

Ancient
IN MEMORY OF
Egyptian and
WILLIAM A. WARD
Mediterranean Studies

Edited by
Leonard H. Lesko

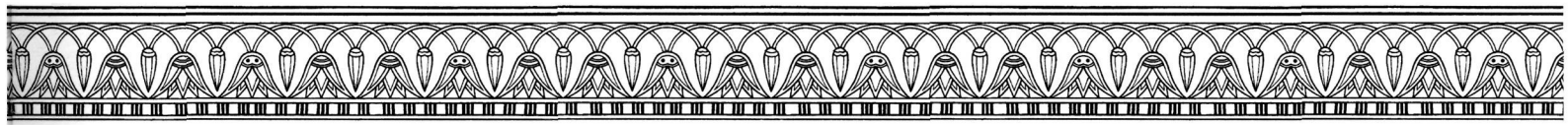
Department of Egyptology
Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island
1998

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Mediterranean Studies
in Memory of William A. Ward



William A. Ward (1928–1996)

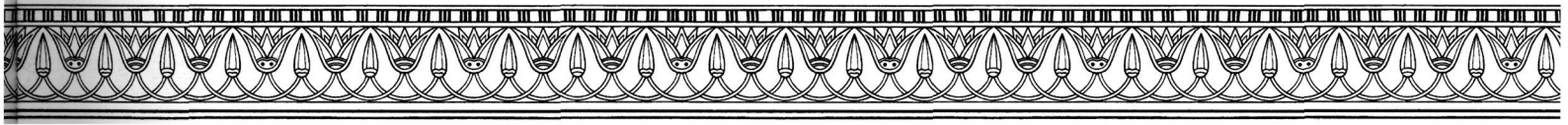


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Queen Khamerernebtj II and Her Sculpture

BARBARA S. LESKO

BILL WARD PRODUCED IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS which will long stand as essential building blocks for those of us who labor to reconstruct women's earliest story. Even before he found refuge at Brown University following his precipitous flight from Beirut, I had sent him an invitation to participate in our 1987 NEH-sponsored conference on Women in the Ancient Near East. Bill was, at that time, one of only a very few Egyptologists world-wide who had shown a genuine interest in researching Egyptian female titles and activities. Fortunately, Bill stayed on at Brown, contributing much time and effort to teaching for, not only the Department of Egyptology, but the Program in Ancient Studies as well. For many of those years he and I shared an office, and we also shared many an idea and discussed books and theories. I learned much from him, and I miss him daily. This little study is worthy of him only in that it seeks to make better known the earliest significant sculptured monument to a woman.

When Ahmed Bey Kamel undertook excavations for the Count de Galarza at Giza in 1909, he discovered several statues of a queen that have received little notice in Egyptological circles, which is odd considering their uniqueness. They were found in what has been known ever after as the Galarza tomb, and brief descriptions of the sculpture found within it are superficially published by Kamel and Daressy in the *Annales* for 1909, with only one photograph of one of the statues.¹ The plan of the large rock-cut tomb was also published by Reisner,² and its owner was originally identified by him and other Egyptologists as the Fourth Dynasty Queen Khamerernebtj I, presumably the daughter of Khufu and wife of Khafre, and mother of Menkaure. However, later consideration of the scant inscriptional material surviving at the tomb suggested to Edel that, not the mother, but the like-named daughter/daughter-in-law was interred here originally.³ This identification has received further consideration by Michel Baud (who supports it) and even more recently (after my article was written) by Vivienne G. Callender and Peter Jánosi.⁴ Obviously their conclusions bear directly on the identification of the sculpture discussed here. I am gratified that their close study has yielded conclusions agreeing with mine, and I now will only refer briefly to these conclusions, because the main purpose of my article was to publish, with the kind

¹ Ahmed Kamel, "Rapport sur les Fouilles du Comte de Galarza," *ASAE* 10 (1909), 116–121; Georges Daressy, "La tombe de la Mère de Chéfnen," *ASAE* 10, 41–49; pl. 1. As of this writing, a study on the sculpture of this tomb has been promised as forthcoming by Vivienne G. Callender, "A Note on the Statuary of the Galarza Tomb," in Vivienne G. Callender and Peter Jánosi, "The Tomb of Queen Khamerernebtj II at Giza, A Re-

assessment," *MDAIK* 53 (1997), 21 note 89.

² G.A. Reisner, *A History of the Giza Necropolis I*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 237, fig. 142.

³ Elmar Edel, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientalforschung* 1 (1953), 333–36; 2 (1954), 183–87.

⁴ Michel Baud, "La tombe de la reine-mère *H^c-mrr-nbtj Ire*" *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 95 (1995), 11–17. Callender and Jánosi, *op. cit.*, 20.

permission of Dr. Mohammed Saleh, Director of the Egyptian Museum, a photograph of the largest statue from the Galarza tomb.

William Stevenson Smith in his *Old Kingdom Sculpture and Painting* only describes and does not illustrate the statuary from this tomb's assemblage and notes that the whereabouts of some of the pieces is currently unknown.⁵ The two statues in best condition are on display in the Old Kingdom galleries on the ground floor of Cairo's Egyptian Museum of Antiquities and are the subject of this article. I am grateful to Dr. Mohammed Salah for his permission to publish the larger statue, hitherto only mentioned in texts, and to Assistant Professor at Cairo University, Hanan M. Taha, Cand. Phil., for her assistance in rechecking its dimensions and providing me with the official museum photograph.

At the western end, north wall, of the Egyptian Museum's first transverse hall, which runs parallel to its facade, sitting alone in a large alcove, is found the colossal, statue representing a queen of the Fourth Dynasty, no. 48856. Its label still bears the identity originally attached to it, Khamerernebt I (as opposed to Khamerernebt II based on the research by Elmar Edel,⁶ later supported by Walther Wolf,⁷ Porter and Moss,⁸ Lisa Sabbahy,⁹ Wilfried Seipel,¹⁰ and Michel Baud).¹¹ The identification of the great rock-cut tomb which is in the old Khafre cemetery south of the Sphinx and west of Khafre's valley temple, as belonging instead to Khamerernebt II, the chief queen of Menkaure and presumed universally to be the same woman portrayed in the small statue groups from his pyramid complex, could be questioned in light of the identifications by Zahi Hawass of at least two out of the three smaller pyramids at Menkaure's site as having been actual queens' tombs.¹² Hawass's dissertation research disagrees with earlier interpretations that GIII-A, for instance, was only a "ritual pyramid."¹³ Instead Hawass's investigations agree with Reisner in accepting the first two small pyramids (GIII-A and B, starting from the east) as tombs due to the presence of a sarcophagus in each.¹⁴ Indeed, human remains identified as female were found in GIII-B. The attribution of the third pyramid is problematic and may have been, as Hawass suggests, a cult pyramid of Menkaure.¹⁵ Regardless, it would seem that there is more than enough reason to believe that the queen of Menkaure, represented in the fine shist dual sculpture found at Menkaure's pyramid complex, would have been buried there near her husband in one of the small pyramids at his funerary complex, the view taken by I.E.S. Edwards as well.¹⁶

⁵ Wm. Stevenson Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1949), 41.

⁶ Edel, *Mitteilungen* I, 336.

⁷ Walther Wolf, *Die Kunst Ägyptens: Gestalt und Geschichte* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1957), 144; fig. 108.

⁸ PM III: 1, 273 and 282.

⁹ Lisa Sabbahy, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation Toronto 1982: *The development of the Titulary and Iconography of the Ancient Egyptian Queen from dynasty one to early dynasty eighteen*. Canadian Theses on Microfiche (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1988).

¹⁰ Wilfried Seipel, *Untersuchungen zu den ägyptischen Königinnen der Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches: Quellen und*

historische Einordnung, doctoral dissertation, Hamburg University, 1980.

¹¹ Baud, op. cit. This identification is not reflected in the article by A.M. Dodson "The Tombs of the Queens of the Middle Kingdom," *ZÄS* 115, (1988), 124, n. 8.

¹² Zahi Hawass, *The Funerary Establishments of Khufu, Khafra, and Menkaura during the Old Kingdom*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1987), 260-62.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Hawass pointing out that such "ritual tombs" are always on the east of the axes of pyramids.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 260-61; 280-81.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 282.

¹⁶ I.E.S. Edwards, *The Pyramids of Egypt* (Middlesex: Viking Penguin Books, 1986), 155.

Edel, in his first article on the subject, pointed out correctly that there was no title identification on the Galarza tomb's statuary of a King's Mother. The King's Mother title does, however, appear in the Galarza Tomb's architrave inscription linked to the first Khamerernebty.¹⁷ Selim Hassan noted the rarity (indeed he called it non-existence) of such a title for Fourth Dynasty queens.¹⁸ Actually there are only three women identified as "King's Mother" in the Fourth Dynasty: Hetepheres I, Khamerernebty I, and Khentkawes at the very end of the dynasty, and these same three are exclusively titled "Daughter of the God" as well.¹⁹ This would seem to indicate that such a woman was a first born daughter and true heiress as opposed to later born daughters or royal wives who were called simply "King's Daughter" as a matter of form. Edel's argument essentially was that since Menkaure's Khamerernebty II appears in the inscriptions of the tomb with her mother, and because the statuary inscriptions do not use the title King's Mother, they and the tomb should rightly belong to the younger woman, who incidentally is stated there to be the eldest daughter. The more recent scrutiny of the inscriptions and architecture of the tomb has led Callender and Janossi to suggest that Khamerernebty I was the original owner of the tomb, but that she was not buried in it. The tomb was then utilized by her eldest daughter who enlarged upon the original rock cut tomb, adding to it more chapels on the same level as the original chapel with the large statue niche (C on their plan and the location where the colossal statue of a queen was found) and adding as well a masonry mastaba above, thus introducing a style that was imitated by others later in the dynasty.²⁰

The younger Khamerernebty's identification in the architrave inscription as *Nbt imshw* suggests that she was deceased when the tomb was inscribed.²¹ Despite her claim to being "the greatly loved wife of the king,"²² her statement²³ that she herself paid the craftsmen who worked on the tomb (and thus obviously was not provided with a finished tomb by the king) strongly suggests that she was no longer in the king's favor when she grew old enough to think about readying her burial place. Khamerernebty II, in her linitel inscription, was careful to stress her link to her mother and to her father, stating that she was a "King's daughter of his body" and "honoured by her father." Thus she stresses her exalted family background, which doubtless had won for her the queen's role which she originally had enjoyed. Obviously there is little likelihood that a queen who was forced to pay for her own tomb and had a final resting place quite a distance from the pyramid of her supposed husband, could be on the other hand memorialized in the sculpture of that king's pyramid complex. Thus I had concluded that the queen in the statue group has been mis-identified all these years, and am pleased that recently others have come independently to the same conclusion. Although the famous dual sculpture discovered by Reisner was uninscribed, he boldly identified the king and queen as "undoubtedly Mycerinus and Khamerernebty II."²⁴ This identification

¹⁷ Sethe, *Urkunden I*, 155 A.

¹⁸ Selim Hassan, *Excavations at Giza IV* (1932–33), (Cairo: Government Printing House, 1943), 5.

¹⁹ Lana Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in ancient Egyptian myth and history* (Boreas 14) (Uppsala: University, Gustavianum, 1986), 153–54.

²⁰ Callender and Janossi, op. cit., 12–13.

²¹ *Wb. I*, 81; *Urkunden I* 155 A, line 16 (her mother is revered before the great god and she is revered before her father).

²² Callender and Janossi, op. cit., 15.

²³ *Ibid.*, 16–17 and notes 61 and 62.

²⁴ G.A. Reisner, *Mycerinus: The Temples of the Third Pyramid at Giza* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 110.

has been, until now, widely and unquestioningly accepted. However, if the identification of the Galarza tomb as belonging to Khamerernebty II is correct, it would seem far more likely that the queen portrayed with Menkaure in the statue group found at his pyramid complex was another successor queen who was herself indeed buried at that complex. The identification of her as Khamerernebty II would then be incorrect. No inscriptional material survives from the crude mud brick chapels of the queens' pyramids in the complex nor on the stone coffins found in two of the pyramids to promote such an identity. Rather, the identity of the young queen in the Menkaure statue group may never be known.

STATUE ONE

The seated female figure, Cairo no. 48856, measuring 2 m., 40 cm. in height (and thus much larger than life size), is portrayed in massive proportions: broad shoulders, thick arms and broad waistline. The feet have been lost with the front of the plinth on which the cube throne is set. Moisture and wind blown sand have taken their toll of the limestone, and the statue is badly weathered, leaving the features indistinct. The only remaining paint is seen in the black lines depicting the hair at the back of her head. One might justifiably apply the words Cyril Aldred used when describing the somewhat earlier seated statue of Hemiunu for this female figure: "the well-nourished body... has been rendered with great economy of means."²⁵ Certainly the stocky build and bold planes of the statue characterize it as Old Kingdom, features seen in other female statues of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties.

Even though now unattractive in appearance, the queen's statue would have been impressive when finished (which it appears not to have been) and should be regarded as significant in the history of women's monuments. It is the largest rendition of a woman extant from the Old Kingdom and quite possibly the first large statue of a woman in history. Taking the definition used by other Egyptologists, it is at least twice life-sized and thus worthy of being considered "colossal." Thus it supersedes in time the "first known example" of a colossal free-standing statue named by Cyril Aldred as that of Userkaf, of the following dynasty.²⁶ However, as far as I can ascertain, no. 48856 has never been published in photograph, and this article undertakes to rectify this situation (fig. 1a–b). Although immense, this statue is easily overlooked due to its positioning in the Museum at the end of the transverse hall alone in a type of alcove. The huge hulk of the queen's physique reminds one of, but even surpasses, the seated statue of Prince Hemiunu now in Hildesheim,²⁷ similarly posed frontally with hands on knees, (although both of her palms are flat on her legs and she is garbed in a clinging dress). She can also be easily compared with the massive granite head tentatively identified as King Khufu's by the Brooklyn Museum.²⁸

As is also obvious in the pyramids and Great Sphinx, the Egyptians of the Fourth Dynasty expressed power and importance with size and, for a time in the mid-Fourth Dynasty, apparently utilized physical bulk to emphasize further the significance of the person portrayed. No oversized image of a human survives from prior to Khufu's reign and perhaps none was ever created, although fragments found at the Zoser Step Pyramid Complex suggested to

²⁵ Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art in the Days of the Pharaohs* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1980), 68.

²⁶ Aldred, *op. cit.*, 93.

²⁷ Smith, *op. cit.*, pl. 6d.

²⁸ Richard A. Fazzini et al., *Ancient Egyptian Art in the Brooklyn Museum* (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1989), pl. 9.



Fig. 1a. Frontal view of Khamererneby I, Egyptian Museum, Cairo no. 48856. Courtesy The Egyptian Museum.

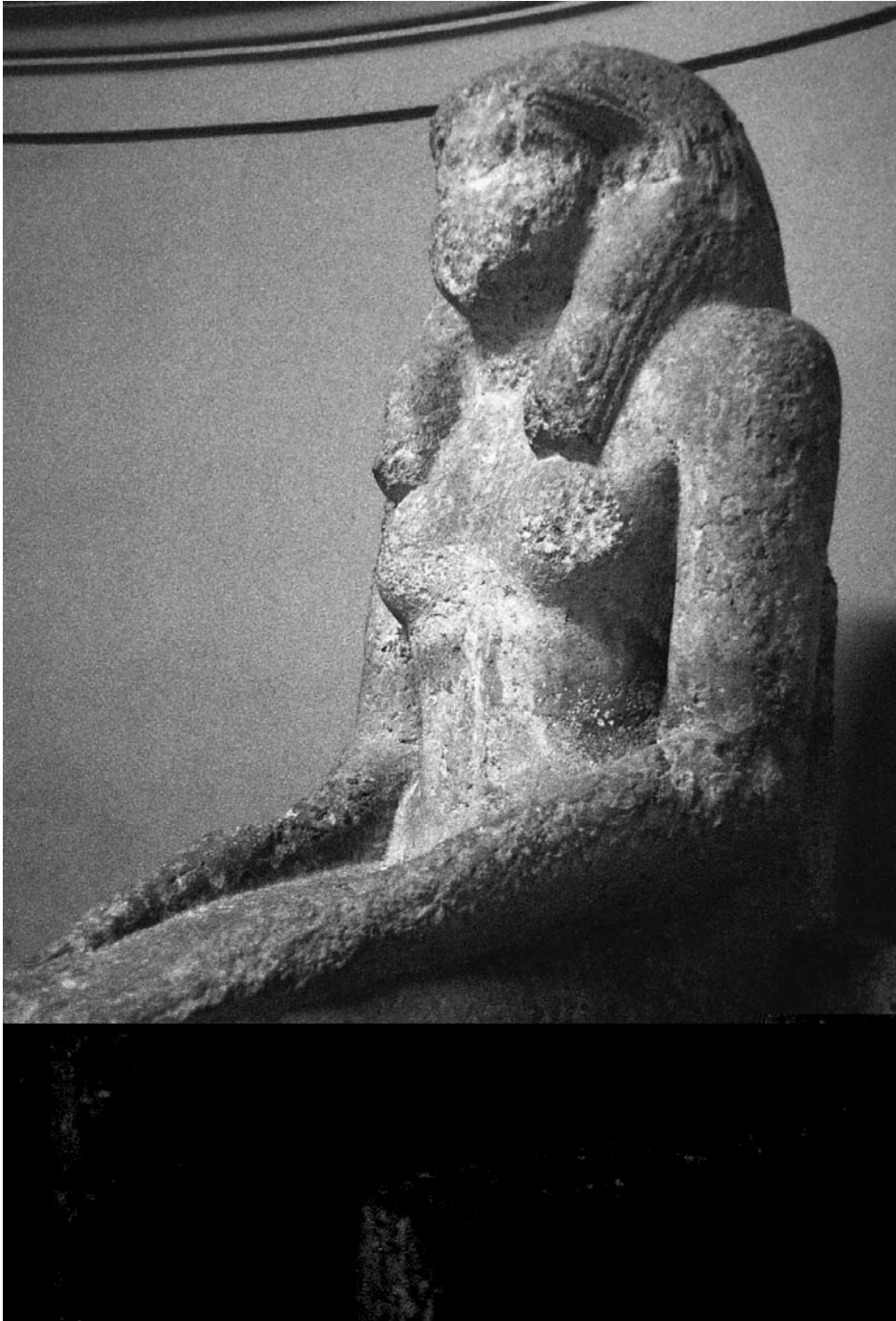


Fig. 1b. Side view of Khamerernebt II, no. 48856. Photograph by B.S. Lesko.

Smith that one statue of that king was over life-sized.²⁹ Certainly no other image of such dimension survives for any other woman from the Old Kingdom, either in height or proportions. Queen Khamererneby's importance, as expressed here, is due to her being a member of the royal family and wife of the ruler. The inscription on the fronts of the cube-like seat of the statue reads: (on her right) *wrt hts, sst-nsw nt ht:f, hmt-nsw*; and (on her left) *m3st Hr Sth, sst-nsw nt ht:f, hmt-nsw*.³⁰ Thus her royal lineage is emphatically proclaimed, as it was on the tomb's lintel inscription.³¹ However as Edel noted neither the King's Mother or Daughter of the God title is present on this figure. Because the elder Khamererneby did possess these titles, Edel was probably correct in considering the Galarza tomb and its sculpture as belonging to the younger Khamererneby.

It was the royal family which, during the Fourth Dynasty, controlled all the major government and religious positions in the kingdom, and royal women were priestesses in major cults. Khamererneby I was a Prophet of Thoth and of Bapef (or Tjasepef) as was our Khamererneby II.³² What other influential roles queens played are not clearly reflected in such titles interpreted as either: Great of Praise (*Wrt hst*) and Great One of the Hetes Scepter (*Wrt Hts*) (each associated with the two Khamerernebys and other Fourth Dynasty royal women) or with the title or epithet, rare until the Fifth Dynasty: "Everything which she says is done for her."³³

The use of such a massive form in portraying a woman appears not to have continued, but its presence in the middle of the Fourth Dynasty suggests that the artistic canon which would rule so absolutely as a regulating influence in sculpture for centuries to come, was not yet firmly in place. Indeed this period may be seen as an age of experimentation when the other exhibited image from this same queen's tomb is considered.

STATUE TWO

The most attractive and artistically significant piece of sculpture from the Galarza Tomb is Cairo no. 48828, a standing figure, again in limestone, now headless, which is currently positioned in a corner of the Old Kingdom hall, 32 (fig. 2a–b). This statue appears separately published in the same volume of the *Annales* by Daressy, who did supply one photograph as a group of plates from diverse articles in that issue, placed after page 96 as plate one.³⁴ Others, most notably Dittmann, have used this statue to illustrate an early feature of female clothing design,³⁵ but even these studies have themselves received little note by later writers, and the portrayal of the elaborate garb of this queen has remained largely overlooked by those who write on ancient Egyptian fashions, while her unusual statue is seldom reproduced in art books.³⁶

²⁹ Smith, op. cit. 15, 41.

³⁰ Titles on left and right. Daressy, op. cit., 44.

³¹ Callender and Jánosi, op. cit., 15, fig. 8.

³² Titles shared by mother and daughter, Troy, op. cit., 153–54.

³³ For interpretations of these titles see Kuchman's article "Titles of Queenship, Part 1" *Newsletter of the SSEA* 7, no. 3 (1977), 9–12.

³⁴ Georges Daressy, "La Tombe de la Mère de Chéfredon,"

ASAE 10 (1909), 41–49; pl. 1.

³⁵ Karl Heinrich Dittmann, "Eine Mantelstatue aus der Zeit der 4. Dynastie," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 8 (1939), 165–70, pls. 24, 25. Dittmann notes two different patterns used in the depiction of the linen of the garments worn by Khamererneby, differentiating the skirt of the dress from the shawl. Thus two garments, not one wrap-around, would seem to be indicated here.

³⁶ The citation in Porter and Moss of photos or



Fig. 2a. Frontal view of Khamerernebt II, Egyptian Museum, Cairo no. 48828. Photograph by B.S. Lesko.



Fig. 2b. Side view of Khamerernebt II, no. 48828. Photograph by B.S. Lesko.

Khamerernebt here assumes normal proportions and size, (the statue measures today 1 m. 34 cm, minus head and feet) but is unusual for the elaborate garb she wears. She is enveloped in a pleated tunic fixed at the shoulders with straps and ties, and a cloak which has been draped sari-like, over one shoulder. The outline of her right arm is seen beneath this cloak, as it extends across her chest with the hand resting above her left breast (a pose seen frequently in the depictions of elite women in contemporaneous tombs like Mersyankh's).³⁷ Her left arm hangs straight down at her side and is decorated with a bracelet, and her left foot is slightly advanced. Her skirt is not long, ending well above her ankles. There is a narrow plinth behind the lower half of this otherwise free-standing figure, which left only a slender neck to support the head—doubtless why it broke off long ago. With the head missing, it would be difficult to identify this image as one of a woman were it not for the exposed left breast. Indeed, it would seem the artist resorted to this device in order to identify his subject as female more clearly.

discussions of this statue overlooks its appearance in J. Vandier, *La Statuaire Egyptienne* (Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne III Les grandes époques, La statuaire) (Paris: J. Picard, 1958), pl. IX/4. See as well Daressy, *op. cit.*, and Wolf, *Die Kunst Aegyptens*, fig. 108, pp. 144 and

146; while Dittmann has published the fullest array of photos thus far.

³⁷ Dows Dunham and Wm. Kelly Simpson, *The Mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III (7530-7540)* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1974), frontispiece and pl. VIIc; pl. XXXVI.

The fullness of the garb, which obscures the figure, the elaborate pleating, and the folding of the cloth, are important signifiers of elite fashion in the Old Kingdom that are rarely documented, but can be traced to even earlier times, as illustrated by Dittmann.³⁸ However, from the Fourth Dynasty itself, the depicted dress of Hetepheres and Mersyankh in the latter's tomb indicates the use of at least short capes, with the peaks at the shoulders suggesting just such starched apparel depicted with so much more detail in this sculpture in the round. Likewise, Mersyankh wears an off-the-shoulder garment in a relief scene on the west wall of the tomb's main room.³⁹ The mother of Khufukhaf⁴⁰ is actually shown with a dress that has, notwithstanding its extremely schematic representation, the feature of a garment somewhat similar to our statue's with one shoulder exposed and the other covered by a sharply rising fold of a cloak reaching above it. Like these women, Queen Khamerernebtv II, in her standing portrait, would seem to have been depicted with short hair, as nothing remains to suggest the long length hair depicted on her seated colossus.

Smith wrote admiringly of the modeling of the collar bone, neck and hands of the standing figure and, although he did not specifically say so, one must assume he would place it among the products attributable to Reisner's "workshop of Sculptor B" to which he ascribed the new spirit of naturalistic art of the Fourth Dynasty and its more plastic modeling.⁴¹ The standing figure of this Queen Khamerernebtv, with its careful delineation of the complicated drapery, is surely an example of a master hand, working unrestricted by the canons of tradition that would soon set in and control much more rigorously the formal portrait sculpture of the elite classes.⁴² That the elaborate garb is found on one of her statues and unusual size and bulk on another marks these monuments as products of a time before the canon had a stultifying effect on royal art. The fact that the sculptor had to depict an exposed breast to identify his subject as female suggests a reason why such voluminous clothing was not depicted in female statuary after this period. Except for a few Middle Kingdom examples of cloaked women, which correspond to the fully cloaked figures of men in the Middle Kingdom, the figure—clinging sheath dress was most frequently utilized in the depictions of women of all classes, whether in relief art or sculpture. If elaborately layered and figure-concealing garments actually were worn already from the beginning of the historic period, it is obvious that the art canon's dictation of the simple sheath dress for female portrayals is not arbitrary but quite deliberate. What motivated this choice united *all* female figures, human or divine, as no insignia of clothing promotes the status of a female elite during the late Old and Middle Kingdoms. Rather than expressing luxury and status of wealth and

³⁸ Dittmann, op. cit., pl. 26a–c. The short, loose and elaborately pleated garments are hardly the "plain, form fitting sheath dress" or "restrained, simple fashion" too often credited to the Old Kingdom, as for instance by Rosalind Janssen in "Costume in New Kingdom Egypt," in Jack M. Sasson ed. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East I* (New York: Scribners, 1995), 383; or Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood in *Pharaonic Egyptian Clothing* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), chapter seven, where only one piece of fabric is envisioned for dresses, and cloaks over one shoulder are attributed to the Middle and New Kingdoms due to the consultation of relief images only, chapter nine. Most recently, cf. Patricia A.

Bochi, "Of Lines, Linen, and Language: A Study of a Patterned Textile and its Interweaving with Egyptian Beliefs," *Chronique d'Égypte* LXXI (1996), 221–53, where this dress is not noted and pleating is discussed as a male fashion (241–42). However, the author does also observe that the amount of clothing is significant for status and "luxurious consumption" (p. 243).

³⁹ Dunham, op. cit., pl. xxd and fig. 7 and frontispiece.

⁴⁰ Smith, op. cit., pl. 44B.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴² Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (London: Routledge, 1991), 62.

class, the sheath dress can only emphasize femininity. The established canon thus demanded a clear delineation between the sexes and emphasizes the sexuality of the female.

This could be taken to absurd lengths (to our modern point of view) as when an obviously older woman, such as Rameses II's mother Queen Tuya, is portrayed with a grim face of maturity but with the firm and voluptuous figure of a young adult female, as seen in the magnificent 12-foot high statue of the dowager queen from the Ramesseum, where her sensual body is enhanced by the high polish of the black stone⁴³ (fig. 3). Her attractive, youthful body in its clinging dress contrasts sharply with her forbidding countenance that must be meant to suggest age as well as sagacity.⁴⁴ This occurs in a statue created during a period when voluminous layered clothing was frequently portrayed on both male and female sculptured figures, even royal figures such as her son's large sculptured portrait in the Turin Museum. One must ask then for what purpose was such flagrant sexualization of this prominent royal woman? Two reasons suggest themselves, beyond that of mere flattery or the expressed appreciation by males of a fine female figure: one being the identity of the queen with the goddess of sexuality Hathor, the other perhaps to emphasize the incomparable fertility of the most important mother figure in the world of her time, the mother of the king of Egypt.

Beginning in the Middle Kingdom, the cloaked male figure, and in particular the "cube" statue of the seated male with his knees drawn up close to his chin, retained popularity for centuries. The well-dressed official of the New Kingdom often appeared as a seated scribe, with head bent over his scroll to emphasize his literacy even if he followed a military career. Such closed, quiet, even "monoidal" renditions of elite Egyptian men contrast sharply with the sensual portrayals of their women. Although there are many New Kingdom elite women who are shown in the art with layered clothing, usually it is not permitted to obscure their figures.⁴⁵



Fig. 3. Queen Tuya, wife of Seti I, Museo Gregoriano Egizio, Vatican inv. no. 22678. Photograph by B.S. Lesko.

⁴³ Jean-Claude Grenier, *Museo Gregoriano Egizio*, Guide Cataloghi Musei Vaticani 2 (Rome: Musei Vaticani, 1993); A.P. Kozloff, "A Masterpiece with Three Lives—The Vatican's Statue of Tuya," in P. Der Manuelian ed., *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson* vol. 2 (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1996), 477–85.

⁴⁴ Dorothea Arnold, *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 90, 119.

⁴⁵ Edna Russman, *Egyptian Sculpture: Cairo and Luxor* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 138.

There are enough voluptuous and erotic images of women from the Eighteenth Dynasty to suggest that the Egyptians of that period were expressing the idea of the woman as a creature of nature in contrast to the male (at least the elite, educated bureaucrat of temple or state) whose body was, more often than not, quite concealed, and indeed often associated with a papyrus scroll or even wrapped (as in a cube statue) in a written text that boasts, not only of the male subject's career of importance, but by inference of his intelligence and literacy. Although this idea of two distinct ways of presenting the sexes may have been consistent with the theology of the New Kingdom, as has sometimes been claimed, it might not have applied to elite women in the Old Kingdom. It surely is wrong to take the standards of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which was strongly influenced by foreign cultures, especially in elite circles, and effected by the growth of a strong military state, and apply them to all of Egyptian cultural history.⁴⁶ The strongly built, plain, and dignified images of women from the Old Kingdom stand in striking contrast to the very feminine, indeed often glamorized and coquettish, renditions of women, even elite women, in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Dynasties. Surely there is no clearer evidence of this difference in values and attitude than that offered by comparing the large sculptured figures of Queen Khamerernebtu of the Fourth Dynasty and Queen Tui of the Nineteenth.

I began this paper concentrating on two images of a Fourth Dynasty queen, and now return to the Fourth Dynasty to question the hair styles prevalent among women in its statuary. On Old Kingdom reliefs, the woman seated at the offering table on slab stela often has quite long hair, a style documented for the Archaic period in relief art and sculpture.⁴⁷ However, the relief figures are—both on the stela and on the tomb walls—nothing but hieroglyphs writ large. The wife of the Fifth Dynasty nobleman Ti is depicted exactly like the hieroglyphic determinative for “woman,” seated on the ground, while her husband's most familiar appearance in the tomb's reliefs is as the hieroglyphic determinative for “official” a standing man with a staff.⁴⁸ The archaic origin of the hieroglyphs preserved in art the earliest hair style, whether or not it corresponded with reality, the actual fashion at the time a figure was created in the Old Kingdom. Indeed, the renderings of elite females in tomb scenes or sculpture in the round indicate that very short hair was in vogue and possibly prevailed for generations, as seen in the tomb of Mersyankh⁴⁹ and Khufukhaf⁵⁰ and the later Sixth Dynasty portrayals of Watetkhethor, wife of Mereruka (fig. 4). Certainly the moderately long, full and straight hair cut short of the shoulders—familiar from the painted image of Nofret, wife of Rahotep from the early Fourth Dynasty or the wooden “wife of Kaaper” from the

⁴⁶ Barbara S. Lesko in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2nd edition, edited by R. Bridenthal, C. Koonz, S. Stuard (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 74; and the words of Kemp following seem apt: “It is tempting with Egyptian religion to combine sources from all periods in order to create a comprehensive explanation for a particular ritual or belief because the pictorial forms tended to remain constant. But continuity of forms masked changes in meaning and practice.... For each period the sources should be interpreted within the spirit and for the illumination of

that age alone,” Kemp, *op. cit.*, 59.

⁴⁷ Ronald J. Leprohon, *Stelae I: The Early Dynastic Period to the Middle Kingdom*, CAA (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1985). For archaic statues of women cf. Smith, *op. cit.*, pls. 3–4.

⁴⁸ Henri Wild, *Le tombeau de Ti*, MIFAO 65 (Cairo: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale, 1966) fasc. III pl. CLXIV.

⁴⁹ For examples of Mersyankh in short hair see Dunham and Simpson, *op. cit.*, pls. vii; xxd; figs. 4, 6, 7.

⁵⁰ Smith, *op. cit.*, pls. 9–15.



Fig. 4. Princess Watetkhethor, tomb of Mereruka, Saqqara. Photograph by B.S. Lesko.

Fifth Dynasty—is the hair style seen on numerous other wooden and limestone figures of private elite women from the later Old Kingdom.⁵¹

The seated, over-sized, and ponderous statue of Queen Khamerernebt II discussed above, however, does exhibit longer hair extending below the shoulder line, a style similar to that seen on the sculptures of the queen of Menkaure in the small statue groups from his pyramid complex and later queens as well. This lengthier hairstyle is similar to the tripartite coiffure in the statuary featuring the goddess Hathor and other goddesses from the Menkaure complex. Thus it is possible that the large seated statue of Khamerernebt II, wearing the archaic sheath and tripartite hair style, is meant to stress her unmistakably religious/regal role as an earthly manifestation of the goddess Hathor, while her elaborate secular dress, which may well accurately represent the garb worn by a lady of fashion of the mid-Fourth Dynasty, was accompanied by a much shorter hairstyle, popularly favored at that time and depicted as we have seen in several Old Kingdom tombs including the contemporaneous Mersyankh III's. The suggestion that the short-cropped hair denotes a daughter when juxtaposed with an older woman or mother, is not credible when the appearance of such very short hair is recalled in the case of women shown in the company of their husbands or sons, such as in the tomb of Khufukhaf,⁵² or in groups receiving rewards for their service to the State, as in the tomb of Akhetotep.⁵³ In the absence of any crown or headdress to denote queenship in the Fourth Dynasty, the long, archaic hairstyle, associated with divinities, is probably significant in denoting the status of queen for the woman in the larger more formal seated statue.

The variety of dress and hair styles found in the reliefs and sculpture of this period suggests that the middle of the Fourth Dynasty was still a time of some experimentation in art and an era when the canon had not yet come to be fixed firmly in place. Once it was, it would appear from the surviving evidence that women, no matter how powerful, were no longer portrayed in colossal dimensions or with ponderous physiques more associated with men, nor were they portrayed in the elaborate fashions of dress again until the Eighteenth Dynasty.

The impressive rendition of the seated colossus from the Galarza Tomb is important for being the earliest free-standing large-scale sculpture of a woman. That this colossus was created for a queen could be taken, was meant to be taken, as testimony to her great importance, both royal and religious. However, because the queen admitted that she paid her craftsmen from her own largess, and because the statues of her tomb are done only in limestone, one is led to suspect that the queen is boosting herself through the exceptionally large size of her monument and protesting too much in her inscriptions that all is as it should be regarding her status and relationship to the ruler. Obviously, the major state artists were not at her command, and the king was not himself showing such reverence of his wife. This

⁵¹ Henry F. Lutz, *Egyptian Statues and Statuettes in the Museum of Anthropology of the University of California*, University of California Publications—Egyptian Archaeology, Vol. V (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1930).

⁵² Smith, *op. cit.*, pl. 44B. For discussion of hair in Old Kingdom cf. E. Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im alten Reich* MÄS 8 (Berlin: Bruno Hessling, 1966), 151–53; 180–182, fig. 12, pl. VII; and also E.

Strouhal "Princess Khekeretnebt and Tisetor: Anthropological Results" *ZÄS* 111 (1984), 44 who questions Staehelin's suggestion about short hair on daughters to distinguish them from adjacent mothers.

⁵³ For the tomb of Akhetotep see Junker, *Giza V*, fig. 9, and Ch. Ziegler, *Le mastaba d'Akhetotep: une chapelle funéraire de l'Ancien Empire* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1993), 118.

Khamernernebt II was a rejected wife, a demoted queen, even though she was the eldest daughter of a king and thus should not be considered to have been a secondary royal wife, as suggested by Seipel.⁵⁴ The fact that both sculptures described here are damaged and the inscriptions of the Galarza tomb show the queen's name expunged hints at an intriguingly tumultuous political history for the Fourth Dynasty, the details of which may never be forthcoming.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Seipel, op. cit., 165–66.

⁵⁵ Daressy, op. cit., 44 and 46 shows the expunged name with only the “two ladies” deities hieroglyph left intact. N. Grimal is one of the latest to suggest dynastic

struggles in the middle of the Fourth Dynasty, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, transl. from the French by Ian Shaw (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 72–74.