

Evaluate the
changing roles of
queens during the
reign of amenhotep 3
and akhenat...



In Egypt's New Kingdom, the role of queens during the reign of Amenhotep 3 and Akhenaten significantly transformed from the confinements of their traditional roles as passive heirs to the throne who provided a divine consort for the king. This is evident through Queen Tiye and Queen Ahmose-Nefertiti through the depictions and evidence displaying the prominent roles in political and religious policies Queens began to assume. Queen Tiye was the Chief Queen and matriarch of the Amarna family. The wife of Amenhotep III and mother to Akhenaten is assumed to be the beginning of the significant changing roles of Queens in New Kingdom Egypt.

It is believed that soon after Amenhotep's accession to the throne or even as part of his coronation ceremonies, the young king was married to Tiye and he publicized this important event through a series of commemorative scarabs that was inscribed and circulated around the kingdom. The scarabs which gave mention and honored Queen Tiye, ' live mighty bull, shining in truth...smiter of the asiatics, good god, ruler of Thebes, Lord of strength... Amenhotep, who is given life and great kings wife Tiye, who liveth...' This is the first time that a queen's name was cited in the royal titulary.

The devotion and attention the pharaoh dedicated to Queen Tiye and the importance she held to Amenhotep is evident and reinforced through his monument-building craze where he devoted a number of shrines to Tiye such as the Temple at Sedeinga and Soleb at Nubia, a palace for the Chief Queen and ' his majesty commanded to make a lake for the Great King's Wife, Tiye, in her city of Djakura. ' This process of great devotion and flattery was followed and furthered by Akhenaten.

This can be seen through Queen Nefertiti's depiction on the walls of temples at Thebes, which is described as Queen Nefertiti's 'her greatest honor' along with 'illustrations of Nefertiti on the pillars of the Hewet-Benben which was reserved for the queen's worship of the god.' Through the devotions of temples, depictions and inscriptions to Queen Tiye and Queen Nefertiti we are able to see how their roles as Queen was transforming in comparison to Old Kingdom Egypt where a queen's roles were confined to providing many children, ensure the smooth running of the palace, if necessary, act as regent if her husband, the king, died before his son was old enough to rule on his own and give silent support to her husband and be a passive, but visible to the king.

Queen Nefertiti is known for her elegant beauty as she ruled alongside Akhenaten during the eighteenth dynasty. Supporting her husband's beliefs she changed her name to Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti when Akhenaten changed the focus from the 'Chief God, Amun and other gods to the worship of a single god, Aten. The Aten became the center of Egypt's new religion. During her reign as queen, Egypt went about many radical religious changes, the first being her name. Her reign with Akhenaten was unlike the traditional ways Egypt had seen she was more than just a typical queen and helped to promote Akhenaten's views. Her reign was approximately only 12 years, but she was one of the most powerful queens to ever rule.

Her importance was greatly valued by Akhenaten and he went to great lengths to show her as his counterpart as seen in source A. As queen, she took on powerful roles and showed herself in ways only Egyptian kings did.

An example of this being, she was often shown with the crown of a pharaoh
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or was depicted in scenes of battle smiting her enemies. Akhenaten valued her so much, that he also allowed her to practice that art of priesthood and she too was allowed to make offerings to Aten.