen in the middle of the fourteenth century. Sherman studies the coronation imagery of Jeanne de Bourbon, in which the French queen is depicted in high regard similar to the king through images of the public life of the monarchy. Bourbon also appears to have played a role similar to Nefertiti, Jeanne was an integral aspect of the kingship, one half of a whole identity much like Nefertiti, who was an integral figure in Amarna imagery to promote both monotheism and a female co-ruler.

Julia M. Walker examines the iconography of Queen Elizabeth during her rule and after, discussing how the Elizabeth icon changed the British monarchy image into a thing rather than a person, influencing the rulers after her. Walker examines the same influential nature of a female monarch in which my study invokes of Hatshepsut.

12 Ibid., 33.
Elizabeth cultivated her image from a woman on the throne to a “mythic figure to icon in a chronological viewing of her portraits,” similar to Hatshepsut’s chronological transformation from a queen regent to a king invoking traditional pharaonic characteristics, neither a male nor female. Rather Hatshepsut appears as an iconographic male king with female inscriptions, promoting herself as a female king instead of queen or male king. Hatshepsut and Nefertiti alike, dealt with this challenge of creating a female monarch identity, one that allowed women to be acceptable rulers in the eyes of the public. Elizabeth I reigned as monarch in a period of wealth and prosperity for England, exactly like Hatshepsut’s circumstances of ruling during a flourishing period in New Kingdom Egypt. Additionally, Elizabeth I’s iconic imagery impacted the historical record of seventeenth-century Britain as well as throughout the ages in much the same way that Hatshepsut’s influence spread; both were the first major female rulers who created a new female monarch identity that dealt with gender.

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15 Ibid., 1.
16 Walker, 3.
17 Ibid., 3.
CHAPTER 2

BREAKING THE CANON: TRADITIONAL VERSUS NEW KINGDOM IMAGES

Traditional Male King Imagery

I consider canonical pharaonic imagery as those typical of ancient Egyptian royal portraiture previous to the New Kingdom (ca. 1550-1070 BCE). In ancient Egypt, pharaohs were considered gods, and myths were created to explain their deification, which were portrayed in various monuments. The permanence and immortality of the king were represented by images carved in stone. The role of the king in ancient Egypt was as god, father, and protector of the land of Egypt, and accordingly, pharaohs have particular accoutrements, iconography, and hierarchy to validate their role. Nemes headdresses, staphs, uraei, and crowns are examples of the typical accoutrements adorned by pharaohs in images throughout Egypt to legitimize the rule and power of the king. The king was not only a god, but also an intermediary between the divine world and Egypt; the king performed temple rituals in order to keep the world working in accordance to \textit{maat}, or the correct order of things. Thus, traditional pharaonic images displayed the power of the Egyptian king, through hierarchy and iconography as the king was depicted on a larger scale than any other figure on the picture plane.

Canonical Egyptian kings were regularly depicted distinctively different than other

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18 Egyptian imagery had changed from its beginning in the PreDynastic Period in ca. 4400 BCE to the beginning of the New Kingdom in ca. 1550 BCE, yet the iconography and general hierarchical positioning of royal figures to that of nonroyal remained relatively the same as well as the concepts behind them; thus I use the term canonical to connote the royal imagery previous to the New Kingdom for my purposes because I examine only iconography and hierarchy in the royal images.
21 Tyldesley, 26-27.
figures portrayed near him, reinforcing his status as ruler and god. This was because
gods were traditionally displayed on a different hierarchical plane than human figures to
honor them.

Canonical images of ancient Egypt displayed pharaohs in characteristically ideal
male physiques, tall with muscular arms, legs and chests. In these images, traditional
kings wore only a wrap around their waist, and were never depicted in robes as
Akhenaten which was rather a typical queen characteristic. Traditional Egyptian kings
were adorned with a nemes headdress, a pleated cloth worn over the forehead and
covering the entire head with two rectangular cloth pieces on either side of the face,
behind the ears in their imagery.\textsuperscript{22} Artists in ancient Egypt used specific grids over their
carvings of both reliefs and statuary to achieve particular proportions for each figure in
the images they created.\textsuperscript{23} In this way, craftsmen were able to create consistent and
precise idealized characteristics for the pharaonic images, in both figures and
adornments, implementing the images as public propaganda of the Egyptian ideal,
elevated above mortal men.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Statue of Kafre}, a canonical image of Egyptian pharaonic statuary, depicts
Pharaoh Khafre sitting upon a throne carved with hieroglyphs and symbols representing
the ‘union of the two lands,’ a phrase used in kingly titles to explain the role of the
pharaoh as the father and protector of the land, both Lower and Upper Egypt, thereby
legitimizing his right to rule as well as displaying his role as the protector of Egypt and

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, 151. Example of nemes headdress is visible in fig. 1.
\textsuperscript{23} Aldred, \textit{The Egyptians}, 26.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 26-27.
guardian of the land. Khafre is displayed in the *nemes* headdress, in addition to the uraeus symbol; he also firmly holds a small piece of cloth in his right hand. Khafre is also adorned with the pharaonic beard and kingly kilt, his nose is wide, his eyes small, and mouth projected and pronounced. This statue was originally housed within a temple and sits beside one of his greatest works, the Sphinx, which guards his burial chamber. The canonical broad, muscular shoulders are displayed in the *Statue of Khafre*, as well as thick, sturdy legs firmly planted on the ground. The pharaoh’s power is conveyed through these characteristics displaying his strength and determination in his demeanor, sitting upon his throne, staring straight ahead while watching over his land and intimidating any passer by who may dare to cross him, fulfilling both his pharaonic and godly role.

Pharaohs were frequently depicted with their principal wives who were typically born of royalty. In these images the woman is portrayed as a supporter of her husband through holding her arm around the king’s torso. The queen acts here not only as an adornment of the king, but as the mother of Egypt, reinforcing the king’s role as father of Egypt. Diplomatic marriages ensued throughout the history of ancient Egypt, predominantly by an Egyptian king and a foreign princess, allowing Egypt to gain strategic political alliances with other political powers. Thus queens became mere

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26 Ibid., 69.
27 Ibid., 69.
28 Ibid., 69.
adornments of the pharaoh further displaying his power, wealth and right to the throne as father of Egypt.

Women in Pharaonic Canonical Imagery

Although motherhood was considered the pinnacle of a woman’s achievement in ancient Egyptian society, women (typically upper-class and royal women) were legally allowed to be educated (though to a limited extent), to own property and businesses, to obtain a job, and were even allowed to be involved in military leadership. More importantly, women legally obtained the right to rule as pharaoh beginning in the second dynasty (ca. 2900 BCE). However, women of royal birth were not considered future kings of Egypt, and the few instances of a queen becoming king of Egypt are rare instances of last resorts, where the queen would take over for her son who inherited the throne until he was old enough to rule as king. Thus, until Hatshepsut, these kingships did not last long and were not of significant impacts in Egyptian history.

Royal symbols and titles attributed to the gods were used to legitimize the king’s role as a deity. Ancient Egyptian queens in the pharaonic period held different titles, such as “God’s Wife,” “Divine Wife,” “Great Royal Wife,” and “Lady of the Two Lands.” These titles, which were written on the queen’s monuments, established the authority that queens held over the land of Egypt and their role as mothers and protectorates of Egypt. The cobra (uraeus snake) and vulture symbols on royal headdresses were

30 Depla, 29.
31 Troy, 94.
32 Robins, Women in Ancient Egypt, 42.
34 Ibid., 29.
iconographic of goddesses. In some instances, ancient queens were depicted as goddesses to promote their deification, using goddess symbols including a pair of horns, a sun disk, and crown of feathers that were associated with the goddess Hathor and the goddess Isis. These images represented the fertility and regenerative processes held in high regard and power.

Women were traditionally depicted in sheer clothing, highlighting their fertility, while kings were never depicted in sheer wraps, except for Akhenaten who frequently adorned translucent robes in his pharaonic imagery. Hatshepsut was also depicted in translucent robes, but only in her female imagery such as in *Hatshepsut as a Female King*. Regeneration and fertility were integral aspects of life and religion for the ancient Egyptians, thus sheer clothing was meant to display the regenerative abilities of royal women, not to sexualize them. According to leading Egyptologist Gay Robins, “the female principle was fundamental to the universe, interacting with the male to ensure its continued regeneration...At one level, the female image in art represented the female principle of the universe.” Thus queens were traditionally used in imagery to depict the mother of Egypt and embody the goddesses of ancient Egypt in order to sustain Egypt.

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36 Luomala, 23-27.
38 *Hatshepsut as Female King*, early 18th Dynasty, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image can be found in Roehrig, 171.
39 Ibid., 39.
40 Ibid., 39.
In effect, women were used to legitimize the power of traditional pharaohs. When depicted alone, queens were portrayed conducting duties of wife and mother both for their own royal family and that of Egypt. Queens were never depicted conducting duties reserved for the king or on the same hierarchy of the king, they instead became adornments of the pharaoh.

From Old to New Kingdom Egypt

Ancient Egypt was in contact with several other countries and provinces throughout its history, and on occasions Egypt was controlled by foreign peoples. This allowed for outside influences in both political and social aspects. However, in terms of gender relations, women in Egypt enjoyed relatively equal status with men, because they had rights and responsibilities typically not given in other societies.42 In the Second Intermediate Period, the era preceding the New Kingdom, the Hyksos invaded, dividing Egypt for roughly one hundred years until King Ahmose drove the invaders out in the early New Kingdom.43

In the New Kingdom era, Egypt was united once again and flourishing both politically and economically. It is from this era that much of the Egyptian artifacts, objects, and buildings survived today due to the change in building materials from mud and brick to predominantly stone.44 Significantly, it is during this prosperous period during the New Kingdom that Hatshepsut ruled as king for a prolonged period of time.

42 Ibid.
43 Depla, 42.
During Hatshepsut’s rule there were some political problems in which Hatshepsut led successful military campaigns, which I contend as evidence of Hatshepsut’s capability as pharaoh.  

While the canonical king used his wife’s regenerative imagery to display his role as the father of Egypt, Akhenaten and Nefertiti both displayed a duality of gender in their imagery, depicting themselves as the mother and father of Egypt. They thus transformed a traditional kingship notion, uniting themselves in one figure. Because Akhenaten and Nefertiti are depicted in the same way, the king and queen became two parts of a whole, one sole ruler, just as the Aten was the sole god in Akhenaten’s religion. Special crowns, poses, and figural forms analogous to the king were used in Amarna imagery to depict the equality between Nefertiti and Akhenaten. In *Nefertiti Smiting the Enemy*, Nefertiti stands with her arm raised, smiting the enemy of Egypt, with full support from the Aten’s rays which shine down upon her. Just as in traditional kingly representations, Nefertiti’s figure is almost triple the size of the enemy she is smiting, thus she is given a pharaonic hierarchy. This imagery conveys to the Egyptian people that Nefertiti is equal to the deified pharaoh of Egypt. Traditional imagery would not have allowed this concept because of the religious hierarchy required when depicting gods and human figures.

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45 Roehrig, 52.
46 Troy, “She For Whom All That is Said is Done: The Ancient Egyptian Queen,” in *Ancient Queens: Archaeological Explorations*, edited by Sarah Milledge Nelson (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 2003), 101.
47 *Nefertiti Smiting the Enemy*, 18th Dynasty, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Image can be found in Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 54.
According to Lana Troy, a feminist scholar who examines ancient Egyptian kingship, “unity, the source of maintaining and regenerating the cosmos, was only possible when both poles [male/female] were incorporated into the authority of the kingship.”\textsuperscript{48} Hence, female imagery “in the presentation of power... [was] a regularly reoccurring feature that explicated the view that power was an androgynous realm.”\textsuperscript{49} As I have discussed earlier, however, aspects of the female gender used in traditional pharaonic portraiture were only symbolic and not depicted as female physical attributes. Therefore, in the traditional realm, power would not have been considered androgynous. Women appeared as adornments to complete the presentation of kingly power, not as part of the pharaonic power. Additionally, Troy does not examine how Hatshepsut’s gendered iconography may be different from that of previous kings, or Nefertiti’s circumstances with Akhenaten and the monotheistic religion. It is not until Hatshepsut that aspects of androgyne are depicted in the identity of the king, where Hatshepsut furthers gendered iconography by depicting herself as a physically male king.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, 113.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, 93.
CHAPTER 3

HATSHEPSUT: THE FEMALE KING

Hatshepsut’s images depart from the canon of traditional kingly imagery and use a duality of gender in the role of the kingship that was later transformed into an androgynous identity in the Amarna period. While Hatshepsut’s images may not display an androgynous figure, meaning a figure that evokes both gender identities and is indiscernible as to which gender the figure is, her images do display aspects of androgyny. Visual representations of Hatshepsut ranged from depictions of her as a female king, as physically female in form with male accoutrements such as the nemes headdress, to images of her as a physically male king with male features such as a man’s chest and build. Both of these types of imagery are common early in her rule, an indication that Hatshepsut was attempting to establish a kingly image displaying her power.50

Hatshepsut’s husband, Thutmose II, died early in his reign, leaving his young son, Thutmose III, the son of the king’s second wife Isis, as the pharaoh of Egypt.51 Because Thutmose III was too young to rule, his stepmother, Hatshepsut became his regent, his council to rule in his place until he was of age.52 Hatshepsut was appointed regent because she was Thutmose III’s closest relative of royal birth, as her father was

51 It was quite common, almost expected, that the pharaoh have numerous wives, yet one wife was considered the principal wife, the woman who is publicly represented. I examine only principle wives of the pharaohs, as the other wives were not influential, they were typically used to bare children. Hatshepsut is the principal wife of Thutmose II. See Robins, God’s Wife of Amun, 73.
52 Ibid., 73.
the previous king before Thutmose II became ruler. Soon after, Hatshepsut assumed the throne claiming herself king and she began constructing images depicting her divine birth to prove her divine right to be king.

Hatshepsut’s images stressed traditional male king attributes as well as dual-gendered images of her female body wearing the pharaonic beard. Her later representations depict her as a male king, in physical form as a man, without breasts or any single feminine attribute. Hatshepsut also used other forms of representation typical of canonical kingly imagery including images of herself in the form of a sphinx to display her power equal to that of traditional male kings. Hatshepsut had to defy the typical feminine visual representations used by queens before her, in order to establish herself as a king rather than a queen who took over the throne temporarily.

To enhance her rule, Hatshepsut began a huge building campaign, constructing numerous images, temples, and obelisks, as well as leading military expeditions. Her building campaign was not only useful in constructing an identity, but also to promote her acceptance and popularity with the people and reinforce her full right to kingship. Hatshepsut’s portraiture featured her likeness and closeness with the gods such as Hatshepsut Kneels to Nurse from the Udder of the Hathor Cow. Hatshepsut had to find a solution to the seemingly problematic question of pharaonic imagery. In other words, Hatshepsut had to confront through public imagery the question of her self-

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53 Ibid, 73-74.
54 Roehrig, 13.
57 Hatshepsut Kneels to Nurse from the Udder of the Hathor Cow, 18th Dynasty. Image can be found in Luomala, 28.
appointed rule as king instead of remaining a regent. She used her visual representations to not only legitimize her rule, but to create a new kingly identity, that of a female king, creating a precedent for female pharaohs in ancient Egypt. Hatshepsut, thus became an icon for women in power after her to emulate, much in the same way that Queen Elizabeth I’s precedent has lived on after she had passed.\textsuperscript{58} Julia Walker states that “Coming into being as Elizabeth passed to dust, this new public sphere has granted the queen resurrection at once relentlessly secular and perpetually mutable.”\textsuperscript{59} Both women’s imagery lived on after them as iconic female rulers.

Nancy Luomala, a feminist scholar in the area of ancient Egypt states that Hatshepsut’s successor destroyed Hatshepsut’s images because they represented the power of a royal blood line that the successor did not have. Hatshepsut’s images were destroyed roughly twenty years after her death, which I contend negates the probability that Thutmose III would want to obliterate Hatshepsut’s images to remove her rule from the line of kings.\textsuperscript{60} Further, Peter f. Dorman, states that Thutmose III erased some of Hatshepsut’s images in a manner suggesting his promotion of his right to rule because he replaces Hatshepsut with images of his father and grandfather while not touching Hatshepsut’s queen imagery.\textsuperscript{61} While we cannot know for certain what Thutmose III’s intent was, I hold that it is unlikely that her images were so threatening to Thutmose III that he would wait such a long time to demolish Hatshepsut’s visual representations, and only destroying a portion of Hatshepsut’s abundant imagery.

\textsuperscript{58} Walker, 5.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{60} Tyldesley, 225-226.
\textsuperscript{61} Roehrig, 267.
The previous female kings before Hatshepsut ruled because their husbands and/or sons died, leaving them to rule Egypt for few years at most as someone to stand in for the young king who inherited the throne at such an early age that they could not rule themselves, (typically in time periods that were in a political turmoil, such as civil war). Typically a young king’s mother would take over the kingship acting as regent, ready to relinquish her throne to her son when he was of sufficient age. Women were allowed to rule as pharaoh yet rarely did because it was considered a last resort by the Egyptians intended only to fill a gap between male rulers. These early female kings ruled for such short periods of time and ruled early in the Dynastic period, where archaeological evidence is few and far between, in effect not providing Hatshepsut with female king imagery to emulate or from which to derive influence. In turn Hatshepsut became a model for other women to emulate because of her break with tradition in her imagery and rule. Hatshepsut was not satisfied with being a regent watching over Egypt until her stepson could take over as the previous female kings had. She instead aspired for power and authority and thus took the initiative to become king, and immediately created imagery that depicted her divine birth and right to the throne. 

_Hatshepsut Kneels to Nurse from the Udder of the Hathor Cow_, exemplifies public propaganda because Hatshepsut contributes in a pharaonic ritual of deification, legitimizing her throne. Here Hatshepsut suckles the goddess Hathor, being nourished by a deity as only a king was allowed. In this way Hatshepsut depicts herself as a god, a major component of the kingship identity. In much the same way, Julia Walker

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62 Ibid., 213.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid., 226-227.
examines Queen Elizabeth I, who had to portray herself as a virgin to keep her throne and not get married. Elizabeth thus invented an image type that would allow her to remain monarch of England. Additionally, Claire Sherman states that Jean de Bourbon was depicted in her public role in a religious manner. In a portrait of Jean and her family, “the queen spreads her cloak protectively around her daughters in a gesture associated with the Madonna of Mercy.” It is as though for women to rule or co-rule, their status had to be elevated to a higher power, typical of pharaohs, yet women were typically depicted alone for such situations without a male counterpart.

Hatshepsut was predominantly depicted alone, without a female or male partner, since she did not need a partner to establish her power to the throne as king. As an alternative she used aspects of androgyny to include both genders in her imagery, allowing her images to adhere to her Egyptian subjects’ traditional beliefs so that they would accept her as a female king. Hatshepsut was able to act as both mother and father of Egypt by herself. What is significant, is that Hatshepsut is the first female king to depict herself in this way, and in doing so she began to gain the acceptance of the Egyptian people.

Hatshepsut broke with tradition by portraying herself as a man, rather than merely using symbols and accoutrements to embody both genders as the canonical pharaohs had done. Similarly, Walker concludes that Elizabeth “[turned] herself from a

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65 Walker, 23.
66 Sherman, 108.
67 Ibid., 109.
68 Roehrig 10.
woman into a thing” in order for her subjects to accept her.\(^{69}\) Dual-gendered images of Hatshepsut are prevalent in her colossal statuary in the intermediate period of her reign when she had taken over as king. In Hatshepsut as a Female King, Hatshepsut is depicted as a female on the kingly throne of ancient Egypt. She wears a sheer dress with a wide collar, in addition to bracelets and anklets typical of traditional queenly imagery in the ancient Egyptian canon.\(^{70}\) Unlike traditional queens and similar to traditional kings, she wears the traditional kingly nemes headdress (a cloth folded over the head and behind the ears) and the kingly uraeus (a cobra on the front of the headdress). The inscriptions on the statue refer to Hatshepsut in a feminine manner as the Egyptian language was gendered.\(^{71}\) The statue also includes two carved images of the goddess Taweret indicating a link to the Divine birth as the Taweret goddess was associated with the protection of women during childbirth.\(^{72}\) The eyes of the statue are pronounced, gazing at the viewer beneath arched eyebrows, the lip is larger than previous male or female imagery while the chin is small and recedes, the nose short and slightly curved.\(^{73}\)

This image is not a typical idealized image of the traditional canon, rather, it is an individual portrait of Hatshepsut that portrays her power and authority to those who view the sculpture because it is life-size and her individual features connote a realistic presence.\(^{74}\) She uses both female and male characteristics in her image, yet her

\(^{69}\) Walker, 1.
\(^{70}\) Roehrig, 170.
\(^{71}\) Ibid., 170.
\(^{72}\) Ibid., 170.
\(^{73}\) Ibid., 170.
\(^{74}\) Ibid., 170.
femininity is the focus of the work. Her dress is translucent, displaying the form of her breasts and feminine curves which was a representation typical of queens in the ancient Egyptian canon. In addition, her royal headdress is that of a king, but the uraeus connected to the nemes headdress is associated with female entities, though it is used by both kings and queens. The uraeus, however, is a phallic form symbolizing the cobra in a stance facing the viewer yet is associated with the sun god, as both his eye and daughter, representing the female gender although was typically adorned on male kings. The myth associated with the uraeus concludes that the eye of the sun god ran away and found its place on the forehead of the god, making it an integral kingly accessory. Hatshepsut’s dualistic gendered nature of imagery is different from the canonical tradition, yet is necessary for her intent to use aspects of androgyny to construct a female king identity. Hatshepsut’s individualized features reflect the careful thought that she considered when forming her new image. She appears to slowly cultivate her identity because she is displayed as a female king rather than a male king as her later imagery does.

In Hatshepsut Offers Maat to Amun Hatshepsut is depicted as a male king, who wears the nemes headdress while kneeling, offering nw jars of maat to Amun. Displayed with arched brows associated with kingly facial features, her large open eyes and a small, thin nose, is similar to her female image. She is, however, much more

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75 Troy, 109-110.
76 Ibid, 110.
77 Ibid., 110.
78 Roehrig 168.
79 Hatshepsut Offers Maat to Amun, 18th Dynasty, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image found in Roehrig, 168.
stylized in the fashion of canonical representations of ancient Egyptian kings. Depicted as participating in a kingly temple ritual, she is completely masculine in the sculpture, as she adorns a traditional male wrap, no upper bodily covering and has no breasts, but instead, the chest of a man. She also wears the pharaonic beard, but without a visible uraeus on her nemes cloth. For all intents and purposes she is a male king, discernible only by the feminine gendered inscriptions on the statue, which were feminine, describing her as ‘Lady of the Two Lands,’ a feminine version of canonical male king titulary.80

Hatshepsut is also offering maat, which is the duty of the king of ancient Egypt to uphold, as maat is the term for justice and truth.81 Because Hatshepsut is depicted as offering maat, she is displayed as the rightful, dutiful king fulfilling her role as pharaoh. Her masculine image is traditional, yet because the inscriptions on her statue are feminine it questions the masculinity of her image and her purpose of using male characteristics. One would think that Hatshepsut would not find it necessary to display herself as a man because she is publicly identified as a female king to her Egyptian subjects through the inscriptions on her statuary as well as the few physically female visual representations of her.

The transition of Hatshepsut’s images from traditionally feminine, to dual gendered images, then to male images, is a significant process in her construction of an identity.82 In the beginning of her role as regent, Hatshepsut portrayed herself distinctively as a queen, with physically female characteristics and traditional queenly

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80 Ibid., 168.
81 Ibid., 168.
82 Ibid., 158.
insignia. Soon after, Hatshepsut began depicting herself in dual-gendered imagery, as a queen with kingly characteristics, much like Hatshepsut as Female King. At about year seven of her rule, Hatshepsut began depicting herself in her gendered images in physically male form reminiscent of a canonical pharaoh. Later during her rule as pharaoh, Hatshepsut had much of her early queen imagery replaced with her new iconic female king imagery. In effect, Hatshepsut was slowly addressing the intersections of gender and kingship, cultivating a new pharaonic identity.

It is necessary to consider why Hatshepsut’s images changed gradually into male images in order to understand what she intended to do to portray her power as king. She may have felt that her image as a female was not an authoritative portrayal of her power as king. I propose that Hatshepsut created male images of herself to maintain the status quo for her subjects, and in effect enabled a woman to be king by using traditional male kingly imagery. She was able to convince the public that she was the rightful king because her images were the same as that of the canonical. However, she altered her images with aspects of androgyny, mixing her own gender with that of the pharaoh. Her legitimacy as a female queen may have been questioned by certain members of society, particularly because she ruled for a lengthy amount of time while the originally appointed king, Thutmose III, was held back from the throne.

Without knowing what Hatshepsut intended, we cannot answer for certain why she created dual gendered images of herself. Hatshepsut created a dual gendered kingly imagery, employing aspects of androgyny, setting a precedent for androgynous

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83 Roehrig, 88.
84 Ibid., 88.
85 Ibid., 88.
pharaonic imagery. She created various gendered images, and incorporated male characteristics into her image, while keeping her identity as a female through the accompanying text, remaining king. Because Hatshepsut was accepted as a king, she would not have been able to give up her throne since once she became pharaoh, she was a god and rightful king, prohibiting anyone else to rule until her death.\textsuperscript{86} I contend that Hatshepsut was paving the way for women to rule as king because she carefully constructed a female king identity through her visual representations; thereby influencing Akhenaten and Nefertiti’s visual representations promoting Atenism.

\textsuperscript{86} Roehrig, 13.
CHAPTER 4

NEFERTITI AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE AMARNA PERIOD

The Amarna period is the span of Akhenaten's rule in which he changed the Egyptian religion from the traditional polytheistic to a monotheistic worship of the Aten god of light. Consequently the artwork of the period was drastically changed from traditional representations to androgynous images made to accompany the new religion. Akhenaten revolutionized traditional kingly imagery by depicting himself and his wife Nefertiti as equals on nearly all of his public visual representations in Egypt through both hierarchical size and figure style. I argue that Nefertiti and Akhenaten's portraiture consisted of figures with indiscernible genders that become an androgynous figurehead of Egypt. Akhenaten depicted himself with Nefertiti as if they were one figure with one identity, but also created images of Nefertiti alone contributing in kingly actions such as smiting the enemy, elevating Nefertiti to the status of unofficial co-ruler rather than queen. This is completely unheard of in traditional king and queen imagery because a queen would never have been depicted on the same hierarchy or contributing in kingly actions with the pharaoh, as I have discussed in chapter two.

Since pharaohs were also gods for the Egyptians, by depicting a queen in the same manner as the king she is elevated to a godlike status and given the same power as the king. Theresa Earenfight also addresses the power attributed to a queen when not with her husband. Earenfight discusses the queen-lieutenants in the Aragonese court, these women ruled the kingdom while their king husbands were away, and would

88 Ibid., 11.
exhibit the full powers of the throne. Much like Nefertiti, the queens participated in kingly duties alone, however, Nefertiti retained her power when Akhenaten was with her. Additionally, Jean de Bourbon was displayed in the public life of the monarchy as well, participating in duties of the state such as welcoming the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV. Jean sat at his right side and is depicted on the same hierarchy and with similar crown as the Holy Roman Emperor in *Les Grandes Chroniques de France.*

The Amarna style of art is characterized by androgynous figures in which the figure’s torso is thin, the hip area is enlarged as well as thighs, arms and lower legs are slender without any visible musculature. *Panel with the Scene of the Adoration of the Aten* displays the typical Amarna figures prominently as well as Nefertiti’s participation in kingly activities with her partner, Akhenaten. *Nefertiti Smiting the Enemy* is a powerful example of Nefertiti exerting her co-ruler status by performing pharaonic responsibilities. Hatshepsut’s influence on Nefertiti and Akhenaten’s visual representations is evident through this familiarity with her imagery as a man conducting pharaonic rituals, such as *Hatshepsut Offers Maat to Amun* and her dual gendered imagery such as *Hatshepsut as Female King.*

I maintain that Hatshepsut provided Nefertiti and Akhenaten with a female icon in a male profession through imagery evoking both genders simultaneously. Hatshepsut was the only female king to do so and ruled at a contiguous time period to

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89 Earenfight, 50.
90 Sherman, 111.
91 Ibid., 111.
93 *Panel Scene with the Adoration of the Aten, 18th Dynasty, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.* Image found in Aldred, *Akhenaten and Nefertiti,* 57.
Akhenaten and Nefertiti in New Kingdom Egypt. Due to the similarities of how each ruler employed gender in images, I conceive that there is a direct influence of imagery and concept of Hatshepsut on Nefertiti and Akhenaten. Additionally, it is during Hatshepsut’s reign that interest and devotion in the god Amun-Re began, Hatshepsut even included inscriptions to this god in temples; as well as depicting her godly birth from Amun to legitimize her right to rule.\textsuperscript{94} Amun-Re was a combination of two gods, Amun, the creator god, and Re, the sun god.\textsuperscript{95} Nefertiti and Akhenaten’s interest in the sun god Aten appears to mirror the intellectual movement involving Amun-Re during Hatshepsut’s reign, pointing to yet another reason for Hatshepsut’s influence. Further, it is evident that pharaohs were knowledgeable of previous Egyptian kings and had studied their imagery, sometimes emulating the previous visual representations. While we cannot be certain at this point how far back the pharaohs studied previous kingly imagery or if they examined each pharaoh in a particular period; because Hatshepsut was so different from traditional pharaohs and because she had an abundance of images throughout Egypt, it is evident that Akhenaten and Nefertiti studied Hatshepsut’s images and used aspects of them for their own public portraiture.

Additionally, Hatshepsut’s dual gendered imagery provided Akhenaten with a solution to his dilemma of Egypt embracing Atenism. Imagery of a king embodying both genders revolutionized the traditional ancient Egyptian concept of kingship. Akhenaten and Nefertiti took Hatshepsut’s imagery a step further, creating the androgynous figure type of the Amarna period, allowing both genders to combine in equality with the

\textsuperscript{94} Roehrig, 84.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., 83.
kingship. Instead of appeasing the Egyptian people’s beliefs with canonical pharaonic imagery (like Hatshepsut), Akhenaten and Nefertiti created one king/queen figure to rule Egypt and promote the sole god Aten. Akhenaten and Nefertiti created this new imagery together, in the first images of the new style, Nefertiti and Akhenaten are depicted separately performing royal duties.96

Although Nefertiti was not a sole ruler like Hatshepsut, she attained similar status as a co-ruler, appearing as an equal to the king. Not only were Nefertiti’s figures in visual representations akin to Akhenaten’s, but in their later imagery, both are dressed in the same crowns and clothing.97 In their royal portraiture, Nefertiti and Akhenaten’s figures are similar in form as both genders are indiscernible, represented in the same hierarchy, a radical transformation from traditional pharaonic imagery. In this new androgynous style of art, created by Akhenaten and Nefertiti, both male and female figures are indiscernible. The Painted Limestone Pair Statuette of Akhenaten and Nefertiti display a similar dress and crown of king and queen.98 Additionally, Akhenaten and Nefertiti are represented with the same facial features, creating a unity and a link between the two.99

Statuette of Nefertiti from Thutmose Workshop at Amarna and Fragmentary Sandstone Statue of Akhenaten at the Great Temple of Amun at Karnak both display

96 Arnold, 17.
97 Ibid., 14.
98 Painted Limestone Pair of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, 18th Dynasty, Musee du Louvre, Paris. Image found in Aldred, Akhenaten and Nefertiti, 63.
99 Arnold, 18.
the androgynous figures of Nefertiti and Akhenaten.\textsuperscript{100} The gender is indiscernible, as well as the distinction between which figure represents each person. Both images are typical Amarna artworks, the drawn figures have a swelled abdomen and hip area, as well as rounded thighs and tapered lower legs. The figures are elongated and have rounded chests, suggesting female breasts. Most importantly, both figures appear to be nude, unlike traditional royal figures which were depicted in sheer clothing at the least, never to be depicted in the nude, as nudity was only acceptable for lower classes. Here, Akhenaten and Nefertiti are unclothed and Akhenaten’s pubic region is devoid of male genitalia, thereby bridging class and gender because of their apparent nudity.\textsuperscript{101} The procreative force is thus used differently in the traditional and the Amarna images.\textsuperscript{102} The only items in which to discern Akhenaten from Nefertiti are Akhenaten’s regalia, including kingly scepters and a crown.

Sexual identities in Amarna images were mixed and typical portrayals of women with lighter skin than men were changed to the same skin colors.\textsuperscript{103} Clothing became unisex fashion unlike those of traditional ancient Egyptian clothing styles, in which gender was detected.\textsuperscript{104} Short wigs were worn by court women in the Amarna period, which drastically differed from traditional long wigs.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{100} Statuette of Nefertiti from Thutmose Workshop at Amarna, 18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty, Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin. Image found in Arnold, 76. Sandstone Statue of Akhenaten at the Great Temple of Amun at Karnak, 18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty, Egyptian Museum, Cairo. Image found in Aldred, Akhenaten and Nefertiti, 29.


\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 37.

\textsuperscript{103} Tyldesley, 233.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 233.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 233.
Traditionally kings directed their pharaonic imagery from afar, yet Akhenaten had direct contact and control over the artists creating pharaonic public imagery.\textsuperscript{106} While figures and their features in the Amarna period veered away from those in the canonical style, the overall size of figures and background of the artwork remained the same, except for figural hierarchy, as Akhenaten and Nefertiti were portrayed as figure of the same size.\textsuperscript{107} Akhenaten only slightly changed the canon of proportion to fit the curvaceous figures representative of the Amarna style.\textsuperscript{108} Additionally, only royalty were depicted in the androgynous style of Amarna, soldiers and commoners were drawn in the canonical style without altered body shapes.\textsuperscript{109}

The \textit{Royal Family Stela} presents one of the most common representations created of Nefertiti and Akhenaten because they were used in private homes throughout Egypt for cultic worship.\textsuperscript{110} These images were kept by common people in ancient Egypt for personal devotion to the king and queen in their homes, Akhenaten and his family appears to replace a former worship of a family of deities.\textsuperscript{111} The \textit{Royal Family Stela} exemplifies the similar appearance and hierarchy of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Here Akhenaten and Nefertiti are depicted with their three infant daughters underneath the rays of the Aten. The Aten, the sole god of Akhenaten’s new

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Aldred, 53.
\item Aldred, \textit{Akhenaten and Nefertiti}, 55.
\item Ibid., 55.
\item Ibid.
\item Arnold, 98. \textit{The Royal Family Stela}, 18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty, Agyptisches Museum, Berlin. Image found in Arnold, 98.
\item Ibid, 102.
\end{enumerate}
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monotheistic religion, was the sun god, and is depicted by lines representing sun rays shining from above onto the royal family.\textsuperscript{112}

The Aten was always depicted in this manner, never personified in figural form as traditional Egyptian gods were, such as Anubis, the god in the after life who weighed souls of the dead, and was depicted as both a jackal and as a man with a jackal head. It is curious that the Aten was never personified in Amarna imagery, rather, I contend that Akhenaten and Nefertiti were meant to personify the god, as if the Aten rays depicted give the power of the Aten to Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Additionally, Akhenaten as a pharaoh was inherently a god, therefore I contend that Akhenaten and Nefertiti personify the Aten in their figural imagery.

Few characteristics distinguish Nefertiti from Akhenaten in this image, only by a slight variation in crown and clothing of each figure. Akhenaten wears the Blue Crown adorned with uraei and cloth strips off the back of the crown, also known as the Khepresh, war crown, traditionally worn by kings and deities.\textsuperscript{113} Nefertiti adorns her characteristic flat-topped crown which was specially made for her, created to resemble Akhenaten’s Blue Crown, and act as a signifier of the “iconographic movement of the queen into the role of a female counterpart to the king.”\textsuperscript{114} Nefertiti is depicted in a sheer robe while Akhenaten does not in this particular image, though he does in other iconic Amarna images.

Both Nefertiti and Akhenaten hold their children, who are unclothed except for some jewelry, depicted in the androgynous Amarna style as Nefertiti and Akhenaten.

\textsuperscript{113} Arnold, 10.
\textsuperscript{114} Troy, 101.
The sun rays of the Aten shine upon the royal couple, adorning the two with ankhs, signs of life, upon their nostrils.\footnote{Aldred, Akhenaten and Nefertiti, 102.} Nefertiti sits upon a stool decorated with the symbols of the United Two Lands, a significant power signifier Nefertiti held because she sits upon a representation of Egypt, much like the throne of Egypt upon which Pharaoh Khafre sits in Statue of Khafre.\footnote{Ibid.} Nefertiti is thus enthroned as a co-ruler of Egypt sitting independently and at an equal height to Akhenaten.

The composition of the stela creates an equality of design on each side of Nefertiti and Akhenaten, utilizing lines and shape to create emphasis on the couple and their relationship with the Aten. Straight lines dominate the work in the stools on which they sit, the walls next to each, and the hieroglyphics in between the couple. These lines emphasize the length of the figures and their proximity to the Aten above them. I argue that the king and queen are equally elevated to the status of divinity in this image because of their close proximity to the Aten and the elevated stools on which they sit above the ground where the Egyptian subjects live. Additionally, the straight lines of the Aten’s rays shine upon only the royal family, emphasizing their importance and associating the family with the Aten; suggesting that the couple is one in the same and personifying the Aten.

According to Dorothea Arnold, Egyptologists have suggested that the shrine reliefs symbolize the royal couple as the “first pair” of genesis myths in the Egyptian belief system.\footnote{Arnold, 99.} The royal couple depicted in the Amarna androgynous style are portrayed in organic shapes that are juxtaposed with the geometric shapes and straight
lines used in the rest of the image. This juxtaposition creates an emphasis on the royal family and their importance in Egypt. In addition, both the sun and the Aten are organic, and because it is the only other organic shape in the image, the connection between the Aten and the royal couple is emphasized. The organic shapes emphasize the circular nature and regeneration of life that the Egyptians valued. In traditional Egyptian belief, Nut, the sky goddess, was generally depicted as a cow swallowing the sun at night, giving birth to it in the morning. This regenerative imagery is evident in the royal stela through the appearance of a symmetrical image. The figures of Akhenaten and Nefertiti are placed on each side of the Aten, appearing as duplicates, imitating the movement of the Aten through the sky and the regeneration of both figures as if in a narrative.

Similar representations of gender and power structures are found in The Adoration of the Aten Stela, in which the royal family makes an offering to the Aten. Here Nefertiti and Akhenaten are portrayed with different heights, yet in the same hierarchy and stance. The Adoration connotes an earlier image than The Royal Family Stela, because it displays aspects of androgyny, a step in the transition of typical Amarna androgynous imagery. Similar to Hatshepsut, Nefertiti and Akhenaten slowly cultivate their new kingship identity with the Aten. Here Nefertiti and Akhenaten wear distinctively different crowns, both adorning traditional headdresses representative of their particular gender. Nefertiti wears the cow horn and sun disk crown associated with traditional queens, while Akhenaten wears the khat headdress he is typically

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118 Troy, 112.
associated with during his rule, a traditional kingly adornment. Their clothing is similar as well, both wear sheer robes and wraps on their waists. Their figures portray congruous proportion and style, though Nefertiti is markedly smaller in size than Akhenaten. Both appear figurally androgynous, and Akhenaten even appears to have breasts.

The use of line in this work is similar to that of *The Royal Family* stela. The straight lines denoting the rays of the Aten point directly upon Akhenaten and Nefertiti in this image, again associating their rule with the Aten. The rays receive and return the offers that Nefertiti and Akhenaten make to the Aten. Their organic figures also imitate the organic shape of the Aten, further emphasizing the connection between the royal couple and the Aten. Additionally, the stela composition connotes a narrative of the creation of the Egyptian people from the new sole god Aten because the Aten appears on the right, shining upon Akhenaten and Nefertiti who are in front of their children. I maintain that the creation myth is portrayed here because the offerings made to the Aten display the regeneration process because the offerings are juxtaposed with the Aten rays, pushing into the Aten while the Aten flows out.

In traditional Egyptian religious beliefs, the first god, Atum, was androgynous and created the other gods from himself, eventually humans as well.¹¹⁹ The first god’s initial children were Shu and Tefnut, the first couple who generated other gods.¹²⁰ In *The Royal Family Stela*, an allusion to the creation myth is evident in the architecture portrayed throughout the image, as well as the analogous representations of the royal

¹¹⁹ Arnold, 99.
¹²⁰ Ibid., 99.
couple, embodying the god’s children Shu and Tefnut because the god’s children were twins.\textsuperscript{121} By resembling the first couple, Akhenaten and Nefertiti persuade the stela viewers to think of both as gods, rather than solely Akhenaten’s deification as is traditional pharaonic concept. A birth bower is detected by Egyptologists out of the architecture depicted in the stela because of the reed structure which frames the royal family; which I perceive represents the birth of a new civilization, of which Nefertiti and Akhenaten are born, embodying Shu and Tefnut to enable the worship of the Aten.\textsuperscript{122}

Androgynous and dual-gendered figural imagery was common in the ancient world. Natalie Boymel Kampen states that in late ancient Greece and Rome, certain gods such as Bacchus and Apollo were “regularly represented as silky, longhaired youths, their poses sinuous and their musculature undefined.”\textsuperscript{123} Kampen further concludes that Antinous, a young man favored by emperor Hadrian, was depicted in nearly a hundred portraits “[stressing] the sensual, unmuscular body, the thick curly hair, the soft smooth face, and the curving lips of the beloved boy.”\textsuperscript{124} Further, Antinous was often depicted as Osiris, yet never evoking a masculine muscular physique according to Kampen.\textsuperscript{125} Additionally, Eve Millar discusses androgyny occurring in Hindu imagery, explaining that the god Shiva was portrayed physically “female on the left side of his body and physically male on the right” in ca. 550 CE.\textsuperscript{126} Millar also stresses that other Hindu gods were portrayed androgynously, such as Daksa

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\textbf{footnote} & \textbf{Reference} \\
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\textsuperscript{121} & Ibid, 100. \\
\textsuperscript{122} & Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{123} & Claude J. Summers, \textit{The Queer Encyclopedia of the Visual Arts} (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2004), 82. \\
\textsuperscript{124} & Ibid., 82. \\
\textsuperscript{125} & Ibid., 82. \\
\textsuperscript{126} & Ibid., 180. \\
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the creator god depicted with both genders dividing himself in half to birth children.127 While there is clear evidence that androgyny existed in the ancient world, both the traditional Egyptian gods such as the creator god and the androgynous images of the Amarna period specifically indicate the belief of the ancient Egyptians in the duality of gender.

The ancient Egyptians found significance in the representation of both genders through their beliefs in the regenerative processes of the universe.128 Therefore, Akhenaten and Nefertiti created androgynous images of themselves in order to persuade their Egyptian subjects to embrace Atenism. The new monotheistic religion did not require a mother and a father of Egypt, but instead one sole ruler, a combination of mother and father. Akhenaten and Nefertiti were able to create imagery that displays one figure representative of both genders, thereby a complete pharaoh who would serve Egypt. The Egyptian creator god was viewed androgynously as it created life from itself without another being or gender, thus conveying the concept of androgyny not only as acceptable, but a godly characteristic.129

127 Ibid., 181.
128 Robins, The Art of Ancient Egypt, 47.
129 Troy, 112.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study has brought to light the gender roles of the kingship, and how Hatshepsut and Nefertiti constructed female king identities. Both women dealt with gender and power to further their ruler status in different ways. Hatshepsut created imagery to legitimize her reign as a female king of Egypt and to construct a new identity of female power and authority for women after her. Nefertiti and Akhenaten were influenced by Hatshepsut’s imagery and constructed a new female identity for Nefertiti as a co-ruler of Egypt with Pharaoh Akhenaten.

While visual representations of Hatshepsut and Nefertiti differ, the concepts behind them are similar. Both manipulated androgyny to create images that display powerful women with equal status to male Egyptian kings. Hatshepsut cultivated images of herself to share an equal status with canonical male kings before her. Both women constructed not just images, but concepts of female kings. It is evident that the two succeeded in their goals because they are the most powerful and famous women in the history of ancient Egypt with a lasting impression even today.

Our knowledge of ancient Egypt has changed dramatically over the years and will continue to do so, thus when new imagery and artifacts are discovered, our understanding of Hatshepsut, Nefertiti and Akhenaten can change. Egyptology continually surfaces new concepts and materials, creating new avenues of research for feminist scholarship. To understand further why Hatshepsut created imagery of herself as a male, a further investigation of her statuary inscriptions and literature written
about her during her life time would be integral. A full study of the ancient Egyptian language and exactly what words were gendered, as well as a comparison between Hatshepsut’s inscriptions and other kings and queens would benefit our knowledge of Hatshepsut’s intent with creating her imagery. Also, an examination of the destruction of Hatshepsut’s imagery would benefit our knowledge on how accepted Hatshepsut actually was as female king to her Egyptian subjects.

If her images were destroyed to legitimize Tuthmosis III’s rule, we would know that Hatshepsut was openly received by the ancient Egyptians. Through her gendered images, did Hatshepsut nevertheless transcend gender in a manner not possible for traditional kings because of their reliance on images of their wives to represent the female aspects of the universe? Was part of the objective of this pharaonic canonical presentation of power constructed to control the female? Consequently, was Hatshepsut exerting her female power over that of the male through depicting herself as a canonical male king? A further investigation into gender roles of the ancient Egyptians would aid in our understanding of this matter.

Moreover, an investigation of Smenkhkare, the prince who officially co-ruled with Akhenaten, would give us insight into Nefertiti’s power as co-ruler and her influence from Hatshepsut. A discovery of who Smenkhkare was would lead us to understand the true gender roles of the kingship for Akhenaten and Nefertiti. The pair were unofficial co-rulers, but if Nefertiti was Smenkhkare, we would know that male depictions were necessary for the rule of the kingship in ancient Egypt. Amarna
imagery depicts Akhenaten and Nefertiti as equals, yet until we find concrete evidence we will not know exactly what Nefertiti’s role was in the kingship.

Finally, we cannot ascertain Hatshepsut’s influence over Akhenaten and Nefertiti until we have sufficient evidence. However, I maintain that as of right now there is proof of this influence due to the proximity in reign and image similarities. A complete understanding of Hatshepsut’s influence and Nefertiti’s role in the kingship can lead us to other discoveries of Egypt.

Of specific interest would be examining the relevance of this study today. In Egypt today, women are not rulers but instead first wives of Egypt, aiding in the representation of the president as a full-fledged protector of Egypt. The president and first lady appear to govern as mother and father of Egypt, much like the ancient Egyptian kings and queens. Can Hatshepsut still influence Egyptian women, or any other women aspiring to power, with her iconic visual representations or has she already? Surely Nefertiti’s imagery as a co-ruler can influence first ladies in the current era, as the first ladies appear to be equals with their husbands, conducting state affairs and other such diplomatic activities. Hatshepsut cultivated an iconic precedent that I argue she created to provide the opportunity for women ruling as king of ancient Egypt after her. If this is the case, Hatshepsut would want women today to govern Egypt alone and possibly create imagery as female rulers, not a female in male physical form. Nefertiti as well may have wanted to create kingship power for women. Have women today in Egypt or elsewhere modeled themselves upon Hatshepsut’s icon? A further
study of contemporary Egyptian women and other women in power may be able to delineate this possibility.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


