

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Early studies in queenship

Henri Gauthier,¹ in his three volumes recording the names and titles given for members of the Egyptian royal families laid the foundation for all subsequent studies that had as their theme the study of these people. The year after Gauthier's first volume appeared Janet Buttle published her volume on the better-known Egyptian queens of the pharaonic period.² These two studies were the only substantial scholarly works that were written about the wives of the kings until Wilfried Seipel's dissertation appeared in 1980.³

During this interval of over seventy years a number of articles on the titles of queens,⁴ reports from archaeologists (such as Jéquier,⁵ Hassan,⁶ Emery,⁷ Farag and Iskander⁸), and special studies that focused on individual queens⁹ were produced, but none of these included studies that looked at the overall pattern of queenship. This overview had to wait until 1959, when a brief chapter by Bleeker appeared in his study of the religious aspects of kingship. In this chapter,

which provided a very general view of the role of the queen during the pharaonic period, Bleeker¹⁰ decried the lack of comprehensive studies in this field, but another two decades were to pass before Seipel's work on queens appeared.

Seipel's work, which focused only on Dynasties I - VI, in its detailed descriptions of the extant material has provided an invaluable record of each of the occasions on which the individual queens were mentioned. The general theme of his work centred on the titulary of the queens,¹¹ presenting for the first time, a study on the development of this aspect of queenship. Like many of the dissertations submitted in this field, unfortunately, it has not been published.

A rigorous investigation of the genealogical network, titulary and iconography of the early New Kingdom queens was presented by Gay Robins in another unpublished work in 1981.¹² Another important aspect of her work was an examination of the role of the so-called 'heiress princess' in determining the heir to the throne. Robins was able to demonstrate that neither the hmt ntr n Jmn, nor any 'heiress princess' determined the succession in this New Kingdom period.

In 1982 Lisa Kuchman Sabbahy completed her study on the

titulary and iconography of queens from Dynasty I - XVII.¹³

This work provided a valuable extension to both Seipel's study and that of Robins. Thus, the queens from Dynasties I - XVIII had now been collected into a series of studies, mainly occupied with their titulary, for the first time since 1908. Kuchman Sabbahy's work, however, also remains unpublished, and some of the Dynasty XVII material has now been superceded by a number of articles from Vandersleyen,¹⁴ Robins,¹⁵ Blankenberg-van Delden,¹⁶ and Troy,¹⁷ so that major adjustments to the historical place of some of the kings' wives needed to be made. Some of these studies have rendered several generalisations (especially concerning the titulary of queens) invalid, and this information also needs to be incorporated into some holistic work.¹⁸

With so much work having been done in numerous fields there has been for some time a need to gather these studies together to examine and evaluate the various developments in titulary, iconography, and political activity that must have taken place over the centuries and, from this synthesis, to attempt to ascertain the roles played by the wives of the kings in Egyptian history. The first of such syntheses was published in 1986 with Troy's work on the rôle of the queen in

regard to Egyptian myth and history.¹⁹ The breadth of this study, spanning the period from the First Dynasty to the end of the Pharaonic period (and, briefly, including some discussion on the rôle of the Ptolemaic queens), has provided some of the much needed synthesis hitherto lacking. It was also the first occasion on which an intensive study of religion vis à vis the queen had been attempted. Although its focus is religious, rather than historic (as the title suggests), Troy's work has been a benchmark for our understanding of the rôle of the Egyptian queen, and her work exposes the different Egyptian concepts concerned with the royal women as daughters, wives and mothers of kings. Her conclusions demonstrate that the rôle of the royal women was critical in the Egyptian belief in the regeneration of the kingship.²⁰

Two years later Peter Jánosi submitted his dissertation on the pyramid complexes of queens,²¹ only one article as yet appearing in published form.²² This was the first time that a comprehensive study of the queens' monuments had been undertaken and, as a result, a number of misconceptions concerning these tombs have been cleared up.²³ In looking at the development of the queen's pyramid complex, and its

difference from that of the king's, Jánosi's research has added another dimension to our understanding of the importance of the queen, particularly in her rôle as king's mother.²⁴

Jánosi's findings have given further emphasis to the conclusions already reached by Robins, Kuchman Sabbahy and Troy concerning the special position given to the queen mother within Egyptian society. His additional observations on the non-pyramidal forms of tombs for the wives of the kings²⁵ have also revealed the value of a comprehensive study for understanding the religious, as well as the architectural changes that took place during the Old Kingdom. Together with the work of Seipel, and the individual contributions made by those scholars mentioned earlier, research within these past ten years has resulted in an enormous development in our understanding of a field which previously had lain neglected.

Aims of this study

The present work is, necessarily, heavily indebted to the work of these scholars, but the aim of this study differs from theirs, in that its primary attempt has been to focus on the historic position of the individual queens from Dynasty I - XVII. As a consequence, the prosopographical aspect of the

individual has taken a priority in the research.

A prosopographical register of queens is provided in Volume III of this study. The entries are not intended to be major studies of individual queens but, rather, a compendium of source material for further research. To this end a fairly comprehensive bibliography accompanies each entry, as well as a summary of significant elements relating to the queen's tomb - where these details are known. Each entry provides a list of titles held by the queen, together with any discussion that had bearing on the individual but, unlike the previous studies, I have not listed every occasion on which the individual's titles appeared, since that has been adequately covered by the works already mentioned. To avoid unnecessary discussion within the entries, a commentary on each of the titles has been given in Chapter 2.

Volume I of this work consists of a collection of studies on aspects of queenship between Dynasties I - XVII. However, while it is appreciated that the king's mother had an even more esteemed rôle to play than that of the king's wife, the royal mother has not been the central focus of this study. Rather, the aim of these separate chapters has been to select major issues affecting the wives of the kings during the

designated period. The major issue of the religious implications inherent in the rôle of the royal women has not been discussed as a unitary issue (although comments on particular individuals regarding this aspect have been made in the prosopographical register). Troy's study²⁶ has already dealt more than adequately with this aspect of queenship, and the present dissertation aims not at reiterating material already provided elsewhere, but at reviewing the position of the queen from an historical perspective. For the same reason, the iconographic aspects of queenship have not been collected into a unit, but the significant iconographic instances relating to individual queens have been discussed in the prosopographical entries. However, in those chapters which survey the position of the queen for the major periods (Chapters 4, 5 and 7), an overview of the evidence from the monuments, the titulary and the iconography for that period is provided there.

The earliest chapter looks at the titles given to the queen throughout the period indicated and, as was the intention of the dissertation as a whole, the treatment of this subject has taken an historic, rather than a generic perspective. The same approach has been taken in the

discussion on the harim, in Chapter 3.

The remaining chapters look at problems and issues arising from the Early Dynastic period, the Old Kingdom and the period from Dynasty XI - XVII.²⁷ These separate studies conclude with a chapter on the hmt ntr n Jmn, one of the most prestigious offices held by some of the queens at the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, and already the subject of two important monographs.²⁸ In that chapter an examination of Gitton's thesis has been undertaken, in the light of the re-evaluation of the genealogy of the late Seventeenth Dynasty,²⁹ some of which has bearing on Gitton's conclusions.

As a result of these studies it is hoped that some further understanding of the status of the wives of the Egyptian kings may begin to emerge, and significant patterns and alterations to their rôles in Egyptian society may become apparent.

Definitions and scope of this study

In attempting this research, one of the priorities was the definition of the word 'queen', as used in this dissertation. The choice determined was not as easy as it had been for Robins, for example, for her criterion was the title

of hmt nswt wrt as her definition of 'queen'. Those women who simply held the title of hmt nswt were determined to be secondary wives, not 'queens'.³⁰ Robins also classified the mwt nswt as a 'queen',³¹ a definition not followed in this dissertation because (particularly for the mwt nswt from the Thirteenth Dynasty to the Seventeenth), not all of these women had been the wives of kings,³² and the primary intention of this dissertation was to examine the rôle of kings' wives.

The differentiations used by Robins had important results for her investigation, for they revealed that it was the hmt nswt wrt who was featured prominently on the monuments; the secondary wives were not much in evidence, but the mwt nswt was featured just as prominently as the hmt nswt wrt. The simple hmt nswt was only represented on private monuments, such as those in the Theban tombs of the 18th and 19th Dynasties. This led Robins to conclude that 'the hmt nsw wrt has a ritual function, while the hmt nsw does not...',³³


Such results could not be applicable to the very limited evidence from the monuments in the earlier periods of Egyptian history. Apart from the reliefs in the private tombs, where the queen might be seen with her son (or, less frequently, her daughter), there are only rare instances in the Old Kingdom

where the remains depict the queen on public monuments.³⁴ The records for the later dynasties are more common if we include the statuary, but they are by no means common for Dynasty XI and XII.³⁵ From Dynasty XIII the iconographic evidence is confined to the Nag Hammadi relief which features the family of King Sebekhotep III,³⁶ but the queens are more in evidence in our records for the Seventeenth Dynasty. Apart from the private stelae (which are not classified here as public monuments), there are a number of fragmentary reliefs where queens appear.³⁷ With J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj the archaeological remains become more numerous, and she and Mrjt-Jmn appear on one royal stele together.³⁸ The number of public monuments on which queens appear increases for the New Kingdom period and the quantity of that material lends itself more easily to analysis, unlike the conditions pertaining to the earlier periods. Thus it seems clear that the criteria Robins used could not really be applied to the Old and Middle Kingdom periods, and a broader net had to be cast for the purposes of this research.

For the earlier periods two other considerations govern any definition we might wish to use regarding a queen. Firstly, for the Old Kingdom, there had been no hmt nswt wrt,

and, indeed, no distinguishing criterion to enable us to determine which of the kings' wives then had held prominence over the others.³⁹ The introduction of the title of hmt nswt wrt also complicates the picture for the pre-New Kingdom era, as the date for the introduction of this title is uncertain.⁴⁰ A further difficulty with the use of that title then lies in the infrequency of its attestation. Its appearance in the poor collection of extant records is irregular - probably due to the paucity of our materials. What is abundantly clear, however, is that the title was frequently used prior to the Seventeenth Dynasty.⁴¹ Its infrequent representation, therefore, would make its use as a criterion invalid for the determining of 'queens' and 'secondary wives' for these earlier periods. Another complication is the clear establishment that the hmt nswt wrt was frequently referred to as simply, hmt nswt - a practice also common in the New Kingdom period. Were we to exclude each hmt nswt mentioned on a broken relief or scarab the selection of 'queens' might then be invalid. With the richer body of evidence for the names and titularies of queens at the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, sorting out the hmt nswt wrt from the other hmwt nswt of a king is an easier task than it ever could be for the pre-New Kingdom period.

As a consequence of the absence of hmt nswt wrt (which has been seen as a ranking title) for the major part of the periods under study, and because there are no clear indications of rank in the titulary of queens prior to the introduction of hmt nswt wrt,⁴² the decision has been taken to include all wives of the kings. For this purpose other features peculiar to the early periods have had to be taken into consideration.

The first was that, at different times, different titulary was used in entitling the wife of the king. In the Early Dynastic period m33[t] Hr < Sth may have been the only, if not the most common, title for a king's consort,⁴³ but the title of (?) Queen Nht-Nt is dubious, and has been claimed⁴⁴ as 'hts Hr', while Nt-htp and  carry the title of 'sm3 Nbtj', a variation on another title for queens attested later.⁴⁵ In the Old Kingdom period several titles were used to denote a queen⁴⁶ on different occasions, and hmt nswt, hmt nswt mrt.f, wrt hts, and m33t Hr Sth were all used independently as the mark of the king's consort. In the Middle Kingdom and subsequent period hnmt nfr hdt, then hmt nswt/wrt together with this title were the commonly attested titles although, in Dynasty XII, there are several royal women

considered to be kings' consorts, who do not appear to have held either title.⁴⁷ Thus, while the title/s of hmt nswt/wrt was common from the Old to the New Kingdom inclusive, it had a clearer usage in New Kingdom times than it did in the previous periods and, as a consequence, the title of 'queen' used throughout this work may be considered to have been more loosely applied than in Robins' work.⁴⁸

CHAPTER 2

THE TITULARY OF QUEENS FROM DYNASTY I TO DYNASTY XVII

Introduction

The titulary of the wives of the kings underwent considerable change between the First and the Seventeenth Dynasties. From a very limited titulary during the Early Dynastic period the corpus of titles had, by the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, grown extensively. This accumulation, however, was not a continuous process but one marked by brief instances of increased titulary followed by periods (such as that between Dynasties XIII and XVI) where titles were few. It is possible that the strength of certain personalities might have played a part in the number of titles a queen possessed, but we have no hint of this in the records. It is equally possible that some queens with a limited titulary - especially in the later periods - might have possessed as many titles as their better-endowed sisters did during their lifetimes, but the impoverished nature of our material prevents us from knowing the truth about this.

During the pharaonic period not only the number but also

the nature of queens' titulary fluctuated between the different epochs. While titles during the Early Dynastic period focussed on the queen's position as a unifying element within the monarchy, those of the Old Kingdom period included more religious titles, especially the title of hmt ntr of the fertility cults. By the Sixth Dynasty those priesthoods had virtually disappeared, being replaced by pyramid titles that, as we can see by their position in the individual titular strings, were considered to be more prestigious. In the Twelfth Dynasty the emphasis was on titles indicative of the queen's role as a partner in the monarchy. Chief among these titles was that of hnmt nfr hdt, a title that persisted until the close of Dynasty XVII, when the titulary of the queens was marked by an increase in the numbers of titles and epithets carried by the king's chief wife.

The Eighteenth Dynasty continued this trend. Its course, too, shows a pattern in which there was considerable fluctuation within the titularies of individual queens. Although the less-prominent queens had few titles, queens we perceive as being important displayed an extensive titulary - this was particularly so for the Amarna period. The pattern was similar for the Nineteenth Dynasty.

In the analysis of titles that follows, the historic growth of the titulary of queens has been chosen as the central narrative. This growth is reflected in the table of titles for various queens found in Appendix I of this dissertation. To facilitate references to individual titles a catalogue, and the pages on which discussion concerning each title will be found, is provided. Where P* is indicated, discussion on that title will be found in the prosopography. As some titles refer to only one queen it seemed better to leave that discussion there.

In compiling the catalogue it was at first tempting to utilise the register of titles in Troy's book, Patterns of Queenship, but certain material in her catalogue was inappropriate for the purposes of this study. The first was her inclusion of epithets as part of the titularies of queens. Epithets, being descriptive phrases rather than proper titles, have been avoided in my discussion on titulary. To eliminate the epithets from Troy's Register of titles would have resulted in an interference with the numbering system employed by Troy, and this would have generated unnecessary problems for the reader. Secondly, Troy's work covers the entire range of Egyptian queenship -

including the Ptolemaic period. Again, there would have been an interruption to the number sequence of titles utilised by queens between only the First and Seventeenth Dynasties. Thirdly, there are some titles that this dissertation interprets differently from Troy's work, and the categories chosen by her would have been at variance with explanations in this chapter. These are the major reasons for embarking on a different scheme of classification in the catalogue that follows.

TITLES HELD BY THE WIVES OF KINGS

Relationship to the King

Mother:

- R1.1 mwt nswt - mother of the king pp.33f.
- R1.2 mwt nswt bjtj - mother of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt pp.34 - 38.
- R1.3 mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj - mother of two kings of Upper and Lower Egypt pp.258 - 265.
- R1.4 mwt nswt mrt.f - king's mother his beloved p.39
- R1.5 mwt msw nswt - mother of the king's children p.38.

Daughter:

- R2.1 s3t nswt - king's daughter p.40.
- R2.2 s3t nswt mrt.f - king's daughter his beloved p.48.
- R2.3 s3t nswt nt ht.f - king's daughter of his body pp.40ff.
- R2.4 s3t nswt nt ht.f mrt.f - king's daughter of his body his beloved pp.40fff.
- R2.5 s3t nswt bjtj - daughter of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt pp.44f.
- R2.6 s3t nswt smswt - king's eldest daughter pp.45fff.
- R2.7 s3t nswt smswt mrt.f - king's eldest daughter his beloved p.48.
- R2.8 s3t nswt nt ht.f smswt mrt.f - king's daughter of his body his eldest his beloved p.48.
- R2.9 s3t nswt wrt - king's chief daughter pp.48ff.
- R2.10 s3t nswt wrt mrt.f - king's chief daughter his beloved p.50.

Wife:

- R3.1 hmt nswt - king's wife p.33.
- R3.2 hmt nswt mrt.f - king's wife his beloved p.33.
- R3.3 hmt nswt bjtj - wife of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt p.225, P*149, 161, 197.
- R3.4 hmt nswt wrt - king's chief wife pp.10 f.

Sister:

- R4.1 snt nswt - king's sister pp.106f.

Relationship to the God/s

- R5.1 s3t ntr - daughter of the god pp.50 - 64.
R5.2 s3t ntr nt ht.f - daughter of the god of his body p. 4.
R5.3 s3t ntr tw - this daughter of the god P*161f.
R5.4 s3t ntr tw W3dt sdt - this daughter of the god
foster-child of W3dt¹ P*178f.,
P*125.
R5.5 s3t Gb - daughter of Geb P*227.
R5.6 s3t Rc - daughter of Re P*255.

Consort Titles

- C1.1 sm3(t) Nbwj - she who unites the Two Lords pp.23f.
C1.2 sm3wt Nbtj/mrj - she who is united to the one beloved of
the Nebty pp.72f.
C1.3 sm3jt Hr (H^c-hpr-R^c) mrj - she who is united to ^{Horus}/Khakheperre
who is loved P*225f.
C2.1 ε Hr - she who carries Horus pp.25f.
C2.2 ε Sth - she who carries Seth pp.25f.
C2.3 m33(t) Hr - she who sees Horus pp.27ff.
C2.4 m33(t) Hr ε Sth - she who sees Horus and carries Seth pp.25f.
C2.5 m33t Hr Sth - she who sees Horus and Seth pp.27ff.
C3.1 ht Hr - follower of Horus pp.73f.
C3.2 ht Wr - follower of the Great One pp.78ff.
C4.1 smrt Hr - companion of Horus p.76.
C4.2 smrt Hr mrt.f - companion of Horus his beloved pp.76f.
C5.1 wrt hts - great one of the hts sceptre pp.29ff.
C5.2 wrt hts nt Snfrw - great one of the hts sceptre of
Sneferu pp.31f.
C5.3 wrt hts nt Hwfw - great one of the hts sceptre of Khufu
pp.31f.
C5.4 wrt hts Nbtj - great one of the hts sceptre of the Nebty
p.32.
C6.1 wrt hst - great of praise pp.77f.
C6.2 wrt hswt - great of praises p.78.
C7 wrt jm3t - great one of the jm3t sceptre P*274.
C8 tjst Hr - she who sits with Horus pp.74ff.

C9 hnmt nfr hdt - she who is united with the beautiful white crown pp.99ff.

Status Titles

- S1.1 ddt ht nbt jrt.n.s - everything she orders is done
pp.86 - 89.
- S1.2 ddt ht nbt nfrt jrt.n.s - every beautiful thing she says is done
p.88
- S1.3 ddt ht jr.tw.n.s - when she says anything it is done
p.88.
- S1.4 dd.s ht nbt jrt.n.s - she speaks and everything is done
p.86.
- S2.1 hrp(t) sšmt jm3t - controller of the butchers of the Jm3t
pp.89f.
- S2.2 hrp(t) sšmt šndt - controller of the butchers of the Acacia House pp.89 - 92.
- S3.1 rp^ct - hereditary prince(ss) pp.80f.
- S3.2 rp^ctt - hereditary princess pp.80 - 86.
- S4.1 hkrt nswt - king's ornament² pp.93 - 98.
- S4.2 hkrt nswt w^ctt - king's sole ornament pp.95f.
- S5 špswt - noblewoman p.386.
- S6.1 hnwt - mistress³ pp.101fff.
- S6.2 hnwt hkrt nswt - mistress of the hkrt nswt p.102, P*188.
- S6.3 hnwt hmwt - mistress of women p.102
- S6.4 hnwt hmwt nbwt - mistress of all women pp.102ff.
- S6.5 hnwt t3wj - mistress of the Two Lands p.104.
- S6.6 hnwt t3wj tm - mistress of the Two Lands in their entirety pp.104f.
- S6.7 hnwt jdbw H3w-nbwt - mistress of the lands of Hau-nebwet p.110, P*311.
- S6.8 hnwt rsj mh^w - mistress of the South and the North pp.110f.
- S7 h3tjt^c rmt - countess of the people P*188.
- S8 krht hnt šm^c - heiress of the South land P*188.
- S9.1 nbt (usually followed by jm3hwt) - lady p.108.
- S9.2 nbt t3wj - lady of the Two Lands pp.108f., P*188.

S10 hrjt-tp rsj mhw - female chief of the south and the north
p.111, P*327.

S11 jtj(t) - female sovereign (perhaps also 'regent') P*309,
P*327f. p.301.

Priestly titles

P1.1 hmt ntr T3-sp.f - priestess of Tjasep ef pp.67 - 70.

P1.2 hmt ntr B3-pf - priestess of Bapef pp.67 - 70.

P1.3 hmt ntr Dhwtj - priestess of Thoth pp.70f.

P1.4 hmt ntr Hwt-Hr - priestess of Hathor pp.66f.

P1.5 hmt ntr Hwt-Hr nbt Jwnt - priestess of Hathor, lady of
Dendera p.64

P1.6 hmt ntr (Nbtj-Sps) - priestess of Shepseskaf pp.64f., P*8 f.

P1.7 hmt ntr Sbk nb Smnw - priestess of Sebek, lord of Semenu
P*227f..

P2 hmt ntr n Jmn - god's wife of Amen pp.109f., and Chapter 8.

Pyramid Titles (see pp.92f., 219ff.)

P3.1 mwt nswt mr (Mn-nfr-Ppj) - mother of the pyramid Mennefer
Pepy I pp.92f., 220, P*148.

P3.2 mwt nswt bitj mr (H^c-nfr-Mr.n-R^c) - mother of the pyramid
(Khanefer-Merenre) pp.92f., 220f.

P3.3 mwt nswt bitj mr (Nfr-k3-R^c-mn-Cnh) - mother of the pyramid
(Neferkare-men-ankh) pp.92f., 220f.

P3.4 mwt nswt mr (Nfr-k3-R^c-dd-Cnh) - mother of the pyramid
(Neferkare-djedankh) pp.92f.

P4.1 hmt nswt mr (Mn-nfr-Mrj-R^c) - king's wife of the pyramid
(Mennefer-Meryre) pp.92f.

P4.2 hmt nswt mrt.f mr (Nfr-k3-R^c-mn-Cnh) - king's wife his
beloved of the pyramid (Neferkare-men-ankh) pp.92f., 220.


P4.3 hmt nswt mr (Snwsrt-n-Hnmt-sw^t) - king's wife of the pyramid
(Senwosret-em-Khnemsut) P*213.

P .1 s3t nswt nt ht.f mr (Mrj-R^c-mn-nfr) - king's daughter of his
body of the pyramid (Meryre-men-nefer) P*167.


P .2 s3t nswt mr (Jmn-m-h3t-n-k3-nfrw) - king's daughter of the
pyramid (Amenemhat-ka-neferu) P*213.


Titles of consorts in the Early Dynastic period

Overall, there is neither great variety nor frequency of titles for queens in the Early Dynastic period. This was due in part to the embryonic nature of the Egyptian state at this time, although the king's officials seem to have had a wide range of titles available quite early on in the First Dynasty. In contrast to the official class, the titulary of the queens presents a much more restricted range. It cannot be stressed too frequently, however, that the slender corpus of material available to us for this period severely curtails any definitive statement about Early Dynastic titulary for queens. Few graves of the royal wives have been discovered, and only those consorts buried during the earlier part of Dynasty I are known to us at this stage. Since the tombs of many of the kings for the Second Dynasty also are as yet unknown there is hope that future discoveries will remedy this gap, for most queens had their burials in close proximity to the mortuary complexes of their husbands.

Those queens that are known can be divided into two broad categories. Nt-ḥtp, Mrjt-Nt and  appear to have been given large, well-built tombs independent from the tombs of

kings. For two of these women this might be explained by the argument that they could have been rulers of some sort (see Chapter 4). On the other hand, the queens in the second group had as their tombs much smaller satellite structures within the king's own cemetery. Their graves were no more distinguished than those of the artisans, officials and women who served the king and whose burials lay alongside those of the queens. Obviously, there was some considerable distinction between those two groups of queens. This distinction is also noticeable in the titulary of both groups.

Two women (Nt-htp and ^x  ^x) carried the title of sm3 Nbwj (C1.1), the oldest of the titles ever held by queens. After the death of the last of these two women the title of sm3 Nbwj disappeared. When a similar title emerged in the Fourth Dynasty it had the form of sm3wt Nbtj (C1.2), expressing the link of the queen to the king, rather than her personal link with the two male gods. The progression of the sm3wt Nbtj form has been documented by Fischer,⁴ but he does not include the sm3 Nbwj examples, since he accepts Kaplony's view that sm3 Nbwj was a personal name.⁵ However, due to the repeated instances of this title with different personal names

(eg. Nt-htp,^x , Ka, Narmer,⁶ and Hr-Nt), it is much more likely that we are dealing with a title, rather than a personal name. The Fourth Dynasty shift of focus in the queen's title from an active to a passive form may indicate the consort's greater dependence upon the king.

The title is the earliest to provide a link between the queen and Horus (later titles were smrt Hr. ht Hr and tist Hr). In the form of sm3 Nbwj the title translates as 'One who unites the Two Lords',⁷ and, in this form, is equally applicable to a male, as the inscriptions for Ka and Narmer seem to indicate. (See further discussion under C1.2 sm3wt Nbtj mri, p.72.) Kuchman Sabbahy⁸ considers this title to be sm3 Nbtj, and this may be a better interpretation because it provides an antecedent for the sm3wt mri Nbtj titles and variations.

Another title that has been attributed to some of these more important women is that of hntj. Hntj is also found in connection with several officials, such as Jdt-nbwj and W3s-rhjt, and Kaplony has suggested that the word (which he translates as 'cellar') meant that the officials and the queens had access to the royal storehouse.⁹ If the word is to be translated 'cellar' this would be unlikely to refer to the

queen herself, as Troy¹⁰ has assumed, since this would be a reference to a place, not a title. If it should be a title - perhaps 'cellarer' - then its presence on artefacts belonging to the queens would indicate gifts from that official to the deceased, rather than an official title of this nature for a queen.

None of the queens in the second group displays the title of sm3 Nbwi; instead, they possess other titles which were in use by queens throughout the greater part of Egyptian history. These titles were restricted to a very narrow range, ꜥ Hr (C2.1), ꜥ Sth (C2.2), m33(t) Hr (C2.3), m33(t) Hr ꜥ Sth (C2.4), m33(t) Hr Sth (C2.5), or wrt hts (C5.1). Like the title sm3t Nbwi these titles emphasise the queen's unity with the king, and the emphasis is a religious one.

ꜥ Hr (C2.1) / ꜥ Sth (C2.2)

The sign of the extended forearm in these titles gives the sense of support, and the title has been translated as 'She who gives support to Horus/ Seth'. Troy's rendering of 'She who carries Horus/ Seth' is equally viable. Troy points to the use of both ꜥ and hts as alternative titles for the carrying chair of the queen,¹¹ and the proximity of the hts



fig. 1. Detail from the Scorpion Macehead,
showing royal women followed by a bearer of
the hts sceptre.

- enlargement of the drawing, fig. 19 of
Grdseloff: Ann. Serv. XLII (1943) p.114

sceptre to the queen's carrying chair is noticeable in the Scorpion Macehead illustration (fig. 1), although it is an official, not the woman in the litter, who actually carries the sceptre. There is also the possibility that the title might be passive and translate as 'One who is carried/supported by Horus/ Seth' but, as with so many interpretations of titles, there is just not sufficient material for a more precise definition.

This reference to the two tutelary gods who represent the throne of Egypt strengthens the mystical concept of the power of the king.¹² As the queen's titles are associated with those gods she herself shares a little of this mystic status.

The implication of the title seems to have had a symbolic reality for the queen, too. It is interesting to note that, apart from the well known remains of the carrying chair of Htp-hr.s I, there is a relief from the tomb of Queen Mr.s-Cnh III where an identical chair is depicted,¹³ together with similar canopy poles, chairs and bed as those found in the tomb of Htp-hr.s I. Remains of canopy poles were also found in the tomb attributed to Mrjt-Nt at Saqqara,¹⁴ and these may indicate that such equipment was considered essential in the burial of a queen, perhaps because of her rôle as wife and

mother.

m33(t) Hr 𓄏 Sth (C2.3) and m33t Hr Sth (C2.4)

The title 'She who sees Horus and Seth' (C2.4) refers to the queen's daily proximity to the king, the earthly representative of those two gods.¹⁵ The title emphasises the exceptional nature of the queen's position and, whenever a queen's titulary was mentioned for the first six dynasties, this title often held the foremost position.¹⁶ Indeed, there are numerous examples of queens' titularies where there is little more to identify the woman as a queen other than this particular title, which was never held by other women. Especially in the early period, it is this title on the grave stelae which indicates the burial of a royal consort.



Kuchman Sabbahy¹⁷ thinks it possible that the title has parallels with the wr m3/m33 wr (later to become wr m3w) titles held by male officials. These, being connected to the priesthood, seem more remote for the queens' titulary. Troy's solution¹⁸ may be more appropriate than that: she believes that the title 'reemphasizes that the role of companion is one which belongs to Maat, the daughter of the god, who is also his eye. The status of the royal women as they who "see" is

documented from Thinitic time ..' as those who see, and watch over the king. Most interesting, as Kuchman Sabbahy has pointed out,¹⁹ is the lack of honorific transposition in this title. Perhaps even 'She who oversees Horus and Seth' (in the sense of 'watching over', rather than 'viewing') may be closer to the original intention of the title.

The title of m33 Hr ̣ Sth and its variants is difficult to interpret on these early stelae, but it, too, may refer to the consort as one who watches over and protects the infant embodiment of the Two Lords. The title appears complete on stele 96 for Queen Sšmt-k3, and incomplete on the nameless Stelae 128 and 129.²⁰ Kuchman Sabbahy²¹ quite rightly questions the usual reading (m33t Hr Sth) for the title that appears on Stele 96, it has additional hieroglyphs not usually associated with the Old Kingdom title. She²² suggests five different possible translations for this particular inscription,

'm33 Hr Sth,
rd? Hr Sth,
m33 Hr rmn Sth,
rd Hr ̣ Sth or,
m33 Hr and any one of the variants above.'

There may, however, be a further alternative reading for this difficult stele. In none of Kuchman Sabbahy's


suggestions has the sign between the two birds  been taken into account. The sign might be similar to that which appears on Stele 95 , but it is difficult to decide, since the top portion of Stele 96 seems to have been broken. There is a possibility that the sign on Stele 95 could be im3t Hr. The inscription on Stele 96 then might read, m33 Hr. im3t Hr. c Sth, 'She who sees Horus, She who is pleasing to Horus, She who carries Seth.' The implication for Stele 96 would then apply to Stelae 128 and 129. This lengthy set of titles might have been the original form of the Early Dynastic titular string for a queen.

wrt hts (C5.1)

A second title which Kuchman Sabbahy²³ suggests is attested for the early wives of the king is wrt hts, a title which subsequently was used by nearly all the queens of Old Kingdom times, but never by other females. If Kuchman Sabbahy's suggestion is correct, the title is attested only once during the the Early Dynastic period:²⁴ this is on Stele 95 from the Djer cemetery, although a second example might once have been present on the badly damaged Stele 126. Petrie's interpretation of the inscription on Stele 95 was the reading of 'im3t Hr'.

Troy²⁵ also sees the title of wrt hts nbw on a label from the tomb of King Djer.²⁶ In the third register of the scene two figures (which may be those of women) are kneeling on platforms. Troy has taken these women to be two queens seated in carrying chairs. There is a nbw sign (and perhaps the piece of flesh sign, like F 51, but inverted) above the head of one person. There is a bird of indeterminate nature in front of the nbw sign, but no hts sceptre is present. The title of wrt hts nbw does not seem to be present according to my reading. The two figures do not appear to be seated in carrying chairs, either. Instead, they appear to be two persons on platforms (perhaps altars?), obviously engaged in some sacrificial ritual, since blood is shown streaming from their heads. In view of this being the only alleged representation of the title, I think that Troy may have misinterpreted this label, and therefore do not include the alleged title in my catalogue.

The title of wrt hts - which has been variously translated²⁷ - refers to a sacral function of the queen. The most appropriate translation of the title so far suggested is 'Great one of the hts sceptre'.²⁸ It is thought that the title refers to the hts sceptre used in certain rites involving the

king, such as consecrating a temple, or initiating a construction project. This sceptre's close connection to the verb hts, 'to bring to completion',²⁹ is revealed in the writing of the verb, . From the Scorpion Macehead there is a fragmentary relief of the royal women, accompanied by an attendant bearing the hts sceptre for the ceremony involving the cutting of the canal (fig. 1).³⁰ The sceptre was used in the act of consecrating ritual buildings.³¹ From New Kingdom times some royal women are shown carrying the object,³² but its precise connection with the queen herself has as yet not been established.

wrt hts nt Snfrw (C5.2) and wrt hts/^{nt}Hwfw (C5.3)

This interpretation of the title wrt hts as a ritual title would help solve one particular difficulty in the titulary of Queen Mrjt-jt.s I. Two of her titles were 'wrt hts nt Snfrw', and 'wrt hts/^{nt}Hwfw', from which it was once assumed that this queen was the wife of both rulers.³³ Although we do not know what duty she undertook in the time of Sneferu, it would presumably have been in the consecration of some building when the king's wife might not have been able to attend. There would appear to be a similar use of the title 'hmt nswt wrt' for senior princesses on ritual occasions in

the reigns of Amenhotep III, Akhenaten and Rameses II.³⁴ In connection with this latter title Meyer³⁵ has suggested that it could be a ranking title, and this intention may have been the reason for those two titles of Mrjt.jt.s.

wrt hts Nbtj (C5.4)

The titles of wrt hts + king are unusual but, more common, was the Old Kingdom title of wrt hts Nbtj. This, too, might have been a reference to the king (as the bearer of the Nbtj title). The title is briefly discussed by Fischer³⁶ who, having discussed its form used by Mr.s-nh III and Bw-nfr, concludes that 'although the precise meaning of hts remains uncertain, it seems likely that a reference to the king is again to be recognised'.

Old Kingdom titles

At the junction of the Second and Third Dynasties the titles of Queen Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I made a sudden break with the pattern that had been established in the First Dynasty. Queen Nj-m3^ct-H^cp was the first known queen to use the title of hmt nswt.³⁷ There is as yet no evidence that it had been in use

prior to this time.

hmt nswt (R3.1)

Faulkner has observed that the word hmt is used on occasion to denote the female of the species, whether it be an animal, a female of a particular race, or a goddess.³⁸ The title hmt nswt, which is interpreted as 'queen', accordingly, means the 'king's woman'. (Although the word hmt doubled as the word for 'wife', there was a separate Egyptian word for 'husband'.)

hmt nswt mrt.f (R3.2)

The extension of mrt.f to the hmt nswt title is first in evidence in the Fourth Dynasty on the stele of Mrjt.jt.s.³⁹ There was the parallel title s3t nswt mrt.f for princesses, but this was seldom recorded.⁴⁰ The queen's title might be an indication of rank, since not all consorts carry it but, due to the usually poor documentation for many queens, this theory is dubious. What is certain is that queens entitled hmt nswt mrt.f also use the shorter title in some places.⁴¹

mwt nswt (R1.1)

Queen Nj-m3t-Hcp's other important title is that of mwt

nswt, a title first in evidence for Queen Mrjt-Nt of Dynasty I.⁴² The later Palermo Stone records the names of two more mothers of the kings for the First Dynasty: Hnt-Hꜥp and B3t-rsw. We do not know whether these women were consorts of kings, but they have been included within the Prosopography in the likelihood that they were wives as well as mothers. Mrjt-Nt's title is the only contemporary record attested prior to that of Nj-m3ꜥt-Hꜥp I. Other relationships in connection with the king (s3 nswt, s3t nswt), do not emerge as titles until the second Dynasty.

From our knowledge of the evidence - some of it incomplete, unfortunately - each mwt nswt between Dynasties I and XVII seems to have been the actual mother of a king. This verification is possible due to the large number of royal mothers whose names are shown in connection with their sons. One or two cases are alleged as being doubtful for the late New Kingdom,⁴³ but these need not concern us here.

mwt nswt bjtj (R1.2)⁴⁴

Occasionally the title mwt nswt was augmented by the word 'bjtj'. This title was first attested for Queen Nj-m3ꜥt-Hꜥp I. Her seal impressions carry both the legend 'mwt nswt' and 'mwt

nswt bitj'. The latter title appears rarely during the course of Egyptian history. It was held by Queens Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, Htp-hr.s I, H^c-mrr-Nbtj I, Hnt-k3w.s I, Hnt-k3w.s II, Sšsšt, Hnt.t[...], Jpwt I, Mrj-R^c-^cnh.n.s. I and II, and Queen ^cnh.s.n-Ppj in the Old Kingdom. It was held by Queen Tm during the Middle Kingdom and, in the Eighteenth Dynasty, Queen J^ch-ms, mother of Hatshepsut. Queen Twj^c of the Nineteenth Dynasty had the variant, mwt nswt n nswt bitj,⁴⁵ and that is the last time the title was used. It is an interesting feature that most queens with this title lived during the Old Kingdom, and that out of the total of these fourteen queens five of them were also entitled s3t ntr (for which title see below). It does not seem to have been an alternative title for other mothers of kings.

Five of these fourteen queens are known to have been the wife of a king who is alleged to have founded a new dynasty, Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, Htp-hr.s I, Jpwt I, Tm and J^ch-ms.⁴⁶ After the Old Kingdom this title appeared only rarely, each time for the wife of a monarch who had some reason to emphasise the unity of the country under his leadership. Seven of the queens appear to have been the mothers of kings who did not immediately succeed their fathers, H^c-mrr-Nbtj I, Hnt-k3w.s I,

Hnt-k3w.s II, Jpwt I,⁴⁷ Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II, Cnh.s.n.Ppj and J^ch-ms. Tm's circumstances are unknown but, given the length of Mentuhotep I's reign, it is possible that her son was the second choice for her husband's successor. (Her circumstances may have had similarities with those of Htp-hr.s I.)

Each one of these queens shares a common trait: her son reveals something distinctive in the nature of his inheritance of the throne. Either these kings are perceived as being the first princes of a new dynasty, or they succeeded a relative or half-brother on the Egyptian throne. It is suggested, therefore, that the major purpose of this extended title is one of propaganda, re-inforcing the status of the queen mother and, through her, the security of her son's inheritance. One could see the necessity for this since, in the majority of cases, it would seem that the queen mother in question had been a commoner.

There are two apparent exceptions to this generalisation: H^c-mrr-Nbtj I and Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s I present difficult cases. Both queens were the mothers of sons who appear to have reigned mid-dynasty, and neither son would appear to have succeeded a brother or half-brother.

H^c-mrr-Nbtj I's relationship network and exact chronology are uncertain. It is generally considered that she was the wife of Khafre, and mother of Menkaure,⁴⁸ but the evidence for this is ambiguous.⁴⁹ Her only certain links are known to be with her daughter of the same name.⁵⁰ If she were the mother of Menkaure, the use of the title would conform with the hypothesis already proposed, that it was used to lend support to the accession of a king who may not have been in direct line for the throne.

The second queen whose possession of the title seems unusual was the wife of Pepy I and, it has been conjectured, mother of a new branch of the royal family. According to the official Wnj, a queen living in Pepy's time was involved in 'a secret charge'. Although we do not know the charge it is thought that the matter centred about a harim conspiracy.⁵¹ If this were the case, the affair is likely to have been a plot to place some princely son on his father's throne, as it was in the conspiracy case concerning Rameses III in New Kingdom times. It is thought that, as a result of the trial of this woman, the king then married the two Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s sisters.⁵² Both sisters provided the king with successor sons. In this sense, Queen Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s I started Pepy's dynastic line

afresh, and her sister also carried the title of mwt nswt bjtj, probably because her son was the half-brother of the previous king.

Thus these two queens whose use of the title seems atypical, do appear to have had something in common with the other title-holders. Their sons also seem to have been the children of a new dynastic branch. The title may have been used to shore up the majesty of the king when some hitch had occurred in the normal progression of father-to-son inheritance.

mwt msw nswt (R1.5)

This title is only once attested - for Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I. The msw nswt appear frequently in hb sd scenes, as discussed by Kaiser,⁵³ and were the king's children. From the reliefs it seems that it was the female, not the male children, who were intended. Nj-m3^ct-H^cp's title, however, may embrace both sexes.

mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj (R1.3)

For discussion on this particular title see Chapter 6 pp. 258- 265.

mwt nswt mrt.f (R1.4)

This title was seldom used. It appeared first for Queen J^ch, mother of Mentuhotep I, on the Shatt er Rigal relief (and is included here simply to complete the titular range of the mwt nswt group). It appears to have been modelled on the hmt nswt mrt.f title.

jw-t wrt

Queen Htp-hr-Nbtj, who appears to have been the wife of King Djoser,⁵⁴ had her name recorded on boundary stelae from Saqqara,⁵⁵ and on a relief fragment from Heliopolis.⁵⁶ On another shrine relief fragment from Heliopolis it has been suggested that the queen carries the title, iw^c(t) wr(t), 'Great Heiress'.⁵⁷ The actual signs are not clear and have been interpreted differently by several scholars. If it does have this meaning then it is a hapax legomenon. Only Queen Nfrw-k3jt of Dynasty XI has a similar title, iw^ct n mwt.s, 'heiress of her mother'. Kaplony is probably correct in rejecting iw^ct wrt as the title of an heiress princess.⁵⁸ His suggestion, wrt hts, seems more likely.

There seems to have been no clear indication of which Princess would be the king's heiress and this should not

surprise us - especially when we suspect so many queens of having had a non-royal origin. The situation has been clearer to see in the New Kingdom, where there is a great deal of evidence to show that there was no such pattern as a designated heiress.⁵⁹

s3t nswt (R2.1)

There are no less than ten variations on the title of the king's daughter (s3t nswt). The original title, s3t nswt, first appeared during Dynasty II. Throughout the Second Dynasty there are numbers of cylinder seal-owners and so-called 'ceiling stelae'-owners who are entitled either s3 nswt or s3t nswt. At times the usual feminine 't' is omitted from the titulary when the figures clearly refer to female tomb-owners. The earliest attested records of s3t nswt for a queen appear on Djoser's boundary stelae,⁶⁰ where Htp-hr-Nbtj holds the title.

s3t nswt nt ht.f (R2.3)

Some time towards the end of Dynasty III a new title for royal women appeared with a princess named Rdjt and, after her time, the title was one often carried by queens.

The title of s3t_nswt persists throughout pharaonic history. In Dynasties II and III it indicates a daughter of the monarch. With the use of s3t_nswt_nt_ht.f by Princess Rdjt - probably towards the end of this period, evidently some refinement to the original meaning was thought necessary. Whether the new title implies that some of the women entitled s3t_nswt in the Third Dynasty were merely titular princesses is impossible to tell, since only two such princesses are known for that period. The new title might have been some indication of rank within the body of women holding the title of s3t_nswt, but it is not impossible that the title was used as a more prestigious version, thus keeping in step with the male title, s3_nswt_n_ht.f, which appears to have first distinguished real princes from titular princes.

Junker's work in the Giza necropolis revealed that a number of burials in the late Fourth and early Fifth Dynasty there bore the titles of s3_nswt and s3t_nswt when in fact their fathers were not kings.⁶¹ In some instances these title-holders were the grandchildren of the king, but some do not appear to have been immediate members of the royal family either. Although Junker was of the opinion that s3_nswt_n_ht.f was the best (though not infallible) indication of a true

prince for that period, this is now known to be unreliable.⁶²

Schmitz has come to the conclusion that the titles of s3 nswt and s3 nswt n ht.f defined orders of rank, rather than specified family relationships.

The issue is more difficult to decide in regard to princesses. There is the exceptional case of Queen Mr.s-cnh III, daughter of Princess Htp-hr.s II and Prince K3-w^lb, who was not the daughter of a king, but did possess this extended title. For other princesses the picture is less clear, since their ranking is seldom obvious because they either had few, or no other official titles. None-the-less, Schmitz has found that those women entitled only as s3t nswt were likely to have been titular princesses, while those carrying the s3t nswt nt ht.f title were more likely to have been the true offspring of kings.⁶³ It is very interesting, in contrast to the male position, that many of those women who were entitled s3t nswt can be shown to have been the grandchildren of kings.⁶⁴ Thus, the two titles seem to have provided a form of ranking for women, some instances of which appear to have been based on descent, and some of which may have been courtly rank indicators received as a result of marriage to a highly-ranked court official.⁶⁵ As is so often the case, however, so much

material regarding these s3wt nswt is unavailable that generalisations are hazardous.

s3t n nswt

An exception to the above regular titles is the title of s3t n nswt, recorded on a block from tomb D14 at Saqqara. This tomb is alleged to be that of Queen Hwjt.⁶⁶ The title is written 's3t nswt n'. Schmitz interprets this as a new title,⁶⁷ although it has also been considered as a variant of s3t nswt.⁶⁸

Hwjt's tomb has been badly destroyed and when Mariette found the blocks he remarked that they could have come from any part of the tomb. The title in question appears on the drum of the tomb entrance. The rest of the queen's titles were written on the side wall of this tomb, and it is possible that the queen was appearing in the tomb of her daughter of the same name, and that this title belonged to the latter.⁶⁹ This seems the most likely explanation of the former title, especially since the phrase is written as 's3t nswt n Hwjt', with the 'n' following, not preceding the s3t nswt.

However, later evidence reveals that the title of s3t n nswt does appear elsewhere as a title.⁷⁰ Meyer⁷¹ has suggested



that this orthography can only stand for s3t nswt nt ht.f, and this explanation offers another interpretation that could be correct.

s3t nswt bjtj (R2.5)

Schmitz⁷² acknowledges two princesses in Egyptian history who have been recorded as carrying the title s3t nswt bitj. They are Khufu's daughter, Htp-hr.s II, and Jpwt, wife of Teti, and probably daughter of Wenis. A third princess, Sneferu's daughter Nfrt-k3w I, might also have held this title, since she is recorded in the tomb of her grandson as nswt bjtj Snfrw s3t.f.⁷³ The unusual form of this title is due to its being a reference to the princess, rather than a formal title. And, finally, there is a case for Hf-mrr-Nbtj I to be included within this group because of the manner in which her title of king's daughter is recorded in the Galarza Tomb.⁷⁴

The significance of s3t nswt bitj as a separate title is difficult to discover; perhaps it might have marked out the senior daughter of the king, but with the poor state of our present knowledge concerning the exact family circumstances of most members of the royal family in this period there is small chance that we might learn whether this hypothesis is

correct. Rather, s3t nswt bjtj may have had the same relationship to s3t nswt that mwt nswt bitj appears to have to mwt nswt; that is, a specific meaning of the s3t nswt title. Perhaps the title might have been used in reference to a deceased king - as it surely did in all of the other examples cited above. It did not mean that the title-holder was not a real princess,⁷⁵ so perhaps it had some further meaning connected to the status of the princess.

Jpwt's title is written as  which parallels the writing of her title . There is thus a possibility that the scribe had modelled Jpwt's title of princess on that of her title as king's mother - see details in her prosopographical entry.

s3t nswt smswt (R2.6)

Technically, the title of 'King's eldest daughter' should mean that the princess in question had been the eldest daughter of the king. In theory it could be argued that each wife of the king might have an eldest daughter or son, as the children of King Djedefre would indicate. In practice, it appears that, for the males once again, the title smsw offered a ranking within the corpus of those entitled as 'prince'. The

possibility that it also retained its literal meaning of 'eldest son' in some instances,⁷⁶ still remains, although that idea has been rejected by Schmitz.⁷⁷ Since the numbers of smsw title-bearers for each king lie within the scope of the marriages known or estimated for him, it is possible that some s3 nswt smsw could have also been the eldest sons of each wife of the king, even as non-royal eldest sons at this time are entitled smsw. Khufu, for example, has two 'eldest sons' and two known wives, Khafre has six sons entitled smsw, and the possible number of his wives totals four, while Djedefre had three 'eldest sons', and one known, and one suspected wife. No account has been taken of any possible sons or daughters of concubines (should they have existed at that time), who would surely be entitled s3/t nswt. Considering the poor nature of the evidence for the period, the correlations between smsw and the number of known wives, it could be possible that some s3 nswt smsw titles might have retained a literal meaning as well.

For the princesses from the Fourth Dynasty onwards the titles of s3t nswt, s3t nswt bjtj, s3t nswt smswt, s3t nswt nt ht.f, s3t nswt nt ht.f smswt, and one example of s3t nswt wrt (Nbtj from Koptos⁷⁸) were used, but the simple title s3t nswt

on its own only appears to have been employed by real princesses as a 'short-hand' record.⁷⁹ The only known exceptions to true princesses carrying the title s3t nswt nt ht.f are Princess (later Queen) Mr.s-^cnh III, and the more doubtful case of Princess Hmt-R^c B.

Mr.s-^cnh III was the daughter of s3 nswt K3-w^cb, and not a born princess, although her father seems to have possessed the highest titles, and is considered to have been the heir-apparent. She might have owed her title either to these circumstances, or else to her proposed adoption by the king - presumably Djedefre - who married her mother.

Hmt-R^c B, is a doubtful case because she had the title rht nswt on her coffin, but not on her false door, or in the remainder of her tomb. In the opinion of Schmitz this particular title, which was not carried by actual princesses, marks her out as a commoner,⁸⁰ although not all scholars are in agreement with Schmitz.⁸¹ A possible explanation for Hmt-R^c's title might be found in some unknown relationship with members of the Sixth Dynasty royal family. Hmt-R^c appears to have been a daughter of the last king of the Fifth Dynasty, judging from her title, s3t nswt nt ht.f in relation to the pyramid of Wenis. Again, however, this suggestion

cannot be confirmed from the present state of our knowledge.

The title of s3t nswt smswt mrt.f (R2.7), and s3t nswt nt ht.f smswt mrt.f (R2.8) were extensions of the s3t nswt smswt title. They were infrequently recorded. While Princess Htp-hr.s A,⁸² was the only royal daughter found with R2.7, both Hmt-R^c B and Princess Jntj had R2.8.⁸³ They may have been personal preferences as titles for these princesses, for others who were both s3t nswt smswt and s3t nswt/nt ht.f mrt.f recorded these titles separately.

s3t nswt wrt (R2.9)

A select few princesses bore the title of s3t nswt wrt. They were Princess Nbtj (Dynasty VIII),⁸⁴ Princess J^ch-ms⁸⁵ and Queen J^ch-htp III, both of Dynasty XVII,⁸⁶ In the Eighteenth Dynasty Princess Nfrw-R^c,⁸⁷ Queen J^crt, daughter of Amenhotep II,⁸⁸ and Princess S3t-Jmn, daughter of Amenhotep III⁸⁹ appear to have been the only possessors of this title. The equivalent title was not recorded for males.

The only other title of similar nature is found with Queen Hatshepsut. She was entitled s3t nswt tpj.⁹⁰ A similar title was recorded for some male officials of the time,⁹¹ the title apparently being associated with the king's mortuary

cult.

Although Troy and others equate the title of s3t nswt wrt with s3t nswt smswt, the titles may not be interchangeable. If they were identical in meaning one would expect to find s3t nswt wrt appearing more frequently among the records for royal women, but this is not the case.

Schmitz perceives a link between the s3t nswt wrt and the office of hmt nswt wrt. For the two Seventeenth Dynasty examples she sees the title as an indication of the eldest daughter of the king.⁹² For J^crt and S3t-Jmn Schmitz suggests that this title might be the forerunner for the use of hmt nswt wrt borne by Daughter-Queens S3t-Jmn of Amenhotep III, Mrjt-Jtn⁹³ for Akhenaten, Bnt-^cn3t, Nbt-t3wj and Mrjt-Jmn for Rameses II. Although it has been claimed that Rameses III also married two of his daughters⁹⁴ the evidence from their inscriptions reveals that it is also very uncertain that they could have been wives of this king.⁹⁵

Schmitz may have found the reason for this princess's title, for Princess Jst, also a hmt nswt wrt,⁹⁶ does not have the s3t nswt wrt title that her sister S3t-Jmn has. Could this title perhaps indicate a

seniority among these princesses? Despite our lack of knowledge about the details of family relationships concerning these women it remains a possibility that the title does single out a more important, and/or likely senior daughter. In view of the several examples of s3t nswt wrt who did not marry it is not necessary to agree with Schmitz's opinion that 'Wie festgestellt wurde, bezeichnete dieser Titel wahrscheinlich die Hauptprinzessin, die zur Königin ihres Bruders gestimmt war.'⁹⁷

The title of s3t nswt wrt mrt.f (R2.7) does not appear to have been earlier than the New Kingdom, when Princess S3t-Jmn, daughter of Amenhotep III held it.⁹⁸

s3t ntr (R5.1)

The interpretation of the queen's title, 'Daughter of the God', has been the subject of a long-standing debate. Its precise meaning is unknown, but various suggestions have been put forward. Unfortunately, none of these is without an exception that argues against the meaning given.

Reisner,⁹⁹ Hassan¹⁰⁰ and others¹⁰¹ considered that the s3t ntr was the king's heiress, and that she carried the direct family bloodline onto the next generation. Since then,

however, several such kings have been established as having been princes prior to their accession, so that idea is now losing ground.¹⁰²

In the late sixties and seventies Helck advanced the idea that the title belongs only to non-royal women whose sons became kings.¹⁰³ It is true that most of these women (Htp-hr.s I, H^c-mrr-Nbtj I, Hnt-k3w.s I, Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II and Cnh.s.n-Ppj¹⁰⁴) were the mothers of kings, but there is an exception in Dynasty XXVI for the God's Wife Jmn-jr-dj.s who, although being entitled s3t ntr, was the daughter, but neither the wife, nor the mother of a king. The concept that the title indicates the bourgeois origins of the queens is not without exception, either. In addition to Jmn-jr-dj.s, Queen H^c-mrr-Nbtj at least is known to have carried the title s3t nswt nt ht.f, which in this period would indicate that she was the actual daughter of the king. (The situation regarding Hnt-k3w.s I seems indicative of her being a s3t nswt nt ht.f.¹⁰⁵) Helck explains the case of H^c-mrr-Nbtj as being an example of one who was 'nicht "im Purpur geboren" worden war'.¹⁰⁶ However, we neither know anything about the circumstances of H^c-mrr-Nbtj's family background, nor about the background of any of those queens - with the exception of

the two sisters Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s. It is the lack of a s3t nswt title alone that implies the bourgeois origin for the rest of these women.

On the contrary, it needs to be mentioned that a great many queen-mothers who appear to have been commoners do not appear to have borne the title s3t ntr (eg. Hnt-k3w.s II, Tm, Nfrt I, Hnmt-nfr-hdt I, Htp.tj, Snt, Kmj etc.). The examples also include Queen Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s I, who was the sister of another s3t ntr. Thus Helck's suggestion, while it has been universally accepted, does not provide a consistent explanation for the use of the title.

More recently, Schmitz has endorsed Helck's idea that these women were commoners whose sons became kings.¹⁰⁷ Schmitz argues that the Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s sisters transferred the title from the elder to the younger queen when Pepy II became king.¹⁰⁸ Such a transfer is unknown in Egyptian titular history, since once a queen received a title she carried it until she died, as we see from many examples in all periods of Egyptian history (eg. the accused queen mentioned by Wnj still retained her titles of hmt nswt and wrt hts; Htp-hr.s II retained her titles after the death of her royal husband, as is evident from the titles of the two women in the tomb of her

daughter, Mrj-R^c-Cnh III). A better solution to this difficulty might be rather that the first queen died before there was an opportunity to record the title for her; but with Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s I this is not the case, since she lived to be entitled mwt nswt bitj on her brother's stele.¹⁰⁹

We might thus suggest that s3t ntr betokened an exceptional royal honour given to the mother of a king. In many cases it seems to have been granted to women who did not hold the title of King's Daughter, so that it might be seen as a surrogate indication of royalty for them. What is curious, however, is that many non-royal known mothers of kings did not possess this title. With one exception in Dynasty XXV, the title was in use only during the Old Kingdom.

s3t ntr as the mark of a new genealogical descent?

Although most of these Daughters of the God made no claim upon royal parentage, at least two of them did.¹¹⁰ Their particular circumstances were not identical, but it might be useful to examine those known circumstances that all the queens can be shown to have in common.

One similarity between these women is that all of them were entitled mwt nswt bitj (see discussion supra). Another

similarity is that all the Old Kingdom examples were the mothers of kings who ascended the throne after some hiatus in the normal pattern of patrilinear descent. In some cases these breaks did not come at the beginning of a new dynasty.

Khufu's mother, Htp-hr.s I carried the title of s3t ntr with the additional nt ht.f that implies she may have been a king's daughter. She appears to have been a hmt nswt,¹¹¹ although earlier works had suggested she was too esteemed to use that title. From burials in the Meidum cemetery we know that Sneferu had other children besides Khufu and some of these would appear to belong to an earlier family, since their tombs were erected during Sneferu's lifetime, while other brothers and sisters of Khufu had their tombs laid out in the newer cemetery at Giza. It would thus appear that there were two branches at least to Sneferu's family.¹¹² Goedicke¹¹³ considers that there had been a short interregnum between Sneferu and Khufu. Whether or not this view is correct, what does seem evident is that Khufu was a younger son of Sneferu, whose reign has been shown recently as being of at least thirty-four years' duration from the dated evidence, although it has been estimated as being somewhere nearer forty-four years.¹¹⁴ In the Turin Canon Sneferu's reign is recorded as

lasting twenty-four years; Khufu's is given as twenty-three. It may be that the latter reign could also be of longer duration (Manetho makes Khufu's reign three times the length of Sneferu's, and Stadelmann has estimated Khufu's reign as being about 35 years).

It is very likely that an older brother or half-brother of Khufu had been destined for the throne prior to the latter's accession, particularly as the Palermo Stone makes special mention of the fact that the sixth cattle count for Sneferu (ie. Year 11 or 12) saw the birth of two of the King's children.¹¹⁵ Stadelmann¹¹⁶ has proposed a schema of the king's family, based on the archaeological data from Meidum and Dahshur, that would give Sneferu several family stems. The prince interred in M17 is considered by Stadelmann to be the most senior prince of Sneferu's family.¹¹⁷ Stadelmann's establishment of the Meidum cemetery as being earlier than that at Dahshur-north would place the burials of the M17 prince, Nfr-m3^ct (M16) and R^c-h^tp as being prior to the burial of K3-nfr at Dahshur-north. Although Stadelmann and others consider K3-nfr to be an eldest son of Sneferu, it is now doubtful whether he should be considered a son at all.¹¹⁸ It is very likely, from the evidence of his tomb that Nfr-m3^ct

was a s3 nswt smsw who was senior to Khufu, while R^c-h_tp, although not entitled s3 nswt smsw, also seems to have been Khufu's senior.¹¹⁹

Perhaps Khufu, as a younger son, was a second choice as Sneferu's successor. H_tp-h_r.s' title of s3t n_tr might reflect an alteration to Sneferu's succession. The titles might have been used as an enhancement of her status - and that of her son - when Khufu became king. Whether the title was an innovation of Khufu's court, or Sneferu's, or whether it had been used by some of the so-far-unknown wives of earlier kings, we have no way of telling.

Queen H^c-mrr-Nbtj I, probably the wife of King Khafre and the mother of Menkaure was the next known s3t n_tr.¹²⁰ Her son was not his father's direct heir. The reign of H^c-mrr-Nbtj's son, according to the Turin Canon, was preceded by the reign of a now-missing king. The Wadi Hammamat inscription also makes a break between the names of Khafre and Menkaure, inserting between Khafre and his son the names of Hordjedef and Baufre.¹²¹ Manetho and the Saqqara list had two more names at the end of the Fourth Dynasty, the Saqqara names now being obliterated. There thus seems room in the Fourth Dynasty for two additional kings,¹²² and the archaeological discoveries at

Zawiyet el Aryan strongly indicate that one of these kings built his tomb there.¹²³ Whatever the relationship between that putative monarch and Menkaure, it is suggested that there was some sort of impediment to the normal pattern of his succession. It is suggested that, as Menkaure's direct inheritance was interrupted in this way, his mother's title mwt nswt bitj re-affirms the legitimacy of his reign, and she holds her title of s3t ntr to stress her link in the chain that carried Khufu's bloodline.

The position of s3t ntr Hnt-k3w.s I is very familiar, even if the precise details of her case are not known. It has never been doubted that she 'played an important role in the change of dynasty'.¹²⁴ She, too, can be seen to have been the mother of a king who succeeded his brother (or half-brother). For an explanation of her unusual situation see Chapter 6.

S3t ntr Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s. II was also the mother of a king who was not the son of his predecessor. Her son, Pepy II, was the half-brother of Merenre.

The last queen to hold the title of s3t ntr in the Old Kingdom was Queen Cnh.s.n-Ppj, the fourth wife of Pepy II. After Pepy's death his son, Merenre Antyemsaf, ruled Egypt for

just over a year. He is likely to have been elderly since his mother, Queen Nt, had died in the early part of Pepy's reign.¹²⁵ Merenre II himself seems to have been married to Queen Neitkrety, who later held the throne for twelve years, according to Manetho. Her successor was Neferkare,¹²⁶ in all probability the son of Queen Cnh.s.n-Ppj, wife to Pepy II. Thus her son, too, came to the throne after a break in the pattern of hereditary succession and, as so frequently seems to have been the case, Neferkare was the half-brother of the previous two rulers.

The last s3t ntr of all was Jmn-jr-dj.s, daughter of King Kashta of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. Her father was the inaugurator of that dynasty, and her two brothers followed one another. By this time it is evident that the original meaning of the title s3t ntr had been forgotten, and its significance confined to just this one example. As is made explicit by another title, s3t Jmn n ht.f mrt.f, Jmn-jr-dj.s was seen as Amen's daughter, so it is only the form of the title that was preserved in her case. She brought to the powerful priesthood of Amen the king's personal connection with the god, acting as peace-broker for her father in her role as wife of the god Amen. Jmn-jr-dj.s was not the mother of any king, she had been

installed as the virginal God's Wife of Amen and her role was strictly sacerdotal. This is why she lacks the title carried by her Old Kingdom sisters, mwt nswt bitj.

By what appears to be sheer co-incidence, Jmn-jr-dj.s took up her vocation at the beginning of a new dynasty and witnessed, as her predecessors had done, an alteration in the usual hereditary pattern for the Egyptian monarchy, but there are clues to explain her title. Her brother, Shabaka, clearly sought inspiration (and perhaps legitimacy for his reign) from the Old Kingdom. He chose the name of Neferkare for his prenomen, the name of a famous half-brother king from the past, and the titles given to his sister have their origin in this same period.

It would thus appear that (with the exception of Jmn-jr-dj.s) each known s3t ntr was the mother of a king who came to the throne after there had been some hiatus in the usual monarchic inheritance from father to son. Although in many instances the previous ruler seems to have been a half-brother of the current incumbent, this may not have always been the case, but our lack of detailed knowledge about the other kings still leaves an element of doubt.

The question of the crown prince throughout Egyptian history is still an area of much debate, but it would be inconceivable that, in practice, a king would leave his kingdom 'to the fittest'. Even in the most primitive societies where monarchy is the form of government some selection and education of the likely successor is undertaken; it is probable that this was the case for the ancient Egyptian monarchy, too. Indeed, it has been the opinion of Stadelmann in a recent article¹²⁷ that the archaeological evidence would suggest that the crown-prince was declared early in the reign of a king. We have a clue to the selection process from the time of Shabaka; the Memphite Theology deals with the decision of the gods' court concerning the quarrel between Horus and Seth and, in line 10c we read:¹²⁸

'Then it seemed wrong to Geb that the portion of Horus was like the portion of Seth. So Geb gave to Horus his inheritance, for he is the son of his firstborn son.'

It seems clear from this later evidence at least that the preferred ruler was the firstborn son of the king. If, due to accident, conspiracy or deliberate decision, a monarchy experienced a change of designated crown prince, it would be only natural for some affirmative action to be taken regarding the new incumbent. It is the present suggestion that the

mothers of the substitute king had a part to play in this propaganda campaign. It would be unnecessary to entitle a queen before the accession of her son but, after he became king, the title mwt nswt bjtj would emphasise that the queen's son was the monarch of both lands - a title also held by women whose sons inaugurated new dynasties. To return to the Memphite Theology, the section following the appointment of Horus as sole ruler emphasises the fact that he has united the lands of Upper and Lower Egypt once more,¹²⁹ and this seems to be the function of the mwt nswt bjtj title, to reaffirm the unity after some perceived disruption. The queen's religious title of s3t ntr gave her son the imprimatur of legitimacy, as one who had been justified in his position by the court of the gods, even as Horus had been.

The title of s3t ntr does not appear with those queens who were the mothers of kings who initiated a separate dynasty, as Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, Mr.s-^cnh I and, very likely, Nfr-^htp.s and Sšššt did. The common distinction of all of the Daughters of the God lay in their ability to have continued on the line of kings when, for one reason or another, some impediment blocked the normal progression of patrilinear inheritance. This might explain why H^c-mrr-Nbtj I holds the

title, even though she was the daughter of the king, and this could be the reason why Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s. II was a s3t ntr when her sister was not. This interpretation might also explain why it was that so many bourgeois mothers of kings were not granted the title of s3t ntr: presumably, the legitimacy of their son's inheritance had never been in doubt.

This explanation also suggests the meaning of that enigmatic title, ^{but} the queen's origin was not the issue. As her husband was considered the son of the god, her role in transmitting the divine blood to her son ensured the continuity of that royal line. In theological terms, the queen thus became the spiritual daughter of the god because she continued his father's line, even as a daughter would do.

There was also a political element common to all women who were s3t ntr; this may be the reason why the title was virtually confined to the later Old Kingdom dynasties. Each of them lived in a time of marked uneasiness within their communities.¹³⁰ These unsettled conditions, together with the disruption to the usual succession pattern made the religious sanctions particularly important. In the majority of these instances of a disrupted sequence it is evident that a half-brother succeeded to the throne. Most of the evidence

for this default-succession is demonstrably secure, although it must be admitted that the case of Khufu appears to be more circumstantial than the others.

In his discussion on the title of s3t ntr Helck had put forward the idea that the ntr concerned was the god Re. This idea originates from the theory that the word ntr refers to a particular god, not 'God' in the sense that we use the term. Hornung has expressed the idea that Re is the likely god intended in Old Kingdom instruction literature from the later period,¹³¹ and Helck has suggested that, as Re was the god introduced by the Fourth Dynasty he would be the god referred to by the term s3t ntr.¹³² But, since there was no known direct link between the queen concerned and the god Re, Helck's suggestion may not be the answer in each case. It is Horus (whose earthly representative was the king) who better fits the concept of the ntr referred to by the title. As the legend of Horus and Seth stresses the primacy of a son's inheritance over that of a brother, the title s3t ntr might have been deemed necessary to support the king's claim to the throne. The concept that is here suggested is that the title stresses the divine role of the king's mother in transferring the blood of the king's father into the next royal generation,

at a time when the normal path to hereditary transmission had been blocked in some way. Each s3t ntr thus ensured the perpetuity of the dynasty at a time when, but for her procreation, the lineage would have been cut off.

The royal priestesses

The Fourth and Fifth Dynasties are distinguished by the numbers of priesthoods that appeared among the titles of the queens and princesses. Two in particular were frequently included in the titulary: hmt ntr (often with specific naming of the king concerned), and hmt ntr Hwt-Hr. In a few instances a princess held both types of priesthood.¹³³ Some queens were also priestesses for the bull-cults of Bapef and Tjasepf. A few select royal women were priestesses of the goddess Neith,¹³⁴ but none of them were queens. Although it has been proposed that the queens were the high-priestesses of the sun-god of Heliopolis,¹³⁵ as yet there does not seem to be any evidence for this claim.

hmt ntr (king) (P1.6)

With the possible exceptions of Queen Bw-nfr and Princess Hmt-R^c B, for both of whom precise affiliation is uncertain, all of the royal women who held the title of hmt ntr for the

king appear to have been daughters or grand-daughters of the king concerned. Khufu was served by his grand-daughters s3t nswt N-sdr-k3 and Htp-hr.s D, while the remaining princesses acted as priestesses for the cult of their fathers.

With so many of the princesses being descendents of the king one would expect Bw-nfr to have been the daughter of King Shepseskaf - as most historians prefer to see her - but some scholars identify her as the wife of that king.¹³⁶ Bw-nfr was the only queen to be entitled hmt ntr + king (P1.6), for discussion on which see her prosopographical entry.

Hmt-R^c B's priesthood was for the mrt of Teti, so this might not strictly be a hmt ntr cult; the title could have been one mid-way between the hmt ntr (king) title and the royal titles connected with the pyramid cults of the subsequent kings (see infra, Pyramid titles). There are surprisingly few hmt ntr (king) priesthoods for royal women in the Old Kingdom; most of the royal cult priesthoods were held by men. Of all the Old Kingdom rulers Sneferu, Khufu, Djedefre and Shepseskaf are the only kings for whom female priesthoods are known at this stage.

hmt ntr Hwt-Hr (P1.4)

The cult of Hathor was the most popular of all Old Kingdom religious cults¹³⁷ and this popularity continued throughout the pharaonic period.

It was particularly appropriate for the queen to be a priestess of Hathor since the goddess had a specific rôle to play in regard to the monarchy.¹³⁸ Hathor appears in myth as both the mother of Horus and his wife - a divine model for the rôle played by the king's consort. Curiously, however, very few queens were priestesses of Hathor - Queens Mr.s-ꜥnh III¹³⁹ seems to have been the only example for the Old Kingdom, in contrast to the princesses of this period. Queens Jꜥh, S3dh, Hnhnt, Kmst, K3wjt, ꜥ3šjt and Jnnj I in Middle Kingdom times were hmt ntr Hwt-Hr but, in contrast with the Old Kingdom practice, only s3t nswt Jꜥh held this title throughout the entire Middle Kingdom.¹⁴⁰ Others who were priestesses of this goddess were women from the official class.

There were many recorded priesthoods for the cult of Hathor amongst women in the Middle Kingdom, although far fewer than for the previous period.¹⁴¹ This reduction in the number was representative of a sharp decrease among official titles for women then. (The reason for this attrition is not known.) The most significant group to bear the title of hmt

ntr Hwt-Hr were the five young wives of Mentuhotep I, who are sometimes considered to be the king's concubines.¹⁴² Together with Queen Jnnj¹⁴³ they are the last queens to hold this particular office until hmt nswt wrt Mrjt-Jmn of the Ramesside period.

Although the number of musician-priestesses of Hathor increased in the Nineteenth Dynasty¹⁴⁴ queens were not among them until the time of Queen Mrjt-Jmn, daughter-wife of Rameses II. Instead, they appeared in the company of the goddess in numerous tomb paintings and reliefs, sometimes shaking the sistrum, or in postures of adoration, but often holding hands with the goddess as an equal might do. Perhaps the reason why few queens held the title of hmt ntr Hwt-Hr was because their rôle was modelled on the Hathoric prototype, even as the king's rôle was modelled on Horus, and both may have represented the earthly embodiment of those gods; there was thus no need for them to hold priesthoods for them.

hmt ntr T3-sp.f (P1.1), hmt ntr B3-pf (P1.2)

The queens also served as priestesses of the ram and bull-gods Bapef and Tjasepf, whose fertility aspect is thought to have given rise to this association. The bull-god had a

close connection with the king himself for, apart from his title of 'Strong Bull', there are references in the Pyramid Texts to the king's assumption of the identity of the 'Great Wild Bull' (PT 280, 283, 293, 397.)¹⁴⁵

The bull-standards of the Delta were in evidence as early as Dynasty I.¹⁴⁶ Wainwright¹⁴⁷ thinks that these manifestations of the bull are representations of aspects of the sky god,¹⁴⁸ the Bull of the Sky. Although his argument concerning the origins of this deity is interesting, the relationship of those other Mediterranean gods to the Egyptian pantheon is, in parts, a little strained.¹⁴⁹ It is also difficult to explain the introduction of such a bull priesthood for the queen in the mid-Fourth Dynasty when, apart from being mentioned in the Pyramid Texts, the presence of the Bull of the Sky is undetectable elsewhere during the historic period. Rather, as the Pyramid Texts reveal, it is the king who is the young bull in question,¹⁵⁰ and it seems more likely that the cult for which the queens had their priesthood has direct reference to the king.

Kaplony¹⁵¹ has suggested that I3-sp.f might be translated 'der männliche der Tenne'. Otto,¹⁵² prefers 'der männliche in seiner Art'. Elsewhere,¹⁵³ Kaplony questions whether or not

the Tjasep ef bull might be synonymous with the Mereh Bull, and associated with an ancestor cult, and this would be more suitable as an explanation for the title of the queens, for it is surely no coincidence that these two titles are found with two queens who engender daughters who themselves marry kings.¹⁵⁴

Queen Htp-ḥr.s II is the earliest-known bearer of either title; her daughter Queen Mr.s-ḥnh III was also a priestess of the bull cult. Perhaps due to lack of material, it is not uncommon to see queens with only one of these priesthoods. In life, however, they may have held both, as both Htp-ḥr.s II and Ḥḥ-mrr-Nbtj I did. The cults may have been interchangeable if Kaplony¹⁵⁵ is correct in his observation that the bull cult had originally been a ram cult during the early Dynastic period.

Others who were priestesses of one or other of these cults are Queen Ḥḥ-mrr-Nbtj II, Hknw-ḥdt, Bw-nfr, Queen Hnt-k3w.s I,¹⁵⁶ Mr.s-ḥnh IV, and Queen Sšsšt.¹⁵⁷ The established link of some queens with other queens who held the title might suggest that it may have been an ancestor cult linked via the female line, rather than the usual mother to son link.

Sšššt appears to be the last of the royal women to hold either of those titles prior to Queen Tj^c, wife of Thutmose IV, in Dynasty XVIII, who held the title of hmt ntr B3-pf. After this single instance neither title appears in the titulary of royal women again.

hmt ntr Dhwtj (P1.3)

Most of the queens who were the priestesses for T3-sp.f and B3-pf also held priesthoods in the cult of Thoth; there seems to be some connection here, since only those queens were priestesses in his cult. There may also have been some ritual link between Thoth and the queen with regard to the king's burial rites since, in legend, Thoth and Isis had to work together to make the dead Osiris live again.¹⁵⁸ Kaplony¹⁵⁹ also points out that both Osiris and Thoth were ancestors of the royal family and, by holding this priesthood, the queen was serving the ancestor cult of the royal family. Certainly, Kaplony may be correct when he sees the possession of little baboon statuettes by prominent female members of the various royal families as evidence of cultic rites associated with this ancestor god.¹⁶⁰

Thoth in later periods is seen in his role of the god who

grants the pharaoh his number of regnal years, and he also partners Horus in pouring the waters of life over the pharaoh. There are thus close connections between the king and this god. As the legendary child of both Horus and Seth Thoth can arbitrate in their disputes, and is an ultimate judge.¹⁶¹ Thoth's consort was Seshat, goddess of writing, and when Khasekhemwy appears on his foundation block with her, he represents the god Thoth. Thoth is also the pre-eminent ancestor god, as attested by the statuettes donated to the First Dynasty temple at Abydos by Narmer and Mrjt-Nt,¹⁶² a link that Kaplony has already connected to these priestly titles held by the Old Kingdom queens.¹⁶³ All of these various aspects, together with his close association with the Eye, and the goddesses associated with the Eye, ensured Thoth's importance to both the kingship and the queenship.¹⁶⁴

Titles associated with the throne

There were a number of titles associated with the throne. The earliest, sm3(t) Nbwtj (C1.1) appeared in the First Dynasty, others emerging in the Fourth and in the Sixth Dynasty. During the Middle Kingdom other titles were introduced. These are dealt with under the Middle Kingdom titles.

From the Fourth Dynasty onwards a number of titles and epithets linked the queen with the Horus aspect of the king. Chief among these was the title of sm3wt Nbtj mrj and its variants. These titles reveal a very interesting progression whose changes have already been charted by Fischer.¹⁶⁵ However, Fischer does not include the Early Dynastic origin of the title in his discussions, since he accepts Kaplony's view that sm3(t) Nbwj was a personal name.

sm3(w)t Nbtj mrj (C1.2)

The earliest Old Kingdom queen to resurrect this particular title associated with the two gods of Egypt was Mrjt-jt.s I.¹⁶⁶ It is immediately noticeable that Queen Mrjt-jt.s' title had shifted the emphasis away from the Two Lords to that of the Two Ladies, a substitution considered by Fischer¹⁶⁷ to be an equivalent reference to the unity of Egypt symbolised by the gods. More important is that, by this time, the title had altered, making a direct reference to the king instead of the gods, for the title reads, 'She who is united with one beloved of the Two Ladies'. Thus Sm3 Nbwj, 'One who unites the Two Lords', had become altered in its meaning, it had changed from an active to a passive role for the queen in the Fourth Dynasty and, as a consequence, its focus had

shifted. This revised title remained substantially unchanged throughout the remainder of the Old Kingdom.

One significant variation of the title (which may merely be a shortening) was carried by Htp-hr.s II on a dual statue of her daughter and herself.¹⁶⁸ The title there reads sm3t Nbtj, 'She who unites the Two Ladies'. Elsewhere this queen has the title sm3t Nbtj mrj, as do the other queens, so the statue inscription could well be an abbreviation and nothing more.

ht Hr (C3.1)

Another title carried by Htp-hr.s II, that of ht Hr, 'follower of Horus', might first have been carried by Queen Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, for whom the title was written a little differently.¹⁶⁹ Gauthier, who found the meaning of the title vague, suggested it referred to one who was behind the king, and thus accompanies the king.¹⁷⁰ One could expect the word to be some derivation from m-h^t, 'following',¹⁷¹ 'accompanying',¹⁷² or, more probably, imi-h^t, 'one who is in attendance upon', perhaps translating as 'One who follows Horus', or 'One who is in attendance upon Horus'.

There might be a parallel between this title and that of


ht h3, which is held by a number of officials.¹⁷³ Helck¹⁷⁴ sees this title as having religious associations, although Strudwick¹⁷⁵ notes that the title is often found with high-ranking legal titles. For the queens, however, the religious association is likely to have been paramount, and may have identified the queen with Hathor as companion to the Horus of the title. Only one official is known to have held the same title.¹⁷⁶ In the late Fifth Dynasty the title of ht Wr seems to appear as an alternative to C3.1, since the two do not appear together in known titularies (see below for discussion on this title.)


tjst Hr (C8.1)

Htp-hr.s II also carried the title of tjst Hr, a title that has been translated as 'companion of Horus'. Both this title and ht Hr are usually found together in the titulary of the queens.

The title has not been an easy one to define. Gauthier suggests it might be derived from the verb tjs, meaning 'to sit'.¹⁷⁷ He tentatively considered the reference was made to the queen's right to sit on the throne beside the king. Such an interpretation is speculative, as Gauthier himself

admitted, but no better translation has been suggested as yet.

Although Junker¹⁷⁸ has suggested that the reading might be ist Hr, 'companion of Horus', there is some difficulty in accepting Junker's reading of  as j, when so many examples of tj are known. It is also difficult to see the connection between the queen's title and that of the official title, hrp tist bitj, which Junker was investigating. Kaplony, referring to a New Kingdom example,¹⁷⁹ suggested that this official might have had the rôle of guardian of the queen, a rôle he considers might have been shown on the Scorpion macehead in fig. 1 of this chapter.

Such an explanation would certainly provide the connection missing from Junker's discussion, were it not for two difficulties. The first is the nature of this rare sign , which Junker considers to be a new hieroglyph. There is no certainty that it is U33. The second difficulty is that it is unlikely that hrp ist bitj refers to the king, since bitj here follows the signs for hrp and ist. The phrase lacks the expected honorific transposition found in titles associated with the king. (It is not connected to the following title, 3 Dw3w, a religious title found among high officials.) In

this instance, perhaps, the bee sign might refer to either this insect, or some other, as it does in ḥnh-tj.fj's narrative¹⁸⁰. For these reasons the relationship suggested by Kaplony seems very tenuous and brings us no further forward in determining the meaning of the queen's title.

smrt Hr, smrt Hr mrt.f

The third title in relationship to Horus carried by Queen Htp-ḥr.s II is that of 'friend of Horus', which appears on her coffin.¹⁸¹ Unlike the previous titles there are male counterparts for this feminine title, since smr and smr wḥti commonly appear in the titularies for male officials, and there are feminine versions of the same titles for two other women, Princess Jntj and Nbt Bbj, both from Dynasty VI.¹⁸² The meaning of the title is not in doubt. Vizier Nbt also has the title smrt bjtj.

A minor variation of the title is smrt Hr mrt.f but, unlike smrt Hr itself, this title appears in the Eighteenth Dynasty as well. Only three queens are known to have held it: Mr.s-ḥnh III, Hnwt and Jḥ-ms, mother of Hatshepsut. If it had any special significance it is difficult to detect it now, but it may have been introduced to distinguish one queen from

another when a king had more than one wife. Mr.s-^cnh III might be the only one of Khafre's wives to have had it.¹⁸³ Of the wives of Wenis, Hnwt has the title, while his other wife, Nbt, is merely smrt Hr.

wrt hst (C6.1)

Wrt hst appears in most royal titularies usually following the title of wrt hts (C5.1). The reading of wrt hst is questionable¹⁸⁴ but is usually given as 'greatly praised', or 'great of praise'. There is possibly some connection with the verb 'to sing', implying that the queen is one who is worthy of having her praises sung, although Troy points out that this interpretation properly belongs to the Middle Kingdom.¹⁸⁵ She would prefer to see this title in association with cult activities, in which the queen took part as a chantress. Such a rôle is much easier to discern in New Kingdom times than it is in the Old Kingdom, for which there are no records that help us to determine the nature of this title, but the manner of writing the chantress differs from that of the Old Kingdom title. Whatever its precise meaning, it is likely to be modelled upon the wrt hts title, with which it is omnipresent in the titularies of Old Kingdom queens.

In the manuscript of Sinuhe (R 3 - 5) Queen Nfrt I is entitled wrt hswt (C6.2), 'great of praises' or, 'great of favours'. The title did not appear again until it was given in the titulary of J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj, at the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty.¹⁸⁶ It had greater popularity after the time of Queen J^ch-ms, mother of Hatshepsut,¹⁸⁷ whereas its usual partner, wrt hts, was replaced by the time of the New Kingdom.

ht Wr (C3.2)

Ht Wr at first appears to be similar to ht Hr, a solitary title which Troy assigns to Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I.¹⁸⁸ Both signs lack the branch determinative (M3). The attribution to Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, however, is questionable, due to the damaged nature of the seal impression concerned.¹⁸⁹ Troy gives the reading 'possession (?) of Horus' to this questionable title, and evidently interprets it as an alternative title of comparable meaning to ht Wr, which she translates as 'possession (?) of the Great One'.¹⁹⁰ Since this title for Nj-m3^ct-H^cp would be a hapax legomenon it is more likely that the damaged sign for this queen had once been m33t Hr Sth, as Garstang¹⁹¹ had suggested to Sethe, and not a newly-introduced title at all.

The more common title, featuring the branch, appears to have been modelled upon the ht Hr title, with Wr as an alternative to Hr, both titles evidently being in reference to the king.¹⁹² Its placement in the titular string is consistent, since ht Wr follows the wrt hts and wrt hst pairing found in many titularies of queens.

Six male officials of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasty were the first to hold the title.¹⁹³ It appears last in the reign of Neferirkare.¹⁹⁴ When ht Wr appeared in the titularies of the queens the title was dropped from the titulary of officials. It is another of those titles which indicate that the queen's titulary was, to some considerable extent, modelled upon the titulary of the official class.

The earliest attestation of the title for queens comes during the very late Fifth Dynasty, and it continued to appear until the time of Pepy I. Its first appearance may have been with Queen Hwjt I but, as she may be identical to Hwjt II¹⁹⁵ of Teti's reign, the most secure date is for Nbt, the wife of King Wenis. On the other hand, Hwjt's use of this title may make more secure her chronological position in Old Kingdom history, for the cessation of male use in the time of Neferirkare could suggest that it came about because the title

was transferred to the queen then and, if Hwjt I does indeed have a separate identity from Hwjt II, she will have belonged to the later Fifth or early Sixth Dynasty.

As Kuchman Sabbahy has remarked, those queens who have the ht Wr title do not have the title of ht Hr. From this practice it is clear that the title is an alternative to the ht Hr title. In the reign of Pepy II his wives reverted to using the ht Hr title, and ht Wr did not appear again as a title.

It is noticeable in each example of official titles that the sign for ht is the branch,¹⁹⁶ not merely the two hieroglyphs that the queen's title always has. It may well be the case that the titles held by male officials did not form a true parallel to the queens' title at all.

rp^ct (S3.1) and rp^ctt (S3.2)

Brugsch was the earliest historian to look at S3.2.¹⁹⁷ Taking examples from the Ptolemaic era, he draws the conclusion that it was closely linked to the goddess Isis. He then related this inference to the titles of Vizier Nbt of Dynasty VI, the first bearer of the rp^ctt,¹⁹⁸ and there are indeed many parallels between the later references to Isis and


the titulary of Nbt.¹⁹⁹ It is not certain, however, that examples from the Ptolemaic era can be assumed to have had a meaning identical to the one example we have for Nbt, particularly as the name of Isis, and the determinatives used in the Ptolemaic period are absent from the Sixth Dynasty example. It seems more likely that the Ptolemaic titles took Nbt's titulary as their model.

Helck claims that rp^ctt specifically indicates a regency for the woman carrying that title. His view²⁰⁰ is that rp^ct is the title of one who is the king's deputy. This idea may be applicable for male officials, but it is much more difficult to accept his conclusion that the title is indicative of a regency. The connecting link between the title and the office is absent in every instance he cites in his argument. For the women who hold this title throughout Egyptian pharaonic history the theory seems even less likely.²⁰¹

Queen Nt, wife of Pepy II, was the first queen to carry the title of rp^ct (S3.1). The title was derived from that of male officials and princes, and for this reason may have retained the masculine form in the time of Pepy II. In later times this title for queens altered into the S3.2 title, being

first noticeable in the titulary of Queen Nfrw I, wife of Mentuhotep I.²⁰²

S3.2 was first carried by Vizier Nbt (CG 1578), and Helck²⁰³ seems to imply that Nt received the title after this time. But surely, the logical pattern of development would be the adoption of the male version of the title, to be followed later by the feminine version which, from then on, was used without exception by all subsequent queens? It would be inconsistent for the male version to have been re-introduced for the wives of Pepy II.

Nbt's floruit is not entirely secure. While most scholars identify her with the mother of Vizier DCw and the Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s sisters,²⁰⁴ not all do.²⁰⁵ Her titles - especially those filiation titles connected to gods - are symptomatic of the First Intermediate Period,²⁰⁶ and so is the writing²⁰⁷ of Horus as . The acknowledged lack of the names of the famous offspring of CG 1431 on Vizier Nbt's stele (CG 1578) needs no further emphasis here, but there have been claims on other grounds that these Nbts are the one person.

Part reason for the identification of the vizier with CG 1575 has been because one person mentioned there is named Jdj

and the name Jdj is probably the brother of $\underline{D}^c w$, who appears on CG 1431, where the queens $\text{Mrj-R}^c\text{-}\underline{C}nh.n.s$ are mentioned. But, as Fischer²⁰⁸ has pointed out, the two men named Jdj spell their names differently. Jdj on CG 1578 is not named as a son of Nbt, even though the Nbt of CG 1575 is the mother of Jdj who owns that stele. It should also be mentioned that the three Nbts mentioned have different titles on each of the stelae, and this seems one of the strongest reasons for doubt about the preferred floruit of the vizier. Women had so few titles that it seems to me unlikely that one woman would alter hers so completely for each of the stelae mentioned.

Another reason for the identification of Nbt on CG 1578 with the mother of the queens is that one of her sons carries the name $\underline{C}nh-n-Nfr-k3-R^c$.²⁰⁹ This name provides a link with the floruit of Pepy II, which also puts Nbt within the reign of Pepy II.²¹⁰ This rather late date creates some chronological difficulty for the mother-in-law of Pepy I. But the name of Nbt's son may not even refer to Pepy II. There were other kings named Neferkare after the reign of Pepy II,²¹¹ and the son's name could just as well be in honour of any one of those First Intermediate Period kings. The women named Nbt on each of these three stelae then may not be

identical and, hence, the vizier may postdate the Nbt who was the mother of the two queens. The proposed sequence of the rp^ct/ rp^ctt titles for the queens may offer some support for this argument, and vice versa.

Rp^ct/t is usually translated as 'Hereditary princess' and, in the case of Nt, was thought to signal the most important daughter of the king but, even during Pepy II's time, it was used for queens who were not daughters of a king. During the Second Intermediate Period it was used for sisters of kings on occasion, as well as daughters and, during the later part of this period, for near female relatives of the royal family.²¹² It had become a ranking title by this time. Robins²¹³ remarks that, for the Eighteenth Dynasty, the title was almost always restricted to queens, so it ended as it had begun.

Troy has observed that the position of rp^ctt, always first in the string of a queen's titles after its inception in the Sixth Dynasty, brought the titulary of the royal women into line with that of the higher officials in the government. She sees in the addition of the smrt.Hr title examples of court titulary 'to express the status of royal women.'²¹⁴ In her opinion the title rp^ctt is to be interpreted

as 'speaker' to the people - and therefore one who has authority.²¹⁵ But, while this interpretation can be applied to male officials - such as Senenmut and others in the New Kingdom period - it is far from certain that this was the meaning of the title in the Old and Middle Kingdoms.

The use of rp^ctt in the titulary of Nfrw of Dynasty XI may have been used in her case to give the appearance of hereditary nobility to a woman whose father had an uncertain claim to the title of king. It was a title used frequently throughout Dynasty XI and XII and, in some instances, was bestowed on a queen who did not appear to be born a princess.²¹⁶

In Dynasty XIII the title was carried by queens who were not born princesses,²¹⁷ and by the sisters of kings, also women who lacked royal ancestry.²¹⁸ The same situation held true for holders of the male title in this period, too.²¹⁹ Such examples have led Schmitz to the conclusion that if a woman bears the rp^ctt title, but lacks the title of s3t nswt, that woman was not a born princess. The corollary is that rp^ctt in combination with s3t nswt indicates an hereditary princess.²²⁰ What does seem evident in the Second Intermediate Period is that the title was used to add legitimacy to those

princesses whose birth was unlikely to have taken place during the reign of the king.

Administrative titles

Several administrative titles appear in connection with the Old Kingdom queens, but there is virtually nothing known about the powers or duties involved with these offices. The titles concerned, ddt ht nbt jrt n.s (and its variations), and hrp sšmt šndt were all held by the more prominent queens of the Old Kingdom. The first of these might at first seem to be an epithet, rather than a title. Its rarity and importance, however, and its position in the titular strings - placed before the name of the queen, not after it, as epithets are - argue for its inclusion amongst the administrative titles. Moreover, the fact that there were no other epithets for queens in the Old Kingdom, would emphasise its role as a title.

ddt ht nbt jrt n.s (S1.1), ddt ht nbt nfrt jrt n.s (S1.2)

'Everything she says is done for her' is considered by Troy to be a reference to the queen's role as one who speaks to the gods in her duties as a chantress. Troy also associates other phrases from the New Kingdom with this

expression.²²¹ None-the-less, a distinction should be drawn between these later expressions (eg. 'One is pleased because of that which comes forth from her mouth' etc.) and the much more prosaic expression used in the Old Kingdom. The latter surely refers to the commands of the queen, rather than the sweetness of her voice that the other titles emphasise. It suggests that the queen had the privilege of having her commands obeyed. Some confirmation for this assertion can be found in the numbers of women who held this title or its slight variant. The other epithets mentioned by Troy not only vary widely from each other, but were never repeated for other queens. They are true epithets, whereas the ddt ht nbt jrt.n.s bears all the hallmarks of a title.

The number of women who carried this title is not large, and all but one of them was a distinguished queen.²²² In one form or other the epithet is placed in the position of a title immediately prior to the name of the queen concerned. This position would emphasise its importance.

The form of the title changed little, yet it was in evidence from the Third to the Twenty-fifth Dynasties. In the Old Kingdom it was held by Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, Htp-hr.s I, Mrjt-jt.s I and Hnt-k3w.s I. No queens carried it between the

times of Hnt-k3w.s I,²²³ and J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj. In the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties it was held by the queens J^ch-ms, Tj^c, Mwt-m-wj^c, Nfirt-jtj, S3t-R^c, and Nfirt-jrj, wife of Rameses II. In the Twenty-fifth Dynasty Jmn-jr-dj.s held the title, the last royal woman to do so. Some of these queens were also given epithets which referred to the sweetness of their voices, and this seems to emphasise the proper distinction between the two types of phrases which Troy considers to serve one purpose.

The meaning of the title is generally considered to be: 'one who says anything (good) and it is done for her'.²²⁴ The New Kingdom version for J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj,²²⁵ gdt ht nbt jr.tw n.s (S1.3), probably means 'when she says anything, it is done for her'.²²⁶ Robins has offered the explanation that 'it is possibly related to the idea occurring in royal texts that the king does what he says'.²²⁷

Although both Kuchman Sabbahy and Troy²²⁸ say that this title is held exclusively by the mothers of kings this is not true for Queen Mrjt-jt.s I, Queen Nfirt-jtj, Queen Nfirt-jrj, or God's Wife Jmn-jr-dj.s. It may not have been true for Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I at one stage, either. Her title of gdt ht nbt jr[t].n.s first appears on a seal from the tomb of

Khasekhemwy, at a time when she was not a mwt nswt, but only a mwt msw nswt.²²⁹ Later, when she was a mwt nswt bitj, the same title is present. It would thus seem that there are several instances when the king's wife held this title, and it was not necessary for her to have been the mother of a king.

Robins²³⁰ thinks the title lost its significance in the Eighteenth Dynasty because it was seldom used. However, the reverse may be the case for all periods. If the title was infrequently given it may have been considered an extremely prestigious title and, since none of the queens for whom it was attested was an insignificant queen, it seems preferable to consider that it marked an exceptional status for the queen concerned.

hrp sšmt jm3t (S2.1), hrp sšmt šndt (S2.2)

Queen Htp-hr.s I was the first queen known to have possessed the title hrp sšmt jm3t, 'controller of the butchers of the jm3t'. Another similar title appearing in the Fourth Dynasty is that of hrp sšmt šndt, 'controller of the butchers of the šndt', and both appear to be variants of the same administrative title. The title refers to the queen's control over the butchers of either the šndt or the jm3t.²³¹ Edel,²³²

sees the two variants as referring to the temple of the Goddess Sekhmet. The queen's connection with that group of butchers is thought to have been in the overseeing of the slaughter of animals involved in the funeral rites of the king.²³³

Fischer identifies the šndt with a collective of women whose quarters were situated in the forecourt of an important temple - probably that of Hathor.²³⁴ He has since agreed that Edel's interpretation is more acceptable and, as a consequence, the interpretation used in the present work for this title is hrp sšmt šndt, rather than jm3t.²³⁵

The connection of these women with the butchers is confirmed by archaeological evidence. There are depictions of butchery scenes in reliefs from the tombs of Dbḥ.n.j and Mrrw.k3 in which women labelled 'jm3t' take part.²³⁶ Furthermore, there are the unusual ostraka discovered by Zaki Saad at Helwan.²³⁷ On some of these ostraka women of the jm3t are mentioned, one of them being an overseer of this establishment. The ideogram for this female overseer on two of the ostraka link the butchery sphere with the woman's title, for the seated woman is shown with blood streaming from her head. There is no mistaking the meaning of this ideogram

since the blood has been put on with red paint.²³⁸ Perhaps the ideogram represents some ancient custom involving a female blood offering. The wooden label found in the tomb attributed to Djer at Saqqara²³⁹ shows in its middle register two seated female figures, blood streaming from their heads. This bears a strong resemblance to the figures on the ostraka found by Saad. The label might even attest to the ancient character of the office.

The title of hrp sšmt šndt has its parallel among the titles of male officials, as Fischer²⁴⁰ has demonstrated, but only eight women - all queens - are known to have held the title. They are Htp-hr.s I, Mrjt-jt.s I, Htp-hr.s II, H^c-mrr-Nbtj II, Hnt-k3w.s I²⁴¹ and Mr.s-^cnh IV in the Old Kingdom, but there is no discernible reason why only these particular queens held the post, unless it lies in their sphere of patronage of the goddess concerned. The fact that so few are known seems dependent upon the amount of material available, for the title was not always shown, as we discover from its use by H^c-mrr-Nbtj II, whose title appears only in the tomb of one of Menkaure's officials. Given the almost identical tabulation of the titles of H^c-mrr-Nbtj I and II in the Galarza Tomb,²⁴² it is highly probable that the elder

queen also held this title. During the Eighteenth Dynasty Queen Tj^c held the title and, in Dynasty XXVI, Queen Tnt₃-t₃. The last two queens have several archaic titles attested for them.

Pyramid titles (P3.1 - P4.2)

Amongst the more unusual titles borne by the queens were those which associated the queen with the pyramid cult of the king. Not only the wives, but the mothers and daughters of kings served in this royal cult. All of these instances have been catalogued by Pierre Montet.²⁴³ The first occurrence of the title appears in the titulary of Princess Hmt-R^c B; the last appears in the titulary of Queen Nfrt II of Dynasty XII, the only Middle Kingdom queen to hold such a title.

After considering a number of possible meanings for the titles Montet concluded that the reference was to the king's existence in eternity. Since the express aim of the pyramid was to preserve the king's body for eternity, the pyramid became synonymous with the king.²⁴⁴ The queen's title merely expressed the extension of her relationship with the king after his death. In Montet's view, 'Par ce moyen les reines et princesses d'Égypte affirmaient que leur dignité n'avait

rien à craindre de la mort du Pharaon. On pouvait ... dire qu'aussi longtemps que durera cette pyramide, aussi longtemps ces princesses et ces reines subsisteront comme femme, mère ou fille royale.'²⁴⁵

Málek, looking at the situation of Princess Jntj, has suggested that, instead of the pyramid being seen as an extension of the king's name, it should be seen as the provider of goods for the tomb of the royal woman concerned.²⁴⁶ In Jntj's situation this is made doubly clear by the reference to two pyramids, that of Teti and of Pepy I. The same parallel can be drawn for Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s I and II, and Cnh.s-n-Ppj, who are also associated with two pyramid names. Málek's explanation seems to fit the circumstances of pyramid titles very plausibly.

hkrt nswt (S4.1) and hkrt nswt w^ctt (S4.2)

These titles, commonly translated as 'Ornament of the king' were previously considered to be the designation of a concubine of the king. Hkrt nswt was first used in a queen's titulary in the Eleventh Dynasty, where each of the five wives of Mentuhotep buried in his complex at Deir el Bahri carried it. It is the inclusion of this title which has inclined so

many scholars to see these females as Mentuhotep's concubines. Prior to this occasion, however, the title had been given as a ranking title to women of the court, but also for some women who lived in the provinces.

The earliest-known example of hkrt nswt is that of a non-royal woman named Hmt-R^c.²⁴⁷ Hmt-R^c almost certainly held the title because she was the overseer of the hnr (for discussion of this institution see Chapter 3).

The earliest-known non-royal woman who was entitled hkrt nswt w^ctt was Nfr.s-rs of the early Fifth Dynasty. Her Giza tomb was provided for her by a man who identifies himself as her 'foster brother', a man who was overseer of singers.²⁴⁸ In addition to her hkrt nswt title Nfr.s-rs was also an overseer of entertainment for the king, overseer of the hnr, and overseer of the King's dancers.²⁴⁹ Once again the connection with the hnr appears with the title of hkrt nswt.

The earliest princess to have the title is N-sdr-k3, who was buried at Giza. The princess is entitled both s3t nswt and hkrt nswt.²⁵⁰ She was not a king's daughter, since we know that her father was Mrj-jb, entitled as a king's son, but possibly even a grandson of Khufu.²⁵¹ This title for N-sdr-k3

may have been to give distinction to a descendant of Khufu who served as his mortuary priestess.

The title hkrt nswt is suspected of having some connection with the cult of Hathor²⁵² - although not all hkrt nswt appear to have been priestesses of this cult. More recently, Drenkhahn has re-inforced this connection, rejecting the idea that the title of hkrt nswt was intimately bound up with women who were concubines of the king.²⁵³ This conclusion was independently reached by Nord in the same year.²⁵⁴

Drenkhahn's argument against hkrt nswt as a designation for a concubine has drawn upon evidence of title-holders who were also married women and patently living beyond the harim domain. This is particularly true for those title-holders who were resident with husband and family in the various nomes far from the capital. Such physical distance and obvious familial relationships would make it very unlikely that those women served as concubines of the king. Her conclusions have been endorsed by some scholars, such as Troy, but not all are prepared to accept her argument in toto.²⁵⁵ Although the title is associated with the harim, as the instances of Hmt-R^c and Nfr.s-rs have shown, the women concerned in this institution need not have been concubines. In regard to the extension

title, hkrt nswt wCtt, Nord²⁵⁶ has pointed out that other scholars have considered the title to be a female equivalent of the male title, smr wCtj, while Drenkhahn has proposed the title 'ladies-in-waiting', or 'courtiers' for the title.²⁵⁷

Since so many of the title-holders were also hmt ntr Hwt-Hr their duties probably lay in the performance of rites in honour of the goddess Hathor, and it may be this activity which was intended by the use of the titles hkrt nswt and hmt ntr Hwt-Hr held by the wives of Mentuhotep I, and by Queen Jnnj. Such rites involved the performance of music and dance, often performed by women of the hnr. That would be the reason why some of the hkrt nswt (such as Nfr.s-rs) were specifically entitled as overseers of music and dance.²⁵⁸ In a fragmentary relief from the pyramid complex of Queen Wdb-tn²⁵⁹ the vulture holds the shen sign over the name of Wdb-tn, while her attendants stand to the left. These attendants are given the hkrt nswt wCtt title (evidently a higher grade than that of hkrt nswt - Nord suggests courtiers of the first rank²⁶⁰). This fragment offers confirmation of the courtly role of such women.

There were male officials also who were connected with the hkrt nswt - many of them having the office of scribe.

Strudwick is of the opinion that 'the izwy hkr nswt ... appear to have formed an independent department, but very closely linked to the treasury, concerned principally with certain personal services to the king (for example, hairdressing [iri šn]), as well as oils and metals, which are often associated also with the treasury.'²⁶¹ It is noticeable that all of these services bear some relationship to the dressing of the king, whether it is the use of oils or metal ornaments, or the obtaining of these from the treasury.

It is the view of Nord²⁶² the title of hkrt is derived from the verb 'to be adorned'. Like Strudwick, she sees the males of this separate department (is n hkrt nswt) as being responsible for the adornment (consisting of gold, ointment and salves) of either the king, or his statue.²⁶³

Perhaps, for the female courtiers, they were those who, in being in attendance upon the queen, were her adornments. As such, they would be fulfilling the purpose of being in attendance upon the earthly representative of Hathor, this making explicable their other titles as priestesses of Hathor. For such an occupation one could understand why so many of the women were associated with Hathoric cults as well.

Nord²⁶⁴ has noticed that the title of hkrt nswt was frequently used in the early Middle Kingdom period to denote the "chief" wife of a noble, and Mentuhotep may, like his contemporaries, have had more than one wife in the early stages of his life. Nord,²⁶⁵ on the other hand, suggests that these wives could have claimed the title as 'a means of asserting honored status equal to the revered wives of the great nobles of the Old Kingdom'. This may have been considered necessary if the marriages were concurrent.

Although Troy²⁶⁶ has drawn a distinction between the hkrt nswt and the nfrw nswt, two groups of women who were associated with the court, her definition of the nfrw as single women and the hkrt nswt as married women is incorrect.²⁶⁷ Drenkhahn had already pointed to several cases where a hkrt nswt seems to have been unmarried,²⁶⁸ and there are the examples for the New Kingdom also mentioned by Brack.²⁶⁹ The instance of the child Mjw (should she have been similarly entitled in her now-destroyed chapel²⁷⁰) at Deir el Bahri, would also indicate that no such distinction, as claimed by Troy, can be drawn.

The Middle Kingdom titles

With the discussion on hkrt nswt a shift was made from the Old to the Middle Kingdoms. The general nature of titularies in this later period was for two types of phenomena: certain queens displayed a fairly extensive titulary (and the same is true for three other royal women whose status is uncertain²⁷¹), while other queens are only recorded with simple titles, such as mwt nswt and hmt nswt. This generalisation applies particularly to the Thirteenth Dynasty and later, and may be largely attributable to the poor preservation of historical remains. Then, too, the extraordinary brevity of reigns during this period would reduce the numbers of inscriptions. There is some uncertainty, therefore, about whether or not we have the totality of titles for some of these queens.

hnmt nfr hdt (C9)

Hnmt nfr hdt - 'She who is united with the ^{beautiful} White Crown' - was nearly always accompanied by a sketch of the white crown of Upper Egypt. The phrase was first interpreted by Brunton, in one of the reports from Petrie's excavations at Lahun. The White Crown was seen to be a reference to the king.²⁷²

Earlier, in the discussion on the title sm3t Nbtj mri, it

was observed that Nbwj and Nbtj might be used as substitute names for the throne of Egypt. Fischer has also drawn attention to the use of Nbtj as an alternative word for the crown worn by the king, and has suggested that there might be a link between that use and the title of hnmt nfr hdt which is used by queens of the Middle Kingdom period.²⁷³ More recently, it has been suggested that the phrase might be a reference to Nekhbet, who symbolised Upper Egypt, and that the title might refer to the queen's identity with the goddess.²⁷⁴

The title first appeared in the reign of Amenemhat II in the titulary of his daughter, Princess Jt-wrt.²⁷⁵ Only one of this king's daughters was certainly entitled thus, but at least one other princess either held that title, or else was herself named Hnmt-nfr-hdt.²⁷⁶

In the reign of Senwosret II, the title appeared not in the titulary, but as the name of his wife: Hnmt-nfr-hdt (wrt). The earliest queen known to hold hnmt nfr hdt as a title²⁷⁷ was Nfrrt-hnwt, wife to Senwosret III. Robins²⁷⁸ has suggested that, as neither of these queens was a s3t nswt, the name may have been adopted by each woman at some point after the relationship to the king was established. No commoner had this title as a proper name.²⁷⁹

The last princess to hold the title was Mnt, daughter of Senwosret III. From this time forward only queens held this title until the close of the Seventeenth Dynasty, when the last royal wife, Mrjt-Jmn, wife of Amenhotep I, displayed it. It was later recorded in a single instance for Hatshepsut.²⁸⁰ It may have been Hatshepsut's approval of Middle Kingdom practices which caused her to place this title among her inscriptions. Robins²⁸¹ has suggested that, if the use of the title had been confined to those queens who were also s3t nswt, this might explain why it is not used again until the time of Hatshepsut, but the title did not have this restriction previously, and no other title (other than s3t nswt) had an exclusive nature. It is more likely that this single example had an archaising purpose for Hatshepsut.

The title appeared on occasions as the only title of the queen,²⁸² and it came to signal the most important wife of the king, but it was not the only title to do so (see R3.4, below).

hnwt and related titles

During the First Intermediate Period the titular princess Nbt from Koptos displayed among her titles tpit-s n kt hmwt

nswt, 'First among the women of the king'.²⁸³ This title was a precursor to another Middle Kingdom title for queens, hnwt + other nouns. Nfrw-k3jt was entitled, hnwt hkrwt nswt (S6.2), 'Mistress of the female courtiers of the king' and, a little later, Queen Nfrw, wife of Mentuhotep I, introduced the title hnwt hmwt (S6.3), 'Mistress of the women'. This last innovation, and its derivative hnwt hmwt nbwt (S6.4), 'Mistress of all the women', was common in the titulary of queens from that time onwards. Robins²⁸⁴ considered that, in Dynasty XVIII the hmwt could suggest the other wives of the king but, in view of the development of the title as outlined above, it would be more likely to refer to all the women of the court, not merely the wives of the kings.

There has been little discussion on the meaning of these related titles. The implication of them seems to stress the queens' status amongst the other women in her society. The title may imply a degree of authority exercised in relation to women, but particularly the women of the court.

At first sight the meanings of S6.4, 5 and 6 seem equivalent to the use of nbt in the titles of queens, a similarity that has already been pointed out by Troy.²⁸⁵ Due to the origin of the words hnwt and nbt, however, there is a

greater differentiation of purpose, since hnwt may derive from hn, the verb to command, while nbt is primarily a substantive, meaning one who is in possession of something.²⁸⁶ Usually, a queen possessed either the hnwt title (eg. hnwt t3wj) or, the nbt title (eg. nbt t3wj), but rarely both.²⁸⁷ Sometimes the use of either nbt or hnwt in the titularies for particular queens can assist us in deciding the identity of two like-named women.²⁸⁸ In Troy's opinion the titles were given out to alternate generations.²⁸⁹

Troy²⁹⁰ links hnwt to a text in the Holy Wedding inscription at Deir el Bahri, where the queen's beauty is the item which makes her the mistress of all women, but Brunner²⁹¹ rightly emphasises that its meaning has an 'Ornamental-Politischen' origin. His reference to the Middle Kingdom wife of a nomarch (the only commoner woman known to use this title²⁹²) is, however, less convincing. This single example is more likely to have stemmed from the deliberate use of royal titles made by these nomarchs and their families, rather than a general usurpation of a political privilege. On the other hand, Brunner's explanation that the queen's title was an expression of the feminine equivalent of the king's overlordship best fulfils the meaning of this feminine

title.

hnwt t3wj (S6.5)

There is a parallel title to hnwt t3wj in the similar title of nbt t3wj, 'Lady of the Two Lands', and there seems to be little in between their meanings. Although J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj held both titles,²⁹³ most queens did not. Rather, the use of either (but not both) of the titles for a queen could create a distinction between her and another (as it does with Mrjt-Jmn and J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn). Both titles point to an increase in the importance of the wives of the king, an importance that grew more significant as the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty approached.

hnwt t3wj tm (S6.6)

Another title similar to the preceding example was 'Mistress of the Two Lands in their entirety' - a title similar to one held by the king. There was no equivalent title for nbt t3wj.

The appearance of this title is relatively rare. It first appeared in the titulary of Queen Hnmt-nfr-hdt wrt,²⁹⁴ and was last recorded for Queen Tj^c, of Dynasty XVIII.²⁹⁵ The

title was also held by Hatshepsut.

To date there is no explanation for the use of hnwt t3wi
tm, although one would imagine its origin as drawing the
titularies of queens into parallel with the titles of their
husbands. This may have been in part prompted by the
appearance of both people in the monumental reliefs of the
various kings, and a desire to display the customary balance
between the respective inscriptions of the royal pair. Its
rarity suggests that it was given to particular queens to
enhance their status, since it is again the more prominent
queens who display S6.6 in their titularies.²⁹⁶

hmt nswt wrt (R3.4)

The earliest queen known to carry this title was Queen
Mrt-sgr, wife of Senwosret III. Her titles appear on a rock
inscription from Semna.²⁹⁷

The title does not reappear elsewhere in surviving
records until the Thirteenth Dynasty, when it was carried by
Queen Jnnj II (whose date is uncertain - see Prosopography
p.263) and Queen Nbw-h^c.s I, possibly the wife of Sebekhotep
V. For that reason it is likely that Mrt-sgr²⁹⁸ did not hold
that title during her lifetime, and that the title was given

by a later scribe, accustomed to the king's important wife being so entitled.²⁹⁹ Hmt nswt wrt does not appear again in the ancient records until the early Thirteenth Dynasty.

This title appears to be the mark of the chief wife of a king, thus suggesting that the Middle Kingdom rulers may have been polygamous. (This cannot be stated with any certainty about most of the Old Kingdom rulers, although it might be true for kings of Dynasty I.) Hmt nswt wrt remained in use even in Ptolemaic times, being last used by Arsinoe III.³⁰⁰

Women who held the title of hmt nswt wrt also used the 'short-hand' title of hmt nswt in their inscriptions. Robins³⁰¹ has shown that women who were only entitled hmt nswt³⁰² appear mainly in funerary records or, occasionally, on private monuments, but the hmt nswt wrt is the king's wife who appears in temple inscriptions, and on royal stelae. She is thus led to conclude that 'the hmt nswt wrt has a ritual function, while the hmt nswt does not.'³⁰³ She was certainly the most important queen in each reign.

snt nswt (R4.1)

During the Thirteenth Dynasty - and probably not before this time - the title of 'Sister of the king' appears.³⁰⁴ It

does not mean that these women were concubines, as Scharff at first supposed. What it is more likely to indicate is that the sisters of the Thirteenth Dynasty kings needed specific titles to attest their status to their contemporaries, since they could seldom claim the title of s3t_nswt. It remained an significant title, still being attested in Ptolemaic times.³⁰⁵

Gauthier³⁰⁶ and Troy³⁰⁷ both list a woman called Djdt as the Twelfth Dynasty mother of Nfrt I, recording her title of snt_nswt.³⁰⁸ The inscription is present on Munich stele GL 41. The words snt_nswt_irt.n S3t-Hwt-Hr are, however, much more likely to be from the Thirteenth Dynasty, as the name, S3t-Hwt-Hr, also suggests. If this is a Twelfth Dynasty stele, it is the only record of the title of snt_nswt that we have prior to the Thirteenth Dynasty where, in Papyrus Boulaq 18, a group of women in the royal court of Sebekhotep II are so entitled. The title is common for the later Thirteenth Dynasty, and holds a prominent position in the titular strings of queens for the late Seventeenth Dynasty, where it is occasionally placed immediately prior to the name of the royal woman.³⁰⁹

nbt t3wj (S9.2)

This important title is the female equivalent to the king's title, nb t3wj, 'Lord of the Two Lands'. It confers upon the queen the honour of being identified with the state, and of sharing with the king the governorship of Egypt. The title appears in the titulary of Queen J^ch-htp II, mother of King Ahmose, although it is mentioned not on a contemporary article, but on the coffin of a later official.³¹⁰ This, then, may not be an actual title held during her lifetime. (This suspicion is strengthened by the circumstance that she held the title of hnwt t3wj - the two titles which are usually mutually exclusive.) Nbt t3wj is more likely to have been first given to J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj, since her inscription is on a contemporary monument.³¹¹ The title remained as one of the best attested titles of queens from this time until the death of Kleopatra.³¹²

The title seems to have been a natural outgrowth of the very common nbt jm3hwt (S9.1), thus having its origins as an epithet for women. If this is its source, then nbt jm3hwt could be a title, somewhat akin to nbt pr. It is more probable, however, that the title was designed as a direct feminine counterpart to the masculine nb t3wj for the king. That this was its immediate origin is understandable in the

climate of the late Seventeenth Dynasty, when the kings' mothers seem to have performed some of the duties expected of a king.³¹³

hmt ntr n Jmn (P2)

The ultimate great title used by queens between Dynasties I - XVII was that of God's wife of Amen. Besides the title the queens who held it were the mistresses of considerable lands, servants, animals and other commodities. It is the first real indication we have of the material possessions and jurisdiction which might accompany a queen's title. (The complexities of hmt ntr n Jmn have necessitated a chapter of its own in this dissertation.)

From apparently humble beginnings in the late Seventeenth Dynasty the title assumed such importance that the title-bearers inscribed that title alone on their scarabs in many instances.³¹⁴ Although the title was not held consistently throughout the New Kingdom period it was still in use in Dynasty XXVI, by which time the title-bearers had extraordinarily pre-eminent status within the Egyptian state. The character of the office had changed by that time, however, and the wives of the god were not queens but princesses and

virgin priestesses, with dominions rivalling those of the kings. All of the God's Wives were provided with funerary cults after their deaths,³¹⁵ and J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj was given the status of a god. Apart from the rare instances of female monarchy that few queens had held in Egyptian history, the position of God's Wife of Amen was the most prestigious and powerful office open to the royal women.

hnwt jdbw H3wt-nbwt (S6.7)

This title, modelled upon a title of the goddess Hathor,³¹⁶ is only attested for Queen J^ch-^htp II. For discussion see her prosopographical entry, under 'Titles'.

hnwt rsj mh^w (S6.8)

In the late Seventeenth Dynasty both J^ch-^htp II and J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj were given this title. J^ch-^htp's citation is only known from a later period.³¹⁷ Such late attributions are frequently dubious.

This is a title modelled on the king's title, nb t3wi. Several instances of such origin have already been mentioned for other titles of the late Seventeenth Dynasty. It was a popular title for queens after this period, only ceasing with

the death of Kleopatra VII. No doubt its popularity was due to its parallelism with the king's title.

J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj held a similar title, hrit-to rsi mhw (S10), recorded on the Donation Stele. This title was held only by one other queen, J^ch-ms, wife of Thutmose I. It is recorded in the Deir el Bahri Holy Wedding scene.³¹⁸

Conclusions

As can be gathered from this overview of titles carried by the queens between Dynasties I and XVII, a great many changes had occurred over that time.

The restricted nature of the titles from the Early Dynastic period (discussed in the opening section of this chapter) gave way in the Old Kingdom period to a noticeable increase in the nature and number of titles possessed by any one queen. There were other differences, too. While the earliest titles put the emphasis on the support given to the king during the unification period, titles of the Fourth Dynasty placed the emphasis on the nobility of the queens, and introduced priesthoods for them. A large percentage of titles was derived from the titulary of the male official class in the Old Kingdom. It was within this period, too, that the full

range of s3t nswt titles was developed.

The interruption caused by the First Intermediate Period resulted in further changes to the titulary of queens during the Middle Kingdom. Two of the emphases for this epoch were on the ranking of queens, and on their more elevated status as participants in the governing of the kingdom. Unquestionably, these titles reveal how important the wives of the kings had become. The iconography of the late Seventeenth Dynasty also shows the extent of their prestige in the community at that time. It was from this portentous background that Queen Hatshepsut emerged.

CHAPTER 3

'HNR', 'JPT', ANDTHE NATURE OF THE HARIM BETWEEN DYNASTIES I - XVII

'Harim' is a Turkish term, derived from the Arabic word 'haram', a forbidden, or sacred enclosure. In the Turkish sense the harim was an area of the household reserved for the women and their small children. It has been used as a synonym for two words used by the ancient Egyptians, 'hnr/wt'¹ and 'jpt'. Both words are glossed as 'harim' in the Worterbuch, and both words show a variety of spellings which makes precision of definition extremely difficult. Neither word is clearly represented by our word 'harim': firstly, because the perceived concepts of the modern word, with its idea of polygyny, concubines and strict seclusion, do not correspond with either of the Egyptian words; secondly, because those two Egyptian words are not interchangeable, each word represents a different institution. In fact, the only commonality between 'harim' and the two Egyptian words is that all three refer to collectives of women in various periods of time. When the term 'harim' appears in this

discussion it is to be understood as referring to either the quarters or the collectives of women, without the Turkish overtones.

The term hnr/wt²

The term hnr/wt is used to refer to groups of musicians and dancers (usually female, but sometimes including male members). The location of these musicians is within the hnr/wt. It has a meaning distinct from hnrt, a Middle Kingdom word for an enclosure or compound.³

In the main the role of the people in the hnr/wt was to provide the musical accompaniment for religious services, particularly those associated with funerals, and the majority of these appear in (or near) funeral scenes. Representations of the hnrwt are common in Old Kingdom tombs (eg. Tj,⁴ Mrrw-k3,⁵ K3-hp,⁶ Hnj,⁷). The purpose of these performances seems to have been to cause the goddess Hathor to appear⁸ - presumably, to ensure the resurrection of the deceased in the afterlife.

Apart from the personal name of Hnt-H^cp, mother of King Djer, no instance of an association with the word hnr/wt is known prior to Dynasty V.⁹ In most Old Kingdom instances the word hnr¹⁰ is accompanied by scenes of dancers and singers but, almost as

frequently, such scenes lack specific mention of the hnr.¹¹ On other occasions the word is used as a title for an overseer, who also will hold a title connected with either singing or dancing.¹² From this it has been gathered that the hnrwt had dancing and singing as their chief occupations, since they do not appear in any other connection in scenes, or in inscriptions of either the Old or Middle Kingdoms. For this reason current opinion is that the hnr was not another name for the harim at all, since there is no evidence to link the musicians' collective with the women of the king's immediate family.¹³

During the First Intermediate Period the word hnr/wt appears only in titles, sometimes in connection with the name of a god. It might be expected, therefore, that the official's function was again to provide music and dancing. There was a hnr/wt of Pillar of His Mother at Akhmim,¹⁴ one of Bat,¹⁵ and the hnrw/t of Wepwawet is mentioned once.¹⁶ One woman on a stele now in Florence is entitled hnryt nt Jnpw,¹⁷ which presupposes a hnr for Anubis as well. Fischer also claims a harim of Hathor among the Naga ed-Der women,¹⁸ although the inscriptions do not directly link the hnr there with the goddess. Other scholars, however, have accepted Fischer's interpretation.¹⁹

In the Middle Kingdom examples the word again appears in

titles, only one of which is accompanied by an activity associated with music.²⁰ Although we lack iconographic evidence after the Old Kingdom, it is likely that the word hnr/wt was connected with music and dance throughout both the Old and Middle Kingdoms. An example of this may be seen in one of the letters from Lahun²¹ which mentions three members of the hnr there,

'the female singer, Sat-tepihu, who is in the hnrt which is at Lahun; the male singer, Ititi, and the lad who are in the hnrt..'

,The Turkish word 'harim' is thus not an adequate translation of the word hnr/wt - particularly when it is used in connection with the cults of the gods - although it is one that has come to be accepted in the literature.²² It might best be replaced by 'musical company', as has already been suggested.²³

The term jpt²⁴

There are two major theories concerning the meaning of the term 'jpt'. For the majority of historians 'jpt' was a collective of women attached to the king; for some this collective included his wives and concubines.²⁵ The word itself was seen by some as a derivative of the verb jp, meaning 'to muster, or assemble people'.²⁶ Gardiner considered it possible that there could have been some relation with the meaning of the word jp3t, 'private

office'.²⁷ The hieroglyph used from Dynasties I - 11I features the sign for a domed building (O45, 46), but some Early Dynastic and Twelfth Dynasty texts thought to refer to the jpt display different signs, including at least one that was similar to the carrying chair used by queens during official ceremonies.²⁸ This last example seems to reinforce the connection between the royal women and the jpt.²⁹ This rich variety of signs has so far failed to lead to a single identifiable source for the determinative, leading to many opinions about its origins.³⁰ Both Nord³¹ and Ward³² have challenged this large range of determinatives and suggested that some variants might have represented different words.

Lorton's interpretation of this term is that the jpt nswt had nothing to do with the harim of the king, but was the royal counting-house.³³ The origin of this term would then lie in jp, 'to count up', so Lorton explains.³⁴ Ward has taken Lorton's interpretation a little further, arriving at a conclusion somewhat different from that of Lorton, but having some consensus with his view.


In a review of all jpt inscriptions prior to the Eighteenth Dynasty Ward has pointed out that on only two occasions is the word in question likely to have been given a phonetic complement




fig. 1 Early examples of
inscriptions purporting to be those
of the ipt.


(see fig. 1).³⁵ In both instances the word jp is indicated,³⁶ both hieroglyphs being followed by the determinative of a domed structure. While only one of those inscriptions carries the determinative of a locality, both Kaplony³⁷ and Ward³⁸ read this sign as jpw, 'Akhmim', although others have given them a different interpretation.³⁹ As with so many of the early inscriptions, the interpretation is exceedingly difficult.



Only one other example from the early period is known. This is on a stele from Dynasty II, featuring a s3t nswt who is usually referred to as špswt-jpt.⁴⁰ The alleged jpt sign, however, is unlike others for this word, and there might even be an alternative reading for this name.

Ward also questions the Middle Kingdom hieratic examples from Papyrus Westcar and Sinuhe R 3 as being genuine examples of jpt with a phonetic complement,⁴¹ pointing out that the only hieratic determinatives we have - and those are all from the New Kingdom - give the sign . There are no Middle Kingdom examples.

In his examination of the evidence Ward has suggested some alternative readings for certain variations of the earlier signs that other scholars had accepted as reading jp(w)t. In




particular he singles out , the most commonly encountered hieroglyph in the Old and Middle Kingdoms. Like Lorton, he favours a reading of 'counting-house', or even 'granary' for this sign.⁴²

In drawing attention to the phonetic 't' that usually accompanies the writing of jpt nswt, Ward stresses that, for the Old and Middle Kingdoms, the 't' which sometimes accompanies the word is a complement of nswt, not of jpt, for which spelling, he says, there is no clear example until the Eighteenth Dynasty.⁴³ His final remarks concerning  suggest that the sign should be read as 'royal granary or the like'.⁴⁴ Ward considers that the ancient word may have been masculine, and this further strengthens his opinion that the Old and Middle Kingdom hieroglyph had a dissimilar sound and meaning from the New Kingdom 'jpt'.

A further extension of Ward's argument is that, until the Eighteenth Dynasty at least, we cannot be sure that the sign  means 'royal harim' at all, since there is no phonetic complement for the jpt hieroglyph prior to the New Kingdom period. He therefore questions whether the Old Kingdom sign  can be equated with the New Kingdom institution at all.⁴⁵ The corollary to Ward's argument would seem to be that, until the New Kingdom, it

is unlikely that there was an jpt.

There is no doubt that Ward's essay strikes at the heart of this problem concerning the interpretation of the sign that we usually translate as 'harim', but there is yet further room for discussion.

While the jpt may indeed have been concerned with the counting-house or granary in some instances, certain texts, such as those of Wnj, Špss-Pth, and Nfr.s-rs, make it plain that there are at least two hieroglyphs that were used to refer to the female quarters of the royal household ( ). In view of their close similarity one would hesitate to suggest a separate institution for each of those examples, and it is my intention to continue to use the word jpt for those two signs (as Ward does himself), until such time as a more appropriate term is proposed. With other signs, such as  (used by 3ht-ḥtp of Saqqara⁴⁶), there is a more distinct difference which does encourage us to consider a variant reading, such as 'granary'.

Archaeological remains of the harim

There are no known archaeological remains of either the jpt or the hnr/wt between Dynasties I - XVIII. From the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, however, the palace of Akhenaten at

Amarna, that of Rameses III at Medinet Habu, the palace of Amenhotep III at Malqata, and the site at Gurob have particular features which have been identified with the jpt. From what we can tell of its organisation, both from the written evidence and the archaeological remains for the New Kingdom, the more important women of this institution had their own quarters. These might have been represented in the remains from the palace of Amenhotep III at Malqata, where separate quarters, such as one would imagine would be present, are clearly noticeable in the palace building. It is clear from the evidence, however, that these rooms are nowhere identified in the ancient record with the jpt, and their identification as harim quarters is only the result of a modern interpretation. On the other hand, more substantial support for the existence of separate women's quarters is at hand in a relief from the tomb of Ay.⁴⁷

While we have no archaeological evidence concerning such quarters for the jpt until Dynasty XVIII, the Second Intermediate Period Kahun papyrus speaks of certain quarters being the domain of individual women, each of whom appears to have had a small staff of servants.⁴⁸ Such provisions as those mentioned may have been consistent with the separate quarters that are noticeable in New Kingdom material. The nature of those separate rooms within

the one compound may have prompted Gardiner's suggestion that 'jpt' could have been linked with 'jp3t'.

During the Old Kingdom the king's female dependents may have occupied separate quarters such as those found at New Kingdom Gurob.⁴⁹ The Old Kingdom jpt ^{has} certain similarities with the Gurob palace in that the latter was a separate palace, which included both the royal women⁵⁰ and the royal children, as well as the young sons of high officials who were being educated at the king's expense. These children, sometimes referred to as hrdw n k3p, 'children of the nursery', were educated by jpt personnel, as can be gathered from several Old Kingdom texts.⁵¹ Ward also mentions an official of the jpt nswt whom he feels might have been an instructor of children during the Eleventh Dynasty.⁵² We thus have some knowledge about the members of the jpt prior to the New Kingdom period, but none of our information offers any hint that concubines were members of this group during the Old Kingdom. For the Old Kingdom, at least, it is more correct to translate jpt either, as 'royal household' as Nord suggests⁵³ or, as 'female royal quarters'.



Evidence for the nature of the hnr/wt and the jpt

It has been understood for some time now that the hnr/wt

collective provided music for the state religious ceremonies and probably for the court.⁵⁴ These performers may or may not have been resident at the court during the early periods of Egyptian history, although there is evidence that they were resident during the late New Kingdom.⁵⁵ The women in the jpt, however, seem to have been those who were domiciled within the palace buildings even during the Old Kingdom, as is suggested by the texts of Wnj and Nfr.s-rs. There is a suggestion that some of these women may have had the function of educators,⁵⁶ but there is more evidence for their having had some association with weaving⁵⁷ and, again, there are similarities with the Gurob material.⁵⁸ It is in regard to these texts that Lorton's argument reveals a weakness. Because he accepts that the word 'harim' necessitates seclusion (in the nineteenth century sense), he finds it understandably difficult to accept that the institution of the jpt also meant seclusion.⁵⁹ Because he suggests that the word must mean 'counting house', Lorton rejects the idea of women's quarters being the reference intended by Wnj in his account of the queen's trial (Urk. I.100,13). He is thus led to conclude that the queen in question was charged with being involved in embezzlement.⁶⁰ Similarly, he provides Nfr.s-rs with a post in the accounts house - which also seems at odds with bureaucratic practice then.

Officials of the jpt

The evidence of the Turin Juridical Papyrus reveals that officials of both the pr hnr and the jpt were involved in the conspiracy against the life of Rameses III. That these two types of officials were the ones involved suggests some link between their duties. More importantly, in this document and elsewhere,⁶¹ the titles sš jpt nswt n pr hnr, 'scribe of the royal jpt of the hnr', and imi-r jpt nswt n pr hnr are found. This linking of the two institutions in an official's titulary would suggest that the jpt was a selective group within the house of the hnrwt - at least by the Twentieth Dynasty, if not earlier. In the Old and Middle Kingdoms the two groups are not linked.

Leaving out of discussion the material cast into doubt by Ward, and using only material containing the  sign, the earliest example of an jpt official known to us comes from an inscription found by Emery in S 3505.⁶² The official concerned was Mr-k3, who held the office of hntj for the . Other possible officials are too doubtful to include since, in their cases, the hieroglyph used is one of the variant signs excluded by Ward.⁶³

The next group of officials known to carry an office in









Fig. 5. "ip.t-nsw" in Old Kingdom titles (1-7)
and narrative contexts (8-10)

1. Fischer, Dendera, n. 824
2. Junker, Giza XI, fig. 83
3. Mar. Mast. A 1 Aht, htp
4. CAA Hildesheim, p. 7.50 = Junker, Giza VII, p. 124
5. Mereruka, pl. 217 B
6. HI I, 19
7. Hassan, Giza III, pl. 25
8. Urk I, 99, 6; 100, 13; 101, 4
9. Urk I, 51, 13
10. Hassan, Giza II, fig. 226

fig. 2 Ward's list of alleged ipt nswt titles
in the Old Kingdom.

- Ward, Fem. Titles, p.88, fig.5

association with the jpt can be found on some Middle Kingdom seals.⁶⁴ Ward has set aside these records since they 'offer nothing which helps define the "ip.t-nsw".'⁶⁵ None-the-less, their real existence using the correct hieroglyphic title, which appears later with phonetic complement in the New Kingdom, would suggest a link between the jpt of the Old Kingdom and that of the Middle Kingdom. Another link, pointed out by Reiser, is that some of the other titles borne by New Kingdom overseers of the jpt are the same as titles held by the jpt officials in the Old and Middle Kingdoms.⁶⁶ Such titular links between the New Kingdom and earlier times do suggest that there could have been an jpt in the earlier periods, too.


In Ward's table⁶⁷ of 'jpt_nswt' hieroglyphs for the Old Kingdom it is noticeable that two signs in particular are represented several times (see fig. 2). The first of these is . The second is . In his discussion Ward would prefer to see nos. 2 - 6 of this table translated as 'overseer of the royal counting house' (if the word 'jpt' is intended), or 'overseer of the granary' (if the sign represented is actually t3rt).⁶⁸ He includes the divergent signs , , , and  as representing the same object. At the same time Ward excludes nos. 9 and 10, even though the signs are identical with no. 2.


Similarly, Lorton considers 8 - 10, all of which are found in narrative contexts, to be examples of the 'royal counting house' concerned with provisions for the queen. However, if we set aside the office of overseer in nos. 2 and 6 on Ward's chart, these signs are identical to nos. 9 and 10. Lorton's selection criteria here are therefore difficult to appreciate.





Although Lorton's suggestions that signs nos. 8 - 10 represent some sort of financial establishment connected with the queen, in at least two of the texts he has chosen, it is difficult to accept his alternative reading. The biography of Špss-Pth (no. 9), could indeed make sense if it were to read that the young Špss-Pth had been educated together with the royal children within the counting-house (Urk. I.51,16), although it is difficult to imagine why a counting house should be located within the inner section (hnw), of the royal palace. But the references in Wnj's biography are not so easily accepted. The general tenor of Wnj's statement about the trial of the queen is unlikely to have been intended as 'When there was a secret charge in the counting-house against the King's Wife, Great One of the hts sceptre, his majesty made me hear it, I being alone' (Urk. I.100,13f.). It is difficult to fathom in what way a queen might have been involved in her own counting-house so that a secret



charge might be levelled against her. But, if we read jpt [𓂏𓂏𓂏] as 'women's quarters' here, then it is to be expected that jpt means the same thing a little earlier on in Wnj's biography, when he talks about his appointment to the new post as an official of the jpt and the six great houses (Urk. I.99,6). In both of these instances the sign 𓂏 is used, but it should be pointed out that for the first occasion the pr sign is used in the text, while for the second instance it is absent. There is a similar variation among the other references, as can be seen in fig. 2. It would suggest that one reference is to a collective of people, while the second is to the quarters in which they live.



The third narrative example refers to Nfr.s-rs, her inscription reading, sk.s m hnw m jpt nswt, 'while she [was] in the residence in the jpt nswt'. Lorton would prefer the reading 'while she [was] in the residence in the accounting office concerned with the queen's provisions', but this would suppose that Nfr.s-rs was an official concerned with either provisions or accounts of some sort, when her other titles refer to her responsibilities in connection solely with entertainment. Although in Middle Kingdom times there was a female seal-bearer working for her nomarch husband, Hnm-ḥtp, no other titles for women list financial posts.⁶⁹ It is indeed difficult to suggest

what relationship Nfr.s-rs could have had with the counting-house, if that is the meaning of  in this instance.

It does seem preferable to regard all of these narrative instances as being better translated by 'private quarters of the king', or 'women's quarters', rather than the 'accounts house' suggested by Lorton. Ward⁷⁰ comes to this conclusion himself, at the end of his article. He considers 'royal apartment' appropriate for some instances where 'it seems to fit best', but adds, 'Where  and its variants appear, we must consider "royal granary" , or the like, as a possible meaning.' It is suggested that here a greater distinction between the granary and the royal apartments is provided by the nature of the actual signs used. Nos. 3 (both examples), and possibly 4 in fig. 2 differ from the two signs previously discussed. It seems likely that they do refer to a separate office from those other examples, likely to refer to the royal apartments.

These three separate references to a presumed ipt nswt in the narrative texts make use of the signs  and  and, in each case, there is a variant reading with . In Wnj's biography this last sign is present on two occasions, suggesting that a building might be intended. In the third reference there is no , and the reference there could be to the collective of

women, rather than to the jpt establishment. In this biography of Špss-Pth (Urk. I.51,13 and 16), the reference is to his education with the royal children in the king's palace within the inner residence of the . The use of the female determinative after the words for royal children could perhaps imply that females served there as instructors. Lastly, in the titles of Nfr.s-rs,⁷¹ the house determinative again provides an appropriate sign for her residence within a royal building, thus suggesting that there might have been a distinction between those words with the  determinative and those without.

It would thus appear that while Ward has presented an interesting argument concerning some references to the jpt nswt, it is suggested that those of Wnj, Špss-Pth and Nfr.s-rs do refer to a collective of royal women (or their private quarters). In view of the chain of inscriptions linking the Old to the New Kingdom with regard to this word it seems possible that the hieroglyphs  and  did express a common idea throughout the three periods. But that all signs which have been attributed to the jpt in the past⁷² should refer to the women's quarters should now be reconsidered in the light of research undertaken by Nord, Lorton and Ward.

The nnr/wt during Dynasties I - IV



fig. 3 Inscription on the stele of a
subsidiary burial at Abydos.

Petrie, RT I, pl.XXXI

The hnr/wt is more difficult to identify between Dynasties I - IV. This is in contrast to the remainder of records for the Old Kingdom (see discussion on the term 'hnr' at the beginning of this chapter). Kaplony refers to a woman from the hnr/wt in the Early Dynastic period whom he identifies as Db3t,⁷³ 'the Nile horse's little wife', a phrase he explains as one connected with Hapy and the harim.⁷⁴ Kaplony has expressed the view that Db3t carries the title hnr(t), which he⁷⁵ associates with the harim, but the stele gives little support to this reading (see fig. 3). 3

The frequent references in other literature, to the female burials surrounding the tombs of the First Dynasty rulers as being those of concubines, is also suspect.⁷⁶ Nothing about the majority of those stelae suggest that the women were concubines, even though they could have been members of either a hnr or an jpt if one existed in that period. Since the male burials within those Early Dynastic subsidiary burials are those of servants and officials of the king it is equally likely that many of the female burials were those of servants, rather than concubines. As the burials included at least several of the wives of the kings, specifically designated (see Chapter 4), we might anticipate that the majority of female burials were those of palace workers, since such servants might be wanted in the

afterlife the king envisaged. Lastly, it might be pointed out that Queen Mrjt-Nt's burial also featured female subsidiary graves, when one would suppose that concubines would be an unnecessary adjunct to her afterlife.

The evidence from Dynasty XI

In the time of Mentuhotep I there were a number of women who were considered to belong to the harim of this king. Six young females, buried within the king's great mortuary complex at Deir el Bahri, were considered to be concubines⁷⁷ because five of them bore the title hkrt nswt wꜥtt, a title which was earlier thought to be the designation of a concubine, but which now appears to be a courtly title.⁷⁸ Although the women were not entitled hmt nswt on their sarcophagi they were given the title of 'King's Wife' on their chapels within the complex, and are thus considered in this work (and elsewhere⁷⁹) to be royal wives.⁸⁰

The status of these women is uncertain, but several theories have been put forward. One suggestion⁸¹ is that the girls might have been partners in hostage-marriages contracted by the king in his effort to reunite Egypt at the commencement of Dynasty XI.⁸² Another proposal is that they belonged to a special category of priestesses of Hathor, and were part of her harim.⁸³

A third suggestion put forward is that they formed a religious harim, similar to the one assigned to the god Min, in which their duties were 'to serve the king as god on earth'.⁸⁴ To date, there has been no resolution of this problem.

Like the remains from the 'Treasure of the Three Egyptian Princesses',⁸⁵ the wives of Mentuhotep I each had only a few isolated titles of 'hmt nswt'.

However, those three wives lacked the titles of hmt ntr Hwt-Hr and hkrt nswt w-~~tt~~, titles that Mentuhotep's five wives possessed. Then, too, the infrequency of their titles hmt nswt, hmt nswt mrt.f, incline some scholars to exclude the Eleventh Dynasty women as proper queens. One salient point that has been made,⁸⁶ is that C38jt's name and title of hmt nswt is given elsewhere on a scarab,⁸⁷ confirming that she indeed was the wife of a king, and not simply a priestess of Hathor and a hkrt nswt. It would thus seem proper to consider the others who carry the title of 'hmt nswt' at Deir el Bahri to have also been the wives of the king. One is reminded that Queen Jpwt I, mother of Pepy I, also carried different titles within her burial chamber to those given in her chapel above. The implication is that the burial equipment may have been prepared at an early stage, before

Mentuhotep attained the throne. Their obvious contemporaneity provides a very strong indication that Mentuhotep I had a plurality of wives at one time. Not since Dynasty I had such a clear indication been given of royal polygyny and, as in the case of the women with the m33t Hr C Sth title buried with King Djer, it would appear that there was a difference of rank (suggested by the different types of titularies) between them and the other wives of that king.

The concubine Jmnt

One of the other tombs discovered near the complex of Mentuhotep I contained the burial of a woman whose relationship with the king was even more uncertain. Jmnt differed from the other women in being tattooed - a feature thought to be associated with concubines.⁸⁸ She is variously referred to either as 'concubine',⁸⁹ or as 'King's Wife'.⁹⁰ The site of Jmnt's pit tomb, known during the nineteenth century, has since been forgotten,⁹¹ so it is now impossible to investigate the problem. On her sarcophagus she is entitled hkrt nswt w^ctt mrt.f, and hmt ntr Hwt-Hr mrt.f.⁹² We do not know of other titles that might have been on her chapel, since this had vanished before her pit was discovered. It seems unlikely that her titles had the same ambiguity as those of the other hkrt nswt w^ctt buried within



28109

fig. 4 Mummy cartonnage mask from the tomb of Hntj,
hkrt nswt, from Deir el Bahri.

- Lacau, Sarcophages anterieurs II,
pl. XXIII

Mentuhotep's shrine.

There has been some confusion over Jmnt's status since she has been considered a king's wife.⁹³ Perhaps the reason for the confusion over the status of Jmnt was due, in part, to her mummy mask. Another hkrt nswt who came from the same period and location⁹⁴ bore the vulture wig of a queen (fig. 4), and it is likely that the mummy of Jmnt was similarly equipped, thus causing her discoverers to think her a queen.

Nfrw and Tm

Both Nfrw and Tm were wives of Mentuhotep I. The former was the daughter of a king and, it has been claimed,⁹⁵ the full sister of Mentuhotep I. Ward has rightly challenged this view.⁹⁶

Ward's other hypothesis concerning this queen is more questionable. His theory is that the king's wives were chosen from among the ranks of the hkrt nswt. Because a scrap of linen, bearing the name of 'hkrt nswt, hmt ntr Hwt-Hr, Nfrw', was found in the tomb of another hkrt nswt, Ward assumes that the Nfrw in question was the queen. In his words,⁹⁷

'it is probable that this scrap of linen names Neferu as she was before she became queen. Having achieved that position, she gave away her personal linens as no longer being appropriately identified. It could well be that Neferu was a contemporary of the

women in the chapels, one of the six candidates for marriage to the king, and was the lucky one to receive the king's nod.'

Ward's argument fails to establish that hkrt nswt Nfrw was the later queen. Indeed, strong support to the contrary is given by the lack of the s3t nswt title on the linen fragment, and the lack of hkrt nswt for any actual daughter of a king. Queen Nfrw's titles of rp^ctt and s3t nswt are those of a true princess from this period,⁹⁸ and it is suggested that the linen record does not refer to the queen at all. Nfrw was a popular name in Middle Kingdom times and it is more likely that the Nfrw named on the mummy bandages was simply a courtier attached to the palace. hkrt nswt Nfrw also lacked the w^ctt distinction of the other five queens and this, too, weakens Ward's hypothesis. As he rightly notes earlier in his book,⁹⁹ among these courtiers, the title of hkrt nswt belongs to a different social level from that of hkrt nswt w^ctt.

At this point, Ward raises the possibility that the child Mjw^t might have been Nfrw's daughter, utilising a tomb discarded by her mother, Nfrw, when she became queen.¹⁰⁰ While one might accept the suggestion that Mjw^t might have been given the burial if she were the daughter of Nfrw, there is no evidence as yet for this relationship.

Queen Tm

Queen Tm, another wife of Mentuhotep I, is not seen by Ward as having been a contemporary of Nfrw - a view with which most would be in agreement although, since their titulary was so very different, the queens might have been contemporary at one time. The different titulary might have been designed to emphasise their different status.

Ward suggests that Tm died some time after the start of Phase C of Mentuhotep's temple,¹⁰¹ but that need not be so. The titles on her sarcophagus, mwt nswt bjtj, hmt nswt bjtj,¹⁰² mwt nswt, hmt nswt mrt.f, hsjt wrt, hdt wrt¹⁰³ indicate that, by the time of her burial, the queen had become the mother of Mentuhotep's successor. It would thus appear that Mentuhotep I predeceased her - presumably some time after Phase D 2. What probably occurred is that although Tm's tomb was excavated earlier, her burial was made after the death of the king.

Tm is the last-known wife of Mentuhotep I. This female collective belonging to Mentuhotep I has been seen as a harim by previous scholars, a view which Ward has challenged. He does not accept the idea that the king was a polygamist and argues that Queens Nfrw and Tm were successive, not contemporary, and that the five burials were those of brides-designate, not actual wives. For Queen C3sjt, however, there is a scarab with her name

and title.¹⁰⁴ Additional to the scarab, Naville and Gauthier consider that the remains of her name appear on a block from Deir el Bahri. From the position of the inscription they suggested that it referred to the wife of the king.¹⁰⁵ These considerations, together with her unusual name, reduce the possibility of confusion with any other queen; it would appear that no other example of that name has been recorded. (For further discussion on Mentuhotep's wives, see Chapter 7.)

The females buried in Mentuhotep's complex at Deir el Bahri do suggest, by their collective tombs, that there may have been an jpt in Dynasty XI times. Their burials also suggest that the king found the idea of polygyny acceptable. That polygamy was practised among a few of the wealthier families between the late Old and the Middle Kingdom periods is thought to be likely,¹⁰⁶ and it would not be surprising if other instances of polygamy were to be found among the royal families of later dynasties. During the Thirteenth Dynasty, for example, King Sebekhotep III (whose reign only lasted three years) records two wives, Queen Nnj and Queen Snb-hn^c.s (see prosopography). These marriages are very likely to have been polygamous, since his reign was so short and since the records of these two queens - in comparison with those of other queens at least - are fairly numerous. As in the

case of Mentuhotep's wives, one of Sebekhotep's queens had a simple hmt nswt title, while the other displayed a rich titulary, similar to that of Queen Nfrw. Again we see a similarity between the two families, in that Snb-hnG.s appears to have been childless, while Nnj had two daughters; and no child is known for Queen Nfrw, but Tm was the mother of the king's son. Perhaps this sort of circumstance determined the issue of multiple marriages for each king.

Thus it is that, contrary to Ward's view, there does seem to be evidence for polygamy in the Eleventh Dynasty in the court of King Mentuhotep I. On the other hand, whether all of his successors followed his example, is uncertain. The evidence for a collective of women resident at the court is indicated by the community of burials within the king's mortuary complex. For this reason it is suggested that there is evidence for the presence of an jpt during this reign.

The jpt in the Twelfth Dynasty

In literary sources the jpt seems to be referred to in the story of Sinuhe R 3.¹⁰⁷ From the sense of the text it would fit the idea of an jpt, since Sinuhe says at that point that he was an attendant of the queen. Although Ward has doubts about the

reading¹⁰⁸ he does concede that this could be a genuine sign for jpt nswt, even though he prefers the idea that it may be the original scribe's form of the ns (W11) sign, and not the jpt sign itself.¹⁰⁹

In the inscriptional material the sign is represented several times. At Abydos, near the two great dummy mastabas of Senwosret, a broken clay sealing was found which has the remains of a Twelfth Dynasty imj-r jpt nswt, named Jjj.¹¹⁰ Another overseer of the harim, and two scribes are also attested elsewhere for this period.¹¹¹ Other officials connected with the jpt in this period are a Twelfth Dynasty 't3t jpt nswt' and an 'iri-Ct jpt nswt',¹¹² - the former title has the suspect sign that Ward would prefer to read as 'granary'. The title of jrj-Ct (without the designation of 'jpt') is also met with in the next dynasty, in connection with the women within the royal household listed in Papyrus Boulaq XVIII (see below). Although those officials do not carry the suspect sign there could be a link between the two positions of 'jrj-Ct X', for the women of Pap. Boulaq, and 'iri-Ct jpt nswt', for the Twelfth Dynasty officials.

A royal household in Dynasty XIII

Amongst the rationbook papyri Papyrus Boulaq XVIII presents us with an unique list of the royal household in the Thirteenth Dynasty. Although the term 'jpt' is not used within the papyrus itself, I would suggest that what this rationbook records is the household of the jpt in the times of Sebekhotep II.

The list is headed by Queen Jj, who is followed by a Prince Rꜥ-n.f, then three, unnamed princesses - presumably sisters of the prince. Directly after these more prestigious members of the royal family come a number of women who are named 'snt_nswt'. Their names are Snbt, Rjj.s Bbj (A), Bbj (B), Pssw, Hr-m-hb, Nfꜣt-jw, Hmmt, S3t-Hwt-Hr and Nfrw.¹¹³ The list reveals that such members of the royal household were individually entitled to certain rations daily from the royal estates. Although both Borchardt and Scharff refer to the king's sisters as 'concubines',¹¹⁴ these women were more likely to be the king's sisters, since the term 'snt' is not employed as a euphemism for concubines in this period. 'Snt_nswt' is well-attested as a title for the Thirteenth Dynasty, and indicates a royal sister whose parents were commoners. Since such women would not be entitled to call themselves 's3t_nswt', kings' sisters adopted the other title to distinguish themselves.

Each of these women in Pap. Boulaq had her own household,

for which she received regular rations,¹¹⁵ and it is apparent that these were daily rations, not mortuary offerings.¹¹⁶ In addition, the list reveals that certain officials connected with these individual domestic 'households' also received rations; they derived income from the other sources connected with the palace, too.¹¹⁷ Thus Pap. Boulaq XVIII provides us with invaluable evidence for the provisioning arrangements of the royal court in the Second Intermediate Period and, as it deals with the female collective and its dependents there is some reason to conclude that this royal collective represents the jpt.

Conclusion

There is no further reference to the jpt in the period leading up to the Eighteenth Dynasty. Consequently, as can be gathered from the very fragmentary nature of the evidence, our picture of the so-called harim between Dynasties I and XVII is far from adequate. All that might be said at this stage is that there were two collectives of women associated with the king between Dynasties I and VI: the jpt and the hnr. The two do not seem to have had a similar function in that period, even if they were to overlap in the Twentieth Dynasty. While the former term might have incorporated the female members of the king's

household, and may have been engaged in educational and textile occupations, the latter term can be demonstrated to have been concerned primarily with singing and dancing, both at the court and in service to the temples of a number of gods.

During the First Intermediate and Middle Kingdom periods there are fewer references to either the hnr or the jpt. However, it would appear that, whereas the jpt might have remained unchanged, the hnr/wt may have diverged from its earlier form. Men became more overtly incorporated into the hnr/wt at this time, and the nature of the administration also altered: There were fewer references to the hnr of the king, although there is more evidence for the hnrw of several gods. Furthermore, the frequent instances of females acting as overseers of the hnr began to diminish in the Eleventh Dynasty, while the more important officials of the king took the place of female overseers of these institutions.

While opinions about the existence of harims within the Middle Kingdom period have varied among scholars over the decades, it would seem that two royal households, those of Mentuhotep I and Sebekhotep II possessed an jpt, even if that term is not used. The jpt and hnr/wt were both collectives of women that, as institutions, continued to be present in the Old,

Middle and New Kingdoms. During this extremely lengthy period it is impossible that some change within these institutions did not occur, and it is suggested that the organisation of the Twentieth Dynasty, which incorporated the jpt within the hnr/wt, was somewhat different from its Old Kingdom counterpart.

CHAPTER 4

ROYAL WOMEN IN THE EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD

The history of the earliest dynasties is exceptionally difficult to reconstruct. The chronology of the period is shadowy, and there are many problems concerning the few personalities whose names emerge - particularly the royal females during this period. In a number of instances even the identification of the royal tombs for these times is tenuous. Only four of the large royal tombs from the First Dynasty have been assigned to queens, the Naqada tomb of Nt-htp, the two tombs (Tomb Y at Abydos, and 3503 at Saqqara), of Mrjt-Nt, and Tomb 3507 of Hr-Nt at Saqqara. All but the Abydos tomb of Mrjt-Nt have been challenged - as indeed has Emery's conviction that he had found the actual cemetery of the early dynastic kings and their families at Saqqara. General opinion has inclined to the idea that the Saqqara tombs belong to officials, notably Helck,¹ Drioton & Vandier,² Kaplony,³ Kemp,⁴ Simpson,⁵ Kaiser,⁶ Málek,⁷ and

Stadelmann.⁸ Kees⁹ and Gardiner¹⁰ prefer to reserve judgement. Postowskaja,¹¹ Edwards¹² and Lauer,¹³ on the other hand, still think that the Saqqara tombs were more likely to belong to members of the royal family, rather than officials; they incline to the idea that the Abydos tombs could be cenotaphs.

There is a marked difference between the type of tomb attributed to these three women mentioned above, and the tombs of other women who seem to have been the wives of several of the kings. The latter graves, known only from their stelae at Abydos, were small, subsidiary structures built in rows around the central royal tombs of the First Dynasty. The queens who evidently occupied those small graves seem to have been sacrificed - perhaps voluntarily - at the time when the main royal interment took place.¹⁴ They shared their cemeteries with builders, potters, musicians, women of the palace, butlers, butchers, and other servants who were also sacrificed at the same time. The graves of the queens in no way differed from those of the palace functionaries and servants who were sacrificed with them. Such simple graves as these queens possessed were to be the architectural models for royal tombs of princes and

princesses of the following dynasty.¹⁵ They contrast strikingly with the tombs of the queens mentioned previously, not only by their size, but also by the fact that the larger tombs were structures quite independent of other tombs attributed to the kings. The purpose of this chapter is to re-examine the evidence regarding the funerary monuments of these various queens, and to explore the possibilities for differences between them. The three more prominent queens will be discussed first.

I: QUEEN NT-HTP

Nt-htp is the earliest of these three queens; her name appears on a number of fragments found in the cemeteries of Naqada and Abydos. Her name has been the subject of several scholarly enquiries. At first Helck¹⁶ argued that there were two people to consider here, one being Htp-wj-Nt, the owner of the seal discussed below, the other said to be Nt-htp, the wife of a person called Rhjt, whom Kaplony and Helck then considered to be a prince. However, Helck¹⁷ would now appear to see the variant spellings of Nt-htp as referring to one woman, who was the wife of King Aha (a king Helck tentatively identifies with Menes).

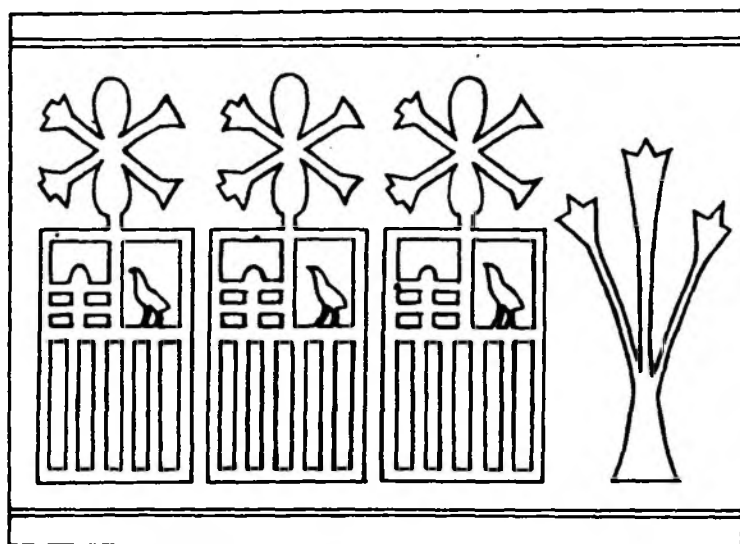


fig. 1 Seal impression of Queen Nt-htp.

- Kaplony, IÄF, fig. 201

The distinction between the two names of Nt-htp has occurred because the seal in fig. 1 has a 'w' which is additional to the usual hieroglyphs for Nt-htp in other instances.¹⁸ Kaplony has suggested that her name might be Htp-wj-Nt, 'How gracious is Neith'.¹⁹

The tomb allegedly that of Nt-htp at Naqada would appear to be a little simpler than similar models built later on at Saqqara; Nt-htp's tomb had fewer magazines, and the burial chamber itself was only a depression in the ground, rather than a proper room like the sepulchral chambers of later tombs. It belongs to the time of Aha, and appears to be one of the earliest of the large, niche-decorated mastabas.²⁰ The tomb, however, is architecturally the same as those Saqqara tombs, (see fig. 2), a feature that Kaiser attributes to the design's Hierakonopolitan origin.²¹

De Morgan's excavation of the Naqada tomb disclosed large numbers of jars within several of the magazines; these, he supposed, were offerings to sustain the deceased in the afterlife.²² In addition he uncovered scores of clay, stone and ivory vases, fragments of furniture that had been

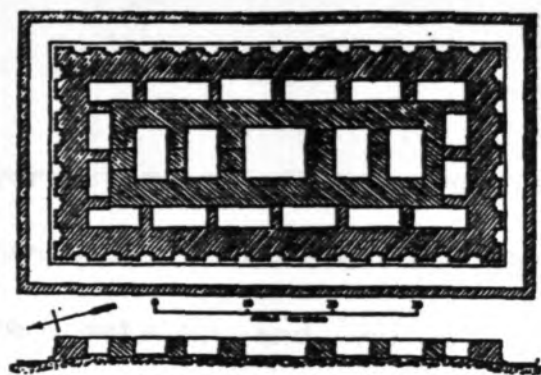


Fig. 7. Plan of the tomb of Hekenu at Nagada

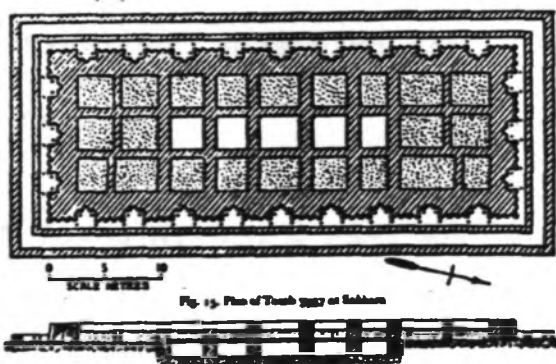


Fig. 15. Plan of Thutmose III at Sakkarah

Fig. 16. Section of Thutmose III at Sakkarah

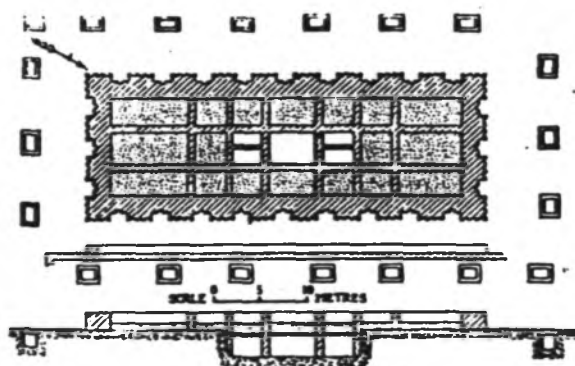


Fig. 30. Plan of Thutmose III at Sakkarah

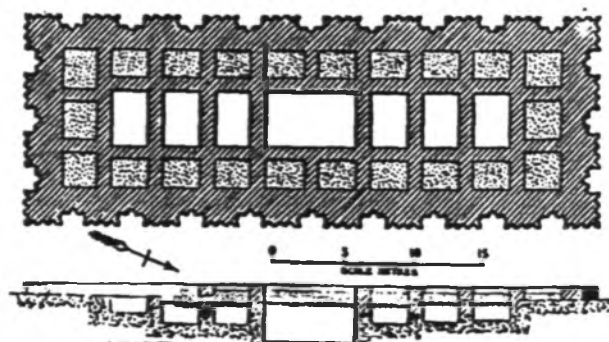


fig. 2 Archaeological patterns within the tombs of the First Dynasty.

- examples taken from Emery, AE, pp.48,55,64,67.

inlaid with ivory, remains of ebony furniture - all showing delicate workmanship - flint knives, items of jewellery in gold and other metals, and various objects of ivory, alabaster, mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell and wood, all burnt, but revealing something of the richness of the original tomb deposits.

De Morgan found Nt-htp's name on some of the objects, notably a number of ivory labels which had been attached to her jewellery. The labels are engraved on two sides, one consisting of a sketch of a piece of jewellery, and figures (presumably referring to the numbers of beads in the necklace), its reverse bearing the queen's name. In Emery's opinion 'such meticulous recording suggests the great value attached to the jewellery'.²³ Fragments of ivory vases also were inscribed with her name. Thus, even though the tomb had been both pillaged and burnt in antiquity, its remains indicate that the tomb owner had been a person of great esteem, for whom costly funerary gifts were provided. Moreover, that person had considerably more prestige within the community at the time than had other contemporaries, for the size and architectural detail of the tomb was larger, and more elaborate, than any other tomb within the Naqada

cemetery - or indeed any other cemetery for that particular period.²⁴ It was for that reason that de Morgan had supposed he had discovered the tomb of the founder of the First Dynasty, the legendary King Menes.


A number of cylinder seals were also found within the tomb, four bearing the serekh of Aha, one bearing the serekh of Aha and the sign of three rhjt birds, another with a collection of animals, and a sixth bearing the serekh of Nt-htp (fig. 1). While some historians thought that Aha's seals showed that this king had buried his father in the Naqada tomb,²⁵ others thought the grave belonged to Nt-htp, the wife of Menes.²⁶ More recently, Kaplony has expressed the view that the grave belongs to Rhjt (whom he terms a prince), because so many items bearing his name (eg. the seal mentioned above), have been found in the tomb. In Kaplony's opinion, the grave had been built for a king, but usurped by Rhjt some time later. Queen Nt-htp, he thinks, should be buried in the cemetery of King Shtj/Djer, at Abydos.²⁷ The presence of Nt-htp's name in the Naqada tomb is due, Kaplony believes, to gifts that Nt-htp made to the anonymous king or prince who was buried there.



fig. 3 Inscription carrying the name of Nt-htp and
other signs.

- Kaplony, IÄF, fig. 722

Many of the clay seal impressions which covered the necks of vases in the tomb carried impressions of the serekh of King Aha. It was obvious that the officials of this king must have organised the burial of the queen, and this gives some tempus for Queen Nt-htp. Since Aha was the successor to King Narmer, Nt-htp was presumed by some to be the latter's wife.

Amongst the inscribed items found at Naqada and Abydos were several items that gave one or two details about the queen. She held the title sm3 nbwj, 'One who is joined with the Two Lords'.²⁸ It is an early title of a consort (see discussion on p.23, Chapter 2). Kaplony has also claimed that on one of the inscriptions, Nt-htp's name is linked with that of Horus Aha, and either the name, or the title, of I3tj (fig. 3). From this inscription he has suggested that Nt-htp was the wife of Aha and the mother of a prince called I3tj.²⁹ Even when the inscription is magnified, however, I fail to find this reading. The sign present here has a closer analogy with  [jr], and although there is a Horus serekh next to the name of Nt-htp, the name in that serekh has been completely broken off. There is a possibility that Horus Aha was the original inscription, but

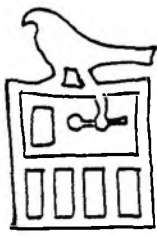
there is no way of establishing that premise today. Since this is the only evidence for the alleged familial relations of Nt-htp, Kaplony's theory remains speculative. No conclusions can be reached about the queen's family. All we can say is that Nt-htp was a consort of a king, and - if the tomb at Naqada is hers - one whose esteem ensured that her costly burial was carried out by the officials of the king himself.

The most important record found in that tomb was the seal (fig. 1) of the queen. Several theories have been put forward concerning this object, although de Morgan himself was content to describe the seal, refraining from further comment, Weill³⁰ drew attention to the insignia of the goddess Neith which surmounts the serekh, but made no comment on other aspects of the sign. Gardiner³¹ remarked that the queen's name was written 'in an interesting way', but also avoided giving an opinion on the serekh itself. Kaplony³² was of the opinion that the seal points to the fact that the queen has her own palace, giving her equal rights with the king. Helck,³³ claiming that Kaplony did not give sufficient value to the serekh's importance, was insistent that the serekh of Nt-htp signalled a regency. In

support of his theory he refers both to the serekh seal and to the ten month interregnum perceived in the second line of the Palermo Stone,³⁴ the presence of the Neith symbol above the serekh being seen as one reason why this insignia suggests a regency, rather than a monarchy.³⁵

Throughout the whole course of Egyptian iconographical history there is no instance where a serekh is used for anyone other than an Egyptian monarch. Only four other queens known to us in Egypt's pharaonic period have had their names recorded in serekhs, Mrjt-Nt (Mrjt.wj-Nt),³⁶ Sebek-neferu, (Mrjt-R^c),³⁷ Hatshepsut (Wsrt-k3w),³⁸ and Twosret (Cnh-Hr).³⁹ With the apparent exceptions of Nt-htp and Mrjt-Nt (whose records are discussed below), all of them were known to be monarchs.

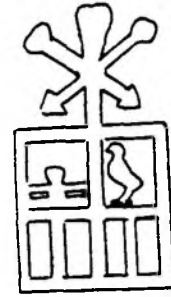
Like these other queens-regnant, Nt-htp's serekh displayed a name (Htpw-Nt) that differed from the name written without the serekh. This curious variation has already drawn the attention of some scholars,⁴⁰ Kaplony,⁴¹ as has been mentioned above, remarking that Nt-htp's serekh denoted a palace domain. No queen who was merely a consort ever had her name enclosed by a serekh, however, even though



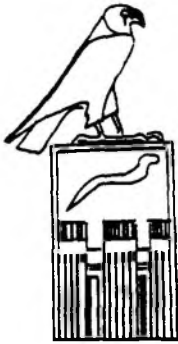
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

fig. 4 Certain serekhs used between Dynasties I and II.

many,⁴² if not all, major consorts seem to have had their own domains as separate establishments from those of the kings. Kaplony's suggestion, therefore, has no historical parallel from which to draw. Thus, it would seem, another explanation must be sought for this interesting seal.

One reason why Nt-htp's seal was thought not to be a valid example of a serekh lay in the use of the Neith sign which surmounts the queen's insignia.⁴³ On most serekhs - there are some early examples from Dynasty I which prove exceptions - the symbol of the ruler's patron god surmounts the serekh itself. While Horus is the usual symbol appearing above most serekhs there are several known types of serekhs which feature different tutelary gods, all of them considered valid (see fig. 4). The only way in which the serekhs of Nt-htp and Mrjt-Nt differ significantly is in their choice of the female deity,⁴⁴ Neith, the warrior goddess who had a close connexion to the Egyptian throne.

While it may be possible (as Helck claims), that Neith's symbol signals a regency for Nt-htp, there are problems which do arise from this theory. One difficulty is that no known regent (such as Mrj-R^c-^cnh.n.s II, J^ch-htp II,

Hatshepsut, or Twosret, for example), made use of a serekh during her regency. In the last two examples, however, the transition to a monarchy was marked by the later use of a serekh, together with a new name for the queen. This would seem to confirm that regencies in themselves did not entitle a queen to the use of a serekh in the New Kingdom period at least. Sebekneferu's records, and those of Nt-krtj are so few that we cannot tell what circumstances existed for them. Nt-hṭp may have been a regent but, from the later evidence at least, it seems unlikely that the serekh was used to signal that office.

The evidence of Aha's seals having been used by the officials who sealed the tomb suggests that Nt-hṭp died before that king, rather than vice versa (as Helck and others have proposed⁴⁵). This means that her alleged regency after the death of Aha would be an unlikely proposition. It is thus possible that Helck's view about the regency of Nt-hṭp being shown on the Palermo Stone could be anomalous, as the regnal gap follows the reign of Aha. The regency of Mrj-R^c-ḥnh.n.s II is not revealed in this way in the Turin Canon, and neither are other regencies acknowledged in Manetho - one would doubt if such records

ever would be made.⁴⁶ The hallmark of a regency is its temporary nature, in which a protector acts only on behalf of a ruler already upon the throne. It is the latter's reign alone that is recorded in official king lists. For these reasons it seems unlikely that, even if a regency had occurred in Nt-htp's case, such a regency would have been recorded on the Palermo Stone.

Whatever the position held by Nt-htp during the Early Dynastic period, if the tomb belonged to her, it indicates that she was an extremely important woman in her community. She appears to have held the title of a queen (sm3 nbwj), yet her name appears in some places within a serekh. Like many of the early kings from this time, her name also appears without a serekh.⁴⁷ At no other time in pharaonic history does the use of the serekh belong to a queen who is merely a consort and, therefore, perhaps we could consider Nt-htp to have held some sort of ruler status.

The hiatus shown in the Palermo Stone does need further investigation. As it stands, without any explanatory signs, perhaps it simply marks an interregnum, but Manetho mentions neither this particular episode in register 2 of the Palermo



fig. 5 Limestone slab from Saqqara, thought to have come from S 3507.

- Emery, GT III, pl.98.

Stone, nor any other interregnum that may have occurred. However, a fragmentary relief (fig.5), that was found in the ruins of a tomb built on top of Saqqara 3507 (the tomb alleged to be the grave of Queen Hr-Nt) may be more helpful in offering a suggestion for the Palermo hiatus.

This relief was found in unusual circumstances, and showed considerable signs of wear. Emery was unsure of its origin, but suggested that it may have come from Tomb 3507 itself.⁴⁸ It has a curious scene, showing two kings, each wearing the short festal robe, and each with a hoe in his hand, apparently paying homage to a statue of a baboon god (fig. 5). The two falcon effigies, one of which is considerably larger than the other, may represent the god Horus. Since each king wears the red crown, one cannot assume the relief to show two episodes of a single festival, for then one of the figures could be expected to wear the white crown. The presence of the two falcons facing the two kings may therefore be a reference to both kings being seen as the earthly Horus, in the same way as Djed's ivory comb shows the god Horus in apposition to King Djed. Perhaps this relief represent a coregency. And, might the concept of a coregency provide an alternative suggestion for the hiatus

on the Palermo Stone (the hiatus actually being an overlapping coregency)?⁴⁹ The dual king/falcon images on this stele could encourage such an interpretation, and there may have been no interregnum at all.

Either way, it seems to me that there are several options to be considered in any explanation for the Palermo Stone's difficulty. Helck's suggestion (that it records Nt-ḥtp's alleged regency) does not seem to me to be particularly strong.

II: QUEEN MRJT-NT

When Petrie found the tomb of Mrjt-Nt at Abydos, alongside the graves of other rulers for Dynasty I, he assigned her a tentative position as the fourth king of that dynasty.⁵⁰ Nothing exceptional in the burial suggested to him that this ruler was not a male, and not until several years later was it realised that Mrjt-Nt was probably a female monarch.⁵¹ It was then that queries were made about her presumed sovereignty. There has been no clear resolution to this problem, some conceding that she was a monarch,⁵² others seeing her as having a pre-eminent, but not kingly status.⁵³ It is the purpose of this section to

re-examine the evidence and attempt a resolution of that problem.

In common with the male monarchs of Dynasty I, Mrjt-Nt had attributed to her a second tomb at Saqqara, excavated by Emery in 1953.⁵⁴ In addition to the size and indications of great wealth, the tomb at Saqqara possessed an adjacent ship burial and Emery, like Petrie, concluded that Mrjt-Nt was a sovereign. Both archaeologists assigned the queen a date based on the degree of sophistication of the tomb architecture. Emery placed her third in his list of rulers, commenting as he did so, that her chronological position and status were uncertain.⁵⁵ He supposed that she might be the successor of Djer, since a number of seal impressions of that king were found in her Saqqara tomb, together with those of Djet and Den.⁵⁶ Weigall,⁵⁷ Sethe,⁵⁸ Reisner,⁵⁹ Helck⁶⁰ and Edwards⁶¹ all suggested alternative theories concerning her chronological position,⁶² the majority of scholars assigning her as the mother of King Den. An attempt to refine the radio-carbon dates of the queen was made,⁶³ but this, too, was unsatisfactory.⁶⁴ The dating of Mrjt-Nt had not really been resolved.

The next methodological investigation was made along the lines of sequence dating. In 1979 Kaplan argued that, while all the royal tombs at Abydos have some types of pottery in common, the absence of Abydos ware, and the presence of lattice-painted vase types within the tombs of both Aha and Mrjt-Nt, together suggest a chronological similarity that is absent from the later tombs at Abydos.⁶⁵ Saqqara Tomb 2185 (time of Djer), while possessing Abydos ware, was also without lattice-painted ware.⁶⁶ As other First Dynasty tombs from the time of Djer, Djet and later kings at both Saqqara and Abydos did have Abydos ware,⁶⁷ Kaplan concluded that Queen Mrjt-Nt and King Aha must be prior to Djer and Djet.⁶⁸ Not only did Kaplan's re-alignment of Queen Mrjt-Nt have consequences for Egyptian history but it also eliminated a gap in Palestinian chronology that had hitherto caused some difficulties.⁶⁹

The structure of the queen's Saqqara tomb, No.3503, would also suggest a period closer to that of Djer, rather than to that of Den. Djer's Saqqara tomb has seven underground rooms, all much larger than those of Mrjt-Nt (see fig. 2 c and d). Moreover, her tomb lacked the entrance staircase that was such an important architectural

element from the time of Den onwards. The superstructures of the Saqqara tombs of Aha and Mrjt-Nt were also considered to be very similar. Beginning with the time of Djet and continuing into the later reigns, the rooms in the superstructure of the royal mastabas were increasingly being used for the accommodation of supplies; the earlier tombs, however, have less space devoted to magazines, as in Mrjt-Nt's mastaba.⁷⁰ Reisner, however, considered that her Saqqara tomb's architecture - far superior to that of the early monarchs' mastabas - suggested that her tomb might have been made closer to the period of Anedjib.⁷¹

On the other hand, the relative lack of sophistication evident in the inscriptions found within the tombs of Mrjt-Nt suggest a date closer to the early reigns of Dynasty I; the hieroglyphs from Djer's tomb - particularly those of the serekhs - display a confidence and control quite absent from few pieces of writing that remained in Mrjt-Nt's tomb.⁷² Petrie⁷³ had already noticed that the Mrjt-Nt ware at Tarkhan had a coarser style than that of her presumed predecessors. In addition, the apparent anomalies in the vase distribution that appear on Petrie's charts⁷⁴ have more consistency if the dating of Mrjt-Nt is re-adjusted to a

lower range.

Mrjt-Nt's heavy wooden cylinder seal found by Amelineau in the tomb of Djer at Abydos might also suggest that her lifetime was closer to the beginning of the dynasty than had been previously considered. In Weill's opinion this artefact is contemporaneous in style with a similar wooden seal belonging to Queen Nt-htp.⁷⁵

Such evidence from the hieroglyphic and archaeological records certainly provides useful support for the pottery dating preferred by Kaplan but, as yet, virtually no discussion on the coincidences revealed by these records has taken place.

The majority of scholars have thought that Mrjt-Nt could have been the mother of King Den.⁷⁶ These scholars sought to identify the queen with Den because of a partial inscription on the Palermo Stone, register 3, where only two hieroglyphs remain, an 'r' followed by a 't' (see prosopographical entry for discussion). One difficulty about this reading, however, is that the writing of the queen's name on her own records never shows this orthography, occasionally the 't' - seldom the 'r' - was

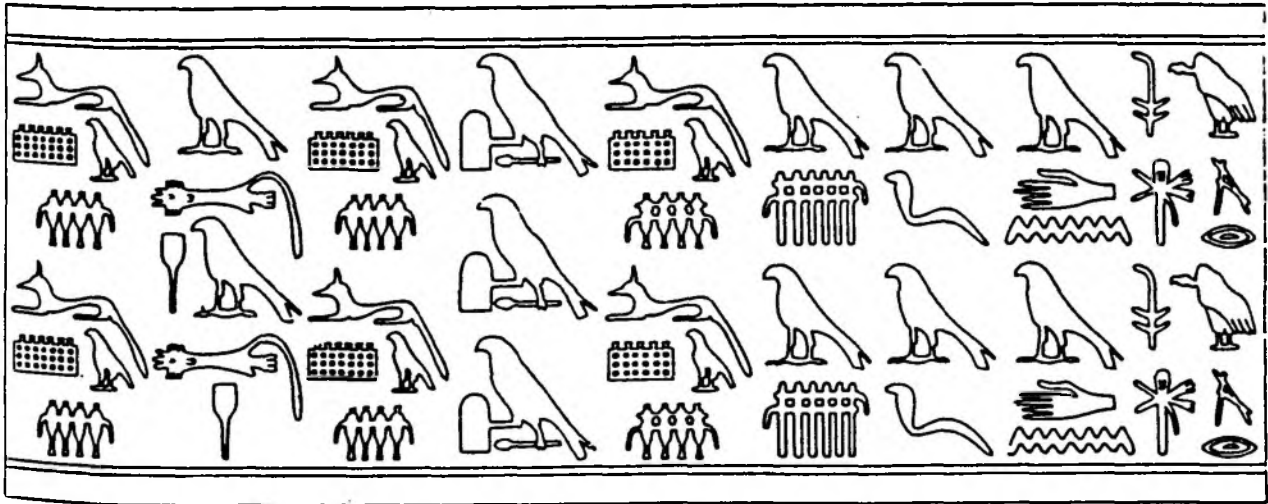


fig. 6 Dreyer's reconstruction of the seal of the
Abydos necropolis.

- Dreyer, MDAIK 43 (1986), fig. 1

present when her name was inscribed, and never with both the 'r' and the 't' during her lifetime.⁷⁷ But Dreyer's recent discovery of the seal impressions with the queen's name at last provided the required example of both hieroglyphic complements.⁷⁸ This seal impression (fig. 6), dates to the period shortly after the reign of Den, not of Mrjt-Nt.⁷⁹ As Mrjt-Nt's name on that seal lies next to that of King Den, prefixed by the words 'mwt nswt', scholars now had some evidence for her relationship to one of the First Dynasty kings. It seemed as if the chronological position of Mrjt-Nt had been settled, but not everyone was happy with this solution.

Kaiser's opinion differs substantially from that of Dreyer.⁸⁰ Inter alia, Kaiser disagrees with the alleged connection between Mrjt-Nt and Den, expressing the opinion that Den's name was a later addition to the actual seal.⁸¹ Kaiser believes that an alteration had occurred to the original seal used by the necropolis officials on this occasion.⁸² He argues that each king's name had originally been prefixed by the sign for Khentyimentiu. Mrjt-Nt's name (without this sign, but prefixed by mwt nswt), came at the end of the seal. Several differences between the

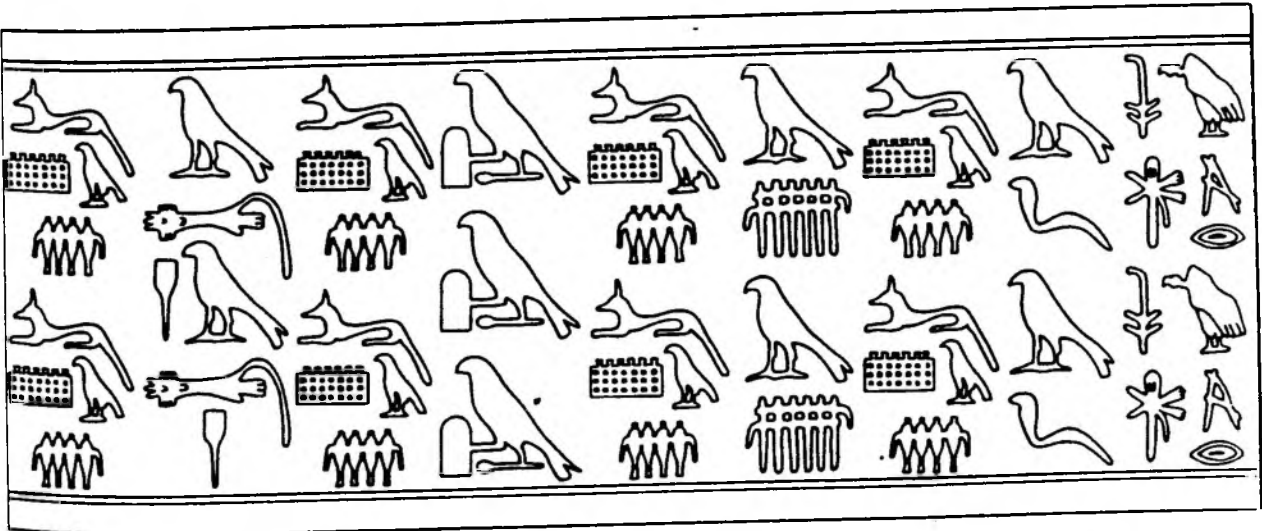


fig. 7 Kaiser's reconstruction of the "original" necropolis seal from Abydos.

- Kaiser, MDAIK 43 (1986), fig. 2.

hieroglyphs,⁸³ and a basic imbalance between the first and second halves of the seal impressions⁸⁴ indicate that this original design had been reworked. Such an alteration would have been fundamentally possible if the seal had been made from a metal mantle moulded over a wooden core, such as Dreyer suggests.⁸⁵ Kaiser thinks that this lengthy reworking (estimated to be as much as 5 cm⁸⁶) could have been made necessary by the sudden death of Den, his name needing to be added to the necropolis seal in a hurry. The size of the seal, and the delicate execution of the hieroglyphs⁸⁷ both suggest that the original seal had probably been made of precious metal.⁸⁸ Thus, when an addition became necessary, the seal was reworked, rather than a new seal being made. In executing this change the artist re-arranged the signs so that what had been the name of Djjet, followed by Mrjt-Nt, now became Djjet without the Khentyimentiu designation before his name, and the additional name of Den thus found its place in front of Mrjt-Nt's name (fig. 6). Kaiser thinks that the original position of Mrjt-Nt's name on the seal was not as the mother of Den, but as the mother of Djjet. He suggests that fig. 7 might bear a closer resemblance to the original seal. Although Kaiser's conclusion is conjectural

(since the original seal has not been found), his views about Mrjt-Nt's tempus, together with the other evidence mentioned previously, do advocate a lowering of Mrjt-Nt's date to a position as the wife of Djer.

* * * * *

Mrjt-Nt's chronological position has not been the only item under dispute. As was mentioned above, her position as ruler has also been questioned. Neither of her stelae had her name enclosed within a serekh, as the names of Djer and Djet were written. Since stelae bearing the names of Aha and Narmer are missing from their graves we cannot be sure that these earlier rulers showed their names in serekhs on their grave stelae either - although the probability is high that they did. Certainly, there are many instances where the earlier kings - and occasionally the later kings - recorded their names without the serekh enclosure.

But Mrjt-Nt did at some stage use the serekh: Emery found examples amongst the seal impressions in her Saqqara tomb⁸⁹ (see fig. 4b), so that, in this respect at least, she has one of the hallmarks of a sovereign.⁹⁰ Other criteria, such as the burial in the royal cemetery at

Abydos, the likelihood of her possession of a Talbezirk,⁹¹ the likelihood of two mortuary monuments (as had been attributed to other monarchs), her inclusion within the great necropolis seal mentioned above, and the acknowledgement of hntj. or hd and palace insignia on pottery fragments⁹² all contribute towards some sort of picture of sovereignty for the queen.

Mrjt-Nt's serekh differs from the usual Horus insignia adopted by most of the early kings. Its prototype was used by Queen Nt-htp - as was mentioned above in the discussion concerning her. Even though the tutelary god on the serekh differs from those of male sovereigns it is clear from later evidence concerning queens and regents that the possession of a serekh was only ever the privilege of a ruler - at least if the practice of the later periods in Egyptian history is any guide.⁹³

One other piece of evidence has been brought up in connection with Mrjt-Nt's serekhs, although it has not been much discussed. A damaged clay impression from Saqqara⁹⁴ has drawn the attention of both Vandier⁹⁵ and Kaplony.⁹⁶ It shows in close proximity the serekhs of Mrjt-Nt and one

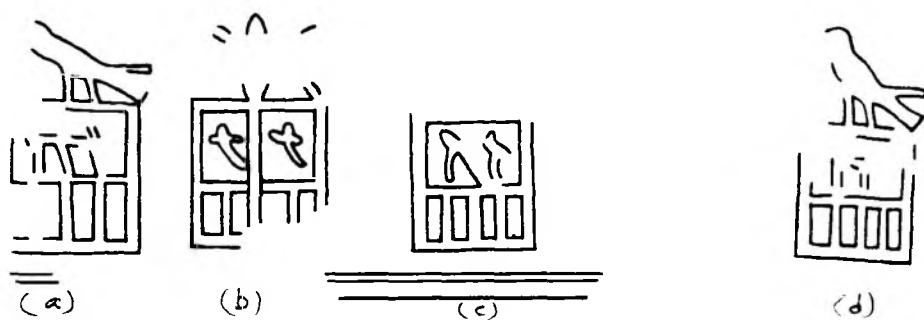


fig. 8 Seal impressions from S 3505, showing:

- (a) an unusual serekh
- (b) Mrjt-Nt's serekh
- (c) the same (distorted)
- (d) distorted serekh (of Djer?).

whose name is too fragmentary to read clearly (see fig. 8). Vandier was particularly interested in the evidence this discovery provided for the light it shed on the dating of Mrjt-Nt, indicating that her period was earlier than previously thought. He has taken the Horus name to be that of Djer.⁹⁷ Kaplony, however, does not share Vandier's opinion. Since this serekh impression differs from that of Djer's typical serekh, he has recorded the impression as a new Horus serekh.

Kaplony's caution has some merit; one would have to agree that the writing must have been recorded in an exceptionally careless fashion, if it were to be considered Djer's name. Emery himself said that the inscription did not suit the name of Djer;⁹⁸ but no other serekh from either the First, or the Second Dynasties could match this inscription as closely as Djer's serekh, and one hesitates to introduce another king, who is otherwise unknown. Thus the material offers us three possibilities, 1) it could be a hapax legomenon for Mrjt-Nt's Horus name; 2) it could be a careless inscription for Djer; 3) it could be the name of another king. While (2) is the most likely, there has been no convincing case made out for either (1) or (3). Against

(1) lies the evidence that the queen already had a serekh, even if it did carry the Neith symbol rather than that of Horus. Against (3) is the silence of our extant records. Due to the irregular nature of mud seal impressions (this impression may have been subject to later surface tension, while still damp) it is very possible that distortion to the usual seal of Djer has occurred. This is clearly possible, since the serekh shown is exactly the same size as others of Djer in the same tomb, thus reducing the likelihood of someone else's serekh being present. That Djer's name should appear within the same context as the serekh of Mrjt-Nt also fits in well with the new material that Dreyer's mud seal impression from Abydos has provided, but the possibility of three sovereigns being in context with one another is rather stretching credulity. It is unlikely that it is the Horus serekh for either Mrjt-Nt or for some unknown king.

Apart from the seal impressions of serekhs, other inscriptional material concerning Mrjt-Nt provides bureaucratic details from both Abydos and Saqqara. The names of several officials, recorded in seal impressions, were present in both tombs of the queen - officials like S3-k3,

who brought the tribute from Upper Egypt to the Abydos tomb of the queen,⁹⁹ or Htp-sd, the Overseer of Stores.¹⁰⁰ Most significant were the presence of a pr hg,¹⁰¹ and hwt hg¹⁰² and several examples of the hntj insignia,¹⁰³ all directly linked to the queen. While not considering her to have been a monarch, Edwards¹⁰⁴ suggests that these important offices could be indications of 'sovereign status'. The numbers of officials represented in Mrjt-Nt's tombs (some of whom also served under Djer) seem indicative of an active ruler, as Kaplony says.¹⁰⁵ A number of different inscriptions on pottery fragments, each carrying the name of a king and having the same offices as those discovered in Mrjt-Nt's tomb, were found in the graves of later rulers. This, too, adds to the impression that the queen's burial was of an equivalent royal standard.¹⁰⁶ Although the names of these officials are not shown in company with any serekh, they have direct parallels to those official seals found in the tombs of later kings.¹⁰⁷ Other seal impressions bear the names of officials from Den's reign, and this was the reason for attributing to Mrjt-Nt the original later date proposed by Petrie. Such late inscriptions need not be those that accompanied the queen's original burial however; subsequent

kings had repaired the tombs of former rulers, as Lauer has demonstrated,¹⁰⁸ and for this reason we find such oddities as the vase fragment of King Peribsen of late Dynasty II within the confines of Mrjt-Nt's Abydos tomb.¹⁰⁹

The burial from the Saqqara tomb attributed to Queen Mrjt-Nt is extremely interesting, but also ambiguous. The array of grave goods was sumptuous, according to Emery.¹¹⁰ But, more significant than this, is an indication that the person buried in Saqqara 3503 could have been a queen. (Whether or not the woman was Mrjt-Nt is less likely to be established, although jar inscriptions bearing her name were present in the burial chamber.) While the charred body permitted no clue for determining the sex of the occupant, there were several wooden canopy poles present.¹¹¹ These items have hitherto been found only in association with queens.¹¹²

However, the occupant of 3503 was accompanied by a boat burial,¹¹³ which is thought to be indicative of monarchs alone - particularly in this early period. Although few solar boat pits have been discovered for rulers of this period, a similar construction was made to accompany the

burial in 3357, considered by Emery to be the tomb of Aha.¹¹⁴ Such material is indeed suggestive of a monarch.¹¹⁵

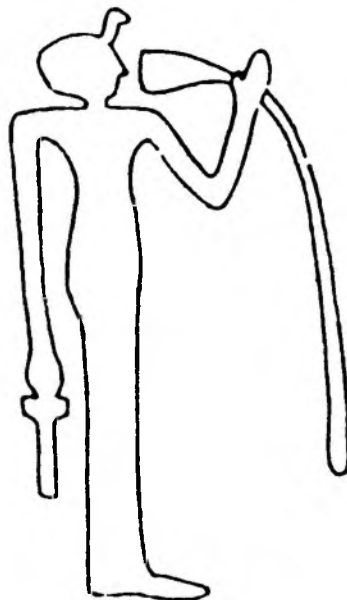
To this point a certain amount of evidence has been gathered which would indicate that Mrjt-Nt enjoyed many of the privileges and symbolic rights of a king - but was she one? Whilst her excavators, Petrie and Emery, both consider she was a monarch others do not. Helck¹¹⁶ has long held the view that she was not a king, but a regent, and in this he is followed by a number of scholars, such as Edwards,¹¹⁷ Grimal,¹¹⁸ and Kaiser.¹¹⁹ General issues concerning regencies have already been raised during discussion on Nt-htp, and these arguments will not need to be repeated here but, in Mrjt-Nt's case, there is additional material to be considered.

The most important of these records is the queen's title of mwt nswt, preserved on Dreyer's mud seal impression from Abydos. Being named as 'Mother of the King' Mrjt-Nt may indeed have been a regent for the son that succeeded to the throne after her time. This was the traditional pattern - at least for the New Kingdom, for which we do have records. The Herodotean story of Neitkrety's accession to the throne



- (a) Inscribed vignette of Queen Mrj-R~~C~~-~~C~~nh.n.s II, wearing the tight cap and uraeus of a monarch.

- Petrie, Abydos II, pl.XX



- (b) Rock-cut relief showing Queen Mrj-R~~C~~-~~C~~nh.n.s II carryingg the ~~C~~nh, and wearing cap and uraeus.

- Gardiner, Peet, & Cerny, Sinai II, pl.9.17.

also fits the traditional pattern, which is that, after the death of a king, a wife could act as regent for the heir, should he be too young to rule. While we could make the conjecture that Mrjt-Nt actually inherited the throne in some fashion, and that her son may even have been born after her hypothetical reign began, this would be unlikely, given traditional Egyptian customs.¹²⁰

There were a number of regents throughout pharaonic history. Those few kings for whom evidence strongly suggests a regency (eg. Pepy II, Ahmose, Thutmose III, Amenhotep III, Siptah), had a female regent, always the most senior wife of the deceased king.¹²¹ Occasionally some iconographical or written evidence for their existence remains, but such evidence is rare.

The earliest piece of evidence referring to regencies known at present is the alabaster statuette of Queen Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II from the Sixth Dynasty, holding her son, Pepy II, on her lap.¹²² From the few records we have Queen Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II is unlikely to have sought the monarchy, although she does, on occasions, appear with the tight cap and uraeus that Pepy himself was shown as wearing (fig. 9).

The inscription names the queen and her son who, although of child size, is dressed as a pharaoh. It is clear that this queen was acting as the protector of her child. It is also clear from the queen's use of the uraeus that some of the power of a ruler had been invested in her. The relief from Wadi Maghara provides evidence for another aspect of that regency:¹²³ her right to actively order royal works to be carried out.

From the Amarna period another relief with a similar motif of one figure on the knees of another is known. Akhenaten was sometimes depicted with his wife Nfret-jtj upon his knee. Usually this is explained as a domestic scene, but Wildung considers it to be far more important.¹²⁴ In his opinion it portrays Nfret-jtj as a king, and Akhenaten as a god,¹²⁵ the iconography having been taken from the concept of the seated figure as the protector of the person seated on the knee. Another, similar representation is found in the group statuette of Akhenaten and a queen, originally found in the atelier of the sculptor Dhwtj-ms (Cairo JE 44866). Usually, this piece is entitled 'Akhenaten and a princess' but, as Wildung has indicated,¹²⁶ this figure is too large for a child, and wears both a dress and an adult

wig. This is an uncommon representation for the Amarna children who more frequently appear naked, and wearing the child's sidelock. Wildung¹²⁷ considers this statue group to represent 'ein Bild der Heiligen Hochzeit zwischen Echnaton und der Königin in Abwandlung des "hieros gamos" zwischen Amun und Königin'. As the uraeus is absent from the smaller figure on the king's knees and, as the wig worn is the Nubian wig always worn by Kjj3, Wildung suggests that the smaller figure in this group statue is Kjj3.¹²⁸

The idea of two of Akhenaten's wives being invested with different attributes for similar iconography seems rather contradictory. One might query the difference between this statue group and the well-known representations of the holy wedding between the god and the queen elsewhere. From the reliefs of Hatshepsut's mother, J^ch-ms and Amen at Deir el Bahri, and the Temple of Amen at Luxor where Mwt-m-wj3 and Amen are shown, both holy wedding scenes show the two participants sitting opposite each other, in identical fashion, even as Akhenaten and Nfirt-jtj appear on some of the Amarna stelae.¹²⁹ In the reliefs the iconography showing one person on the knees of another is different from either of those examples, as we see in both the Amarna

reliefs (Berlin No.14145), and those of other figures in the two-dimensional repertoire (eg.P3-ḥrj nursing Prince W3d-ms at el Kab; Amenhotep II on the knees of his nurse;¹³⁰ Prince Dhwtj-ms on the knee of his tutor, Hk-rsw,¹³¹ or the four princes on the knees of their tutor in TT 226). The latter group present the larger figure as the protector and/or guardian of the smaller figure.

Whichever explanation is offered for this familiar icon, it should represent the same sort of idea: either that of a holy wedding (Wildung's evidence for this being weak), or the representation of some sort of guardianship; but the explanation should remain consistent. The royal investiture such as Wildung envisaged in regard to the Nfirt-jtj relief he saw as a guardianship, with Nfirt-jtj as ruler; the statuette he explains as a holy wedding. There is an inconsistency here, for the iconography is the same in both pieces.

The identity of the smaller figure as Kjj3 is not really secure, There are no names on the statue, and it is unfinished. It was frequent practice to add the uraei in metal, too, so this could be an explanation for the absent

uraeus in this instance but, also significant I think, is that Kjj3 is seldom represented in Amarna art and never in intimate contact with the king. Furthermore, the canopic jars from T 55 being a possible exception,¹³² Kjj3's representation is unknown in the corpus of Amarna sculpture. Nothing else from Dhwtj-ms' workshop could possibly have been identified with Kjj3, although Nfirt-jtj was well-represented in the artworks discovered there. Kjj3's representations have so far appeared in the reliefs from Hermopolis. On the other hand, Nfirt-jtj does appear in the Nubian wig.¹³³ The chances of this little figure being Nfirt-jtj, therefore, seem to be greater than they would be for this statue-pair representing Kjj3 and Akhenaten.

Alternatively, both the reliefs and the statuette might depict Nfirt-jtj as sharing a regency with Akhenaten, a position that is more compatible with the arguments promoted by Harris¹³⁴ and Samson¹³⁵ in their numerous articles. These scholars allege that Nfirt-jtj was not only Akhenaten's coregent towards the end of his reign, but that she herself ruled as the monarch Smenkhkare¹³⁶ after Akhenaten's death. Given that there are few examples of this regency iconography in royal Egyptian art, the close parallels



fig. 10 Fragment of ivory found near the tomb of Djer
at Abydos

- Petrie, RT II, pl.VA.12

between the Amarna statue and that of Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II is remarkable. As the next example indicates, this sort of iconography still had currency in the Nineteenth Dynasty, so the reliefs and the statue-pair from the Amarna period may indeed have been designed to depict a regency for Nfrt-jtj.

The third example of regency iconography comes from the Nineteenth Dynasty and is badly damaged. It is a large double statue of Queen Twosret with a child on her knee, in a position identical with that of Pepy and his mother, and with the Amarna statue-pair.¹³⁷ The young child in this instance is King Siptah, who died while still a teenager. Von Beckerath also argues here for this statue depicting the iconography of a regency.¹³⁸

Another piece, this time a very fragmentary drawing of Dynasty I date, may show a similar motif (fig. 10). It was found by Petrie at Abydos but, apart from his cursory remark that this figure 'seems to show the king on a throne and a lesser figure upon his knee',¹³⁹ no-one else has since commented upon it. The fragment comes from the vicinity of King Djer's tomb. Queen Mrjt-Nt's tomb is not far from Djer's, and material from each of these persons has found

its way into the tomb of the other - perhaps as much due to proximity as to their likely husband/wife relationship.

Given the known iconography of this motif it is most likely to show a queen with a male child upon her knee. There is no traditional motif for a king with any person upon his knee until the time of Akhenaten, although there are a number of New Kingdom representations of tutors or nurses holding their royal charges on their knees. This theme, however, is unknown prior to the New Kingdom. More frequent is the motif of a goddess with the king upon her knee, but this motif is unknown for the Early Dynastic or Old Kingdom period. This fragmentary figure from Dynasty I does not show a goddess, and must therefore show a female with a child - most probably a royal pair, since private carvings of this nature are unknown for the early period. Whether or not the figure represents Queen Mryt-Nt is clearly questionable, but the fragment might indeed provide evidence of some female regency in the earliest dynasty and, at this stage, we have no better candidate than this queen.

In the two known instances of female monarchies for Queen Hatshepsut and Queen Twosret, these queens gained

control through regencies which they converted into the position of queen regnant. In the case of Hatshepsut she chose to share her reign with Thutmose III, but she was always in the dominant position in any relief or inscription they shared.¹⁴⁰ Queen Twosret, however, clung on to power after the death of Siptah, not becoming pharaoh until after his death, so the circumstances of the two queens are not identical. Mrjt-Nt's circumstances were different again, in that her own son later governed the land. Whether his reign began with a regency, or followed as a result of her death, or after her abdication as ruler or regent can only be speculative. However, it is sometimes assumed that his reign began with a regency.¹⁴¹

Mrjt-Nt's title of mwt nswt now contributes to the intriguing circumstances regarding the two queens who possessed serekhs. Since Nt-ḥtp and Mrjt-Nt share the privileges of large royal tombs and Neith-surmounted serekhs, were they both regents for sons who became kings? Although it has been often claimed that Nt-ḥtp was a regent¹⁴² she is not recorded as the mother of a king on any of her extant material; neither is there clear evidence for any family relationships she might have had. Consequently,

we cannot assume that Nt-ḥtp became regent for her son - even if it does seem likely. From the later examples of Hatshepsut and Twosret we know of two regents who were not the mother of the king, and this may be the situation in Nt-ḥtp's case. There is also the possibility that her tomb (and therefore mortuary cult) was at Naqada, not Abydos, as Kaplony¹⁴³ and Helck¹⁴⁴ have argued. This could be an alternative reason for the absence of her name on the royal mortuary seal used for the cult offerings at Abydos.

Thus, the reason for the omission of Nt-ḥtp's name from the Abydos seal may be due to a range of reasons. It could be possible that, unlike Mrjt-Nt, she was not the mother of a king and, therefore, not part of any king's mortuary cult. We should at least allow that there may have been a difference between the nature of the positions held by these two women, even as there was a clear difference, both in the nature of the regency, and in the reigns of Hatshepsut and Twosret.¹⁴⁵

We know from Manetho's record for King Netjerem of Dynasty II that, during his reign, it was decided that females might inherit the kingly office. It seems

significant that Manetho refers to the throne in this masculine terminology, since the throne itself is considered a feminine noun. Perhaps his phrase refers to the legitimising of female rule by permitting females to have full male titulary and privileges, rather than simply putting the reins of government into female hands - as may have been the case with the Dynasty I queens. It may be that there was no objection to a female being on the throne in the First Dynasty, since two queens seem to have had some sort of sovereignty, but the use of the Neith serekh, and the lack of male royal titulary may have been the accepted female version of monarchy then. It is indeed conceivable that the Egyptians had not formulated their ideas on the monarchy at that time - as the gradual accumulation of royal titulary for the king testifies. Schulze¹⁴⁶ may well be correct when he suggests that, in this very early period at least, there may have been no sharp difference between a regent and a reigning queen.

Schulze's idea does overstate the issue somewhat, however, for neither queen appears on a king list, and neither woman has the nswt bjtj name given to kings. Egyptian tradition, never favourable to the idea of female

rulers, does not seem to have accepted them as monarchs, even though in the case of Mrjt-Nt we have clear evidence that she was honoured among the kings after her death, and that her funeral arrangements were no different from theirs. For her own time, however, Mrjt-Nt does seem to have had the status of a ruler; and in death, at least, she had the prerogatives of one - even if the king lists do omit her name.

III: ROYAL WIVES AFTER THE TIME OF QUEEN MRJT-NT

(?)Queen Hr-Nt

The third of the better-known queens mentioned at the beginning of this chapter is Queen Hr-Nt. Her alleged tomb, No.3507, was found by Emery at Saqqara,¹⁴⁷ but her name was also found at Abydos.¹⁴⁸ Most - if not all - of the records regarding her belong to the earliest period of King Den¹⁴⁹ but, unlike the two queens mentioned above, Hr-Nt is poorly attested, and this makes analysis very difficult. While both Emery¹⁵⁰ and Helck¹⁵¹ have suggested that she could be the consort of King Djer this assumption is questionable.

Unlike many of the other tombs in the royal cemetery at Saqqara, 3507 was not accompanied by the sacrificial burials of servants. Only a pet dog, buried at the tomb entrance, was sacrificed at the grave of his owner.

Within the tomb a few remains of ivory furniture, gold jewellery, splendid stone vessels, toilet articles, beadwork of faience, lapis lazuli, carnelian and gold, scores of bracelet fragments in schist, dolomite, onyx and ivory were found in the burial chamber, together with numerous stone and pottery vases, enough to indicate that the owner of the tomb had been given a rich funeral. Like the tomb of Mrjt-Nt, remains of bones and fragments of a very large sarcophagus were found by Emery in the burial chamber.¹⁵² Although the bones were too few to give details on the sex and height of the tomb owner, Emery was able to discover that the person interred had been of a great age. Because Hr-Nt's name was in the tomb, Emery assumed that she was the owner of that tomb,¹⁵³ and he therefore identified the bones as belonging to Hr-Nt.

The architecture of this tomb is similar to the tombs that were built in the time of King Den, and at an early

stage in his reign.¹⁵⁴ As the bones contained in the tomb were those of an elderly person, Emery concluded that she could not have been the wife of either King Djet, or of King Den, for she would have been too old for those kings. From this he concluded that she must have been the wife of King Djer.¹⁵⁵

The inscribed material within the tomb was most interesting. Some fragments carried the hntj sign, but none of these had the name of Hr-Nt in proximity to them.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, the hntj sign did appear next to the rhjt sign on one inscription,¹⁵⁷ and next to the drawing of the horned sheep on a second fragment.¹⁵⁸ Two other records with the rhjt birds were also present in this tomb.

'Prince' Rhjt

Kaplony's contention that these three birds indicate the name of Prince Rhjt, alleged son of Aha,¹⁵⁹ is called into question by these finds mentioned here. Kaplony himself has stated that the hntj sign dates from the time of Djer¹⁶⁰ and Rhjt is thought by him to have been interred in the time of Aha, yet his name, together with the hntj sign in one instance,¹⁶¹ is present in this tomb from the time of

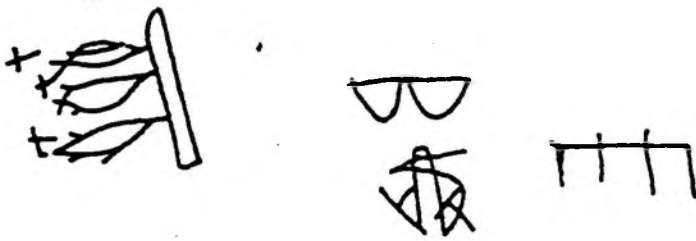
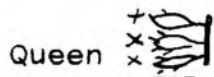


fig. 11 Inscription from a vase fragment from S 3507
at Saqqara

- Emery, GI III, pl.107.3



Den. Such a lengthy period of time for the assumed 'Prince Rhjt' is not sustainable. The evidence is inconsistent with Kaplony's theory that this sign represents a prince who predeceased Aha.






Sm3 nbwj, the important title which marks out a queen for this period, was also found on an ivory vase within Tomb 3507.¹⁶² No name was present on the vase. On a stone vessel fragment, however, the sign was repeated, together with the name of Djer and the unusual sign (Kaplony's 'unreadable name') of three fish-like signs (see fig. 11).

This name is well-attested elsewhere. A small collection of eleven miniature funerary alabaster bowls and a vase, all carrying the same unusual name, were included by Petrie in his book on stone vases.¹⁶³ Petrie remarked on the exceptional quality of the manufacture evident in these objects, which were obviously from a royal tomb. The collection was bought as a group, but its provenance is unknown. Although Petrie thought they must have come from the great Naqada tomb (no reason given) he may be incorrect, since this name was otherwise not found there, and the

tempus of the Saqqara finds, together with the name of Djer gives a pretty clear indication that the queen with the unreadable name lived in the time of that king. (Perhaps the vessels came onto the market as a result of Amelineau's discovery of one of the royal tombs at Abydos, for we would expect to find some mention of Djer's wife from there.) Petrie also notes, in connection with a larger vase, also inscribed with this name,¹⁶⁴ that this vessel dates to the middle of the First Dynasty, about the time of Den.

Given the large number of examples of the name, and given the clear title of sm3 nbw, and the hntj sign next to her name, plus her proximity to Djer in this inscription (fig.11), it seems to me that we are able to identify this queen as the wife of Djer. Whereas Hr-Nt has few records, none of which give her the queen's title of sm3 nbw, , has better credentials for assigning her as the wife of Djer. If we take Lauer's rule of thumb regarding tombs found without owners' names, that the greater number of records with one name suggests the most likely tomb-owner, then , rather than Hr-Nt is the most likely owner of S 3507. The coincidence that the bones of the occupant of S3507 were of a person from Djer's time, together with the fragmentary

records of this king within the tomb, strongly suggest that the burial in S 3507 belongs to ^x, the attested consort of Djer.

Unlike the previous queens identified with burials in large mastabas, this queen's name was never written within a serekh. She evidently had no monarchic status, thus highlighting the much more elevated rank of Nt-htp and Mrjt-Nt. As both Mrjt-Nt and ^x seem to have been consorts of Djer this offers us some opportunity for making a comparison between the different attitudes toward a queen consort and a queen who had control over some (if not all) of the kingdom in this period. Mrjt-Nt's serekh signals monarchic status, as does her tomb with its subsidiary burials, Talbezirk and boat pit. Her burial arrangements differ substantially from those of a consort, unlike the mortuary complex of the next known regent, Mrj-R^c-nh.n.s II, whose complex is identical to that of her sister, and the other two consorts of Pepy I.¹⁶⁵ These differences do tend to support the contention that Mrjt-Nt at least had a status that differed from that of the later perception of a regent.

* * * * *

Djer's queen has the last tomb that can be demonstrated as belonging to an important queen; the remainder of the kings' consorts seem to have been buried in small, subsidiary tombs around the mastabas of their royal husbands. Their status was no more substantial than that of the artisans and servants who served the king.

Although a suggestion has been made to the effect that the huge mastabas at Tarkhan might have included the graves of queens for Dynasties I and II,¹⁶⁶ nowhere in his volumes on Tarkhan does Petrie offer evidence for those tombs being connected with the royal family. Indeed, the pattern of burial customs concerning members of the royal family would militate against this hypothesis. With the exceptions of the Nt-ḥtp and Mrjt-Nt, all other known wives of the Dynasty I kings were buried near the tombs of their husbands, a custom that continued for much of the Old Kingdom. If any later royal wives were buried in great tombs, such as those belonging to Nt-ḥtp and Mrjt-Nt, no-one has yet discovered which ones they might be.


One further observation that might be made at this

point is the odd feature that it is only for the tombs of Djer and Den that we can be sure that consorts were buried in the satellite tombs. There are no such stelae marking the tombs of consorts for Narmer, Aha and Djet, and none in the era following that of King Den. Perhaps the idea of royal sacrifice only ever had a limited duration, and was abandoned after Den's time or, perhaps the custom continued but the queens' stelae have been removed from their graves. Emery does not record multiple burials in any of the large Saqqara tombs except S 3505, where only one large sarcophagus was found, but the bones of four adults (two being male, others not specified) had once occupied the burial chamber at the time of the original burial.¹⁶⁷ It is thus unlikely that any queen was interred with her husband.

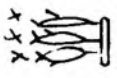
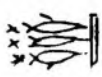
The majority of the Dynasty I women thought to be queens (further examples in the Prosopography) had undistinguished burials and, due to the minimal recording carried out by Amelineau, we do not know even which particular tombs were adorned by their stelae. Their titularies also were restricted to the title of m33t Hr < Sth (and perhaps the 'wrt hts' title)¹⁶⁸ - titles also held by most of the queens in the Old Kingdom period. An

increase in titulary, apparently, was only to come with the Third Dynasty but, due to our lack of evidence concerning the wives of the kings in Dynasty II, such a suggestion should be considered only temporary at this stage.

Conclusion

On the surface, it would seem that royal wives up until the time of Djet at least, were divided into at least two categories, important queens and lesser consorts. Those queens who appear to have held sovereign powers (as Nt-ḥtp and Mrjt-Nt did), and the unique instance of  (who was entitled to a huge tomb, had the important titles associated with queens, but lacked other distinctions),¹⁶⁹ were given impressive mortuary monuments. The other consorts of the king who at least were included in the official cemetery, did not possess such elevated tombs. The significance of these different monuments suggests that a difference in status among the royal women existed within the court during the First Dynasty.

In the instance of King Djer there is an opportunity for us to see that this king at least had three types of consort in his entourage if we consider the funerary

evidence. The queens of the lower rank (who appear to have held only the 'm33t Hr < Sth' title) were sacrificed, and buried in satellite tombs that were meagrely equipped and had poorly-made stelae as their grave markers. Djer's consort, , was more highly ranked than the minor queens. Her richly-endowed tomb was located in an independent site (clearly, because she survived the king, as the other queens in his intimate cemetery did not).  possessed the title of 'sm3 nbw i', a title held only by this queen and Nt-htp in the Early Dynastic period. As its meaning suggests, it confers a special dignity upon the king's wife, and it is probably no coincidence that each of the title-holders in this period had a large, independent tomb. It is also evident that the hntj office was first instituted for some of Djer's queens at this time,¹⁷⁰ and this queen appears to have been one who was entitled to a hntj official. Again, it is only the better-attested queens with large tombs who are found in association with the office. Furthermore, the fact that Djer was outlived by two of his consorts indicates that royal sacrifice was not obligatory for all consorts of the king. The third queen, Mrjt-Nt, out-stripped the ranks of Djer's other consorts¹⁷¹

and, although the 'sm3 nbw i' title has not been found in connection with her name, there is evidence for the offices of hnti and pr hd, as well as evidence of a palace for her.¹⁷² Details of her funerary provisions have already been discussed above; they have marked similarities to those of the monarchs for this period.

We could perhaps conclude from the above discussion that there was within the Egyptian court in the Early Dynastic period a clear demarcation between the various wives of King Djer. The material for the other monarchs lacks the detail provided by Djer's consorts. There may have been similar ranks within the consorts of other kings as well - although this might be a risky conjecture, since any evidence there might be for important queenly burials after Mrjt-Nt's time is not available. The few queenly burials after this period belong to the consorts of King Den, and consisted only of satellite burials. If this king had a more highly-ranked queen she is not known.

There is also the curious coincidence provided by the names of officials operating during the reign of Den, observed first of all by Helck.¹⁷³ The officials, too, were

kept at a distance from the king. It could suggest that, whatever the circumstances, Den's policies culminated in the elevation of the king at the expense of the remainder of the court; his queens seem to have suffered as a result of this policy.

CHAPTER 5

A SURVEY OF THE STATUS OF QUEENS FROM DYNASTIES III - VI1) The evidence from the monuments

Whereas it is clear that the majority of women who appear to have been queens during Dynasty I had a relatively minor social position (as evidenced from their burial sites and grave equipment), the evidence for the Third Dynasty, meagre as it is, indicates that this situation was different for the two queens attested for this period. Htp-hr-Nbtj, presumably, was buried within the galleries beneath Djoser's step-pyramid and, although Nj-m3ꜥt-Hꜥp I's tomb is unknown at present, the queen's mortuary cult was mentioned by Mtn, who attended to it nearly a century later in the region of the step pyramid, so we could expect that she, too, might have been buried in Djoser's tomb.

The royal women had a significant religious role to play by the Third Dynasty. This role is indicated by the names of Queen Htp-hr-Nbtj and Princess Jnt-k3.s (presumably her daughter) on the numerous boundary stelae from the eastern side of Djoser's funerary complex.¹ The women² depicted on the Scorpion and Narmer artefacts seated in carrying chairs might have been participating in

religious activities during the Early Dynastic period, but it is only with these boundary stelae of Djoser that we can attest to the importance placed on the religious rôle of the royal women in the early historical period.

Djoser's boundary stelae find their echo in those from the Amarna period, but there are differences as well as similarities between the two groups. Both sets of stelae carry the names of the king, his consort and royal daughters, and both attest to the importance of the royal women in defining sacred boundaries. With the Amarna examples the temenos is the city of the Aten; with Djoser's stelae it is the temenos of the mortuary complex that appears to be defined.³

We are reminded by the role of the royal women as shown in these boundary stelae of other reliefs in which the queens-consort (and sometimes their children) also accompany the king in the consecration of temples, or on other official occasions. Pointing to the persistent portrayal of mother and daughter on royal monuments throughout pharaonic times, Troy has suggested that their presence serves some religious function in asserting the generational progression of the royal family.⁴

The rôle played by the royal women on the monuments is not

easy to define, since we lack any references to them in inscriptional material; we are thus obliged to interpret their roles. Whether the women on the Scorpion and Narmer Maceheads can be identified with the goddess, Reput, as Kaiser has suggested in reference to royal women in the carrying chair,⁵ is not certain, but later reliefs do suggest the likelihood that this is so.

In the absence of any iconographical accompaniment for Htp-hr-Nbtj and Jnt-k3.s on Djoser's boundary stones it is more difficult to suggest their rôle in the context of these monuments. That it appears to be connected to the funerary nature of the complex is indicated primarily by the reference to Wepwawet which surmounts each stele, for Wepwawet was the 'Opener of the Ways' not only for the king but also for Osiris (PT 1090). The absence of Seth in the queen's title may also suggest that the queen may have been fulfilling some funerary role, where the presence of Seth would be inappropriate.

These stelae, however, may have been linked to the iconography associated with the mswt nswt in the wall reliefs relating to the king's heb sed, as extant in the mortuary reliefs for some of the kings. In the collection of reliefs from the Abu Ghurob sun-temple, and the Sanure and Apries complexes given by Kaiser,⁶ the frequent representation of the mswt nswt in association with

the Wepwawet standard, as seen on the Djoser boundary stelae, is noticeable.⁷ Additionally, the Wepwawet standard on the Narmer Macehead appears in the register above the woman in the carrying chair (as it also does in two of the Abu Ghurob reliefs⁸), so that, even when not directly in front of the mswt nswt in some reliefs, the connection between the god's standard and the royal women is apparent on a number of occasions. One would be inclined to associate these representations with the concept of the women perpetuating the king's royal line beyond the realms of the dead. Given other instances where Djoser's complex emphasises the *neb sed* aspect of the king, the presence of the royal women on these funerary stelae, too, may have had that intention.

It is not only in the official reliefs that there are difficulties in trying to interpret the rôle played by the queen during the Old Kingdom. Even concerning their own monuments there are great problems. In the main, these are due to the minimal material found relating to them, but also due to the poor nature of previous publications of the little material that has been found,⁹ and our imperfect knowledge concerning the meaning of those titles that have been preserved.

No actual tomb for a king's consort has been discovered as yet for the Third Dynasty. The mortuary arrangements for Djoser's

complex suggest what may have been the model for Third Dynasty family burials, but the peculiar circumstances of his tomb make it difficult to establish any sort of rule. The superstructures of each tomb originally designed for a member of his royal family were covered ultimately by the step pyramid itself. Thus, it would appear that the original intention was to bury members of the royal family apart from other members of the court, and also apart from the king's sepulchre. But for the changes to the step pyramid, these separate tombs could have been the final resting place of his consort(s).

Although the inclusion of Djoser's family in his pyramid marks some increase in social status for them (in contrast to the position held by consorts in the First Dynasty), we cannot say what arrangements were made for the remainder of the wives during the Third Dynasty. The complex of Horus Sekhemkhet does not give us any clear indication where his consort's sepulchre was destined to be positioned. Goneim's discovery of a small cache of jewellery (too small to fit an adult male) in the pyramid of Sekhemkhet¹⁰ could suggest that the king's consort might also have been intended for burial in that pyramid complex, but no trace of any burial has been found there to date. Lauer¹¹ did suggest earlier that the tombs of the queens might have been the Upper and Lower Egyptian little step

pyramids that are anonymous, but Dreyer and Kaiser¹² have argued a stronger case for these pyramids being more likely to belong to King Huni - and none of them appears to have a sepulchral chamber anyway.¹³

The architectural survey carried out by Maragioglio and Rinaldi¹⁴ has suggested that the subsidiary pyramids for Sneferu's monuments are more likely to be cult pyramids than the tombs of queens, a view earlier expressed by Fakhry¹⁵ and, more recently, by Dreyer, Kaiser,¹⁶ and Stadelmann¹⁷. They see the pyramids of Sneferu as the manifestation of royalty, rather than royal graves and, presumably, this might be the reason why no pyramids for queens at this time have been discovered. Given Fourth Dynasty practice of burying some queens in mastabas, that form of grave may have been the preferred tomb type for queens of the earlier period, and perhaps some of the anonymous mastabas could belong to consorts. One burial within the peribolos of the Meidum pyramid might have been that of a royal consort, but the remains found there were so badly decayed that the sex of the skeleton was unable to be determined.¹⁸ Thus, except for Djoser's family members, there is no evidence as yet for the burial of any queen until the time of Khufu.

while queens of the Third and early Fourth Dynasties do not

seem to have been buried in pyramids, it has been assumed for some time that the satellite pyramids in the Giza cemeteries of Khufu and Menkaure once belonged to queens. There is no evidence either for or against this opinion. János¹⁹ has pointed out that, of the three known queens of Dynasty IV who carried the title of mwt nswt (Htp-hr.s I, H^c-mrr-Nbtj I and Hnt-k3w.s I), none is known to have been buried in a pyramid. The situation is not clear-cut in regard to this issue, however, for there does remain the possibility that Htp-hr.s I might have been assigned G 1a²⁰ and, in the case of H^c-mrr-Nbtj I, the ownership of the Galarza Tomb is uncertain.²¹ The tomb of Hnt-k3w.s I may lie outside the pyramid tradition altogether because of one of two factors: the possible religious concerns that prompted the building of the Mastabat Faroun, the possibility that she might have been a monarch herself.²² Thus none of János's exceptions is totally secure.

While the evidence for the Fourth Dynasty is still unclear, the burial of Htp-hr.s I, and the possibility that her tomb could have been intended as a pyramid, do suggest that the royal mothers might have been provided with pyramids even then. This is further emphasised by Menkaure's complex, where one of his satellite pyramids contained the burial of a young woman. Unfortunately, no further investigation of this person was carried out. Still, the

provision of chapels for all of these satellite pyramids (rather than simple offering slabs) does encourage us to consider the possibility that these pyramids were actual tombs for royal women, particularly in view of Reisner's discoveries of fragments bearing the titles of a queen from pyramid G 1b.²³

There are problems in accepting the above view, however. Although the evidence does not show this conclusively, it would appear that, in contrast to later practice where consorts were given tombs in their husbands' cemeteries, in some Fourth Dynasty instances the pyramids of queen-mothers appear to have been situated within proximity to the tombs of their sons, rather than their husbands. Thus Htp-hr.s I was interred near the pyramid of Khufu and, perhaps, H^c-mrr-Nbtj I might have occupied one of the pyramids adjacent to Menkaure's pyramid. It has been thought that the nameless person (Hnwt.sn?), who occupied G 1c was connected with H^c.f-Hwfw (whom Stadelmann would identify with the later King Khafre²⁴) in which case she, too, might be included in this generalisation. If these pyramids did belong to the mothers of kings, it might partially explain why Nyweserre converted his mother's pyramid into a cult for his grandmother, Queen Hnt-k3w.s I. The position of her cult then lay beside the pyramid complex of her son, Neferirkare - no doubt in an effort to stress the strong

ancestral ties that established the legitimacy of his succession.²⁵

All the tombs thought to be for consorts of Khafre are rock-cut structures, while for Queen H^c-mrr-Nbtj I (whose relationship to Khafre is uncertain) there is doubt as to the location of her final resting place. She could not have been buried in Khafre's southern pyramid because,²⁶

'Although this pyramid originally measured about 20.1 meters square, the entrance and passage are so narrow that an average adult would find it difficult, if not impossible, to enter.'

The situation regarding a number of Fourth Dynasty royal wives (some of whom may have belonged to Khafre), is further clouded by the question, Who paid for the queen's tomb? Evidence from the tombs of Mr.s-^cnh III and Pr-[snt] could suggest that their husband(s) might not have borne the cost of their monuments. That some queens do seem to have been personally responsible for the cost of their tombs is evident for H^c-mrr-Nbtj II,²⁷ at least, while the tombs of Nj-m3^ct-H^cp II and the poor remains of the tomb of Queen Mr.s-^cnh IV would suggest that they faced circumstances similar to those of H^c-mrr-Nbtj II.

The questions of ownership and the provision of the monuments are not the only problems we face regarding the tombs for the Fourth Dynasty royal wives. Three monuments of this dynasty (G 1a,

G 1b and LG 100) thought to have belonged to queens, are further distinguished from the other tombs for royal consorts in having a trench for a solar boat beyond their temenos walls. While the last monument is known to belong to a queen, identification of the two satellite pyramids from Khufu's cemetery are less certain, as has been indicated already. While all three monuments were provided with a solar boat, this has drawn no comment, and no satisfactory explanation for this uncommon inclusion has yet been offered.

Although in the Sixth Dynasty Queen Nt's complex contained a flotilla of model boats, which were considered to provide a miniature collection of boats for a funerary procession along the waterways - as seen in tomb reliefs and paintings²⁸ - the three Fourth Dynasty examples were provided with large trenches similar to those found in the mortuary complexes of kings. It is unlikely that the Sixth Dynasty miniature ship burials were intended for the same purpose as their forerunners, however, for Nt's model boats were deposited in a corner of the queen's chapel.²⁹ The Giza boat-burials appear to have been full-sized boats which were deposited outside the boundary wall of each complex. Did those boats confer some privilege upon the queen in the afterlife? Did they signal the possession of some rank, or power held by the queen during her lifetime? Or were they merely remnants of an

architect's abandoned plans for his ruler's funerary monument? Given the uncertain state of our knowledge about the purpose for which these satellite pyramids were built, such questions remain insoluble at present but, what should be kept in mind, is that they are not known to appear with the burial of any other queen after the end of the Fourth Dynasty.

Setting aside these problems relating to the six satellite pyramids in the Giza cemeteries, there are several more positive impressions that we receive from a survey of the Fourth Dynasty mortuary monuments for consorts. It is evident, for example, that the wives of the kings of Dynasty IV enjoyed some considerable social elevation above that of consorts from the earliest dynasty. Apart from the evidence provided by the treasures in the tomb of Htp-hr.s I we can gather these impressions from the size of the tombs provided, and the quality of decoration evident within their mortuary monuments. Mastabas prepared for Htp-hr.s II and Mr.s-Ĝnh II when they were princesses were as large and well made as any for the princes of the Giza eastern cemetery, and the rock-cut tombs of H^c-mrr-Nbtj II, Mr.s-Ĝnh III, Rht-R^c and Bw-nfr were large, and well decorated. This increase in affluence stands in marked contrast to the monuments of their First Dynasty predecessors. One consequence of the greater material wealth associated with the

queen at this time is that it has provided us with much more evidence for piecing together something of the individual details for a number of the kings' wives. While not giving us as much information as we would like, they do at least provide a better understanding of their lives than was possible to glean from the evidence for the First Dynasty consorts.

Another noticeable difference between the mortuary arrangements for the First and Third Dynasty queens and those of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties was that the tombs of the latter group were frequently independent of those of their husbands. Again, the reason for this difference is not readily evident, but it could indicate that, while the more important wife (or the mother of the next king), might have expected to receive a tomb in close proximity to that of her husband or son, other queens were expected to make what arrangements they could. Perhaps this could be the reason why the Galarza Tomb features the name and titles of H^c-mrr-Nbtj I. It seems feasible that this tomb may have once belonged to that queen at a time when she did not expect to become the mother of a king. When her son³⁰ became king this change of position not only resulted in her receiving the titles of mwt nswt bjtj and s3t ntr,³¹ but could have meant that she then became entitled to a pyramid. Thus she may have abandoned the Galarza

Tomb, which her daughter then took over for herself. That H^c-mrr-Nbtj II was one queen who had to finance her own tomb is clear from the inscription on her tomb,³²

'I have paid well the craftsmen who have made this for me.'

The queen's statement highlights the fact that we know virtually nothing concerning the economic circumstances relating to the wives of the kings.

From the greater variation evident within the architecture of these tombs of royal wives it is apparent that there was sometimes a wide difference between the affluence of one tomb and another in the Old Kingdom. We are ignorant about the private resources of Old Kingdom queens,³³ but we do know that, in a society where women (apart from the poorest groups) were dependent upon their menfolk for the benefits they enjoyed, the queens must have had to rely on fathers, husbands or sons. To some extent the evidence suggests that the expense incurred in the provision of these tombs could have been derived from the financial resources of the queens' sons.

This alleged dependence of a mother upon her son's resources is most evident among the women who were mwt nswt. If the queen were the mother of a king there would be a greater expectation in

respect of the material cost of the queen's funerary monument. Since there could be no certainty regarding which of the king's sons would eventually succeed him, it stands to reason that the princes may have been the persons responsible for the burial arrangements for their mothers, as Jánosi has already suggested.³⁴ There is clear evidence that Khufu buried his mother, Htp-hr.s I, as the seals of officials present in her tomb testify. We also know that, although the complex of Hnt-k3w.s II may have been commenced during her time as the wife of King Neferirkare,³⁵ it, too, was completed in the time of her son, Nyweserre.³⁶ While Queen Jpwt I may have been given a mastaba to the north-east of Teti's pyramid by that king, it was her son, Pepy I, who provided the additional steps to make her tomb into a pyramid, and who saw to the provision of a false door of red granite, as is evident from the places where this queen's titles were found. Within her burial chamber she carries all the titles of a consort, but on the false door and offering slab she is entitled mwt nswt bjtj. These are evidently later additions to her status. From fragments of the relief decoration of her temple it is clear that Jpwt is depicted as a queen mother, for she wears the vulture cap that was the privilege of those queens alone.³⁷ As Jánosi³⁸ has pointed out in regard to the inscriptional material from this chapel, there can be little doubt that it was Pepy I who appears to have been

responsible for the payment of his mother's monuments, because of the decoration featuring Pepy's name there. There is even the possibility that this alteration and decoration took place after the demise of the queen, since her burial crypt contains no inscription featuring her title of king's mother. Queen ^Cnh.s.n-Ppj is also another queen mother whose rudimentary funeral arrangements could have been made by her son (since her titles concentrate on her status as royal mother). It is clear in her case, at least, that they had not been provided by her husband.

Consorts who were not royal mothers may also have expected their sons to provide their funerary chambers, although our evidence for this is very sketchy. This may be why Pr-[snt]'s tomb is incorporated within the tomb of N-k3w-R^c (see details in her Prosopography). Perhaps, too, it could explain the location of Mr.s-^Cnh IV's tomb in proximity to the mastaba of Prince R^c-m-k3, whom Reisner suggested could be her son.

But, again, we find exceptions to this suggested pattern of a son assisting in the burial arrangements for his mother. It is clear from the layout of Wenis' cemetery that the mastabas of his wives, Nbt and Hnwt, were designed to be part of his complex; the same is evident for King Teti's complex. Was this arrangement due to the early deaths of those particular wives, thus obliging the

king to provide their mortuary monuments? Or, by this time, had it become the practice for the king to provide all of his consorts with a suitable tomb? It is very difficult to judge.

When a queen had no living son to take care of her funerary arrangements (as appears to have been the case with Mr.s-ḥnh II, Htp-hr.s II, H^ḥ-mrr-Nbtj II, Rht-R^ḥ, and Nj-m3^ḥt-H^ḥp II), she seems to have had to fall back on her own reserves - as H^ḥ-mrr-Nbtj II was obliged to do. The graffiti on the blocks of Htp-hr.s II's second tomb also indicate that it was she who was organising the building of G 7450 as a tomb for herself.³⁹ Other queens, perhaps with fewer resources available for the payment of tomb workers, might have made do with a tomb given to them when they were still princesses. This happened in the instance of Mr.s-ḥnh II, and may also have been the case with Hwjt I.

Sometimes, however, it is clear that although a son survived his mother he might not have provided a tomb for her. Thus we find that Hdt-hknw, whose son appears to have outlived her, and who mentions his mother in his tomb (LG 89), has no known monument. The same situation applies to Queen Mr.s-ḥnh III: although her son features his mother prominently on the walls of his tomb, he did not provide her monument. It was Mr.s-ḥnh's mother, Htp-hr.s II, who seems to have done this.⁴⁰ Again, this appears to be the case

for Nfrt-h3-Nbtj of Dynasty V; she may have been survived by her sons, but no tomb for her has yet been located. From the position of Queen Nbtj-nwb's tomb it is possible that she, too, may have had to provide her own monument, for her tomb lies some considerable distance from the main royal cemeteries at Saqqara. Bw-nfr is another queen who may have been responsible for providing her own tomb - unless she were the wife of Thamphthis, as Seipel⁴¹ has suggested. But, perhaps, in the interests of good relations with the previous dynastic line, her tomb could have been paid for by the king who succeeded this ephemeral ruler.

There are few deductions that can be made about the economic status of the royal consorts from their mortuary monuments, but a few generalisations can be suggested. While some may have been smaller than others, all of the Fourth Dynasty tombs were large. Some, like those of Mr.s-cnh III and H^c-mrr-Nbtj, were spacious. Whatever the origin of the finance provided, the consorts of this period had access to the resources necessary for the construction of such monuments, and the economic resources seem to have been generous in regard to these women.

In the Fifth Dynasty the picture is incomplete and less predictable. Many of the queens cannot be identified with known husbands for this dynasty, and only the tombs of some of them are

known. One or two of these consorts (eg. Hnt-k3w.s II and the owner of Djedkare's subsidiary complex)⁴² originally had impressive monuments that mirrored some of the elements in the mortuary complex of the king.⁴³ Other consorts, however, had much poorer tombs (eg. Nj-m3^ct-H^cp II and Mr.s-^cnh IV). The fluctuation evident in the cost of monuments for the wives of the Fifth Dynasty kings might reflect something of the political tensions now becoming evident for this period.⁴⁴

The incomplete nature of the evidence is a great handicap to our understanding of the position of the wife of the king within the Fifth Dynasty. Only one of these monuments (that of Hnt-k3w.s II) has been published in sufficient detail to be useful. Additionally, the paucity of the remains that have been found for the tombs of Fifth Dynasty queens make it difficult to draw any valid conclusions.

On the whole, it is also difficult to reach an understanding of why some queens have rich tombs, others have poor tombs and some tombs are unknown. The lack of standardisation does suggest that individual circumstances decided the outcome of a queen's funerary monument, and that there was no established protocol concerning the mortuary establishment of either the wife or the mother of the king. What appears to have occurred is that a king would be likely

to provide a tomb for his wife should she die before he did but, after his death, it was left to the queen to make what arrangements she could. That a son would assist his mother financially might have been the general expectation.⁴⁵ Above all, however, we are faced with the realisation that until more excavation and publication of queens' tombs has been undertaken we will be unable to draw significant conclusions about the status and provisions for the women concerned. None the less, although our evidence for the Fifth Dynasty is far from complete, it would appear that pyramids for consorts, at least from the beginning of this dynasty, only belonged to the mothers of kings,⁴⁶ but only the names of *mwt nswt Nfr-ḥtp.s* and *Ḥnt-k3w.s II* are as yet known.

Further developments in the mortuary establishments of the queen can be seen in Dynasty VI, and here both the published material and the degree of material remaining are much more substantial. One of the first observations that can be made concerning the Sixth Dynasty is that it was a period which saw the more pronounced importance of the queen - particularly the queen mother. Queen *Sšššt* was honoured not only by her son, Teti,⁴⁷ but also by Pepy I, in whose mortuary temple blocks prominently featuring her name and title of *mwt nswt bjtj* have recently been found.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the site of her own tomb is not known to

us.

At least two of Teti's wives were provided with tombs. Although Hwt II's complex was poorly recorded, the publication of Queen Jpwt's tomb has permitted the observation that it was the mother of the king, rather than the consort per se, who received a pyramid.⁴⁹ In addition, the few reliefs that remained from Jpwt's monument have been instrumental in determining the circumstances under which the queen wore the vulture cap (see section 3 below).

It is still too early to expect full reports concerning the damaged monuments belonging to all of Pepy I's wives, but sufficient has appeared⁵⁰ to enable us to see that all were provided with pyramids and mortuary chapels similar to the model evident in the complex of Jpwt I. This marks a further development in the revalorisation of the consort, for it is quite improbable that all four of these consorts were the mothers of kings. The absence of Pyramid Texts for all these wives⁵¹ also confirms the impression that the first known queen to have been given this religious privilege was Queen Nt, first wife of Pepy II.

Jéquier's publication of the tombs of all four of Pepy II's wives has made one of the most important contributions to our understanding of the rôle of the the royal wives in Old Kingdom

times. The numerous citations of Nt's titles provide us with information of great value in compiling our material on the titulary of the queen, particularly in regard to the order of titles in the titular strings used for the Old Kingdom wives (see section 2 below). Then, too, the Pyramid Texts in Nt's sepulchral chambers have been of enormous value, not only to our knowledge and understanding of the Pyramid Texts themselves, but in their revelation that, by the time of Pepy II, the king's consorts were considered worthy recipients of those precious religious texts that had hitherto been reserved for the king alone.⁵² In the inclusion of these texts we also become aware that, by the end of the Sixth Dynasty, the social status of the queen had reached its climax for the Old Kingdom, the queen now possessed a pyramid (like the king), and a mortuary complex (not identical, but similar to the king's), and Pyramid Texts which (like the king), enabled her to join the company of gods. It is significant that queens, rather than officials, were the first to benefit from this developmental stage in the 'democratisation of the hereafter',⁵³ for, in the First Dynasty, the position of the king's consort appears to have been equivalent to that of the middle-ranking officials, and she was certainly not in the vanguard of social or religious change. By the end of the Old Kingdom, however, the evidence from the monuments shows that her status had become much more elevated than

theirs.

The monuments also reveal that the establishment of a cult for the queen gradually became more frequent toward the close of the Old Kingdom, and often reached beyond her burial site. Although Queen Mrjt-Nt was given participatory status within the cult of the dead kings at Abydos, she seems to have been the only queen so honoured at that time. In Dynasty III Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I was given a hm k3 for her cultic rites that were still functioning in the Fourth Dynasty. But it was not until the time of Hnt-k3w.s I that a hwt ntr for a queen seems to have been introduced.⁵⁴ This cult may have included other family members when another hwt ntr for this queen was established at Abusir. Queen Jpwt I was another whose cult was established at a site far from her tomb. She was accorded a cult in Koptos.⁵⁵ The Mrj-R^c-^cnh.n.s sisters and their brother were given a joint cult at Abydos. As is recorded on a limestone stele found there,⁵⁶ the cult was to be served by both hmw k3 and hmw ntr. In addition, the elder of these two queens was also honoured in a hwt ntr cult at Saqqara, which she shared with her daughter, Queen Nt.⁵⁷ Although both Queen Nt and Queen Wdb-tn were honoured by hwt ntr cults, there are no signs as yet that either Jpwt II or ^cnh.s.n-Ppj was served by any sort of cult - but the records for both of these queens are much more limited than for the other two

wives of Pepy II. Concerning Wdb-tn's establishment, it is indeed interesting that the last of these prestigious cults known for an Old Kingdom queen was given to a commoner consort, the first time this type of cult seems to have been instituted for a consort, rather than for the mother of a king.

It is apparent from the various types of evidence provided by the monuments that the position of the queen experienced a good deal of change over the centuries between the First and the Sixth Dynasties. The mortuary monuments bear witness to the increased status of royal women as applicable, first of all to the king's mother, and then to the king's consort.

2) The written sources

An important part of our evidence concerning the queens from the Old Kingdom comes from their titulary. For the early periods of pharaonic history this is infrequently, and often incompletely attested but, in the Fourth Dynasty, there is a noticeable increase in our evidence.⁵⁸ What becomes apparent from this time forward is that, like the male officials, queens had their titles recorded sometimes as single units (eg. hmt nswt X), or in groups of titles, referred to here as 'titular strings'. Like the male officials, the royal females appear to have accumulated a greater number of

titles as the Old Kingdom progressed but, due to our limited documentary records, it is risky to place too much emphasis on this point. What does emerge from this evidence for titular strings is that certain patterns are clear between the individual strings recorded in each tomb, and between the different strings of individual queens.

The most commonly attested titles for the consorts in the Old Kingdom were hmt nswt/mrt.f, m33t Hr Stḥ, wrt ḥts and wrt ḥst (the last two mentioned being usually found as a pair). It is clear from the titular strings that hmt nswt, or either wrt ḥts or m33t Hr Stḥ was considered sufficiently important as an independent title to denote a queen in the Old Kingdom.⁵⁹ In Mr.s-Ḥnh III's tomb, for example, Queen Htp-ḥr.s II is recorded as, wrt ḥts Htp-ḥr.s,⁶⁰ and Mr.s-Ḥnh II's short titles are, wrt ḥts, hmt nswt, ḥt Hr Mr.s-Ḥnh; s3t nswt nt ḥt.f, wrt ḥts Mr.s-Ḥnh; m33t Hr Stḥ Mr.s-Ḥnh; ḥt Hr, wrt ḥts Mr.s-Ḥnh.⁶¹ Mr.s-Ḥnh III carries many short titles in her tomb, especially on her door surrounds. She is entitled M33t Hr Stḥ Mr.s-Ḥnh on her eastern architrave,⁶² s3t nswt nt ḥ[t].f, hmt nswt Mr.s-Ḥnh on her central architrave,⁶³ smrt Hr mrt.f Mr.s-Ḥnh on the western architrave,⁶⁴ and wrt ḥts, ḥt ḏr Mr.s-Ḥnh on the door post.⁶⁵ Bw-nfr is entitled, wrt ḥts, wrt ḥst Bw-nfr.⁶⁶ She is also recorded as wrt ḥts Bw-nfr on the east side

of the northern pillar in her tomb,⁶⁷ and m33t Hr Sth, wrt hts Bw-nfr on the door jamb of the passage through to the offering room.⁶⁸ Nj-m33t-H^cp II's titles are also recorded as, m33t Hr Sth, wrt hts on her false door tablet⁶⁹ and Jpwt I's short titles on her funerary jars feature, hmt nswt mrt.f Jpwt; wrt hts, wrt hst, Jpwt.⁷⁰ These examples (there are many more) clearly indicate that there were varieties of titles which might introduce a queen, but they also indicate that there was variety in the titles selected for the short strings of titles used by the queen in different places.

There are numerous examples of longer titular strings for queens from Dynasty IV through to the end of Dynasty VI, but the order of those titles cannot be deduced from the chart listing the titles of queens (See Appendix I) since queens' titles did not always form the same pattern in any given string, and not all titles are present in any individual string. Again, this is the general pattern Baer found among the titulary of male officials.⁷¹ There are variations in the number of titles appearing in any given string, too, even when the title-holder is the same person⁷² so, in these instances I have selected only the longer string for each individual. In the examples mentioned below only those strings which are complete were chosen, since examples of incomplete

strings could result in invalid conclusions.

In the Fourth⁷³ and Fifth⁷⁴ Dynasties, among both the short and the longer strings, the most common titular element at the head of the string was m33t Hr Sth. In 95% of cases, the title wrt hts follows m33t Hr Sth immediately in the longer strings, almost always followed in turn by wrt hst for Dynasty IV⁷⁵ and Dynasty V.⁷⁶

Following on from these first three titles come those titles associated with the male gods, Dhwtj, I3-spf and B3-pf.⁷⁷ These titles are only present among the titularies of a few queens, those who were (and those who seem to have been) mother and daughter, so the incidences are few. In the Fifth Dynasty two other title holders of the fertility gods are known, Mr.s-Ĝnh IV and Sšsšt. The former does not display her titles according to the Fourth Dynasty pattern, and the last holder's record is too fragmentary to suggest any pattern⁷⁸ at all, so the Fifth Dynasty practice is, as yet, unknown. In the Fourth Dynasty, however, Queen Htp-ḥr.s II, who holds the hrp sšmt šndt title has this inserted immediately before the priesthoods for the gods mentioned above,⁷⁹ and in the Fifth Dynasty Queen Mr.s-Ĝnh IV has her hrp sšmt šndt title following the titles hm[tl ntr I3-spf. ht Hr.⁸⁰

The titles following these examples already given can take several patterns, the usual groupings placing sm3wt mrj Nbtj titles prior to the others,⁸¹ but Nbtj-nwb's long string places sm3wt mrj Nbtj after tjst Hr and smrt Hr. The titular strings all seem to end with an important relationship title, either s3t nswt nt ht.f or, more commonly, hmt nswt/mrt.f.⁸²

One more title appears towards the end of a titular string in four cases during the Old Kingdom, this is ddt ht nbt (nfrt) jrt.n.s. It is attested for Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I, Htp-hr.s I, Mrjt-jt.s I and Hnt-k3w.s I. In the first, third and fourth examples it immediately precedes the name of the queen. Htp-hr.s, however, follows this title with that of s3t ntr nt ht.f.⁸³ This significant position indicates the importance of the title in each of the queen's strings, but the real implication of it has not been easy to define.

In the Sixth Dynasty the general order of titles alters. In the earlier reigns the most common title initiating a string is likely to be hmt nswt.⁸⁴ One major variation is caused by the use of the pyramid title held by the queen. This takes precedent over all other titles, whether it be daughter, wife, or mother of the pyramid title⁸⁵ (see below). In the time of Pepy II the most common initiating title carried by all three wives is rp^ct, often

in association with a pyramid title.⁸⁶

Kings' mothers were more likely to carry the title of mwt nswt,⁸⁷ but, in a number of inscriptions, the title of mwt nswt biti was also given to all queens who held the s3t ntr title⁸⁸ and, in all the instances where a fuller titulary is evident, to the king's mother when she had been the wife of a king who inaugurated each of the dynasties mentioned by Manetho.⁸⁹

In the Sixth Dynasty, however, a religious title that had first appeared in the titulary of two princesses of the late Fifth Dynasty⁹⁰ was extended to the queens when they were given titles associated with the king's pyramid. Only females held these titles - usually royal women,⁹¹ but the higher-ranking male officials were also given titles in connection with the king's pyramid (such as shd hm ntr Dd-swT-Itj, jmi-ht hm ntr Dd-swT-Itj). Their titles, however, relate to the supervision of the kings' pyramids.⁹² The meaning of these titles for a queen or princess is imperfectly understood, but it might have been intended as an assurance that offerings from the king's cult would be given to the women who held them.⁹³

Baer has remarked that 'without exception, all pyramid titles [for male officials] outrank whatever titles they may be combined

with in a string, including the very highest such as jrj-p^ct and z3 nswt.,⁹⁴ We can see a similar effect in the titulary of the queens, too. From Queen Jpwt I onwards any of the pyramid titles could denote a daughter, a consort, or the mother of a king,⁹⁵ and these titles were often chosen as the preferred commencement to a titular string in monumental inscriptions. Thus, Jpwt I's offering table has a horizontal line with the usual funerary offering formula, followed immediately by the inscription, mwt nswt Mn-nfr-Ppj, Jpwt. Her false door, however, shows no pyramid titles, only the titles of mwt nswt bjtj followed by her name. It is clear that the pyramid title could therefore stand in place of the mwt nswt bjtj title in her case. On her Boston statuette (13.119) Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II's titulary is mwt nswt bjtj, s3t ntr tw, jm3hwt mrt Hnmw, followed by her name,⁹⁶ but on an alabaster cup in the Metropolitan Museum,⁹⁷ the titulary for this queen has a pyramid title held in respect of her son, followed directly by her own name, and no other title. Clearly, in this instance too the pyramid affiliation could replace the title of mwt nswt bjtj.

Unlike the officials,⁹⁸ however, the queens sometimes do display both their pyramid titles in a single string (as Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II does in her Sinai inscription, and as Cnh.s.n-Ppj does on her false door fragments⁹⁹). On the stele of D^cw (CG 1431)

the pyramid titles of a wife initiate the titular strings for both Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s sisters; the pyramid titles of mother of the king commence the second titular string for each queen on this stele. One hesitates to decide in this instance whether the titular string in the first column for each queen came to the end of the stone and thus her name was left out, or whether the two vertical rows of titles for each queen are to be read as a continuous string of titles. However, on her Sinai inscription, the issue is easily decided, for there Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II is entitled, mwt nswt bitj nt Nfr-k3-R^c-mn-Cnh, followed by her pyramid title as the wife of Pepy I.¹⁰⁰ Cnh-s.n-Ppj also uses her pyramid titles of mother and wife on her shattered false door.¹⁰¹ Thus the queen's pyramid titles, while having some superficial affinity to the pyramid titles held by high-ranking male officials, do not seem to have had the same significance as them, for the latter do not use their pyramid titles as a substitute for their short title, as the queens do.

Courtly titles, such as s3t ntr. smrt Hr. tsit Hr, all of which refer to aspects of the king as god, seem to have been introduced in the Fourth Dynasty, and priestly titles, such as hmt ntr I3-spf. hmt ntr B3-pf. and hmt ntr Dhwtj, made their appearance, too.¹⁰² These priestly titles, which also refer to the fertility aspect of the king¹⁰³ lasted until the end of Dynasty

v,¹⁰⁴ with Queen Mr.s-nh IV and Queen Sššt being the last known queens to hold these titles for the Old Kingdom period.¹⁰⁵ They do not appear to have been part of a queen's titulary in either the Third or the Sixth Dynasty, and Kuchman Sabbahy¹⁰⁶ has suggested that, as these titles for male gods were concerned with the divine aspect of the king, their disappearance might have signalled an alteration in either the attitude toward the kingship, or an alteration of expression regarding that kingship. Perhaps these alterations of expression and attitude may have been in relation to the king's pyramid cult, for the changes here affected the rank and titles of officials, too.¹⁰⁷

During the reign of Pepy II another high-ranking official title, that of rpḥt, was given to the king's consorts. Queen Nt was the earliest recipient of this title.¹⁰⁸ The masculine version of this title (later converted to rpḥtt in the First Intermediate Period), has drawn comment on a number of occasions.¹⁰⁹ Its history seems to derive from two sources: originally, it was the title for a prince who was possibly the eldest son of the king,¹¹⁰ but later, rpḥt was used for high officials midway through the Fifth and into the Sixth Dynasty. That it had this masculine origin, and not the feminine derivation first recorded for Vizier Nbt¹¹¹ seems indicated by the latter's use of the double 't' in the word used in

her stele.¹¹²

In addition to court and priestly titles, two titles occasionally carried by queens during the Old Kingdom period were ones that might indicate some official capacity: hrp sšmt šndt, and ddt ht nbt jr.n.s. The former title was confined to the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties, but two other examples (in Dynasty XVIII and XXVI), are also known;¹¹³ the latter title had a wider application, stretching from the beginning of the Third Dynasty down to the Twenty-sixth.

The title hrp[tl] sšmt šndt ('Controller of the butchers of the šndt') is discussed at length in the register of titles (Chapter 2

pp.89f.). It is a title for which there are parallels for male officials, hrp sšmt šndt¹¹⁴ and hrp šndt nbt, a high-ranking administrative title.¹¹⁵ The queen's title appears to be connected with the supervision of funerary rites of the king,¹¹⁶ and is thus an administrative title. Perhaps its limited use, like that of the priestly titles associated with aspects of the king, were considered redundant in the Sixth Dynasty because of the queens' pyramid titles, which may have encompassed the king's funerary rites formerly supervised by the hrp[tl] sšmt šndt office.¹¹⁷ Or, perhaps the use of pyramid titles for officials superseded these responsibilities that the title implies for the queen.

In spite of its extensive tempus the second of the above titles was rarely used and can only be found with those queens who are particularly eminent. If it did represent temporal power, it may have been the reason for that eminence (for further discussion see Chapter 2 pp.86 - pp.89).

In the instance of Queen Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I we see from her official seal¹¹⁸ that the queen had a major role to play in the provisioning of the grave of King Khasekhemwy, presumably her father.¹¹⁹ The presence of the title, ddt ht nbt jrt.n.s. on her seal would thus seem to imply real administrative powers, since they were her officials who put the seals on goods in Khasekhemwy's tomb. Her titles of hmt nswt and mwt msw nswt declare her social status at that time, she was the wife of a king - presumably the successor of Khasekhemwy - and the mother of his children, but not the mother of a king at that stage. Although it has been said that the title of ddt ht nbt jrt.n.s. was only carried by those who were the mothers of kings,¹²⁰ it is clear from this example, and that of Mrjt-jt.s I,¹²¹ that Old Kingdom queens did not have to be the mother of a king in order to hold it. In the New Kingdom the use of this title by Queen Nfirt-jtj provides another example¹²² of the possession of ddt ht nbt jrt.n.s. by a queen who was not the mother of a king. Queen Nfirt-jrj-mr.n-Mwt was another who held the title

without being a queen mother. The last recipient of the title, the God's Wife, Jmn-jr-dj.s was another.

It is also noticeable with Queen Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I that two titles, hmt nswt and mwt nswt appear together for the first time.¹²³ They remain as the most important titles for a queen from that time onward. Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I's title, mwt nswt bitj, which appears to be a title distinct from mwt nswt,¹²⁴ seems to have been introduced in her time. Judging from the political situations surrounding those queens who held the title, its purpose may have been to reinforce the concept of the king having a legitimate control over both Upper and Lower Egypt. In placing emphasis on the queen-mother, the Egyptians no doubt intended to enhance either the mystique, or the status of the king. This emphasis, however, had a corresponding effect upon the prestige of the royal women, as can be seen from the increasing size and complexity of their monuments, and from other factors, such as prominent funerary cults,¹²⁵ and the great popularity of their names among the women of the next generation.

Perhaps the most explicit evidence for the increased esteem accorded to the wives of the kings in the Old Kingdom is to be found in the Pyramid Texts within the tombs of Nt,¹²⁶ Jpwt II¹²⁷ and Wdb-tn.¹²⁸ It is possible that Queen Cnh.s.n-Ppj also may have

had Pyramid Texts in her original tomb, since there once was a fragment (it has now disappeared) in the Berlin Museum purporting to show extracts from the Pyramid Texts for her.¹²⁹ The inclusion of Pyramid Texts in the tombs of Pepy's wives reveals that by this time the queen was entitled to full royal privileges in the afterlife.

On the temporal plane there is further evidence for the increased status of the queen. The Wadi Maghara inscription of Queen Mrj-RC-Ḥnh.n.s II¹³⁰ suggests that she was directly connected with that expedition to Sinai. This evidence, together with the symbolic representation of King Pepy II sitting on his mother's knee in the Boston alabaster statuette, strongly indicates a regency for this queen. Although the circumstances surrounding Queen Hnt-k3w.s I remain obscure,¹³¹ the position of Queen Neitkrety is clearer. The Turin Canon,¹³² Syncellus' commentary on Manetho¹³³ concerning her (which may reflect hearsay), and the later tale recorded by Herodotos¹³⁴ all inform us that Queen Neitkrety of the late Sixth Dynasty was an Egyptian monarch. No other material concerning her reign has as yet been discovered but, in this last appointment, we receive clear confirmation that the status of the king's wife had reached its social apex at the end of the Sixth Dynasty.

3) The iconographical evidence

Representations of females associated with a king appear among the royal monuments from the earliest period of pharaonic history. The Scorpion Macehead (Ashmolean E 3632) contains a fragment of a register where two females are followed by an official bearing a sceptre. Their function on this occasion of some ceremony performed by Scorpion is unknown, although it might have been made in connection with the completion of a building project, as suggested by the hoe in the hands of the king on the opposite side of the macehead. As was mentioned in the first section of this chapter, these people in the sedan chair appear to be either the wives or female children of the king (at this early stage in the development of royal iconography it is difficult to judge), and they may represent the goddess Reput.¹³⁵ This iconography is later present in reliefs depicting the sed festival¹³⁶ where we know that these women in the carrying chairs are the daughters of the king.¹³⁷

The Narmer Macehead (Ashmolean E 3631) also contains the representation of a single woman in a carrying chair. Her size is equivalent to that of the king who faces her. We are accustomed to seeing in equivalent size an equivalent status, and we might be meant to interpret the relief in this way, so on this occasion she

may represent the queen. There is a similar representation of a woman in a wall relief from the temple of Sahure in the Fifth Dynasty.¹³⁸ A series of reliefs featuring women in the carrying chair has been found in the sun temple of Nyweserre at Abu Ghurob, too.¹³⁹ All these representations, while difficult to interpret, reveal the continual representation of the royal females in ceremonies involving the king.¹⁴⁰

There are few remains of statuary relating to royal women in the Old Kingdom. In one piece, that of Djedefre and his consort, the king's consort appears beside him in miniscule size.¹⁴¹ In other representations the consort - if this is the person represented¹⁴² - was of equivalent size to the king; these are the feet of two dyads from Djoser's complex,¹⁴³ and the schist dyad of Menkaure with an unnamed consort.¹⁴⁴ Quite significant is not only the equivalent size of both figures, but the fact that, like the king, the queen strides forward with her companion. It is uncommon for a queen to be portrayed in the striding pose prior to the time of Nfirt-jtj.¹⁴⁵

Significantly, on a schist triad of this king (Boston 09.200), the goddess Hathor bears the face of the consort from the Boston pair,¹⁴⁶ a factor which surely emphasises the role of the queen vis à vis the goddess. Here, too, we see the iconography of the royal

statuary reflected in the religious triad, with the goddess clasping the king in the manner adopted by the queen in the dyad piece. The interplay and interchange of religious and royal iconography in this example surely speaks for a discernible religious veneration towards the king's consort in such instances.

Enough non-royal statuary survives for us to consider it very likely that there would have been a large collection of individual statuettes of queens at one time, but to date it seems that very little has survived. Alabaster fragments of the head of a female (probably a queen, but perhaps a goddess), wearing a vulture cap were found by Hölscher in Khafre's complex at Giza.¹⁴⁷ In Cairo Museum¹⁴⁸ there is also an unfinished, colossal limestone statue of H_c-mrr-Nbtj II where the queen's titulary has been inscribed on either side of her box chair. It is the only known complete colossal statue of a queen prior to the Middle Kingdom.

On a smaller scale the Boston alabaster statuette of Mrj-R_c-^cnh.n.s II and her son provides a significant example where the queen is larger than the child-sized king. This iconography is very suggestive of later known statuettes of Isis with Horus seated on her knee, and that model is probably the origin of this form of statuary.¹⁴⁹ But, as Martin-Pardey¹⁵⁰ has observed, the queen here is to be seen not so much in her traditional rôle as royal mother,

but much more in her political rôle as regent, guaranteeing order and the continuity of the dynasty for her young son. The statuette appears to be one of a few select pieces which represent a female regent with an infant king on her knees.¹⁵¹ A later statue of Twosret with Siptah on her knees reproduces the iconography of this Boston piece in most of its details.¹⁵² Wildung¹⁵³ has also pointed out the similarities between the Boston statuette and the unfinished limestone statuette of Akhenaten with a queen seated upon his knees (JE 44866). These two artworks bear a remarkable iconographic resemblance to each other.¹⁵⁴ Although Wildung argues that the mythological element of a ruler on the knees of a god is thematically present in the New Kingdom iconography, perhaps the idea of a regency, more than divinity, is to be sought in the Amarna examples. In this one could see the Boston statuette as the prototype for the New Kingdom iconography.¹⁵⁵

It would be hazardous to draw any conclusions from these few examples of Old Kingdom statuary, not only because so few examples are available, but also because similar statuary throughout Egyptian history shows us that the iconography relating to a queen altered according to circumstances. Thus, the example of Amenhotep III's colossal statuary of himself and Queen Tjy (CG 610) shows the couple as a pair of equal size, while the so-called Colossi of

Memnon feature huge statues of the same king with miniature women (of whom Tjjj is one) flanking his legs. One can only suggest that the size of the consort must have been dependent upon the purpose for which the monument was originally intended. In the latter instance it would appear that because the colossi were the guardian effigies flanking the portal of the king's own mortuary temple the rôle of the royal women there was less important in these pieces. The same intention may have applied in the example of Djedefre's statue (Louvre E 1152) mentioned earlier. We encounter similar examples among the tomb reliefs and statuary of officials from all periods, too, and thus we can draw no conclusions about the status of the queen from those examples.

Although the statuary is not particularly helpful in detecting the status of the queen, other art forms have been more useful. Among the reliefs and paintings of royal consorts available to us today there is a discernible progression in the iconography of these women. Djoser and his consort and daughter, and a woman who is unnamed,¹⁵⁶ form the subject of the earliest relief where royal women are named. The piece is similar to Djedefre's fragmentary statue mentioned above. Next in time is a small fragmented image of Htp-hr.s I from the inlaid box¹⁵⁷ found in her tomb. She is seated on the box throne, wearing a simple shift and many bracelets

on her lower arms. Remains of a fillet with ribbons are evident on her head. If one compares this image of Htp-hr.s I, or the consorts of Djedefre and Menkaure from their statues, with one of the queen-mothers from Dynasties V or VI, the differences are noticeable. Frequently, a sceptre of some sort, or an ankh - previously the prerogative of kings and gods - is held in the hand of the queen, from the latter part of Dynasty IV onward. From the same period, the queen-mothers appear wearing the vulture-cap¹⁵⁸ and, occasionally, the cobra. (This does not apply to those consorts who were not *mwt nswt* at this time.)

From the evidence available to us it appears that the vulture headdress for the queen emerged during the time of Khafre,¹⁵⁹ although the queen (perhaps goddess) there remains anonymous. That it could be Queen H^c-mrr-Nbtj I is possible, especially as she is the first known queen to be depicted wearing this headdress; the determinative for her name appears in the inscription from the architrave of the Galarza Tomb. Seated on a box chair or throne she holds a w3d sceptre in one hand, and an ankh in the other.¹⁶⁰ Her vulture-cap (*Kamal*)¹⁶¹ does not specify whether a cobra or vulture decorates the crown) formerly was confined to the iconography of goddesses. In the mortuary temple of Menkaure Reisner found fragments of a colossal statue wearing a vulture cap.¹⁶²

On her Giza door jamb inscription¹⁶³ Queen Hnt-k3w.s I also wears the vulture-cap. In the Abusir finds this iconography continues, but it is difficult to determine which of the queens Hnt-k3w.s is referred to in some of the damaged remains. One faience fragment of Hnt-k3w.s found at Abusir¹⁶⁴ shows the queen wearing the vulture-cap and, possibly, uraeus. The queen grasps a papyrus wand. The representation is suggestive of the iconography of Wadjet and, as the queen also wears the vulture cap, she epitomises the Nbtj. Whether or not this effect was intentional, the religious trappings worn by the queen on this occasion mark a considerable advance in the iconographical status of the queen. In Dynasty VI Queen Nt also appears in identical fashion on a fragment found in her mortuary chapel.¹⁶⁵

There is a further iconographical development to be seen during the Sixth Dynasty in the several extant representations of Queen Mrj-R^c-Cnh.n.s II. She wears the vulture cap and (missing) decoration - either vulture or cobra - in the Boston alabaster statuette.¹⁶⁶ However, in the inscription from the tomb of D^cw,¹⁶⁷ in the Wadi Maghara inscription,¹⁶⁸ and in the damaged stone offering table from Abydos,¹⁶⁹ the queen wears a tight-fitting cap with a prominent uraeus, a type of headgear that is seen again in the alabaster statuette of the infant Pepy II.¹⁷⁰ This would seem

to offer special recognition of her regency status for, in these representations, she wears the headgear of a king.

Another very interesting relief fragment from later in Pepy's reign indicates an iconographic distinction for his wife, Wgb-tn. This queen, who had, as far as we can discern, only the status of a consort, had her name engraved beneath the outspread wings of the goddess, Nekhbet.¹⁷¹ This iconography is identical to the decoration which accompanied the name of the king on his monuments.¹⁷² Even as that iconography was designed to protect the king throughout eternity (as the shen ring in the vulture's claws symbolises), so we might expect that this was the intention for the iconography attached to the name of Wgb-tn in the other instance.

Conclusion

In this review of the evidence from the monuments, the written records and the iconographical sources, it seems that over the centuries between the First and Sixth Dynasties, a gradual, but marked development had taken place in the way in which the king's consort was perceived. In the First Dynasty - with the two exceptions of Nt-htp and Mrjt-Nt who may have been monarchs themselves - the position of the royal consort had been little different from that of the lower-ranked officials who served the

king. Nothing shows this quite so plainly as the position of, and equipment within, the consort's tomb in the archaic cemeteries.

The tombs of queens underwent several changes in the following dynasties and, by the Sixth Dynasty, the mortuary monuments of queens (the consorts, as well as the mothers) were distinguished structures, quite unlike those of the royal officials. In the use of the pyramidal form and in the eventual development of the mortuary chapel, queens' complexes provided an intermediate stage between the mortuary arrangements of officials and those of the kings.¹⁷³ János¹⁷⁴ has seen in the development of the queen's complex a security for her existence as a royal wife in the afterlife. This also appears to be reflected in the pyramid titles held by the queens from the same period.¹⁷⁵ Not only this, but the final privilege given to Pepy's wives, the inclusion of Pyramid Texts within their burial chambers, was designed to ensure that these women could travel safely to the region of the celestial gods, and there assume the status of gods themselves - a privilege which previously had been confined to kings.

Additionally, in the world of the necropolis, their perpetuity was to be assured not only by the offerings from the king's pyramid cult, but also by the establishment of cults dedicated to individual queens. The numbers of such cults is not known, but

incidental evidence from the tomb of M_{tn} at Saqqara¹⁷⁶ reveals that Nj-m3^ct-H^cp I had a k3 cult being maintained for her during the Fourth Dynasty, while the cult of Hnt-k3w.s I at Abusir may have lasted until the Middle Kingdom.¹⁷⁷ Queen Jpwt I had an additional cult at Koptos,¹⁷⁸ as did both Mrj-R^c-cnh.n.s I and her daughter, Nt,¹⁷⁹ and both Mrj-R^c-cnh.n.s sisters, their brother D^cw, and King Pepy II¹⁸⁰ had cult statues in the sanctuary of Khentyimentyw that were the subject of an edict during the Sixth Dynasty. The last cult established for a queen was the hwt ntr of wdb-tn (also probably the subject of an exemption order by the king¹⁸¹), this one being especially remarkable, since Wdb-tn does not appear to have been a mother of a king, as all the women previously mentioned had been.

Keeping pace with the gradual increase in their burial and cultic privileges were the iconographical representations of the consorts of the king. The occasional use of diadems, such as those worn by Htp-hr.s II, the royal female in Sahure's temple, and Queen T3tt, gave some distinction to the depiction of the queen, but a much more significant item was the use of the vulture cap, previously only seen on the heads of goddesses. In some instances the uraeus was worn. At this stage of our knowledge we are uncertain of the true significance of this iconography, but the

several depictions of ~~Mrj-RC-Enh~~.n.s II with the tight cap and uraeus seems to indicate the regnal status of this queen. It is also apparent that a consort could become a monarch, as is evident from the Turin Canon entry for Queen Neitkrety. Such details, even though they are few in number, indicate that the wives of the kings had manifestly greater participation in the affairs of Egypt by the close of the Sixth Dynasty.

In surveying the evidence from the archaeological, written and iconographical sources it has become apparent that considerable changes had occurred in the way the Egyptians perceived the position of the queen. Although the position of the consort in the First Dynasty appears to have been no more elevated than the position of middle-ranking officials, there was a noticeable cumulative process in evidence throughout the Old Kingdom. The generations witnessed a gradual increase in the number of titles for the queens, a substantial alteration to the types of tombs they received - some of them being very expensive monuments - and the entitlement of some of them to both hm k3 and hm ntr servants for their cults. The iconographic record endorses this trend, gradually investing the queen mother with attributes previously seen in connection with goddesses. While never the equal of the king (as is evident from the different mortuary establishments),

the queen's status, by the end of the Old Kingdom, had been elevated by the accumulation of a number of symbols that, formerly, had been the sole prerogative of the king and the goddesses.

Drawing conclusions from these accumulated honours is extremely difficult, due to the poor condition of our material, whether it be the monumental, the written, or the iconographical records. Perhaps the kings (who frequently chose commoner wives) wished to increase the status of their consorts by the bestowal of titles, or by the elevation of the queen with the attributes of goddesses in the iconography. Alternatively, the initial impetus may have come from a king who wished to honour his mother, perhaps because she was a commoner, or perhaps because he wished to emphasise the legitimacy of his right to inherit the throne.¹⁸² Certainly, the greatest acceleration of honours appears in the Sixth Dynasty, when there seem to have been a number of political crises for several kings.¹⁸³

What does emerge from the evidence is the integral rôle of the queen in the Egyptian concept of kingship. Some of her titles (smrt Hr. t1st Hr. ht Hr. s3t ntr), added to his aura of majesty because they stressed his godlike attributes, others (hmt ntr B3-pf. T3-spf. Dhwtj. sm3wt mri Nbtj) emphasised his fertility and his union with the gods, and others (mwt nswt Ppj-mn-nfr etc.)

attested to the continued importance of the king's pyramid. And, even as the titulary of the queens reflected the majesty of the king, so the queens themselves shared in some of his privileges. As time elapsed their tombs became increasingly more distinguished, then different from those of the official class. Beginning with Hnt-k3w.s II, the queens' mortuary chapels began to incorporate the cult pyramid, statue niches and magazines that all imitated elements of the king's mortuary temple design. By the end of the Sixth Dynasty the Pyramid Texts entitled the queen to share in the king's afterlife, as no other citizen might do, thus bringing to its apogee the status of the queen between the First and Sixth Dynasties.

CHAPTER 6

THE PROBLEM OF QUEEN HNT-K3W.S

Perhaps the most intriguing problem concerning any queen in Old Kingdom Egyptian history is that of Queen Hnt-k3w.s, who has been the subject of numerous scholarly discussions. Chief among them are those by Junker,¹ van de Walle,² Borchardt,³ Hassan,⁴ Maragioglio and Rinaldi,⁵ Altenmüller,⁶ and Verner.⁷ From time to time, other scholars have mentioned the difficulties experienced in trying to place this queen within the history of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties, but their comments have tended to echo those of the major works mentioned above.

Questions concerning the queen's place in Egyptian history focus on such items as the date for her floruit, her genealogical connections, the meaning of her several titles - none of which is common - and her exact status in the kingdom at that time. Although the answers to none of these questions is known all of the authors previously mentioned have put forward tentative solutions, some of which will be

discussed below. At times, during the course of such arguments to the questions posed by the few remnants from her tomb, literary references have been examined. Junker, van de Walle and Hassan have discussed the legend of the Fourth Pyramid and the courtesan Rhodopis; Hassan and Altenmüller have given closer attention to the Westcar Papyrus. All of this has led to a most stimulating debate.

The problems concerning the queen have been further complicated by the presence of another queen of the same name and many of the hypotheses advanced have been misled by information relating to the latter queen. As both queens had an association with King Neferirkare this contributed to the confusion. This confusion has now been clarified to a great extent: recent excavation by the Czechoslovakian team at Abusir has produced a considerable amount of material pertaining to both queens, some of which is due for publication at the end of this year.

The mortuary complex

The queen's tomb, often referred to as a pyramid, is not one at all, although its appearance has some deceptive likeness to a step-pyramid. It is an unique monument, more

like a double mastaba.⁸

It is often said that the queen's tomb has many features paralleled by the tomb of King Shepseskaf at Saqqara.⁹ However, in spite of the obvious similarities, there are noticeable differences between the two tombs.

Shepseskaf's mortuary temple is in the centre of the building, on the eastern side. Hnt-k3w.s' chapel is positioned on the south-eastern corner of her tomb. Shepseskaf's mortuary temple is an exterior structure, while Hnt-k3w.s has an interior chapel. In addition to her chapel, the queen had another place for offerings, on the outside of the north-eastern section of her lower stratum, where a false door had been set. The false door for Shepseskaf was located within his mortuary temple, outside the superstructure.¹⁰

Although it has been said that Shepseskaf's tomb has only one level (and so it appears in Jéquier's well-known reconstruction sketch), the tombs of both Shepseskaf and Hnt-k3w.s have two levels,¹¹ although the proportions differ. The tombs seem to have had different superstructures too, but this may be due to stone robbery;

there are no traces left of the upper corners of Hnt-k3w.s' superstructure, as there are on Shepseskaf's tomb. One other disparity is that the uppermost structure for the tomb of Hnt-k3w.s was added at a later date,¹² perhaps in the time of Neferirkare. In this alteration we may be seeing a revalorisation of this queen, in the same way that the mastaba of Queen Jpwt I was transformed into a pyramid, after her son became king.¹³

There are, however, similar elements within the burial chambers of the monuments of Hnt-k3w.s, Menkaure and Shepseskaf. All are finished in similar fashion, with large blocks of well-dressed granite, and all have a simple stone-lined chamber with a vaulted roof.¹⁴ Stadelmann¹⁵ has observed that these three tombs have a chronological development which provides us with some criterion for dating the queen.

The inner chambers of all three monuments possess an alignment of four niches and, at rightangles, two niches in the room adjacent to the burial chamber. We do not know what purpose these niches might have served; Hassan refers to those in Hnt-k3w.s' tomb as 'magazines', but they have a closer affinity with statue-niches, since they measure

approximately a metre both in depth and width, and range between 1.38 and 1.55 metres in height. This niche-formation does not appear in the other pyramids of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties, although King Wenis, has three niches at one end of his burial suite. Evidently Menkaure, Shepseskaf and Hnt-k3w.s had some common intention that does not seem to have been shared by the other kings. Stadelmann is of the opinion that their purpose was chthonic.¹⁶ It is also possible that the niches were for ka statues, but again we cannot demonstrate that this was so, since no significant remains were found in any of those tombs. Arnold¹⁷ considers these structures to have served the purpose of a serdab for all three persons. Be that as it may, the fact that the queen's antechamber within the tomb contained two false doors on its western wall places added emphasis on the queen's k3.

The religious background for the Fourth Dynasty

It is possible that both Shepseskaf and Hnt-k3w.s were involved in some religious changes thought to have taken place in the Fourth Dynasty.¹⁸ Hassan's explanation for their monuments is that those two royal persons could have erected their tombs as a public declaration of their

allegiance to the burial cult. He also suggests that Shepseskaf might have been urged to do this by public opinion at a time when there was a fairly rapid turnover in kings for reasons that remain obscure to us.¹⁹ Whether these ideas are correct is as yet undetermined.

The dating of Hnt-k3w.s

Doubt continues over the approximate floruit of this queen. The fact that her burial took place at Giza would imply that the queen belonged to the Fourth Dynasty for, apart from Djedefre and Shepseskaf, all Khufu's descendants seem to have used Giza as their cemetery. Elements of the tomb of Hnt-k3w.s (already mentioned) suggest that she might have had some connection to King Shepseskaf, and indeed some scholars are of the opinion that she could have been the wife of this king, while recognising that there is no evidence (apart from the style of her tomb) for this suggestion.

Other views concerning her familial relationships are that she might have been the wife of King Weserkaf, first king of the Fifth Dynasty; or that she might have first been wife to Shepseskaf (whose four year reign suggests an early

death) before a proposed marriage to Weserkaf. Schmitz has expressed the opinion that she was not a king's wife at all, since she does not claim to be a hmt nswt.²⁰ Any of these suggestions might be correct - or none of them might be. There is no evidence as yet for the name of her husband. Only the architecture of her tomb suggests that she might have been a near contemporary of Shepseskaf.

Some scholars have thought that the queen might have been the wife of King Weserkaf.²¹ However, there is a possibility that Weserkaf might have been her son. The name of Weserkaf bears close similarity with the names of Hnt-k3w.s and Shepseskaf, although the name might reflect not a family affiliation, but a religious one. For those who see in Hnt-k3w.s I the consort of Shepseskaf, there is the difficulty of explaining the origin of a new dynasty with this king if Hnt-k3w.s were the mother of Weserkaf. The presence of Thamphthis in the king lists, however, could suggest that Weserkaf succeeded this king in default of other heirs, thus prompting Manetho's division. There is no break in the Turin Papyrus. The mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj title carried by the queen might indicate that two of her sons became king by default.²² As one royal son of

hers is known, the implied other son could have been Weserkaf. Sahure's mother, evidently, was Queen Nfr-htp.s, wife of Weserkaf.²³

Manetho attributes to Weserkaf the founding of the Fifth Dynasty, although recent studies have seriously questioned the divisions made by Manetho in comparison to the Turin Papyrus,²⁴ so the concept of a new dynasty should be treated with some caution. The legend of the Westcar Papyrus has also entrenched the position of Weserkaf as the first king of a new dynasty.²⁵ One might suppose from this that, if Hnt-k3w.s I were Weserkaf's mother,²⁶ she might not have been the wife of a king. Weserkaf's origins, however, are not known.

The titles of Hnt-k3w.s²⁷

Apart from her substantial mortuary complex at Giza, very little material evidence remains for Hnt-k3w.s. This is particularly true in regard to the queen's titles: the two massive red granite door jambs from the mortuary chapel at Giza providing the major evidence. The titles given there are: mwt nswt bitj. nswt bitj. s3t ntr. gdt ht nb nfrt jrt.n.s, the two accepted translations of this titulary

being either: 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mother of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Daughter of the god, Every good thing that she orders is done for her', or 'Mother of two Kings of Upper and Lower Egypt, Daughter of the god, Every good thing that she orders is done for her'.

Leaving aside discussion of the other titles (all of which are analysed in Chapter 2), we shall concentrate on the most difficult title, mwt nswt bjtj, nswt bjtj.

Theories concerning the title of mwt nswt bjtj, nswt bjtj

The title can be interpreted in two ways, as indicated above. Opinions about these two interpretations are polarised. Borchardt advocates a reading meaning that the queen was the mother of two kings;²⁸ Junker supports the idea that Hnt-k3w.s was a ruler of Egypt and also the mother of a king.²⁹ When he published his archaeological report on the queen's complex Selim Hassan also promoted Junker's view since, in his opinion, the funerary complex showed every sign of belonging to a full monarch. All other scholars who have written about the issue have aligned themselves either with Junker, or with Borchardt, most of them preferring

Borchardt's reading.

There is no point in pursuing at this stage which of these two lexicographical alternatives gives the correct reading for the titles, the arguments appear to be equally balanced for each. If the problem of the queen's regency is to be solved it will have to be argued on other grounds. This was the path taken by those who have made more recent attempts to solve the enigma concerning the queen. These explorations have taken several different directions.

Grdseloff's thesis

Grdseloff was one of the first to propose a scheme based on genealogical grounds.³⁰ Referring to an inscription in the Saqqara tomb of Pr-sn, he identifies the mother of Weserkaf as a certain King's Mother named Nfr-ḥtp.s.³¹ He suggests that Nfr-ḥtp.s was the daughter of Djedefre and Queen Ḥtp-ḥr.s II.³² (There is no security about this identity, even though it remains a viable proposition.) He suggests that perhaps Nfr-ḥtp.s married the High Priest of Heliopolis (taking his idea from the Westcar Papyrus), and he offers the idea that this person might have been her brother, B3-k3 - perhaps the later king Bakare - and that

these people were the parents of Weserkaf.³³ After the death of Queen Hnt-k3w.s I - whom he considers to have been a monarch³⁴ - Grdseloff suggests that Queen Bw-nfr was married to the ephemeral monarch Thamphthis and, after the death of the latter, Weserkaf claimed the throne as a legitimate descendant of Djedefre.³⁵

Grdseloff's support for his claims rests on an inscription in the tomb of Pr-sn which states that, in the time of Sahure, the offerings from the tomb of the King's Mother, Nfr-htp.s, should afterwards be directed to the tomb of Pr-sn. The locality of the tomb of Nfr-htp.s was therefore in the vicinity of Pr-sn's tomb, which was 190 metres distant from the pyramid complex of Weserkaf. Grdseloff thus concluded that, as the pyramid of the king's wife, just beyond the temenos wall of Weserkaf's complex, was missing/^{its owner} Nfr-htp.s was likely to be the owner of the pyramid.³⁶

Grdseloff's arguments are plausible, and further evidence has been found in support of them. Following a re-examination of Weserkaf's satellite pyramid³⁷ Lauer³⁸ has confirmed that this pyramid is that of Queen Nfr-htp.s. Given the usual Old Kingdom mortuary practice, the pyramid

is likely to be that of Weserkaf's wife, rather than his mother.

However, the Nfr-ḥtp.s who was the wife of Weserkaf is unlikely to have been the daughter of Djedefre as, from the length of regnal years known so far, at least fifty-five years³⁹ would have elapsed between Djedefre's succession and that of Weserkaf.⁴⁰ This same length of time must approximate the age of Djedefre's daughter, Nfr-ḥtp.s. Weserkaf may have been a mature man when he took the throne, so it is conceivable that Djedefre's daughter, Nfr-ḥtp.s, could have been Weserkaf's mother; but this person could not have been his wife. Queen Nfr-ḥtp.s, wife of Weserkaf, could not have been the daughter of Djedefre. She might have been a descendent,⁴¹ but Nfr-ḥtp.s was quite a common name in the late Fourth and Fifth Dynasties, and Grdseloff's reconstruction has no other support.

As a consequence of the new identification relating to Nfr-ḥtp.s we should expect that the mwt nswt Nfr-ḥtp.s in Pr-sn's tomb to be the mother of Sahure, as Pr-sn was an important official of his. The evidence thus points to King Sahure as being the son, not the brother (as is sometimes proposed) of King Weserkaf. As the mother of Weserkaf could

not have been Queen Nfr-ḥtp.s referred to in the tomb of Pr-sn, perhaps Hnt-k3w.s was that king's mother.

Altenmüller's thesis

Altenmüller proposes that the mother of the three kings (Weserkaf, Sahure, and Neferirkare⁴²) mentioned in the Westcar Papyrus story was Queen Hnt-k3w.s. He says that the reason why she did not carry a title mentioning three kings of Upper and Lower Egypt is because she died before the third son could come to the throne.⁴³ However, as it now could appear that Sahure was not the brother of Weserkaf (as the Westcar Papyrus has it), Hnt-k3w.s would not have been the mother of Sahure, and thus, not the mother of the dynasty's first three kings.

While Altenmüller's theory thus far is conceivable, it is more difficult to accept his proposition concerning the queen's alleged connection with Prince Dd.f-Hr.⁴⁴ That argument is not supported by evidence for any actual relationship between the people concerned.

The Westcar Papyrus is primarily a literary work designed to entertain; it is not an historical account. Its author has used several well-known literary devices in this

piece, amongst which are puns, designed to heighten the element of mystery in the story. He also knows that his audience will find the story more credible if there are factual elements within it: the names of the first three kings provide one of those elements, and the measure of the author's success lies in the attention we give his story today. Although Altenmüller's theory has won wide acceptance he has not been able to find any substantial evidence to demonstrate the links he suggests are there between Hnt-k3w.s I and Dd.f-Hr, and his thesis, like that of Grdseloff, is weakened by the recent work involving Nfr-htp.s.

Later evidence concerning this title

A major avenue for extending our knowledge about Queen Hnt-k3w.s has been opened by further archaeological investigations that have taken place at Abusir. A number of references to Queen Hnt-k3w.s have been found there. Some of these refer to the first queen of that name, and others refer to her younger namesake.⁴⁵

Mrj-st.f-Pth was an overseer of the ka-servants, for one Hnt-k3w.s - presumably the younger. Her name also



fig. 1 The Ghazouli Block, giving the titles of
Hnt-k3w.s II in relation to her husband and son, Neferre.

- Illustration taken from Mme Posener-Kriéger: Archives
p.531 fig. 34.

appears on an alabaster offering-table bearing the legend 'King's Wife', a title the older queen does not display in the remains from Giza. Hassan rightly suggests that this queen could have been the wife of Neferirkare.⁴⁶ The Ghazouli block (fig. 1), unpublished until Posener-Kriéger's study on the Abusir papyri, identifies this queen with her husband, Neferirkare, and her son, Nfr-R^c. Another block, found by Verner during the Prague University team's work at Abusir, has also linked this queen as the mother of Nyweserre.⁴⁷ It was this evidence that prompted Verner to propose that the mother of the two kings of the mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj title was the wife of Neferirkare.⁴⁸ (Verner's current view, however, is that there are two queens of this name.⁴⁹) The younger queen, on the other hand, does not seem to have possessed either the mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj, or the gdt ht nbt jrt.n.s titles held by the elder queen.

Other references to the first Queen Hnt-k3w.s have been found at Abusir. A scribe and lector priest of the ka servants for mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj Hnt-k3w.s named Jdw, left a graffito recording his office on the bottom half of his coffin.⁵⁰ And it was at Abusir that Borchardt found a

relief fragment that includes a reference to the hwt ntr of this queen. There was every indication that this temple for Hnt-k3w.s was to be found at Abusir, and confirmation of the site came with the Czechoslovak 1979 excavation.⁵¹ Verner's excavations have disclosed the queen's cult temple (which is incorporated within the funerary complex of Queen Hnt-k3w.s II) had been constructed in two stages. The first took place during the reign of Neferirkare, the second under his son, Nyweserre. Later kings also paid homage there, as is indicated by the seal impression of King Djedkare Isesi.⁵²

Yet a third source of information from Abusir is found in the numerous fragments of papyri which have been discovered during the course of several excavations. These fragments show that an important cult for the mother of King Neferirkare was established at Abusir.⁵³ Some of these fragments mention the transfer of offerings from Neferirkare's temple to the temple of the King's Mother. While it is sometimes possible to detect which of the queens Hnt-k3w.s is mentioned, for the greater number of pieces it is impossible to detect which of the two queens is intended. This is because both queens held a relationship in respect of Neferirkare, and because both queens were the

mothers of kings, and therefore carried the title of mwtnswt, the usual title accompanying the name of Hnt-k3w.s in the papyri. But, as both queens appear in the relief fragments, graffiti and papyri, the possibility that both queens were revered in that hwtntr should not be overlooked.

One of the most informative pieces of the papyri makes mention of a mortuary foundation for the King's Mother Hnt-k3w.s and the King's Son Jr-n-R^c. Posener-Kriéger expresses the view that it reveals for the first time an unknown son of Queen Hnt-k3w.s.⁵⁴ Although there is every indication that she is correct, Verner points out the difficulty of deciding whether the mwtnswt in question is the elder or the younger Hnt-k3w.s.⁵⁵ If we are to see in this prince a son of the elder Hnt-k3w.s, Jr-n-R^c's title of s3nswt could be significant. If he were the son of Hnt-k3w.s I, then she is very likely to have been the consort of a previous king.⁵⁶ The tomb of Jr-n-R^c, discovered recently, lies in the royal cemetery that encompasses the hwtntr of the queen.

Thus the Abusir finds have contributed a great deal to our knowledge of Queen Hnt-k3w.s. They have established that

she was the first queen of that name, possibly a king's wife, the mother of King Neferirkare and, possibly, another prince named Jr-n-R^c. In addition, the Abusir discoveries have shown that the queen was the object of a religious cult there, one which continued well into the Sixth Dynasty, at least.⁵⁷ The cult was not the ordinary type, but one that was usually only given to kings.

The Abusir cult was not the only one for Queen Hnt-k3w.s. Hassan had discovered previously at Giza that Rnpt-nfr was the hm ntr of Hnt-k3w.s,⁵⁸ and there seems to have been a hwt ntr at Giza, too.⁵⁹ Hassan proposes that, as only monarchs were given such establishments, Hnt-k3w.s must have been a monarch.⁶⁰ As far as we can tell, Hassan was correct in associating a hwt ntr with a monarch up until the time of Hnt-k3w.s I. That two hwt ntr were established for this queen is indicative of an especial esteem that does not appear again in our records until the time of Pepy II.⁶¹

An interpretation of the queen's status

We have seen that all the evidence points to some remarkable position in Egypt's history for her, although the precise nature of this has remained elusive. The only

question that remains to be answered is the meaning of her title mwt nswt bitj. nswt bitj. Does it mean that she was the mother of two kings, as Borchardt suggested? Or, does it mean that she was herself a ruler and the mother of a king?

The queen is the mother of two kings

Taking the view that the queen is the mother of two kings we find considerable support within the evidence at our disposal. First of all, the inscription allows us to read her name in that way. Secondly, her name is never written in a cartouche, yet this is what we would expect to see following the title nswt bitj. Thirdly, her name does not appear on the King Lists of the time - although it must be said that none of these is complete for the period in question.

Fourthly, the way in which the title is written leaves a large gap between the phrase nswt bitj and the name of Hnt-k3w.s. Normally we would expect a monarch to write, 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Hnt-k3w.s'. The queen's title is not written in this acceptable fashion, so we are encouraged to think that she was not the monarch being

referred to by nswt bitj.

Fifthly, she is known to be the mother of King Neferirkare, although the second royal son implied by the title does not seem to have been King Sahure, as proposed by some scholars.⁶² As her title of mwt nswt bitj nswt bitj was upon her Giza door portals by the time of Neferirkare, the only other candidate likely to be her royal son would be either Thamphthis or Weserkaf.

Finally, the queen's tomb makes frequent display of false doors - a total of no less than five have been found. No other monarch in the Old Kingdom had a false door within his tomb; it was a cultic practice exclusive of kings, but not of princes, princesses, or the wives of kings; monarchs possessed a false door in their mortuary temples.⁶³ All these points add up to a formidable argument against a monarchy for Hnt-k3w.s.

The case for a monarchy

There is also a substantial body of evidence that can be mustered in support of a contrary argument. Her much-disputed title, mwt nswt bitj nswt bitj, can be read to mean 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt and Mother of the King

of Upper and Lower Egypt'. As was pointed out earlier, the title remains ambiguous, although the title, mwt nswt bjtj, was a recognised title for a king's mother.⁶⁴

Secondly, she had a mortuary complex with some components similar to those of male monarchs - although it is only proper to point out that this lacks a proper mortuary temple, causeway and valley temple.⁶⁵ However, the absence of these items indicates⁶⁶ that the queen could not have been regarded by her contemporaries as a monarch.

Thirdly, the queen was buried in her own cemetery. She was not buried in proximity to any other king, as most other queens were; this, too, might suggest an independent status - were it not for the fact that a number of queens (eg. Bw-nfr, Nj-m3^ct-H^cp II etc.) were also buried apart from their husbands. Such consorts, however, do not have their own pyramid city, as Hnt-k3w.s I does.⁶⁷

Since she seems to have shared the religious beliefs of Shepseskaf it is surprising that her tomb was not built in the same cemetery and, it would appear from this, that there was some particularly strong reason for her decision to erect her monument near that of Menkaure, with whom she also

shared some cultic features within her funerary apartments.⁶⁸ Should Hassan's so-called valley temple⁶⁹ belong to this queen, then the unusual pathway and door he found there would indicate that offerings were taken from the valley temple of Menkaure to the temple of Hnt-k3w.s directly from the king's altar - surely an unique situation.

The queen's entitlement to a hm ntr might suggest her status was that of some sort of ruler, while the possession of a known hwt ntr - and probably two - provide further evidence for her importance. Even the most prestigious consorts were not entitled to a hwt ntr prior to the time of Hnt-k3w.s I. In the Sixth Dynasty, however, there were other queens who were given this honour and, like Hnt-k3w.s I and her relations buried at Abusir, the cult embraced other members of the royal family. Perhaps one aspect of the hwt ntr cult (so far not examined) could be its function as an ancestral cult. Such an explanation would resolve the difficulty raised by Hassan's belief about the attribution of hwt ntr cults in the Old Kingdom.

Finally, there is room on most of the king lists relating to the Fourth Dynasty for at least one other ruler

after the death of King Shepseskaf. Although the inscriptions for Hnt-k3w.s' tomb could have been added later, the queen's complex itself is unquestionably dated to this period because of its architectural features.⁷⁰ The interior of Weserkaf's pyramid is quite different from that of the queen's burial chambers, and so are all the royal tombs that follow after the time of Weserkaf.⁷¹ This architectural sequence would suggest the floruit of the queen as belonging to the period prior to that of Weserkaf. During that period she might have attained her initial prominence due to a regency she held for the king Manetho calls Thamphthis. This would have provided the queen with an opportunity to alter or construct her mortuary complex as she pleased. This remains as a real possibility.

Conclusion

On balance, the evidence appears to favour a position suggesting that the queen was not a monarch.

The Abusir papyri show that there was no cartouche in the writing of Queen Hnt-k3w.s' name, although each king named in the papyri fragments did have a cartouche. Her 'reign', therefore, must remain in doubt.

There is a similar difficulty with the queen's unroyal hiatus between the royal title of nswt bitj and her own name. Perhaps it could be said that (apart from any confusion that her title might have caused the scribe) the titles of Hnt-k3w.s follow the pattern of entitling a queen.

For the assumption that the queen was mother of Sahure as well as Neferirkare there is no evidence at all. The link has been made because of the story in the Westcar Papyrus.⁷² Borchardt provided further substance for this claim, having discovered a relief in Sahure's temple at Abusir where King Neferirkare is named on one occasion in which he was part of the entourage of Sahure.⁷³ Because Neferirkare appears with his cartouche on Sahure's temple wall does not necessarily mean that the two men might have been brothers, as Borchardt suggested. Nowhere, either in Sahure's reliefs or in any inscription of Neferirkare's, does the latter claim to be the brother of the former. Sahure seems more likely to have been the son of Weserkaf and his wife Nfr-htp.s - as discussed above. Even more pertinent is the evidence from the papyri fragments and other evidence of Hnt-k3w.s I at Abusir. In none of this

(admittedly, very fragmentary) evidence is there any mention of her being the mother of Sahure yet, as the unknown Jr-n-R^c was mentioned in connexion with her, we should expect that any relationship to Sahure should also have been apparent. Be that as it may, no link so far has been discovered between Sahure and Hnt-k3w.s, and it is possible that the relationship between Sahure and Neferirkare is more likely to have been that of an uncle and his nephew.⁷⁴

Another aspect that has bearing on the problem of the meaning of Hnt-k3w.s I's title of mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj is the situation concerning her parentage of two kings. No other woman who was the mother of two kings ever carried the mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj title.

There are several known mothers of two kings. The queen closest in time to Hnt-k3w.s I is Hnt-k3w.s II, who was the mother of Prince Nfr-R^c (later King Neferefre⁷⁵), the eldest son of Neferirkare, and King Nyweserre, as a relief block from Abusir discloses.⁷⁶ But, unless future material reveals otherwise, this Hnt-k3w.s was not designated mwt nswt bjtj. nswt bjtj on any fragment found.⁷⁷

The Intef kings I and II of the Eleventh Dynasty were

brothers,⁷⁸ but their mother was not entitled mwt nswt bjtj
nswt bjtj. The much-publicised Queen Kmj of Dynasty XIII
 was the mother not only of two kings, but of three, yet she
 does not carry the title of mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj.
 According to Kitchen⁷⁹ Queen Nwb-h^c.s III was the mother of
 Rameses VII and IX, yet she does not carry this title
 either. Altogether, then, there is a fairly substantial
 body of evidence to show that the title mwt nswt bjtj nswt
bjtj could be a hapax legomenon that does not necessarily
 confirm Borchardt's reading of 'Mother of two kings of Upper
 and Lower Egypt'.

In addition to her title of mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj
 Hnt-k3w.s I was entitled s3t ntr. Each time this latter
 title appeared in Egyptian history the queen concerned was
 the mother of a king who took the throne after some unusual
 hiatus - often the death of a half-brother. The title could
 imply that the queen had played an important part in the
 perpetuation of the dynasty of a previous king; whether she
 were a daughter or not, she functioned as a daughter of the
 king in ensuring that his line continued to hold the
 Egyptian throne.⁸⁰

The title of mwt nswt bjtj was carried by each s3t ntr,

the title emphasising that the king concerned had a claim to rule both Upper and Lower Egypt. Perhaps the significance of the title mwt nswt bjtj nswt bjtj was not that Hnt-k3w.s I was merely the mother of two kings - as Hnt-k3w.s II and later queens were - but that on two occasions she ensured the perpetuation of the direct lineage of a king, when that lineage had lost control of the throne. That she was almost certainly Menkaure's daughter is clearly indicated by the inscription on the offering table found in the so-called valley temple associated with Hnt-k3w.s I.⁸¹ It might well be the lineage of Menkaure for which Hnt-k3w.s I acted as s3t ntr, and that might explain the siting of her funerary complex, and its connection to the so-called valley temple.⁸²

As Thamphthis was the successor of Shepseskaf, Hnt-k3w.s is unlikely to have received the titles of either s3t ntr, or mwt nswt bjtj⁸³ had he been her son, and the direct heir of Shepseskaf.⁸⁴ For this reason it is more likely that Weserkaf was the first of her two sons (the second being Neferirkare) referred to in her title.

Because Neferirkare appears not to have been the son of Sahure (none of whose four known sons succeeded him),

Neferirkare is very likely to have been the brother of Weserkaf, as the Westcar Papyrus says. Hnt-k3w.s I, for the second time, thus provided a successor who continued the line of the royal family of Menkaure. Such a pattern of succession would explain her title of mwt nswt bjtj nswt bitj, a title that the other mothers of two kings were not entitled to carry.⁸⁵ If this conjecture is correct, the explanation to her unusual title would suggest that she revived a faltering ancestral lineage on two occasions, and this may be the reason for her possession of a hwt ntr at both Giza and Abusir. It may well be the case that her hwt ntr at Abusir at least was part of a deliberate program designed to legitimise the reign of Neferirkare and his descendants. The continued veneration given to her Giza cult would ensure that her links with the revered god, Menkaure, were not forgotten.

Should this argument be well-grounded then we might come closer to identifying more accurately the queen's family relationships. There are a number of possibilities for these relationships, some of which have already been outlined; the identity of her husband, however, has not been discussed.

If Weserkaf is to be excluded as a possible royal husband for Hnt-k3w.s, we can only see her as the wife of either Shepseskaf or of Thamphthis. The latter king has never been considered principally, one would suppose, because of the brevity of his reign. Seipel⁸⁶ has suggested that Bw-nfr may have been the wife of Thamphthis, and her commoner son would have come from a secondary marriage - a circumstance more predictable if that queen was left a young widow.

Schmitz⁸⁷ and Seipel⁸⁸ do not consider the queen to have been married to a king because her Giza titulary omits wifely titles. So do the titles of Htp-hr.s I within her tomb, yet the lid of a vase was published not long ago by Kaplony⁸⁹ which appears to have belonged to this queen, and which carries the simple title of hmt nswt. Similarly, at Abusir was found an incomplete block which carries some of the titles of a queen.⁹⁰ Because one of the titles clearly present is [ddt ht] nbt irt.n.s, the fragment would appear to refer to Hnt-k3w.s I, as Hnt-k3w.s II is not known to have held this rare and important title. Other titles present on the fragment are those carried by the wives of kings: hm[tl] ntr [I3-spf], [hmt ntr] B3-pf, ht Hr and,

possibly, the title of hrpt sšmt šndt. It is thus likely that Hnt-k3w.s I had been the wife of a king. Further support for this status could be provided by a fragment mentioning a s3 nswt Jr-n-R^c,⁹¹ who shared in the cult of Hnt-k3w.s at Abusir.⁹² Kaplony⁹³ has estimated that from two to three generations served the cult, and this allows for at least two generations of members of the royal family. Posener-Kriéger⁹⁴ is of the opinion that Jr-n-R^c was without doubt the son of Queen Hnt-k3w.s⁹⁵ - but the problem is, which one? We are unable to tell from the papyri fragments.

It will also be remembered that, in the queen's tomb at Giza, Hassan found a relief fragment bearing the title s3 nswt n ht.f smsw⁹⁶ - not 'King's Daughter', as Hassan translates it.⁹⁷ It is most likely to refer to a son of this queen, thus suggesting that Hnt-k3w.s I may have been a king's wife.

It is tempting to speculate that, if she were the wife of Shepseskaf, she might have acted as regent for King Thamphthis - Shepseskaf's brief reign suggesting a youthful heir. It would be during this alleged regency that she could have seen to the continuation of her funerary complex

at Giza, perhaps suggestively modelling it upon the design of a royal mortuary complex to reflect her governmental position.

King Shepseskare

The position of Shepseskare is another difficult historical problem that might have some bearing on the complicated family relationships of the Fifth Dynasty.⁹⁸ Shepseskare appears on the Saqqara list as the successor to Neferirkare, but his name is omitted from the Abydos list, and there is a lacuna in the Turin Canon. If Shepseskare followed Neferirkare, as the Saqqara list has it, he too might have been a brother of Neferirkare. (The structure of his name also suggests some link between Shepseskaf, Weserkaf, Neferirkare and Shepseskare.) Shepseskare might have usurped the throne, taking over from his brother Neferirkare as the precedent had already been set. The theory of such an unusual royal succession may then have provided a platform for the Middle Kingdom story of the three kings who were brothers. According to the model suggested for the meaning of s3t_ntr,⁹⁹ Hnt-k3w.s II should have borne this title, yet existing evidence suggests that she did not. This omission might have been due to the

damnatio of Shepseskare's reign. A similar absence of s3t ntr from the titulary of Jpwt I indicates the obliteration of the reign of Weserkare in Dynasty VI. That Shepseskare's part in that story is missing could be due to an unacceptable usurpation of the throne, and later propaganda put out by Nyweserre, after the restoration of Neferirkare's line. The Westcar Papyrus would then be reflecting the later tradition.

Summary

The problem of Hnt-k3w.s I has never been clear-cut, as the permutations of this chapter have re-affirmed. Her status is still dubious, but it is likely to have been due to her perpetuation of a dynastic line which had its origins in the Fourth Dynasty. That her dynastic role might have been honoured with that of Hnt-k3w.s II (who played a similar role in the succession of Neferirkare's sons) is not beyond possibility. The Abusir papyri do refer to both women in association with the cult.¹⁰⁰

It is also conceivable that Hnt-k3w.s I may have gained her initial prominence by acting as a regent for the king known to us as Thamphthis. It may even have been this

regency that facilitated the accession of Weserkaf to the throne - but all this is pure speculation.

That her prestige was great in her own time, and subsequently, has never been in doubt, and it is very likely that this prestige was linked with her title mwt nswt bitj nswt bitj, the import of which may be that, on two occasions at least, she ensured the perpetuation of a royal lineage which might otherwise never have regained the throne.

CHAPTER 7

A SURVEY OF THE POSITION OF QUEENS FROM DYNASTIES XI - XVIIIntroduction

Although the number of records relating to the kings' wives from the end of the Old Kingdom to the beginning of the New Kingdom are more numerous than the records for Old Kingdom queens, our evidence for the former period is still very limited. Sometimes a queen is known from only one scarab¹ or cylinder seal,² or single, damaged inscription.³ With these - at times considerable - limitations being placed upon our studies any assessment of the position of the queen in this broad period of time can only be tentative, although some general observations can be made.

One of the most notable features is that the tombs of the kings' wives seemed to lack any sort of standardisation in the Middle Kingdom. Some queens were buried in shaft tombs with exterior chapels,⁴ others may have had pyramids,⁵ some were buried in gallery graves beneath the courtyard of the king's pyramid,⁶ two queens were buried in the gallery-chamber complexes within the pyramid of Amenemhat III, but numbers of

queens are not associated with any tomb at all,⁷ while the wives of many kings are not even known.⁸ Such irregularities make it difficult to compare tombs for differences in the status of queens from one period to another.

Comparison between the titularies of different queens for whom we do have some evidence does not yield much in the way of analytic data either, for it is clear from the records we do possess that the same queen could be referred to differently between one inscription and another. While the short titularies of the queens were used on some occasions (especially on seals and scarabs) at other times their titularies were much more elaborate, especially when these were recorded on important monuments.⁹ Because the nature of the records dictated the nature of the titulary we cannot be sure that, for the majority of the period Dynasty XI - XVII, a queen's importance relative to others can be gained from her titulary alone. The chart of comparative titles (Appendix I) should therefore be considered only as a guide to what material records still exist, rather than an indication of the comparative status of queens as reflected in their titularies.

Some idea of the status of the queen in her community can

be gathered from the few remains of iconography that have survived from the Middle Kingdom period. Like the evidence from titles, iconographical representations are also limited in number, but it is noticeable in the Middle Kingdom that the position of the queen was more prominent in the monumental records than it had been in the Old Kingdom period. Both the wife of the king, and his mother were sometimes represented accompanying the king during ceremonies, such as the inauguration of temples,¹⁰ while the daughter of the king,¹¹ or even the grandmother, might provide the feminine component on similar occasions.¹² Sometimes the queen appears on other types of dedicatory stelae,¹³ and this phenomenon, too, represents a change of custom from Old Kingdom practices.

In the New Kingdom period the queen might occasionally accompany a king in reliefs where he appears in scenes depicting the ritual slaughter of the enemy but, toward the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, both Queen Tjjj¹⁴ and Queen Nfrrt-jtj¹⁵ are depicted as conquerors themselves. These, and similar representations show an ever-increasing participation of the queen in state and religious affairs in Egypt. Such development leads us to the conclusion that the status of the queen was not static: it underwent a slow, but continuous

evolution throughout the pharaonic period.

Statues of the queen are more numerous for the Middle Kingdom period than they are for the Old Kingdom, although it is apparent that the loss of many statues is due not only to vandalism and misuse, but to reuse by later queens.¹⁶

The Old Kingdom statues of the queen seated on the box throne continued to be the most common form in the Middle Kingdom¹⁷ but other forms, such as the triple statuary of Senwosret III with his mother and wife,¹⁸ make their appearance. Frequently in these statues the Hathoric wig is worn by the queen as, for example, the figure of Nfret II in her Tanis statues, but other statues are damaged above the waist, and it is impossible to judge whether the tripartite wig or the Hathoric wig is worn.¹⁹ Although it may have been worn by queens earlier than this date,²⁰ it is more apparent for royal women from the Twelfth Dynasty onward. The Hathoric wig also appears in the statuary of commoners from Dynasty XII onward.²¹

A new type of statuary for the royal women also appears to have been introduced in the Middle Kingdom: a number of sphinxes are known - to date, the only named ones belong to

princesses - signalling some new religious interpretation of the role of royal women. The Hathoric wig is nearly always seen on such statues.²² It seems clear that the portrayal of the royal women as sphinxes was derived from the kingly models and, as such, indicates another form of religious elevation for royal women at that time.

Thus, both the titulary and iconography of the wives of the kings (to be discussed at greater length below) show a progressive growth in the prestigious representation of the queen between Dynasties XI and XVII. The evidence concerning the burial arrangements for these women, however, is more complicated, and it is difficult to discern any progression that might have been there.

The tombs of the Queens from Dynasties VII - XVII

Prior to the Eleventh Dynasty there is no known female royal burial other than the tomb of the wife of Šm3j;²³ the elaborate funerary provisions for all of Mentuhotep's wives are therefore all the more remarkable. His earlier, and perhaps less-important wives, received shaft tombs provided with small chapels en echelon on the first terrace of his Great mortuary temple at Deir el Bahri.²⁴ Queen Nfrw who, by

her titulary alone seems to have been Mentuhotep's most important wife (at least for the early part of his reign), was given a much larger tomb located in the peribolos wall of the main temple compound. Queen Tm, mother of the king's successor, had a tomb that was included within the upper terrace chapel of Mentuhotep's monument, apparently without any separate chapel at all. Its long dromos has a marked similarity to that of the king's own burial chamber, but the position and preparations for this tomb seem to indicate a tomb that had been provided as an afterthought.²⁵

King Mentuhotep I's wives are the only queens whose burials can be identified without equivocation between the First Intermediate Period until the reign of Amenemhat III. A similar situation exists for the tombs of the mothers of kings. Apart from mwt nswt bitj Tm, no tomb belonging to the mother of a king is known for the entire Middle Kingdom. Part reason for this lack of evidence may be due to excavation work that may have been hurriedly done originally.²⁶ Recent excavations carried out by Dieter Arnold at Lisht have shown that much material still remains to be discovered in sites already investigated at the turn of this century, and it is hoped that such future investigations will narrow the present

gaps in our knowledge of the Middle Kingdom and Intermediate periods. However, in spite of this dearth of knowledge, there are some observations that can be made concerning the types of burials for royal women between Dynasties XI and XVII.

Most noticeable is that the earlier Old Kingdom practice of bestowing a pyramid upon the queen mother is quite uncertain for the Middle Kingdom period.²⁷ Recent excavations at south Saqqara, around the pyramid of Pepy I, have now revealed that this alteration appears to have been made first during the Sixth Dynasty, with two wives of Teti, four wives of Pepy I, and three of the wives of Pepy II being assigned pyramids, even though only four of those queens were the mothers of kings. In the Middle Kingdom pyramids do not appear to have been the distinguishing mark of a king's mother, although it is possible that Queen Hnmt-nfr-hdt wrt may have been one mother of a king to have been assigned a cenotaph pyramid.²⁸ The pyramid burial of Nfrw-Pth is also discussed at length within her prosopographical entry. On the other hand, in the complex of Senwosret I at Lisht, there are nine pyramids, some of which may not have been immediate members of the king's family.²⁹ Only two fragments containing names helped to suggest the names of the tomb owners of the

first two satellite pyramids, Jt-k3jt and Nfrrt I; the others are nameless.

There are other differences between the queenly burials in the Old Kingdom and those of the Middle Kingdom. The tomb structures between one reign and another in the Middle Kingdom lack standardisation. This differentiation is noticeable for both the Eleventh Dynasty and the Twelfth. For the Thirteenth Dynasty only two queenly burial monuments are known,³⁰ they also are dissimilar. Dodson believes that this differentiation of tomb design between one reign and another was due to the desire to maximise the security of the tomb-owner³¹ but, for Amenemhat's wives at least,³² these changes may have been intended to express evolving religious ideas.³³ There is no reason why both suggestions should be considered incompatible.

Kings Amenemhat I,³⁴ and Senwosret III may have buried their queens in mastabas, while the evidence from the complex of Senwosret I suggests that not only queens, but the princesses of this royal family may have been given pyramids.³⁵ The queen found in Amenemhat II's complex, however, does not appear to have been a queen from this dynasty at all,³⁶ and the tomb of none of his consorts is

known.³⁷

Senwosret II seems to have utilised shaft graves to the south of his pyramid for some female burials, but the only evidence for a wife in these was a fragment carrying the name Hnmt-nfr-hdt wrt,³⁸ and this may have had nothing to do with her burial. Only one princess was discovered to have been buried in the shaft tombs, but Tomb 621, which lies outside the temenos wall of Senwosret's complex, has a similar underground structure to the tombs of later queens, especially those in the satellite pyramid of Khendjer. The presence of a sarcophagus with palace facade decoration in Tomb 621 also recalls the sarcophagus of Queen Ḳ3t, wife of Amenemhat III. The tomb, however, may not have been an original part of Senwosret II's complex, as suggested by its extra-mural placement, and its very close affinity with the later Thirteenth Dynasty queens' tombs already mentioned.

Amenemhat III preferred to include his wives within his own pyramid at Dahshur - until some building disaster caused him to abandon this monument for the Hawara pyramid. Within Amenemhat's Dahshur pyramid the queens had their own corridor and room system, with their attached k3 and canopic burial provisions closely modelled upon those designed for the king.

Jánosi sees in this new practice a revalorisation of the status of the queen during the time of this king,³⁹ as it undoubtedly was. These new provisions included facilities for the burial of the ka of the queen, and a fragment of a gold-covered ka statue of one of the queens⁴⁰ supports this theory. (Further corroboration of Jánosi's suggestion is given by the similarities evident in the ka burial of King Hor from the Thirteenth Dynasty.⁴¹)

Arnold has remarked that Amenemhat III took the Step Pyramid of Djoser as a model for his own building (and perhaps cultic practices).⁴² The king's inclusion of family members within both his pyramids appears to be another example where Djoser's practices provided the model for Amenemhat. As the tombs of no other queens for this dynasty have as yet been identified, Amenemhat's pyramid complexes are the last Twelfth Dynasty structures to include royal women.

There are only two Thirteenth Dynasty queenly burials known to date,⁴³ but there are none for subsequent dynasties until the time of Nwb-hꜥ.s II from Dynasty XVII. Although the burial of Nwb-hꜥ.s has not been found, the evidence for her burial arrangements is preserved in the Abbott and Amherst papyri. She is said to have been interred with her husband.⁴⁴

Although the sarcophagi of other queens from the Seventeenth Dynasty have been found their tombs are uncertain. The only positive tomb identification we have for any other queen from this dynasty is that of Queen Mrjt-Jmn, wife of Amenhotep I.⁴⁵ Her tomb, cut into the rock near the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahri, had been robbed in antiquity, but it had been resealed by priests of the Twentieth Dynasty.⁴⁶

Mrjt-Jmn's tomb contrasts with the earlier tombs of Khendjer's wife, Kmj-nwb, C3t and Hnmt-nfr-hdt III in that her sarcophagus and burial chamber were not aligned in a north-south direction.⁴⁷ They lie in a north-east direction, her tomb being located at a considerable distance from the tomb of her husband. Her tomb was not well cut, as the queenly tombs of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasty tombs were, and there was no provision for the burial of a ka as far as can be determined, but the new architectural element of a well was introduced into Mrjt-Jmn's tomb, thus providing some link with the tombs of kings from the early New Kingdom. There are thus marked differences between the only certain queenly burial for the Seventeenth Dynasty and those of previous periods.

The Middle Kingdom remains also indicate that queenly

burials must have been considered differently from the burials of princesses.⁴⁸ This is clearly noticeable in the cemetery complexes of both Senwosret III and Amenemhat III.⁴⁹ According to Jánosí the tangible starting-point for this development appears first in the burial arrangements of Senwosret III, whose wife/wives(?) were interred on an upper gallery, but whose daughters were buried in the lower gallery, their provisions being considerably less refined. Even here there are curious features. Queen Nfrt-hnwt's granite sarcophagus in the upper gallery seems to have marked the tomb of an unimportant wife, for her name is not recorded on other monuments so far discovered. However, Senwosret III's other wife, Hnmt-nfr-hdt II, who was prominent in the archaeological record, has no known funerary provisions, and this has created some speculation as to her burial site. The acknowledged dependence of Senwosret's system upon Djoser's model has suggested to Jánosí that (as in the step pyramid complex) Hnmt-nfr-hdt's chambers could lie in the eastern part of Senwosret's cemetery, under the king's pyramid.⁵⁰ It is also possible that, if the queen had died later than the king, her tomb might be found in one of the mastabas in the outer cemetery.

Any differentiation between the tombs of queens and princesses for Senwosret I is more difficult to detect. The nine similar pyramids could suggest that these pyramids conferred a similar mortuary status upon all Senwosret's female dependents - if we could be sure that all of them were members of the king's immediate family. However, we do not know the names of any of the tomb-owners themselves, nor can we be sure when these pyramids were erected. Given the attested practice of Thirteenth Dynasty burials within the temenos boundaries of the Twelfth Dynasty kings⁵¹ we may be faced with a similar phenomenon in Senwosret's cemetery at Lisht. This is a possibility, since so few of the Thirteenth Dynasty burials for kings have been suggested so far.⁵² János has already questioned whether the pyramids might not be "für direkte Nachkommen aus dem Königshaus?"⁵³ It is surely curious that, if pyramids were built for the daughters of Senwosret I, the practice was discontinued after his time. No pyramids were built for any subsequent princess except for the unusual provisions made for Princess Nfrw-Pth. The singular nature of her funerary arrangements, which suggest that her position within the Egyptian court was unusual, has been discussed at length in her prosopographical entry.

Thus, given the apparent isolated examples of pyramids for Senwosret I's dependents, and the possibility that these tombs might have been made for later burials of other royal identities, it may yet be too early to draw conclusions about the satellite pyramids of Senwosret I.

The status of queenly burials in the post-Old Kingdom period is thus still elusive, partly due to our incomplete knowledge of the identity of individual tombs suspected of being those of queens, and partly due to the incomplete nature of archaeological investigations that have taken place over the past century. But, even though our knowledge is so restricted, it is clearly apparent that new parameters were drawn up by each of the Middle Kingdom monarchs for the funerary monuments of their wives.⁵⁴ The inclusion of Nfrw-Pth within Amenemhat's Hawara pyramid, and then her separate burial in an independent tomb some distance from the tomb of either father or husband, appears to be a further indication of the independent arrangements made by the Middle Kingdom monarchs for their royal womenfolk.

The Titulary of Queens in the Middle Kingdom Period

Queen Cnh.s.n-Ppj was the last queen of the Old Kingdom

whose titles are known to us. The next known queen was Nfrw-k3jt, of Dynasty XI. S3t nswt wrt Nbt, wife of Šm3j, who was entitled rp^ctt, hkrt nswt w^ctt, and hmt ntr Hwt-Hr,⁵⁵ is the only other woman claiming royal titles who is known between the intervening years of Dynasties VII and XI. Her titles of hkrt nswt w^ctt, hmt ntr Hwt-Hr were to reappear later in Dynasty XI, perhaps first of all with the title of hmt ntr Hwt-Hr for Mentuhotep I's mother, J^ch,⁵⁶ but certainly, with his earlier wives, Hnhnt, S3dh, K3wjt, C3š3jt, and probably Km-st as well.⁵⁷ They held the titles of hmt nswt, hkrt nswt w^ctt and hmt ntr Hwt-Hr.

This unusual combination of courtly, priestly and queenly titles has prompted much discussion about these queens raising questions about their actual status. Priestly titles for queens in the period Dynasty XI - XVII are rare,⁵⁸ although the priestly office of God's Wife of Amen was held by queens from the family of King Ahmose towards the end of this period. In the Twelfth Dynasty at least one queen held the title of hmt ntr Sbk.⁵⁹ In the Thirteenth Dynasty Queen Jnj held the titles of hmt nswt, špswt, hmt ntr Hwt-Hr,⁶⁰ Although she was entitled 'špswt', rather than 'hkrt nswt w^ctt', Jnj also held the titles of a courtier, king's wife, and priestess

of Hathor. With these exceptions, however, such combinations of titles do not appear again in the titulary of queens, except for the title of špswt later attested for Queen J^h-h^{tp} II,⁶¹ and that of hmt ntr Hwt-Hr in the titulary of Princess M^{jt}-J^{mn}, daughter/wife (?) of Rameses II.⁶² While unusual, the titularies of these earlier wives of Mentuhotep I are thus not entirely unique.

The actual position of these women has alternated between the acceptance of them as wives, as concubines or, as priestesses. Most recently Ward's study of the position of these women has argued against their being either wives, or members of a harim; Ward considers that they were only 'potential' queens.⁶³ On the other hand, both Arnold⁶⁴ and Kuchman Sabbahy⁶⁵ endorse the idea that the women were members of some type of a religious harim for the king. The solutions to this problem have not found consensus⁶⁶ and, as none of these scholars has debated the significance of Queen J^{nj}'s similar titles, the issue is by no means settled. Given the clear historic position for these women as having been buried early in Mentuhotep's reign, they may indeed have been minor wives of the king. That polygamy was practised by some Egyptian men of means from time to time has been considered

very likely,⁶⁷ and it is therefore possible that the king did have a number of consorts. It is clear that Mentuhotep's wives provide the best evidence for the practice of polygamy in the royal court and, as was discussed on p.131 of Chapter 3, there are certain similarities between the burials in Mentuhotep's shrines and the burial of the 'three princesses' in the reign of Thutmose III which might indicate a similar status between both groups of women. The numerous queens associated with kings Senakhtenre, Seqenenre and Ahmose is also suggestive of plural, rather than consecutive marriages.

The Twelfth Dynasty again poses problems relating to the wives of the kings, but these are of a different nature. At that time some of the women who have been considered to have been queens lack the very titles that would confirm their status, yet they possess other titles which are carried only by the kings' consorts. Kuchman Sabbahy has aptly remarked that 'At no other time ... do the titles of queen and princess mix, and mix so extensively' as they do during the Twelfth Dynasty⁶⁸ and, because of this, the status of these three royal women is still uncertain.

The first of these exceptional princesses was Jt-k3jt, from the reign of Senwosret I.⁶⁹ Amongst all her titles

Jt-k3jt is never named as a king's wife; it is for this reason that she is usually referred to as a princess. She does, however, bear the queenly titles of rpCtt, wrt hts, wrt hst, and m33t Hr Sth from Old Kingdom usage. All of these titles were used at some time by a number of Middle Kingdom queens.⁷⁰ The last mentioned is a title used later by Queen JCh-ms, wife of Thutmose I, Queen TjC, wife of Thutmose IV, and Queen TwjC, wife of Sety I, but by no other woman who was a princess only. While rpCtt was a title used during the Middle Kingdom for some princesses, the other titles carried by Jt-k3jt were used only by queens. These titles have presented great difficulties for determining the status of Jt-k3jt, and opinion is divided on whether or not she was a queen.

The second of these dubious queens was Nfrt II. Her large Tanis statues are the major sources for her titulary. Although she lacks the title of hmt nswt she carries the queenly Old Kingdom titles of wrt hts, wrt hst, and sm3jt mrjt Nbtj,⁷¹ as well as the Middle Kingdom titles of hnwt hmwt nbwt and hnwt t3wj. None of these titles appear for women who were clearly princesses - except in the case of Jt-k3jt, and in the case of the third exceptional royal woman, Nfrw-Pth.

Nfrw-Pth had a titulary comprising both those of a

princess and those of a queen. She lacks - as the other two do - the titles of hmt nswt and hnmt nfr hdt. All these royal women have a number of titles, and a number of omissions in common (see Appendix I). All are (uncommonly, for the Middle Kingdom) entitled s3t nswt nt ht.f; all are entitled rp^ctt, wrt hts, wrt hst; all omit the title of hnmt nfr hdt, as well as hmt nswt.⁷² Additionally, all these women have some other anomaly present in their titulary, (eg. Jt-k3jt apparently held the titles h3tt-^c, as well as m33t Hr Sth⁷³). Nfrt II was entitled sm3jt mrjt Nbtj, a title that had not been used since the time of Nbtj-nwb, from the Fifth Dynasty; and Nfrw-Pth was the earliest woman for whom a cartouche was used. She also appears to be the only royal woman in Middle Kingdom times to carry the title, s3t nswt nt ht.f mrt.f. Queen Snt had a number of these titles in common with the above princesses, but she also carried the titles hmt nswt and mwt nswt,⁷⁴ thus giving some indication that the titulary of these unusual princesses was not dissimilar to those of the regular queens.

Kuchman Sabbahy's solution⁷⁵ to these difficulties is to suggest that each queen could have been married to the co-regent, but may have died before her husband could become sole ruler. Kuchman Sabbahy proposes that, if there were two

queens during a coregency, some distinction between their titular could be expected. This may have been effected by the use of certain queenly titles for a coregent's wife, leaving the use of hmt nswt (and, for the later period, hnmt-nfr-hdt) for the senior queen. It may have been the need to accommodate the queens of coregents which prompted the revival of the Old Kingdom titles for queens, as Kuchman Sabbahy has suggested.⁷⁶

Some support for Kuchman Sabbahy's solution also seems to be forth-coming from the burial arrangements of Jt-k3jt. We understand from one scarab⁷⁷ that Jt-k3jt was the daughter of Amenemhat I, yet she was buried beside Senwosret I, which would suggest that she had been Senwosret's wife, rather than simply the daughter of Amenemhat I at the time of her burial.

Although there are the above-mentioned problems in connection with the kings' wives in the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties there are other patterns of entitling which are less problematic. While we do not know the reasons for the introduction of new titles for the queens, it is noticeable that not only did new titles appear, but that some steps were taken to introduce ranking titles during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties.

The number of titles held by individual queens increased very noticeably between the periods of the Eleventh and late Seventeenth Dynasties; the variety also expanded. One title, referring to the union of the queen with her husband, 'She who is united with the white crown', has already been mentioned. This was perhaps the most important title after the mid-Twelfth Dynasty, for not all queens could lay claim to it.⁷⁸ It appears to have indicated a special rank among both queens and princesses.⁷⁹

The first suggestion of this title may have appeared in the titulary of Queen Tm, wife of Mentuhotep I, and mother of Mentuhotep II, who is recorded by Maspero as having the title of hdt wrt.⁸⁰ Unfortunately, we can no longer check the original inscription since it has disappeared due to water damage. If it was used its appearance in Mentuhotep I's time is significant; not only did this king attach particular importance to the White Crown in his reliefs, but he himself carried the name of Nb-hdt (Lord of the White Crown). It may be in relation to this Horus name of the king that Queen Tm carried that title.

The earliest queens associated with the full title (the mother, and then the wife of Senwosret III) bore it as a

personal name.⁸¹ Hereafter it became a title for a queen, and it was added to the titulary of Senwosret's other wife, Nfrt-hnwt, on her sarcophagus inscription.⁸² She was the first queen to use the title. As in all other cases, the title immediately precedes the name of the queen, its position thus indicating that it was a title of the greatest importance. Only the title of mwt nswt might thrust it from its usual position in front of the queen's own name.

Although Kuchman Sabbahy has said that the title hnmt nfr hdt was given to only one queen and one princess in each king's reign,⁸³ the evidence for this claim is questionable. Two princesses, usually considered⁸⁴ to be daughters of Amenemhat II⁸⁵ are alleged to have held the title during his reign, Princess Hnmt⁸⁶ and a Princess Jt-wrt.⁸⁷ Perdu,⁸⁸ however, correctly observes that Hnmt did not hold this title. A s3t nswt, hnmt nfr hdt is also attested for this king's reign,⁸⁹ and a s3t nswt nt ht.f, hnmt nfr hdt seated on a damaged statuette from Aleppo⁹⁰ cannot be linked to any known princess. It is possible that the so-called title in these two examples is more likely to have been the name of a princess, as it was for at least two other queens. In the reign of Senwosret III one princess, Mnt, held the title.⁹¹

All other title-holders were queens. Thus, with the possible exceptions of the two nameless items mentioned above, it would seem that only one daughter of Amenemhat II, and one daughter of Senwosret III ever held this title.

While Senwosret III's wife Hnmt-nfr-hdt-šrj is well-attested in the archaeological record, it was his other wife, Queen Nfrt-hnwt, who was the first queen to carry this 'name' as a title. The significance of the introduction of the title into the queenly titulary is unknown, but perhaps it may have been a tribute to the last queen who used the the phrase as a personal name. After this time it seems to have been given to the most important wife of the king - although the incomplete nature of our records does hamper any generalisation about this.

In the reign of Amenemhat III the inscription 'hnmt nfr hdt' was present on the sarcophagi of both queens buried within the Dahshur pyramid.⁹² The presence of two queens with the title would seem to run counter to Kuchman Sabbahy's theory that this title was given to only one queen during the reign of any one king. However, we could either conclude from the Dahshur inscriptions that the title was transferrable after the death of the first title-holder (for both János⁹³

and Arnold⁹⁴ observe that the Dahshur pyramid burials were consecutive, not simultaneous) or, we could consider the possibility that the 'title' for the 'nameless queen' is actually the name of the queen, Hnmt-nfr-hdt III, as I have suggested in her prosopography. Hnmt nfr hdt always precedes the actual name of the queen in any titular string (unless the title-holder is the mother of a king, when mwt nswt then immediately precedes her name).

The questionable place of Queen Htp-tj, also entitled hnmt nfr hdt in this period,⁹⁵ adds to the impression of several queens from this time having been in possession of the title. It is also possible that Htp-tj could be the 'nameless' queen who was buried in the Dahshur pyramid, since their titular strings have some similarity.⁹⁶ Certainly, Kuchman Sabbahy's generalisation (as it applies to the queens) is tentative at this stage, due to the complexity surrounding the women in Amenemhat's family. Thus, although it is clearly apparent from later records that the title does not appear to have been held by more than one queen at a time, the earlier periods are less clear-cut than Kuchman Sabbahy has suggested. Certainly, the title does not appear to have been used by one princess in each reign; rather, it now appears

that only two princesses may have held the title throughout the entire Middle Kingdom period.

Mrjt-Jmn was the last queen to carry the title of hnmt nfr hdt. With her death the Seventeenth Dynasty royal line came to an end. The use of this title, which was one of the most significant in the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate periods, together with certain other titular elements, ceased to be used, ^(except in one case - possibly an archaism) after her death. The pattern of titulary for the Eighteenth Dynasty wives of the kings altered significantly after this time, particularly in regard to the extensive use of epithets for the New Kingdom queens - they are rarely present in the titulary of queens from Dynasties I - XVII.

Another, equally significant title probably introduced during the Thirteenth Dynasty⁹⁷ was hmt nswt wrt, (king's great wife). Hmt nswt wrt was the first ranking title introduced into the titulary of the queens. Whereas the evidence for hnmt nfr hdt is a little cloudy, as was pointed out above, hmt nswt wrt is a clear indication of the pre-eminent wife of any king. Kuchman Sabbahy has referred to it as, 'the most important titular change' in the Second Intermediate Period.⁹⁸ It retained its importance as the chief title of a queen until the Ptolemaic period.

From time to time two queens with this title might be represented on the monuments with the king, but it is always the case that one of these women will have been the wife of a previous king - at least prior to the time of Amenhotep III, when a daughter of the king may appear.

In the Thirteenth Dynasty the title of snt nswt is evident for the first time. Pap. Boulaq 18 lists eight snt nswt.⁹⁹ In Troy's Register of titleholders, however, three earlier examples are given, snt nswt Djdjyt, and snt nswt Nfryt.¹⁰⁰ The third person she credits with this title does not hold it; she is referred to on a statue from Sinai as 'His sister, the hereditary princess and king's wife, Nfryt, true of voice, possessing honour'.¹⁰¹ She thus appears as 'snt.f' (as Troy had recorded it), not as snt nswt, and she cannot be considered to have held this title.

The other two titleholders mentioned by Gauthier,¹⁰² Hayes,¹⁰³ and Troy¹⁰⁴ appear on a stele now in Munich museum.¹⁰⁵ Two women face each other on the stele, over a heap of offerings, both smelling large lotus blooms. Their separate inscriptions run from the centre towards the edges of the stele. (Another stele, held in the museum at Berlin, has the same names and relationships without the titles of snt

nswt accompanying Nfrt and Djdt.¹⁰⁶) The above-mentioned authors list Djdt as the sister and the wife of Amenemhat I, and suggested that her daughter, Nfrt, was thought to be Queen Nfrt, wife of Senwosret I. Gauthier,¹⁰⁷ however, points out that the Nfrt who was the daughter of Djdt might not be identical to the queen of that name.

Gauthier's caution seems justified. The title of snt nswt is attested nowhere else in the Twelfth Dynasty, its earliest recording being for Sebekhotep II's sisters in Pap. Boulaq 18. Djdt is not mentioned anywhere in connection with Amenemhat I and, more importantly, had she been this king's wife, that title would have taken precedence over any lesser title, but Djdt does not claim the title of nmt nswt. Moreover, had the Nfrt associated with Djdt been a king's daughter, she, too, would have used that title in preference to the title of snt nswt. (Queen Nfrt I, however, does use the title of s3t nswt nt ht.f on the pedestal of a statue found by Mace at Lisht.¹⁰⁸)

Snt nswt Nfrt's less prestigious social position is emphasised by her title of nbt pr. This was a commoner's title, and no Twelfth Dynasty princess ever displayed indications of a commoner status. However, it was common

among the Thirteenth Dynasty royal families for the kings' sisters to lack the title of s3t nswt.¹⁰⁹ Snt nswt is evident on many occasions for dynasties later than XII, but not otherwise for Dynasty XII itself. For these reasons it seems preferable to place these two women in the Thirteenth Dynasty, rather than the Twelfth.

If this is the correct tempus of Djdjyt and Nfrrt, then the title of snt nswt does not seem to have appeared prior to Dynasty XIII and, when it did make its appearance, a reason can be found for its introduction. Many women in that period were elevated in society when their brothers became kings, but the traditional titulary could not reflect their new status. Since they could not entitle themselves s3t nswt (as they were not the daughters of kings) the use of snt nswt would have conferred upon them their new status as members of the royal family without distorting the family relationship.

Other titles introduced between Dynasties XI - XVII expressed more the political importance of the queen in this period; she was frequently referred to as 'Mistress of all the women', or 'Lady of the Two Lands'. A rarer title was 'Mistress of the Two Lands in their entirety', held by only five queens between Dynasties I - XVII.¹¹⁰ The title of hnwt

rsj mhw (Mistress of the South and the North), was introduced posthumously for J^ch-htp II and J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj, but it derived from the prototype, hrit-tp rsj mhw, recorded for the latter queen on the Donation Stele.

Several of these political titles were even more exceptional. Queen J^ch-htp II was given one political title in particular that no other queen ever received, 'Mistress of the Lands of Hau-Nebet', evidently in appreciation of her help in governing Egypt during the difficult years of the Hyksos expulsion.¹¹¹ Both she and J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj held the title of 'Female Sovereign',¹¹² in the time of Ahmose, and this seems to express the role of these queens as either regents, or perhaps even deputy rulers in this same period. There is no such title for Ttj-šrj, for whom a regency has been claimed,¹¹³ which could suggest that her 'regency' was spurious. It certainly would have been unusual for a grandmother to have held the regency when the chief wife, and mother of the king was still alive.

One or two of the titles introduced at various times were religious in nature. Nfrw-Pth, who has already been mentioned as having unusual titles, was also the first to be entitled, 'Sister of the god'. Although there has been a little

discussion on the meaning of this title¹¹⁴ no firm conclusions have been drawn concerning it.¹¹⁵

Nfrw-Pth's burial beside Amenemhat III in his Hawara pyramid, and her unique title of snt ntr, suggest that she was the sister of that king. This title appears to have been posthumous, and may have been bestowed after the death of Amenemhat III, since he seems to be the god in question.¹¹⁶ Her relationship to Amenemhat IV is unknown, although she does not appear to have been his mother.¹¹⁷ It might be possible that Nfrw-Pth was the mother of Sbk-nfrw, who seems to have married Amenemhat IV.¹¹⁸

In addition to these unusual distinctions, Nfrw-Pth's name was accompanied by the 'dj Cnh dt' formula, usually reserved for kings, on the south wall of the shrine of the temple at Maadi.¹¹⁹ Attention has already been drawn to a similar epithet for Nfrw-k3jt (Cnh dt mj RC),¹²⁰ and for Queen Hnmt-nfr-hdt,¹²¹ but other princesses from the Twelfth Dynasty also have this accompaniment on occasions.¹²²

However, the most striking innovation featured in the titulary of Nfrw-Pth was the use of the cartouche for her name. Such a feature conferred upon this royal woman a status

approaching that of the king himself. It was an idea that, during the following dynasty, gradually became more common in the recording of the queens' names, but was also given on one occasion to another princess, Jwht-jbw.¹²³ In the late Seventeenth Dynasty the privilege of the cartouche was extended to some of the sons and daughters of the kings, thus confirming in the public records the importance of these members of the royal family.

Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj was given the new religious title of drt ntr during the time of Amenhotep I.¹²⁴ Later titles were attributed to this queen by successive generations but, since they were not part of her titulary at the time she lived, they are not included in this discussion.

Like their predecessors, the queens for this period were given either short, or lengthy titular strings. Unlike the pattern for titular strings noticeable for the Old Kingdom, however, those of the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period show more consistency in the content and order of their titles. There was still considerable variation, - especially if we compare the strings used for the lesser wives of Mentuhotep I with those of his other wives. The three problematic queens, Jt-k3jt, Nfrt II, and Nfrw-Pth also had

variant titles and strings, but these have been omitted here, as their circumstances have been mentioned above.

Dynasty XI queens display the greatest variety between their titles. Only one inscription is known for Nfrw-k3jt,¹²⁵ and this is a long string: s3t nswt. hmt nswt mrt.f. nbt t3wj. hnwt hkrt nswt. krht hnt Šm. She was the first queen to use the title of nbt t3wj, and the only queen to display the last two titles in her string. Her titulary is unique, both within her dynasty, and within the titular records of queens. Hmt nswt. mrt.f. hkrt nswt (w<tt). hmt ntr Hwt-Hr was the consistent string for Mentuhotep's lesser wives. Nfrw's shorter string was rp<tt. hmt nswt. s3t nswt.¹²⁶ Queen Tm, being the mother of Mentuhotep II, had a different string from the rest of Mentuhotep's wives. Hers was: hmt nswt mrt.f. hmt nswt bitj. mwt nswt bitj. hsit ntrw. wrt hts. mwt nswt bitj im3hwt. hdt wrt.¹²⁷

The most common shorter string in Dynasty XII was rp<tt. (s3t nswt/s3t Gb). hmt nswt mrt.f.¹²⁸ In the Thirteenth Dynasty the commonest short titular string was hmt nswt/wrt. hnmt nfr hdt.¹²⁹ For the Seventeenth Dynasty the pattern for shorter strings was: s3t nswt. snt nswt. hmt nswt wrt.¹³⁰ Queen JCh-ms-nfrrt-jrj usually had s3t nswt. snt nswt. hmt

nswt/wrt. hmt ntr.¹³¹ One of the interesting features of categorising of titles is that the debatable position of Queen J^ch-htp I shows that her short titulary has more in keeping with the earlier range of the Seventeenth Dynasty¹³² than it has with the titular strings of the women associated with King Ahmose. Thus, the study of titular strings may assist scholars in locating the historical position of a queen.

For the general pattern of longer strings the Twelfth Dynasty is best exemplified by Queen Snt's longer string: rp^ctt. wrt hts. wrt hst. hmt nswt. mwt nswt.¹³³ Apart from the last two titles, the problematic queens Jt-k3jt, Nfrt II and Nfrw-Pth have a similar pattern to this.¹³⁴

Few queens in the Thirteenth or Fifteenth Dynasties have long titular strings. Snb-hn^c.s, wife of Sebekhotep III, has the one of the longest: rp^ctt. wrt hts. wrt hst. hnwt t3wj tmw. hmt nswt. hnmt nfr hdt.¹³⁵ The close similarity of her string to that of Snt mentioned above is worthy of notice. The pattern of Nwb-h^c.s I's titulary is very similar, only omitting the wrt hts. wrt hst combination, and substituting for them wrt jm3t.¹³⁶

The early Seventeenth Dynasty lacks the resources for long titular strings, and it is not until the time of J^ch-htp II that we encounter one that has any length. Both of her strings from the Karnak stele¹³⁸ are short, but important for the examples of two new titles introduced (jtjt and špswt). On her coffin, however, the string is lengthy: s3t nswt, snt nswt, hmt [nswt] wrt, hnmt nfr hdt, mwt nswt.¹³⁹ J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj's coffin has a string not too dissimilar from this: s3t nswt, snt nswt, hmt ntr, hmt nswt wrt, hnmt nfr hdt, mwt nswt.¹⁴⁰ These then appear to be the usual formation of the longer titular strings for queens at the close of the Seventeenth Dynasty. After this time the title of hnmt nfr hdt is omitted, and the wrt hts, wrt hst titles are only seldom used. Wrt im3t replaces these last two, and epithets for the queen accompany their titles on many occasions.

The Iconography relating to Queens (Dynasties XI - XVII)

Iconography is one of the most immediate indicators of the position of the queen in her society and, for the period stretching from Dynasty XI to the end of Dynasty XVII, it is mainly the iconography that allows us to see the innovations

apparent in the rôle of the wife of the king. In this time the records - scarce though they are - show the queen occasionally accompanying the king whereas, in the Old Kingdom, the king appeared in company with the gods and goddesses, rather than his wife. Other distinctions are also apparent.

In the later period not only wives, but also the mothers and daughters assume a role indicative of sharing some of the ritual (if not political) responsibilities of the kingdom. This is first evident during the reign of Mentuhotep I, where the king's mother, JCh, appears behind her son's gigantic effigy in the relief at Shatt er Rigal.¹⁴¹ Although she wears no crown, JCh holds in her hand a long staff identical to that held by her son in that relief. It is not common for queens to be depicted with the long staff. Its terminal is unusual - perhaps a version of the hts sceptre, but its significance is enigmatic. Kuchman Sabbahy¹⁴² has suggested that the normal lotus carried by women from the later Old Kingdom has been lengthened in juxtaposition to the long sceptre of Mentuhotep. A problem with this explanation, however, is that the lotus carried by women from the Old Kingdom and later is always partially opened; it is never the bud, as the termination on

this staff appears to be. Kuchman Sabbahy's suggestion that J^{ch}'s staff repeats the motif given in Mentuhotep's depiction seems more likely. It would appear that the queen's staff invests her with an element of royalty, enhancing her status in the eyes of the onlooker.

The longest study devoted to the Shatt er Rigal relief was made by Oleg Berlev,¹⁴³ who saw in the relief Mentuhotep's political manifesto of his exceptional kingship.¹⁴⁴ He sees the parents of the king in that relief as representing one of the forms of the the hieros gamos¹⁴⁵ and, in his opinion, it is likely to be the first such representation.¹⁴⁶ J^{ch}'s role in this relief is thus identical to that of Queen J^{ch}-ms in the Deir el Bahri relief in the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut: she is the mother of the god.

Iconography of a different nature from the same period is found in the reliefs of Mentuhotep's minor wives that appear on their Deir el Bahri shrines. These reliefs show the king in affectionate poses that have prompted scholars to view the women either as concubines,¹⁴⁷ or as priestesses of Hathor engaged in a sacerdotal role.¹⁴⁸ They are unmatched in subject matter until the scenes from the Amarna period, where Nfrt-jtj and Akhenaten share their delights in a meal, or in playing

with their children. Similar examples of intimate scenes between king and queen are also found on the Golden Shrine of Tutankhamen,¹⁴⁹ and there are echoes of these scenes in the Medinet Habu reliefs from the migdol of Rameses III.¹⁵⁰

Mentuhotep's iconography in regard to the gods is rich and complex, as Habachi has already pointed out.¹⁵¹ Apart from his god-like size in the Shatt er Rigal relief, he appears with šwtj feathers upon his red crown on a block from a temple wall in Elephantine, where he is flanked by Neith and Montu.¹⁵² At Konosso, he is shown in silhouette as an ithyphallic god wearing the šwtj feathers and attended by Khnum and Satis,¹⁵³ and again in ithyphallic guise attended by Montu and Neith.¹⁵⁴ That the figure is the king and not one of the air gods is made plain by his cartouches, and the speeches of the gods to each other. In the opinion of Habachi,¹⁵⁵

'There is no doubt that the king is identified with or assimilated to Amun and Min or Kamutef in scenes on Konosso Island, in Elephantine and the chapel of the king at Denderah. It is known that the king is identified with these deities in some ceremonies in the Min or Fertility Festival. Perhaps these ceremonies are concerned with the succession to the throne.'

Both Arnold¹⁵⁶ and Kuchman Sabbahy¹⁵⁷ have drawn connections between these various representations of the king and those of

the women in the Deir el Bahri reliefs, suggesting that the latter served as priestly functionaries of the king as a god.¹⁵⁸

All the reliefs from the shattered Deir el Bahri shrines, and from the tomb of Nfrw are now scattered in several museums across the world, making it difficult to comment upon the various elements from these scenes, but those that have been published do have much in common, some being associated with Hathoric motifs.¹⁵⁹ What is apparent, however, is that both on the coffins found for these early wives, and in the shrines' wall reliefs from their monuments and Nfrw's, the funerary decoration with all of these women differed markedly from previous tomb decoration for queens, although fragmentary reliefs of the king with his arm around a queen in identical fashion are known from the remains of Sahure's mortuary temple.¹⁶⁰ Because these motifs have their model from the Old Kingdom (where the full titulary of the queen accompanies the relief), it is hazardous to assign a solely priestly function to these women. They could, however, indicate a new concept in the decoration of the mortuary monuments of the king's wives. Perhaps it is because the Deir el Bahri chapels were located within the king's own mortuary temple that this Old

Kingdom motif should re-appear here.

The idea of the women as priestly functionaries, rather than wives has been adopted by some scholars,¹⁶¹ and the decorative elements from their chapels and burials emphasise the Hathoric importance of their priestly titles. They are not unique in having the titles of hmwt ntr Hwt-Hr, however,¹⁶² their closest imitator being Queen Jnj of Dynasty XIII. She was another hmt ntr Hwt-Hr who was a hmt nswt. In addition, she also held the courtly title of špswt, instead of hkrt nswt wꜥtt but, unfortunately, her tomb has not been discovered as yet, so iconographic comparisons cannot be made.

It is clear from Arnold's re-examination of the evidence that these wives of Mentuhotep were interred quite early in the king's reign, as is indicated by the use of Mentuhotep's second Horus name on the chapels.¹⁶³ By this time the temple he built had incorporated these burials which had been there already for some time - how long is not known. It is thus quite possible that these women had been buried prior to the accession of Mentuhotep I to the throne, and before they were entitled to have their titularies changed to hmt nswt. That might explain why their burial chambers do not reveal any

trace of this title. If they had been wives who had died prior to the king's accession they may well have had established tombs with their courtly and priestly titles displayed. It might then be possible that, many years later, Mentuhotep had the chapels redecorated, at the time when the burials were incorporated into his mortuary temple. He may then have added the title of hmt nswt mrt.f to those titles the women already carried.

It is not known whether they died simultaneously or separately, but the youth of the girls, and the closeness of their tombs could suggest that they had met with some common misadventure.¹⁶⁴ Their community burial has certain parallels with that of the wives of Thutmose III: both burials show restricted use of the hmt nswt title. Robins' study of New Kingdom queens¹⁶⁵ revealed that while the chief wife appeared frequently on the monuments, the lesser wives of the kings were seldom mentioned in the records except on private monuments, and even then exceptionally. This may have been the practice prior to the Thirteenth Dynasty, when the title of hmt nswt wrt allows us to identify the chief wife of the king.

None of the known images of Eleventh Dynasty queens wears

anything other than wigs - either the short curled wig, or the tripartite wig. None wears fillets or ribbons. In all probability this circumstance is due to the extreme loss of source materials. There is more evidence (especially from the statuary) for Twelfth Dynasty customs, but even this is limited. However, it is possible to see that headdresses for the royal women alter several times between Dynasty XI and XVII. There is one representation of the vulture cap in Dynasty XII,¹⁶⁶ (during which period queens were more often depicted in the Hathoric wig), and Nfret II's statue pair marks the first time that the uraeus appears in the statuary. Then, in the early Thirteenth Dynasty, the queen was depicted wearing the šwtj feathers of the air gods, together with a platform crown - first seen on the Nag Hammadi monument of Sebekhotep III.¹⁶⁷

On the Nag Hammadi relief Snb-ḥn^c.s and her mother-in-law both wear the šwtj feathers above their platform crowns. Both also wear the queen's feathered vulture cap, but Snb-ḥn^c.s appears to have the uraeus on this crown, while Jḥwt-jbw's decoration is too indistinct to determine. It is possible that she carries the vulture head instead, which would be most appropriate for the mother of the king. The combination of

the šwti feathers with the vulture cap symbolises both aspects of the queen's sexual function as wife and mother.

The vulture cap, worn by the queens on the Nag Hammadi track relief, is represented on a limited number of other occasions during the Middle Kingdom period, but the Middle Kingdom circumstances appear to have been dissimilar to those of the Old Kingdom, where the cap only appears with the mother of a king. It is next seen being worn by non-royal hkrt.nswt who were buried in the time of Mentuhotep I¹⁶⁸ and later in female burials of Middle Kingdom date.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps this serves as another example of the democratisation of Egyptian religion.

In the iconography of queens for the Eleventh Dynasty, however, no example of the vulture cap is known - probably due to the extreme paucity of our records. It is not common in Twelfth Dynasty times, either, although Queen Ḳ3t is shown seated on a box throne, wearing the cap on one occasion.¹⁷⁰ Usually the queens for this period appear in the statuary wearing the Hathor wig,¹⁷¹ but again, these few remnants may be unrepresentative of the iconography of the queen during that time.

In the Thirteenth Dynasty there is a representation of Queen Nwb-ḥꜥ.s I (Louvre C13), where she wears a simple, tight gown with shoulder-straps. On her head is a very detailed vulture crown. Whereas Queen Jhwt-jbw on the Nag Hammadi track relief¹⁷² was the mother of a king, neither ʿ3t, nor Snb-ḥnꜥ.s, nor Nbw-ḥꜥ.s I was. One would thus be inclined to associate this iconography with the revalorisation of the hmt nswt, acquiring the vulture cap that had, in the Old Kingdom, been restricted in use to the queen mother. By the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, however, it seems to have been worn by any of the queens.

Below Queen Snb-ḥnꜥ.s, in the Nag Hammadi relief, Princess Jhwt-jbw wears a fillet with a striking cobra mounted on the front, but the detail on the relief of her sister (?) is indistinct. On Louvre C8 both princesses wear the cobra uraeus. At Lahun Brunton found a diadem with marguerite decorations similar both to those in Princess Nfirt's headband (Dynasty IV), and to the roundel decoration in the furniture of Queen Htp-ḥr.s I.¹⁷³ The Lahun diadem is adorned with an inlaid uraeus,¹⁷⁴ which presents us with the earliest evidence yet known for this insignia for a princess. Even if Williams¹⁷⁵ should be correct about these princesses being of

Thirteenth Dynasty date, other pieces of jewellery from the cache, clearly marked with the names of Senwosret II and Amenemhat III, appear to date the princess' uraeus to the latter part of Dynasty XII.

The two reliefs mentioned above, in which the Thirteenth Dynasty princesses appear, provide the earliest iconographic example of the uraeus for princesses. As Troy has already observed, the use of the uraeus, which is symbolic of the goddess Wadjet, links the daughter of the king with the gods.¹⁷⁶ The religious aura which, in the Old Kingdom, had accompanied the queen mother had now been extended to the kings' daughters.

At the same time there was another type of religious extension provided for the king's wife. The šwtj feathers for the queens on the Nag Hammadi relief could be seen both 'as a symbol of kingship',¹⁷⁷ and as a symbol of the gods who normally wear them. The two feathers are also to be equated with the uraei in Coffin Text IV.202f., and thus they signal a symbolic elevation of the queen by the time of Sebekhotep III. This symbolism appears to have been an entirely spiritual expression of the queen's elevation, but its actual implication is unknown. It may have been connected with

priestly associations between the queen and these gods, even as the queen had held titles in respect of the cults of Tjasepef, Djehuty and Bapef during Dynasties IV and V.¹⁷⁸ The implications of the queen's use of the šwtj crown, and the king's use of the 3tf feathers¹⁷⁹ is also significant, particularly in relation to the concept of these two types of feathers as symbols of Lower and Upper Egypt.¹⁸⁰ Even as the consort had appropriated some of the mortuary structures of the kings during the Old Kingdom, so in the Middle Kingdom some of the titles and insignia of the king were being transferred to the kings' consorts. Thus, the use of the platform crown and šwtj feathers can only indicate that (in the iconography at least) a revalorisation of the queenship had occurred during the Thirteenth Dynasty.

In her section concerning the significance of the šwtj crown Troy concentrates on the parallelism between the feathers and feminine duality,¹⁸¹ but it would also appear probable that the feathers were an outward sign of the queen's rôle as a functionary of the gods, such as the male fertility cults of gods, mentioned above. With the queen's adoption of the feathered headdress that was worn by the gods Amen, Montu and Min, we see an extension of the queen's rôle vis-à-vis

other male gods. Thus it would appear that, even as the king was the only true priest of the gods (all other priests being merely his deputies), so the queen represented the chief female equivalent. This rôle, that may have been symbolised by the use of the šwtj feather crown in the Second Intermediate Period, later developed further. Not only did this religious rôle extend into the post of the God's Wife of Amen (see Chapter 8), but it also led to the visibly prominent position of Queen Nfrt-jtj as priestess of the Aten during the Amarna period.¹⁸² On the other hand, while the occasional priestly titles of hmt ntr Hwt-Hr, and hmt ntr Sbk made their appearance during the era between Dynasties XI and XVII, the titles of a priestess were seldom present in the titularies of queens for this period. It is only with the introduction of the office of God's Wife of Amen in the late Seventeenth Dynasty that we see the acknowledgement of the queen as the chief priestess in Egypt.

Statuary

The representation of queens also takes on different forms in the statuary of the Middle Kingdom. A few of these individual statues present the queen (frequently wearing the Hathor wig) seated on a box throne, in a manner suggestive of

regal or religious dignity.¹⁸³ In form these statues have a marked similarity to the colossal statue of Queen $\text{H}^{\text{C}}\text{-mrr-Nbtj}$ II from Dynasty IV, which might suggest that the concept of the queen had not altered much over the centuries.

Nfrw's Tanis statues, however, betray some differences. While the sculptor has portrayed her in the usual static position in CG 382, he has given her the unusual position of the left arm across her waist, her hand resting on the inner elbow in CG 381. Her proportions in both statues have elements of the vigorous expression of the Middle Kingdom royal statuary: her Hathor wig is wider than usual, her ears extend outward from this (almost at rightangles to the head), and her limbs are heavy. Sourouzian¹⁸⁴ believes that these statues represent a new variety of Egyptian sculpture, where more emphasis was placed upon the power (and position) of the royal person portrayed. In other remains the queen sometimes accompanies the king in the statuary, as she occasionally did in the Old Kingdom.¹⁸⁵

A new type of statuary for the royal women may have been introduced in the Middle Kingdom: a number of sphinxes of princesses are known (no such statue of a queen has as yet been identified), signalling some new religious interpretation

of the role of royal women. This religious interpretation may be of the royal women as solar daughters, as Troy¹⁸⁶ has suggested.

This rôle for the princess, as distinct from the queen, is interesting. In the revalorisation of royal females usually the princesses adopted items first seen in connection with the queens (eg. the use of the uraeus). Troy links the uraeus on the sphinxes with the role of the princess, for she considers all of the female sphinxes to have been princesses.¹⁸⁷ However, the earliest attestation of the cobra for royal women is with Queen Hnt-k3w.s II of Dynasty V, and Nfrt II of Dynasty XII also wears the uraeus on her seated statues from Tanis.¹⁸⁸ Queen Tjjj and Queen Mwt-ndmt appear as sphinxes in the Eighteenth Dynasty, and it could be possible that the king's wives may have had sphinx statues even earlier than this.

The image of the queen as a sphinx was extended even further in the New Kingdom: there are representations of Hatshepsut and Tjjj as sphinxes trampling down the enemies of Egypt, the image of the sphinx now having an active rôle that was derived directly from the iconography of the king. Nfrt-jtj also appeared as a sphinx in a row of sphinxes

flanking the dromos at Karnak. Her effigies alternated with those of Akhenaten as a sphinx, suggesting to Traunecker that these representations implied a joint partnership in the reign.¹⁹⁰ It is thus clear that as the pharaonic period continued there was some progression towards a more prominent and public rôle for the queen, and that her representations frequently link her with aspects of various goddesses and aspects of the king - especially in her titulary and iconography.

The social status of the queen

While both the titulary and iconography of the queen from Dynasty XI - XVII shed considerable light upon the social status of the queen for this era, they do not provide us with much insight into the daily life of the queen. The outstanding source for this, and for the social structure of the court in the later Middle Kingdom is Papyrus Boulaq 18.¹⁹¹ Not only does it give us important clues as to the status of the queen in that period, but it has also provided the opportunity of constructing a theoretical model of the operations of the palace bureaucracy.¹⁹²

From his study of Pap. Boulaq 18 Quirke has suggested

that there were three sections within the organisation of the palace in the Second Intermediate Period: the hntj, or outer palace, where the offices for state affairs were situated, the k3p,¹⁹³ or inner palace, where the king and his dependents resided, and the snf, or area where the serving staff carried out their work.¹⁹⁴ The term used for the quarters where Queen Jj received her provisions in S9 of the larger Pap. Boulaq 18 was the k3p, which was serviced by the rmt pr mn-wt ('people of the house of the nurses').

The queen is only mentioned in connection with the lists of food and cosmetics distributed to her and the other dependents from day to day, but even this restricted list allows us to draw some interesting conclusions. Scharff¹⁹⁵ has observed that Queen Jj received from three to five times the quantity of provisions received by any other recipient in those lists, and from this circumstance we can draw our conclusions about the relative importance of the queen. On each occasion the list of orders puts her at the head, followed by Prince R^c.n.f, then three princesses, and finally, the king's sisters. The list thus preserves the social hierarchy observed by the court in Sebekhotep II's time.

Additionally, entry S33¹⁹⁶ for Day 1, Month 3 of the

inundation mentions a special delivery to the estate of the queen, thus providing us with evidence for the queen having her own estate, as is also apparent for Queen Ttj-šrj. Pap. Boulaq 18 reveals that Jj had her own household and estate from which her rations seem to have come, and the variety of food from it was rich.

Another record connected with Queen Jj is found on a stele from the Wagner Museum in Wurzburg¹⁹⁷ which reveals that the queen was related to the son-in-law of the vizier, Cnhw. From other Thirteenth Dynasty records we know that many of the viziers (such as Jj, Jbj and Cnhw) and other powerful officials were frequently related in some way to the kings' wives.¹⁹⁸ Their power base seems to have lain in their duration of office, for the kings themselves, on the whole, had very brief reigns.¹⁹⁹ It was not uncommon for the vizier to span several reigns, as Jbj and Cnhw did, and this family network might provide the explanation as to why so many of the queens were given prominence (such as cartouche and family stelae) in this period.

Leaving the Thirteenth Dynasty, and moving to the Seventeenth, we gain a more comprehensive view of the social status of the queen as the number of our existing records

increases. Mwt nswt Ttj-šrj, together with hmt nswt S3t-K3ms, like Queen Jj just mentioned, were owners of large estates.²⁰⁰

Queen Jḥ-ms-nfرت-jrj had additional property as the God's Wife of Amen,²⁰¹ together with what is believed to have been a regular income.²⁰² Presumably, other queens who held this title would also have had some estates for their use during their incumbency.

Gitton²⁰³ has indicated an active rôle for Jḥ-ms-nfرت-jrj in the administration of the cult of Amen, too, suggesting that her Maasara inscription²⁰⁴ could indicate that it was this queen who opened up the quarries there. Another - this time undated - inscription at the alabaster quarries of Bosra, near Assiut, may also indicate her personal interest in the Bosra mines.²⁰⁵ Gitton even goes so far as to suggest that the queen may have had a rôle to play in the reconquest of Nubia in the time of Amenhotep I,²⁰⁶ and he cites the erection of a statue to her on the southern border of Egypt's new boundary as evidence of her association in the conquest. As we do have confirmation that Jḥ-ḥtp II put down a rebellion in Upper Egypt, and 'pacified' the discontented nobles in the south during her lifetime, it may not be out of the question that Jḥ-ms-nfرت-jrj also had some association

with the military, as Gitton has proposed.

The numbers of monuments on which queens are portrayed or mentioned escalate toward the end of this period, and the records that have accumulated are supplemented by an active cult for the entire royal family of Ahmose in the Theban tombs of officials from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties. On the public monuments we see the queen depicted accompanying the king as he performs his tasks of inaugurating temples or other monuments,²⁰⁷ but the pre-eminent documents which demonstrate the administrative activities of the queen from the late Seventeenth Dynasty are found on the Karnak stele in praise of Jḥ-ḥtp II,²⁰⁸ and the stele (CG 34002) on which Ahmose discusses with his wife the erection of a memorial pyramid and chapel for Queen Ttj-šrj in Abydos. Both these records reveal that those queens had played an active participatory rôle in the affairs of the land. That both of them were given the feminine equivalent title of jtj²⁰⁹ is suggestive of regnal powers for both queens, possibly as regents, as has already been suggested. This evident political prominence, absent from our earlier records, is equalled in the representations from the private stelae²¹⁰ and tombs²¹¹ of later Theban officials who honoured the late

Seventeenth Dynasty queens in a cult devoted to Ahmose, Amenhotep I, and their families. The queens thus held pre-eminent esteem in their lifetimes, and continued to be honoured after death.

In summary, what can be seen from Dynasty XI - XVII is a fairly substantial body of material that indicates the gradual accumulation of monumental records, titles, iconographic representations, and real indications of administrative participation for the queenship throughout the era. In the process of this accumulation the queen was given more public prominence by the king than she had had in the period from Dynasties I - VI. This can be seen in the provisions made for her tombs, her adoption of some titles that were directly modelled on the titles of the king, and her assumption of some of the symbolism of the gods and the king. With the position held by *Jḥ-ḥtp* II and *Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj* we have good evidence to show that, by the end of this period the king's wife and mother could also be instrumental in the governing the kingdom.

CHAPTER 8

HMT NTR N JMN: SOME PROSOPOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Concerning the difficulties encountered by all who deal with the source material relating to the late Seventeenth Dynasty, Troy¹ has emphasised the fragile nature of evidence, and its effect upon the views of those who try to interpret it. As Troy puts it,²

'We are forced to integrate a very fragmentary and elusive contemporary documentation with the abundant but "edited" sources emanating from the cult of the Theban necropolis. Somewhere between these two groups of material stands the evidence of the royal cache. It contains both original documentation directly related to the period of the early 18th dynasty and the results of the efforts of the priests who, some 500 years later, gathered together and restored the remains of the occupants of the royal necropolis. The creditability of this material is, as we are seeing now with the publication of the results of modern medical examination of the mummies, a difficult issue which must be treated judiciously.'

Within the confines of these limitations in the evidence this chapter attempts another interpretation of the relationships of the royal family of the late Seventeenth Dynasty. Hopefully, the conclusions reached will shed further light on the royal women of that period, and shed light on the order of succession for the Wives of the God for the same

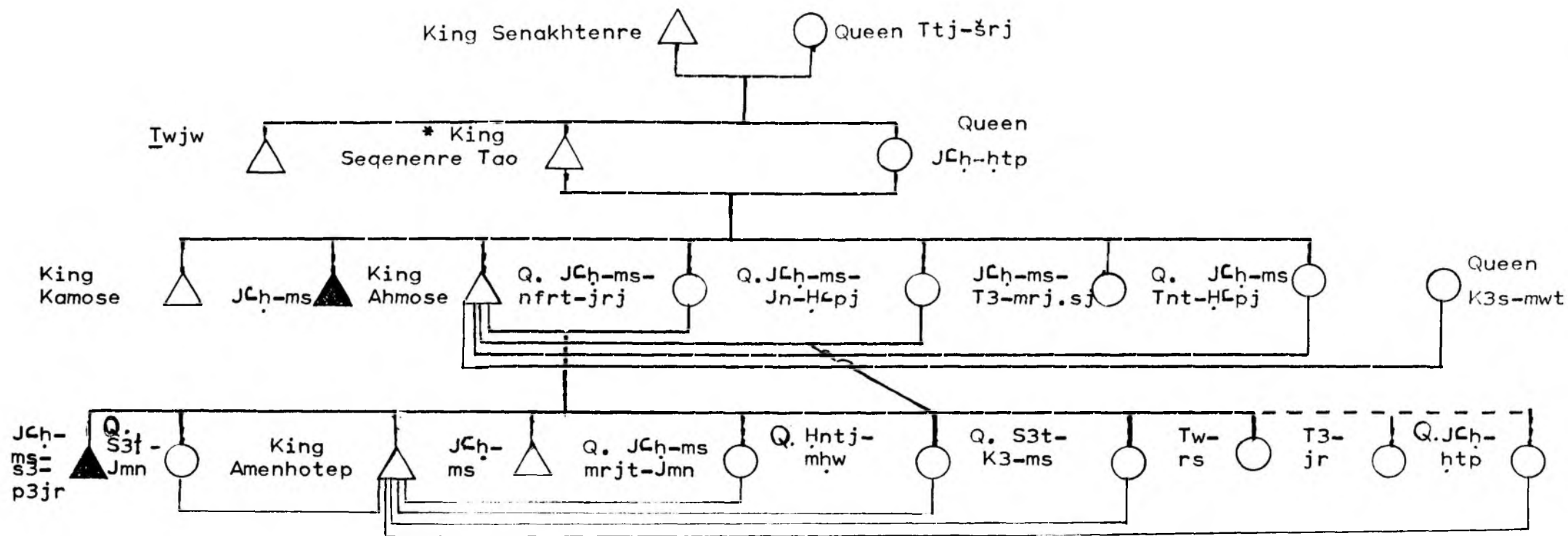


fig. 1 The genealogy of the late Seventeenth Dynasty, as suggested by Gauthier.

* This person has been re-aligned from Gauthier's original scheme to eliminate unnecessary confusion.

- △ males
- females
- ▲ early decease

period.

I: The Genealogy of the Seventeenth Dynasty

, Over the past ten years or so a great deal of research has taken place on the Ahmosid women at the dawn of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Vandersleyen led the way with his study on Queen J^ch-^htp II,³ in which he examined the scope of her titles and made an assessment of her political importance to Egypt in the unsettled years prior to and after the expulsion of the Hyksos, some time between 1570 and 1546 BC.⁴

Queen J^ch-^htp

At the time of Vandersleyen's publication two queens named J^ch-^htp were known. The sarcophagus and mummy of J^ch-^htp I had been found at Dra abu'l Naga; the other queen (J^ch-^htp II) had been discovered in the royal cache at Deir el Bahri. One of these women was known to be the mother of King Ahmose, the other queen was said to be the wife of Amenhotep I.⁵ (see fig. 1). It was not always clear which of the sarcophagi referred to the mother of Ahmose, and which referred to the queen alleged to have been Amenhotep's wife.⁶

Vandersleyen later amplified his examination of the Ahmosid royal family in discussion on a stele from Hanover depicting King Ahmose and a princess named S3t-Jmn. In that article he again raised the issue of the identity of the several members of the family of Ahmose.⁷

Vandersleyen's work was followed shortly by Troy's tabulation of nearly all the known evidence concerning the name of Jꜣḥ-ḥtp.⁸ In this same article she proposed that Queen Jꜣḥ-ḥtp I might be the consort of King Kamose, for whom no wife is known. In a subsequent investigation Vandersleyen demonstrated that there were two queens named Jꜣḥ-ḥtp, and that neither of them was the wife of Amenhotep I.⁹ In his opinion Jꜣḥ-ḥtp I was the wife of Kamose,¹⁰ a theory that he had expressed in an earlier article.¹¹ Part of his argument rested on the different signs with which the names of the queens were written, Jꜣḥ-ḥtp I's name featuring the earlier moon sign (which Vandersleyen was able to demonstrate was current prior to Year 18 of Ahmose).

Vandersleyen's thesis was generally accepted,¹² and other studies relating to these queens and their families appeared soon afterwards.¹³ These studies clarified the situation as to which of the queens named Jꜣḥ-ḥtp was earlier than the other,

and what the prosopographical implications of these new identifications were. Much recently-written material relating to the royal family of the Seventeenth Dynasty now required revision, and Vandersleyen, Robins, Troy and Blankenberg-van Delden all proposed new genealogical models for the family of King Ahmose. In a brief article, in the midst of these discussions, Robins raised the question of a third queen named J^ch-htp,¹⁴ a study that has not received much comment, but one to which I wish^{to} return at a later stage in this chapter.

Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn

The investigations continued into other members of the Ahmosid dynasty but, unlike the studies on J^ch-htp I and II, those on J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn have not been satisfactorily resolved.

Von Beckerath's LÄ entries list one Queen Mrjt-Jmn as the daughter of King Seqenenre and his wife Queen J^ch-htp II, while a queen named J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn appears as the wife of King Amenhotep I. The names and titles of both queens have been recorded from their coffins. One queen's sarcophagus was discovered in the queen's tomb at Deir el Bahri by Winlock in the early 1930s. The other coffin was copied by Wilkinson,

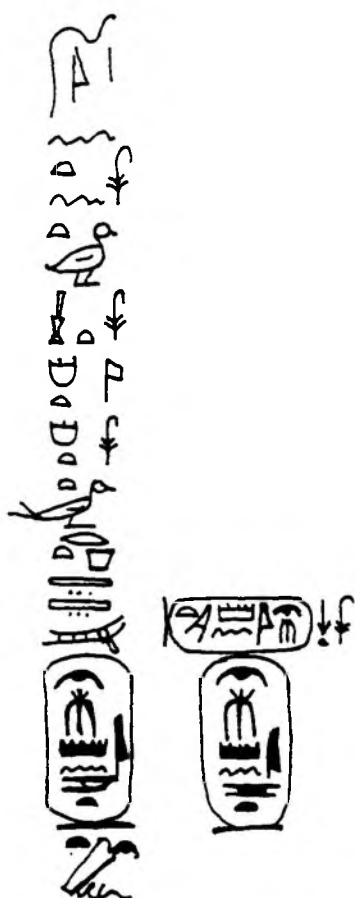


fig2. Wilkinson's copy of the JCh-ms-mrjt-Jmn coffin inscription.

just prior to 1830 - the coffin has now disappeared, and only Wilkinson's copy of the inscription remains (fig. 2). (Lepsius also recorded two instances of the name in his Königsbuch ¹⁵).

The Wilkinson copy ¹⁶ has not been unanimously accepted.

Some scholars, who find the Wilkinson titles at odds with their perception of the genealogy of the Ahmosid family, have rejected the material, pointing out that no coffin with that description can now be located. ¹⁷

Additionally, a small piece of funerary furniture (known as the Florence fragment), provides us today with the only unequivocal piece of archaeological material relating to this queen's burial. ¹⁸ The carved inscription reads 'snt nswt J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn'. Following her name is most of the sign for 'mwt' which, by coincidence, also appears at the end of the Wilkinson copy.

A number of scholars consider that this funerary fragment refers to the equipment of Queen Mrjt-Jmn, wife of Amenhotep I, and that it bears no relation to the Wilkinson record. Vandersleyen feels that Wilkinson may even have made an error in his transcription, confusing the name of J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn with that of J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj. ¹⁹ However, a confusion between

the elements 'Nfirt-jrj' and 'Mrjt-Jmn', is difficult to reconcile, since the two names are so different orthographically. Wilkinson is generally considered a reliable copyist, while the views of his critics lack evidence. The recent discovery of the name of J^ch-ms-s3t-Jmn, additional to that of S3t-Jmn,²⁰ requires us to act cautiously in regard to rare examples of royal names in this Ahmosid period. Whereas the numerous examples of the name of Nfirt-jrj are nearly always accompanied by titles that reveal we are dealing with J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj, and the mummy bandages of (J^ch-ms?)-s3t-K3ms - as written by the priests of the Twenty-first Dynasty - contain both variants,²¹ the circumstances in which other female members of the family of Ahmose appear do not always mean that those with the J^ch-ms prefix are identical to those without it.

Perhaps inspired by those dramatic results with the J^ch-htp queens, Blankenberg-van Delden applied a similar scrutiny to the question of Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn, the alleged wife of Amenhotep I. Blankenberg-van Delden²² reversed the names of the queens as given in the Lexikon, and suggested that Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn was not the wife of Amenhotep I, although Queen Mrjt-Jmn did indeed hold that position. Given

the coffin inscriptions, both queens were Wives of the God, and their titles in general were very similar (see Prosopography pp.305^f, and p.333), both being daughter of a king, sister of a king, and great wife of a king, a feature that increased confusion.

Two other remarks should also be made concerning the Mrjt-Jmn records. The first is that Mrjt-Jmn carries the titles of a king's chief wife, including that of hnmt nfr hdt, whereas Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn does not display that title on Wilkinson's copy. This is unusual as, from the Thirteenth Dynasty onwards, the Great Wife of the King always held that title, together with hmt nswt wrt, until the reign of Thutmose I. It is yet another indication that Wilkinson was unlikely to have miscopied the inscription from one relating to J^ch-ms-nfrrt-jrj, who did hold the hnmt nfr hdt title.

Secondly, Wilkinson's copy (and also those of Lepsius in his Königsbuch), feature the moon sign which is one also attested for the Ramesside period.²³ Thus, the moon sign of the Wilkinson copy could indicate that it had been written in the Nineteenth Dynasty (or later). Perhaps the original coffin had been one used in a later reburial of the queen. The sign was not one used in the time of Amenhotep I and,

therefore, is more likely to refer to another queen of that name.²⁴ The moon signs from the two fragmentary wooden funerary pieces (Florence and Cairo) are different from those recorded by Wilkinson and Lepsius, and there may well have been no connection between the four pieces of evidence. Although two princesses named Mrjt-Jmn are known for the Thutmosid period²⁵ neither can be shown to have been married.²⁶ Neither can it be shown that either of these princesses was referred to by the name of J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn. S3t-nswt, hmt nswt Mrjt-Jmn, of Rameses II is known; her sarcophagus has been found. Both her name and her titles are dissimilar to those of Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn of the Wilkinson record.²⁷ It thus seems possible that the nineteenth century copies refer to an Ahmosid queen,

Although Blankenberg-van Delden's suggestion made very little difference to the positions of either queen, as they appeared in the Lexikon, her attempt to sort out a genealogical puzzle did not meet with the approval that had greeted the case of J^ch-htp I and II. Her suggestion was rejected by Troy,²⁸ who considered both von Beckerath's Lexikon entry and Blankenberg-van Delden's emendation to be in error. In Troy's opinion, there was only one queen, whose

name was sometimes written with the J^ch-ms element, and at other times this element was left out.²⁹ Troy sees her as the wife of Amenhotep I. Robins³⁰ and Gitton³¹ also appear to be in agreement with Troy's genealogy, but Vandersleyen's proposed family tree (fig. 3) has more in common with Blankenberg-van Delden's.³²

The fact that there are two mummies - both named Mrjt-Jmn by the priests of Dynasty XXI - also gives support to Blankenberg-van Delden's argument.³³ As yet, no record of this name has been found prior to the generation of Ahmose. Also contrary to Troy's claim that the mummy belonged to an earlier epoch is the opinion of Smith, who said that the technique used on the elder Mrjt-Jmn's mummy was similar to that of both Seqenenre and Queen Jn-H^cpj.³⁴ This is closer to Blankenberg-van Delden's suggested period.

Blankenberg-van Delden³⁵ has also proposed that, since the mummy of (J^ch-ms)-mrjt-Jmn belonged to the period of Seqenenre and Jn-H^cpj, she was likely to have been the wife of King Kamose, for whom no known wife has been identified. This suggestion has been refuted by Troy³⁶ who, in an earlier paper had proposed that the wife of Kamose was likely to be the first Queen J^ch-htp.³⁷

One strength in Blankenberg-van Delden's argument is that the coffin of Queen J^ch-htp I is a distinctly primitive anthropoid type, which belongs to the generation of Intef kings and their immediate successors, rather than the generation of Ahmose. For this reason she suggested that J^ch-htp I might have been the wife of Seqenenre, or even one of the earlier kings, with whom her sarcophagus had a close affinity.³⁸

Also in favour of Blankenberg-van Delden's perception of the Ahmosid family tree is that the name of J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn fitted better into the genealogy among the children of King Seqenenre, all of whom were called Ahmose, the females having a second name. She suggested that, as King Kamose also belonged to that generation, Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn would be best placed as his wife, rather than as the wife of an earlier king.

Troy's objections to Blankenberg-van Delden's hypothesis³⁹ are not particularly convincing. Her preference for the opinion of Maspero,⁴⁰ concerning the date of the mummy, runs counter to the views of Elliot Smith (viz. that the mummy could have belonged to an earlier period). Smith considers that the J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn's mummy dates to the period

of Seqenenre and Jn-H^cpj.⁴¹ Secondly, whilst there is some ground for Troy's opinion that the use of J^ch-ms need not be confined to the generation of children of Seqenenre, it is remarkable how many J^ch-ms names there were in that generation (see fig. 3). It is clear that some additional use of J^ch-ms was made on occasion, and often this was done in error by priests of the Twenty-first Dynasty,⁴² as they labelled the mummies. Troy herself has pointed out on many occasions just how unreliable their labelling could be. It is also noticeable that royal theophoric names with Amen, although introduced in Dynasty XII, did not re-appear again until the generation of Kamose/Ahmose, when several such names appear.⁴³ One could see in this the name J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn fitting well into the period contemplated for her by Blankenberg-van Delden - and this is where Vandersleyen⁴⁴ places her (see fig. 3). Vandersleyen has indicated that the sudden demise of the J^ch-ms element, which has been considered to be a legacy from the Hyksos period, is likely to have been part of a deliberate propaganda programme.⁴⁵

More conclusive is the title of hmt ntr n Jmn (usually written as hmt ntr). J^ch-htp I does not hold this title, but J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn does. We know that this office was first

introduced sometime close to the Ahmosid period,⁴⁶ and that often the chief wife of the king held that office during her lifetime.⁴⁷ Furthermore, it was an office thought to be strictly hereditary, the title passing from the King's Great Wife to her daughter.⁴⁸ Therefore, the Great Wife of the king who holds the office of God's Wife is likely to be more recent than the Great Wife who does not. Although the arguments of Troy have their attractions, J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn must have been later than J^ch-htp I because this title appears on the wilkinson copy of her coffin, while J^ch-htp I is never named as God's Wife - even in the later cult records. Thus, the title of hmt ntr suggests that J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn belonged to the Ahmosid period.

Although the family tree of the Ahmosid dynasty is still in a state of flux, there have been great changes since Gauthier's projection. The new developments can be best understood by comparing fig. 1 with fig. 3.

2: The God's Wife of Amen

Whilst these later deliberations concerning the Mrjt-Jmn queens were in progress Gitton published the results of his

studies into the history and status of the hmt ntr n Jmn.⁴⁹

This work was subsequent to his study on Queen J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj.⁵⁰ In his later book Gitton argued a case for Queen J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj being the first member of the dynasty to be given the title of hmt ntr, or God's Wife,⁵¹ an argument that has been readily accepted by scholars who have been involved with similar studies.⁵²

hmt ntr J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn

In developing his argument that J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj was the first God's Wife, Gitton considered the case of J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn very carefully. He set aside the Wilkinson copy, adopting the opinion of Vandersleyen,⁵³ who thought that Wilkinson could have assembled the titles from different sources, such as scarabs, and other small objects, - or perhaps from those used by Lepsius in his Königsbuch. However, Wilkinson's copy is prefaced by the words dd mdw, so that the likelihood of his having copied the complete text from a single funerary source⁵⁴ is much higher than Vandersleyen, Gitton, Troy and Robins have accepted. It is also apparent from the actual presentation of Wilkinson's work that, while the three representations of the queen's name appear to have come from different sections of the original, the row of

titles runs en echelon in coherent, and customary order. One would not expect this consistency from a composite list of titles.

Gitton did not, however, reject the evidence of the two mummies, as Troy had done. On the mummy bandages of the elder Mrjt-Jmn the priests of the Twenty-first Dynasty had labelled her s3t nswt. snt nswt. Mrjt-Jmn. No other titles were recorded. The Florence fragment, and the mummy both have in common the title 'King's Sister'. There is thus a possibility that there had existed a Princess J^h-ms-mrjt-Jmn who had no connection to the Queen J^h-ms-mrjt-Jmn of the Wilkinson copy; this was the view of Gitton and others. Taking his lead from Yoyotte, Gitton decided that J^h-ms-mrjt-Jmn was neither a King's Wife, nor a Wife of the God, even though her namesake, Queen Mrjt-Jmn, had all four titles.⁵⁵ As he had set aside the Wilkinson copy from the argument, Gitton's conclusion was sound. If we accept the Wilkinson copy, however, an alternative conclusion can be drawn.

The titles on Queen Mrjt-Jmn's coffin, and those of the Wilkinson copy display a great similarity. The former appears as 's3t nswt, snt nswt, hmt ntr, hmt nswt, hnmt nfr hdt, nbt t3w',⁵⁶ Mrjt-Jmn'. Wilkinson's copy reads, 's3t nswt. snt

nswt, hmt ntr, hmt nswt wrt, hnwt t3wj tm, J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn'. Lepsius' inscription reads, 's3t nswt, snt nswt, hmt ntr, hmt nswt wrt, hnwt t3wj, J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn'. The Königsbuch copy lacks the 'tm' preserved by Wilkinson in the last title, leaving us to wonder whether Lepsius omitted the ~~ⲙ~~, or Wilkinson could have used a different source.

This last title is rather interesting. While it is not unique in the titularies of queens, it is rarely attested during the pharaonic period. Queen Hnmt-nfr-hdt I carried the title in the Twelfth Dynasty,⁵⁷ so did Queen Snb-hn^c.s in the Thirteenth Dynasty⁵⁸ and, on one occasion,⁵⁹ Queen J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj displays the title. The significance of the title refers to the 'two lands in their entirety', and may have been used in some geographical and political sense.⁶⁰ Its appearance in the titulary of the queen at the time of the expulsion of the Hyksos is understandable if it celebrates the re-unification in the time of Kamose and Ahmose. Should this interpretation be correct, it could be possible that Queen J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn may have been the wife of either of those kings. Since J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj also claims the title on one occasion, in year 22, it is possible that, by this time, J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn had died. It also raises the possibility that

J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn might have been the first wife of Ahmose and, after her death, the title was able to be used by the next most important wife of the king. This theory could then explain why it was that J^{ch}-ms-nfrt-jrj, who is not attested prior to Years 18 - 22, appeared in the later years of King Ahmose. It would also explain the youth of her sons on the monuments towards the end of Ahmose's reign.

The titles of Queen Mrjt-Jmn and those of J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn differ in two important details which suggest that the two queens had separate identities. One is the omission of the title hnmt nfr hdt for J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn, as copied by Wilkinson. The second is that J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn was entitled 'Mistress of the Two Lands in their entirety', while the Mrjt-Jmn was 'Lady of the Two Lands'. (This latter title was used consistently for Queen Mrjt-Jmn on all her monuments.) It is noticeable that different titles such as these were sometimes used to distinguish between one generation of queens and another.⁶¹

If we accept Blankenberg-van Delden's distinction between Queens J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn and Mrjt-Jmn, we will immediately appreciate that the genealogy in figure 3 suggests that Queen J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn could have been an incumbent of the office of

hmt ntr prior to the time of Queen J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj. Such a conjecture runs counter to Gitton's suggestion that J^ch-m-s-nf^rt-jrj was the first hmt ntr. Therefore, it might be instructive to re-examine the argument concerning other royal women whose claims to be God's Wives were, to some extent, rejected by Gitton.

hmt ntr J^ch-htp II?

The earliest queen with whom the title is associated might have been Queen J^ch-htp II. The evidence for her title of hmt ntr comes from several sources, the most recent being found on a sarcophagus of a priest who lived in the Twenty-first Dynasty.⁶² In this inscription the queen's name is written with the early moon sign, which would imply that the inscription had been copied from original material but, since the sarcophagus itself is very late, this evidence has been set aside by most scholars.

Closer to the lifetime of the queen is an inscription on stele CG 34009, erected by Jw.f, one of J^ch-htp's servants, some years after the death of the queen. Both Gitton and Troy reject this evidence because it is not contemporaneous with the lifetime of the queen; they suggest the title was a

posthumous honour. In Gitton's view, by the time that Jw.f came to erect his stele, his former mistress had become so prestigious that she was given the honorary title of God's wife.⁶³ Although there is no evidence to confirm Gitton's suggestion, it may well be the explanation for the appearance of this title on Jw.f's stele. Some doubt still remains, however, for it is apparent that Jw.f, who had carried out a number of specific tasks for the queen when she was alive, would have had first-hand knowledge of her titles. Thus, the evidence from this stele could be accurate, although Gitton and others have think it suspect. It is curious that, had the custom of an honorary conferring of title been in vogue, Queen Ttj-šrj should never have been accorded the honour, since so much was done to elevate her importance in the times of Ahmose and later.

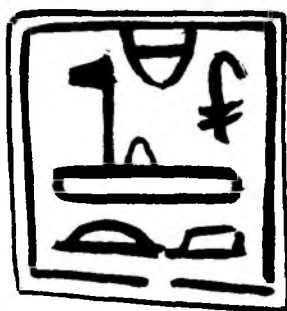
The two scarabs which mention the title of hmt ntr for Queen J^c h-ḥtp II pose a different problem. As most scarabs and seals were made only during the lifetime of the person named on them, one would anticipate that these two items were made during the lifetime of the queen. This is not the view of Gitton.

Most inscriptions which mention J^ch-ḥtp and are known to



P1. XXIV.44




Petrie, Scarabs and Cylinders with names



P1. XXIV.45

ibid.

fig. 4 Scarab and seal with the name of hmt ntr Jch-htp.

have been made during her lifetime feature two variations of her name, those where the lunar sign is shown thus, , the other where it appears in the inverted position, . The former inscription is the more ancient of the two forms, but the latter was used during the last 13 - 16 years of J^{ch}-htp's life. One of her scarabs uses a peculiar form of the lunar sign () , which is not included in Vandersleyen's category of signs. The other seal does not use the J^{ch} sign at all (see fig. 4).

4

Thus the evidence of the scarabs and seal presents us with a dilemma. Either, we reject the seals, as Gitton does,⁶⁴ or, we admit that the scarabs are primary evidence that J^{ch}-htp II held the title of God's Wife during her lifetime.

Some scholars have assumed that there was only one God's Wife at a time, and that transmission of the office passed from mother to daughter.⁶⁵ This theory encounters difficulties, due to the number of God's wives evident in the family of Ahmose. Apart from J^{ch}-htp's claim, J^{ch}-ms-mrjt-Jmn, J^{ch}-ms-nfrt-jrj, J^{ch}-ms-s3t-Jmn, S3t-Jmn, S3t-K3ms, Mrjt-Jmn, and a hmt ntr J^{ch}-ms have all been given this title, either on contemporary records, and/or in later inscriptions. Moreover,

in the temple of Mut in Asher, both S3t-Jmn and J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj⁶⁶ appear on either side of a statue of Amenhotep I, both described as Cnh-tj, and both carrying the title of hmt ntr. S3t-Jmn and J^ch-ms-s3t-Jmn appear in a similar inscription on a statue of Amenhotep I at Karnak, both carrying the title of hmt ntr.⁶⁷ The last two examples might suggest that it was possible for the title to be held by two women at one time, even if one of them may already have relinquished the actual office.

hmt ntr S3t-Jmn

There have been one or two problems concerning the place of S3t-Jmn in the history of the late 17th Dynasty. Schmitz's statement regarding S3t-Jmn's death as a child⁶⁸ runs counter to the evidence from S3t-Jmn's mummy, which reveals that her bones are those of a woman of at least thirty years of age.⁶⁹ Gitton also has difficulty in trying to explain S3t-Jmn's presence on the Hanover Stele from Year 18 of King Ahmose,⁷⁰ at a time perhaps prior to the earliest records for J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj, whom Gitton sees as the first God's Wife. S3t-Jmn's presence on the statue of Amenhotep I, already mentioned, would suggest that she still held the title of hmt ntr in his reign, and this too creates a problem, as Queen

Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj also held the title at that time. It would thus seem that either, S3t-Jmn might have preceded Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj as God's Wife or, both women held the title and/or office at the same time.

Another query is raised by the Karnak statue of the same king, where he seems to be in company with two God's Wives at the one time, S3t-Jmn, dj ḥnh dt, and Jḥ-ms-s3t-Jmn, m3ḥt-hrw. While the titles of the like-named women may be explained by one being alive, the other dead, the inference is that Jḥ-ms-s3t-Jmn must have held the office of hmt ntr n Jmn prior to the incumbency of S3t-Jmn. This recent identification of Jḥ-ms-s3t-Jmn was not available to Gitton when he published the results of his research.⁷¹

hmt ntr S3t-K3ms?

There are similar difficulties with the presence of Queen S3t-K3ms, too. She was a King's Daughter, King's Sister, and King's Great Wife. Maspero⁷² placed her as the daughter of Ahmose and Queen Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj, and the wife of Amenhotep I. Redford, F. Schmitz, and Vandersleyen consider S3t-K3ms to have been a daughter of King Kamose, for that is what her name means. From the evidence of her mummy, which was estimated to

have a maximum age of thirty years, they say that, as the daughter of Kamose, she could not possibly have lived until the reign of King Amenhotep I. By the time of his accession, she would have been too old to have become his wife. They assign her a place as the wife of King Ahmose.⁷³

Gitton also places her as the wife of King Ahmose, and suggests that she did not hold the title of hmt ntr during her lifetime, but was only given it by later generations, as he suggests had happened in the case of J^ch-htp II.⁷⁴ The great difficulty in considering the position of S3t-K3ms is that there is only one small, damaged contemporary record for her. This is a plaque which links King Ahmose with a female, whose scratched name is evidently that of S3t-K3ms.⁷⁵ There are no titles. Apart from this dubious record, the earliest-known text mentioning S3t-K3ms is a stele thought to belong to the time of Thutmose III, or later. It shows the queen, together with Amenhotep I and Queen J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj. This grouping has given rise to the suggestion that S3t-K3ms was closely connected with that family, either as wife or sister of that king. Because of the dearth of contemporary inscriptions concerning her it is difficult to know whether or not this queen had ever held the title of hmt ntr.

* * *

Thus, the evidence suggests that the title of God's Wife of Amen is far too insecure to assert that the title was first held by Queen J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj. Moreover, the investigation of material regarding the other queens who, at one time or other, were given the title of hmt ntr, has shown that there are difficulties if we assume that the title was carried by only one woman at a time. While it is conceivable that Queen J^ch-htp II, S3t-K3ms, and S3t-Jmn were given the title in some ad hoc ways, as Gitton proposes, there is still room for doubt concerning the plethora of women holding that title up to Year 10 of the reign of Amenhotep I. The possibility remains that the title, if not the office, could have been held by more than one woman at a time, and this perpetuation of title is customary in the titulary of Egyptian queens.⁷⁶

Several difficulties are also apparent concerning the mother-to-daughter transmission. Gitton's conclusion that S3t-Jmn (whom he sees as daughter of J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj) 'dut mourir avant sa mère; elle entra peut-être en possession du titre juste après que la Stèle de Donation eut constitué le patrimoine de l'Épouse du Dieu et en eut règlementé la transmission',⁷⁷ leaves unanswered a number of objections. Why

would J^{ch}-ms-nf^{rt}-jrj give her alleged daughter the title just after she herself is thought to have been given it? Why would S3t-Jmn have been one of the two God's Wives represented on a statue of Amenhotep I (in both the temple of Mut, and the temple of Karnak, both times labelled cnh.tj) if S3t-Jmn had died before J^{ch}-ms-nf^{rt}-jrj? And why does S3t-Jmn appear to carry the title on the Ahmose stele of Year 18, which is surely an early date in the reign of Ahmose for a daughter of J^{ch}-ms-nf^{rt}-jrj to have been given the title?

The Amenhotep group statue

The problems caused by the Amenhotep I group statue also have to be explained. The damaged Karnak group statue of King Amenhotep I and a seated woman has the lower part of a woman seated on a throne. On one side of her throne the woman carries the titulary, s3t nswt. snt nswt. hnwt t3wj. hmt ntr J^{ch}-ms-s3t-Jmn, m3^ct hrw; the other side carries the simple legend, hmt ntr S3t-Jmn di cnh dt.⁷⁸ The inscriptions are equivocal. Do they refer to one woman, or to two? If the reference is to a single woman the conclusion must be that her name could be written either as, J^{ch}-ms-s3t-Jmn, or as S3t-Jmn. If the reference is to two women it would seem that the inscription of J^{ch}-ms-s3t-Jmn was a memorial, while the

statue of S3t-Jmn would indicate that she was apparently still alive at the time of the statue's dedication.

Tefnin thinks that the reason for the names of two God's Wives being beside that of Amenhotep at Karnak is that both women were sisters of the king.⁷⁹ Troy (writing before the clarification of the statue's correct name) identifies the women as S3t-Jmn and Queen Mrjt-Jmn, and sees them as being 'perhaps .. successive wives of Amenhotep I', although there is no record anywhere of S3t-Jmn as hmt nswt - except, erroneously, in Gauthier.⁸⁰

Such a representation of a king and two sisters would be unusual in the corpus of Egyptian iconography; similar examples usually feature either a mother and daughter accompanying the king,⁸¹ or else a king's mother and the wife of the king.⁸² Less common is the queen's mother with her daughter and husband (as in the case of Queen J^{ch}-ms, Hatshepsut and Thutmose II on the Berlin Stele⁸³). Clearly, the Karnak group does not show the king's mother (whom we know to be J^{ch}-ms-nfrrt-jrj), and one of the problems that needs to be solved if these are to be seen as two separate women is the nature of their relationship to each other, and to the king.

If, on the other hand, it is suggested that S3t-Jmn and J^ch-ms-s3t-Jmn are the same person, then it should be explained why it is that, on the same statue, a royal princess is entitled both Snh.tj and m3^ct-hrw. As we would expect, in the Karnak inscription the woman suspected of belonging to the generation of Ahmose is indicated as being deceased, while the younger S3t-Jmn was apparently still alive at the time. This important difference suggests that the inscription depicts two royal women, not one whose titles are merely amplified on the other side of her chair.⁸⁴

It has been suggested by Vandersleyen⁸⁵ that S3t-Jmn was the child of Kamose. This construct would be in accord with the Hanover Stele of Ahmose from Year 18, which shows the king (whom we know to have been young at that time) accompanied by S3t-Jmn (shown as an adult).⁸⁶ We could thus explain that record as the king and his predecessor's daughter (who was also God's Wife of Amen) being seen in harmony. Thus the stele would express a propaganda purpose very useful to a young king. The presence of both J^ch-ms-nfrrt-jrj and S3t-Jmn on the statue of Amenhotep in the Temple of Mut could then be explained as representing the path of inheritance of the title, rather than the mother-daughter relationship usually

assumed. If this were a correct interpretation, then we might suggest that the Karnak statue of Amenhotep displays a similar circumstance: the previous (and deceased) incumbent of the office of God's Wife of Amen in company with her successor, S3t-Jmn.

Queen J^ch-htp II again

In returning to Queen J^ch-htp II once more, it is to learn whether or not this revised formula for the God's Wife of Amen can in any way be seen to apply to her. As the wife of Seqenenre (she is Great Wife on some monuments, but not on others) the queen might have been a candidate for God's Wife. It is my suggestion that the Jw.f stele, and the scarab and seal provide evidence for her being not only a God's Wife, but one of the earliest to hold the office.

One of the noticeable characteristics of the office of hmt ntr is the frequent pattern of transferring the title from mother to daughter, as occurred in the case of Queen Mrjt-Jmn, who inherited the title from her mother. We have another very clear instance of this with Queen Hatshepsut, who donated the title to her daughter Nfrw-R^c when Hatshepsut assumed her full monarchy. The age of the recipient does not appear to have

been a vital issue in the transfer, for Nfrw-R^c was a mere child when she first became God's Wife.⁸⁷

But, if J^ch-htp II had been an earlier hmt ntr, why was the title not directly transferred to her daughter, J^ch-ms-nfrrt-jrj? The answer to that question may lie in the troubled history of the period. Seqenenre's violent death occurred while J^ch-htp's family was still young. Although we are unsure whether Kamose was the uncle, father, or elder brother of Ahmose, he inherited the throne from Seqenenre. Whoever his wife, she was also likely to be the daughter of a king, for all of the queens of this period carry the title of s3t nswt, and all holders of the office of hmt ntr n Jmn were born princesses. If the title were in existence at this time it would be the wife of Kamose who was then entitled to hold the office of hmt ntr. It is Blankenberg-van Delden's suggestion that J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn was the wife of Kamose and, since she was also a king's daughter, she became the next God's Wife.⁸⁸ If, as her name suggests, J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn was the daughter of J^ch-htp II and Seqenenre, then this would have been a proper transfer of the hmt ntr title for this period.


The suggestion of Vandersleyen and Troy (that J^ch-htp I was the wife of Kamose), on the other hand, would mean that

the title of hmt ntr n Jmn must have gone to another princess, as J^ch-htp I did not hold that title. If their suggestion is correct - and I think the style and probable date of the sarcophagus from Dra Abu'l Naga speak against this - then the title may have passed to another of the many God's Wives who have been accorded that title at one time or another.

A constant problem with the title of hmt ntr for the early period is that there is very little archaeological evidence for these queens having the title. The sources which we do have are often non-contemporary references, and for that reason have been discarded by many historians examining the problem today. (It is precisely because there has been so much original material for J^ch-ms-nfrt-jrj that scholars credit her with being the first Wife of the God.) We need not be surprised that the records relating to these women are so negligible. There were several aspects of the times that operated against the proliferation of inscriptions. Neither J^ch-htp II nor J^ch-ms-mrjt-Jmn could have held their office for very long, due to the early deaths of their proposed husbands, and it is possible that this is why there are so few inscriptions mentioning their names with that title from contemporary records. Another reason why these particular

records are scarce was due to the disturbed times in which both women lived. There was not the leisure for the monumental works that later accumulated in the years of peace that followed the expulsion of the Hyksos. Yet a third reason why records relating to the office of God's Wife are scant is no doubt due to the nature of the office. Amen's cult received its greatest boost in the times of Ahmose, who named his offspring after his favourite god. It was then that the office of God's Wife became so prestigious, and that is why it was Nfrt-jrj who gave it such prominence among her titles.

The God's Wife, Jꜥḥ-ms

The problems associated with the office of God's Wife do not stop with the numerous office-holders already mentioned. One of the enigmas so far not discussed concerns a hmt ntr named Jꜥḥ-ms. The most famous artefact bearing her name is an ivory wand, now in the Museum of Turin (Cat. No.6921). Its simple inscription reads 'Hmt ntr Jꜥḥ-ms, ʕnh.tj!'. The second piece of evidence concerning her comes from a broken stele from Dra abu'l Naga (CG 34159).⁸⁹ The inscription reads, 'King's Sister, God's Wife, Jꜥḥ-ms, honoured lady'. In each of these inscriptions the name of Jꜥḥ-ms is written in identical fashion, . According to Vandersleyen's dating

criterion, mentioned above, the lunar sign belongs to the earlier part of the Seventeenth Dynasty, prior to Years 18 - 22 of King Ahmose.

Although the presence of this God's Wife J^ch-ms has caused scholars to hesitate, most of them have decided that these inscriptions are a hypocorism for J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj - yet this J^ch-ms is not entitled 'King's Wife' in either inscription. The first unambiguous record we have of J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj's possession of the title of God's Wife is on the Donation Stele, evidently some time after she had become the wife of the king. Now, while it is acknowledged that J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj's lengthy name is shortened in the records from time to time, that abbreviation is always in the form of 'Nf^rt-jrj', not 'J^ch-ms'.⁹⁰ Furthermore, J^ch-ms-nf^rt-jrj was always accompanied by some title other than hmt ntr - usually hmt nswt, or mwt nswt, whereas the simple J^ch-ms, it would seem, does not carry either of those titles. Gitton has suggested that the queen was given the title of hmt nswt on the stele from Dra Abu'l Naga, but that the edge of the inscription has been broken away for part of this title.⁹¹ There is no break in the ivory wand, however. Another title that could have appeared on the stele is s3t nswt, and indeed

there is a parallel to the writing of this inscription present on the statue of S3t-Jmn mentioned earlier. This God's Wife, too, as we have seen, was only ever a princess, never a queen. In fact, the only title that remains on the stele is 'King's sister', and all other readings must be conjectural.

It would appear then that the material concerning Jꜥḥ-ms suggests that she was a different individual from Jꜥḥ-ms-nfꜣt-jꜣj, but who could she have been? What was her place in the genealogy of the Seventeenth Dynasty?

The name of Jꜥḥ-ms was very popular in the late Seventeenth Dynasty. Apart from the king of that name, there were four of his sisters, all named Jꜥḥ-ms, with a second name added. These women were: Jꜥḥ-ms-T3-mꜣ.sj, Jꜥḥ-ms-jn-Ḥꜥpj, Jꜥḥ-ms-nfꜣt-jꜣj, while Queen Jꜥḥ-ms-mꜣjt-Jmn (and probably Jꜥḥ-ms-s3t-Jmn too) also appear to have belonged to that generation. There was also a prince called Jꜥḥ-ms, the eldest son of Seqenenre Tao. This prince died while he was young, and his parents and two sisters, both called Jꜥḥ-ms, dedicated a statue (Louvre E 15682) to his memory. All three siblings are named on the statue, together with their father, King Seqenenre Tao, and mother, s3t nswt wrt. ḥnmt nfr nꜥt. Jꜥḥ-ḥtp. Although Jꜥḥ-ḥtp is not named 'King's Wife', her

title, hnmt nfr hdt, is one that only belongs to queens in this period of Egyptian history.

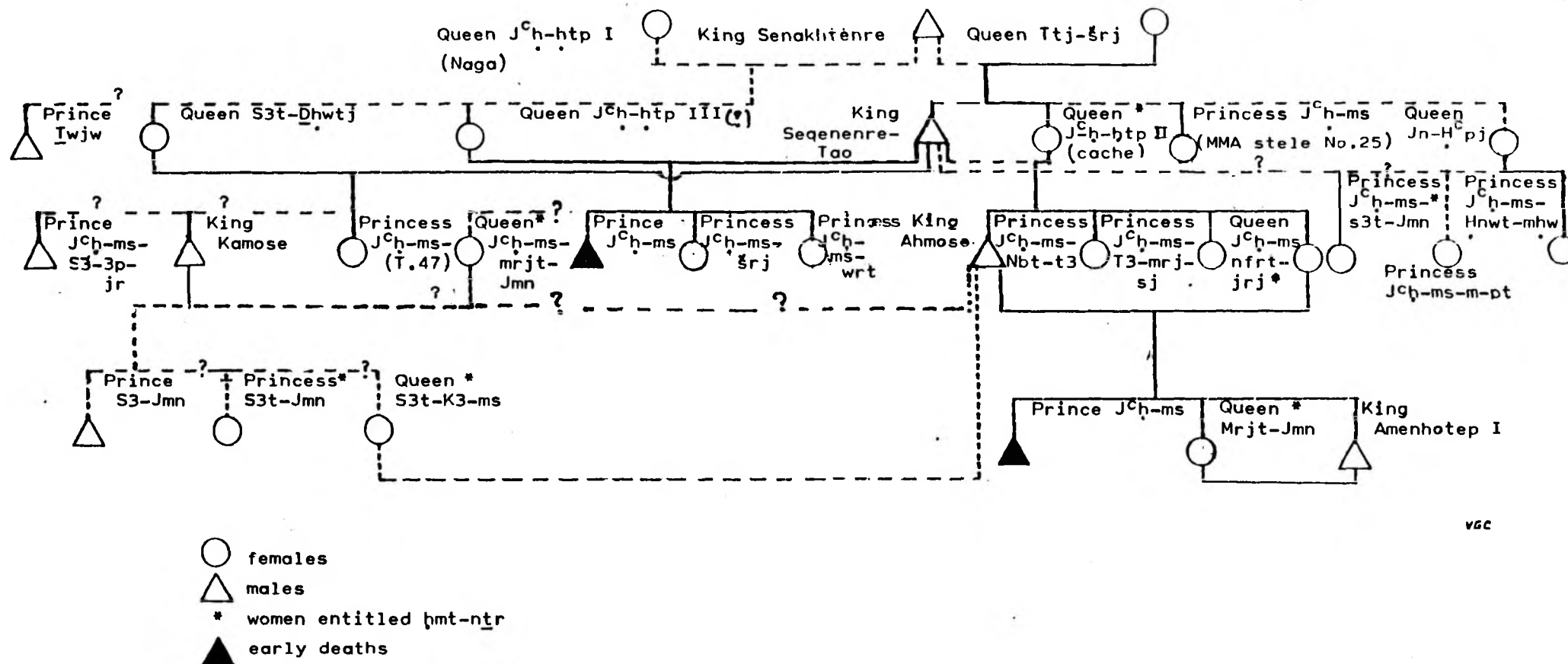
Nearly all scholars have accepted that this statue must have represented Queen J^ch-htp II and her family, some seeing the prince as an elder brother of King Ahmose, and identifying the princesses with Nfret-jrj and one of her sisters.⁹² Winlock,⁹³ however, noted that the titles of Queen J^ch-htp II did not match those of the J^ch-htp of the statue. Some years later Robins⁹⁴ expressed a similar doubt, explaining that Queen J^ch-htp II's earlier inscriptions lack the title hnmt nfr hdt, the title of the chief queen, not those of lesser rank. She also notes that J^ch-htp II was only ever entitled s3t nswt, not s3t nswt wrt, as carried by the Louvre statue queen. Robins' reluctant suggestion, therefore, was to label the mother of Prince J^ch-ms and his sisters as Queen J^ch-htp III.

The names of the sisters of this prince, taken by all scholars to refer to the hyphenated names of King Seqenenre's daughters by J^ch-htp II do not, in the opinion of this writer, represent those women. As has been mentioned above, concerning the abbreviation of hyphenated names, the name of J^ch-ms should not be considered a hypocorism for a longer

name. These princesses are more likely to be different individuals from the known daughters of J^ch-htp II. The šrj and wrt adjectival elements attest to that. Had they had secondary names these would no doubt have been added to their respective inscriptions, for there is room on the statue for this. As it is, the wrt and šrj elements echo those used by Hnmt-nfr-hdt I and II, as discussed by Perdu.⁹⁵

The names of J^ch-ms wrt and J^ch-ms šrj might attest to additional members for the family of Seqenenre and Queen J^ch-htp II, or else they could have been members of a separate family group with only the father being the same. Since J^ch-htp II was the mother of a large family whose names are known, three additional children would seem to distort her section of the royal family tree. We know that the life-span of King Seqenenre was little more than about thirty years and, consequently, his marital life must have been even briefer. For that reason, and because the titles of the two sisters of Prince J^ch-ms differ from those of J^ch-htp II's daughters, there does seem room for another wife for this king. This was the suggestion of Robins, who has proposed that there were three queens named J^ch-htp.⁹⁶ It seems a better solution that Seqenenre had two wives named J^ch-htp, one of whom was his

A SUGGESTED GENEALOGY FOR THE LATE SEVENTEENTH DYNASTY



v6c

fig. 5 A suggested genealogy for the late Seventeenth Dynasty.

chief wife (hnmt nfr hdt), mother of two daughters and a son who died in his youth, the other Queen J^ch-htp II, the mother of King Ahmose.

Although J^ch-htp II and III do not appear to be identical, could it be possible that J^ch-htp I might have been the person mentioned on the Louvre statue? Both queens share the title of hnmt nfr hdt, but this is all that they have in common. While the first queen carries the title of hmt nswt wrt, the third J^ch-htp does not, although her title hnmt nfr hdt would imply that she was the great wife of a king.⁹⁷ Conversely, while the third queen holds the title of s3t nswt wrt, Queen J^ch-htp I does not even seem to have been a princess at all. The dissimilarities seem sufficient to suggest that they were separate persons (see fig. 5).


On the ivory wand the name of J^ch-ms is enclosed in a cartouche. The use of the cartouche for princesses was rather erratic in the late Seventeenth Dynasty, and some inscriptions feature the name of the same person both within and without a cartouche. Although the name of Princess J^ch-ms wrt is not enclosed by a cartouche in the statue inscription, neither is the name of the God's Wife on the Dra abu'l Naga stele. Apart from this omission, the three inscriptions of the name of

J^ch-ms are otherwise identical. The evidence of the similar lunar sign and the titles of the inscriptions make it possible that all the inscriptions refer to the one person. She may have been the first God's Wife of Amen.

It is unlikely that this J^ch-ms became the wife of a king, as we have no queen named J^ch-ms until the time of Thutmose I. This princess, therefore, could not pass the title on to any daughter. We do not know the actual circumstances of either her place in the genealogical tree, or the details of her prosopography, but it is suggested that the office of this God's Wife could have been transferred to another princess of this period - perhaps to J^ch-htp II's line.

While it would appear that J^ch-ms may have been the first attested hmt ntr n Jmn in the Seventeenth Dynasty, Newberry claims to have seen the base of a statuette in Luxor with the title of hmt ntr Nfrw.⁹⁸ The base has not been seen since, and it is difficult to decide whether this queen belongs to the 12th or the 17th Dynasty. Gitton, taking his clue from the numbers of royal women called Nfrw in Dynasty XII, is sure the queen must belong to that period,⁹⁹ but there is also the possibility that it is the name of an unknown queen from Dynasty XVI or XVII. There is a Queen Nfrt known from the

Second Intermediate Period (see Prosopography p.296), she was the mother of a Princess H3t-špswt. If Newberry's record is accurate then this queen might be the first hmt ntr, but it is not known whether or not the god concerned was Amen.¹⁰⁰

From the orthography alone we have two instances of a God's Wife J^ch-ms, who was not the wife of a king, holding the title prior to the time of Queen J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj's incumbency. The earlier identification of s3t nswt J^ch-ms wrt/šrj with J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj thus seems unlikely, since any hypocorism used for that queen consisted of the final elements of her name, not the initial element, as Gitton has proposed.¹⁰¹ Moreover, the writing of 'hmt ntr J^ch-ms' is never found with the later lunar symbol, yet this is precisely the period from which the majority of Nfirt-jrj's inscriptions come. The hypocoristic 'Nfirt-jrj', on the other hand, is recorded with the title of hmt ntr many times. Only once¹⁰² does J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj display the hmt ntr title when her name is written with the  sign. It would thus be reasonable to assume that the hmt ntr J^ch-ms in question is a separate identity, who held the post of God's Wife prior to the time of J^ch-ms-nfirt-jrj.

Conclusion

In the course of the many re-examinations that have been made into the prosopography of the women belonging to the family of King Ahmose, several important changes have been made to those relationships first suggested by Gauthier. Winlock's excavations and observations first raised the issue of the identities of those queens named J^ch-htp, and Vandersleyen, Gitton, Troy, Robins and Blankenberg-van Delden have pursued the quest still further. In this present re-assessment of the material certain anomalies have made themselves conspicuous. It is thought by the present writer that not all the women rejected by Gitton need be excluded as God's Wives, even though the material for some of them is scant. Moreover, the situation regarding tenure of that office, which has only been briefly touched upon in this chapter, raises further questions about the nature of the office. It seems unlikely now that those God's Wives needed to relinquish their titles when another incumbent held office, for several of them seem to have held the title of hmt ntr contemporaneously.

As a result of these many changes over the years, it is suggested that Gitton's premise (that the first incumbent of the office of God's Wife of Amen was J^ch-ms-nfrrt-jrj) might

now be revised. While she was, undoubtedly, the most celebrated holder of that office - the God's Wife par excellence - she does not appear to have been the first.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

As indicated at the beginning of this study, a growing body of research has now shed much light on the royal women of ancient Egypt. While it may, indeed, be too early to attempt a synthesis of the work done so far, one of the aims of this present work has been to gather together the results of these separate studies to examine their cumulative effect on the position of the wife of the king. This synthesis has also aimed at presenting and reviewing these conclusions from an historical perspective.

Because the source material relating to these queens is frequently slender, and because much material that has been discovered has had inadequate publication,¹ the investigation and analysis relating to queenship has not been an easy task; any conclusions drawn here, therefore, can only be tentative.

Following the pattern established in the general survey chapters,² this chapter will first put into perspective the results of research into the material evidence concerning the queens as it is present in the monuments, the titulary, and

the iconography. This overview will then be followed by general conclusions relating to the social and religious position of the wife of the king (inasmuch as they can be determined) between the First and Seventeenth Dynasties.

(1) The evidence from the monuments

The evidence of the monuments indicates that the position of the queen changed a great deal over the centuries between the First and the Sixth Dynasties. At the most superficial level it is noticeable that the size and complexity of the tombs provided for the wives of kings generally increased, but the most dramatic change introduced was that of the pyramid, built first of all for the king's mother. As it was modelled upon the king's tomb, this innovation seems to point to a gradual increase in status of the queen mother. By the time of Pepy I, however, a number of queens who were not the mothers of kings were also given pyramids.³ This status symbol set these women apart from the remainder of the Egyptian nobility.

The development of the queens' mortuary chapels⁴ has revealed that, although by the end of the Old Kingdom these structures possessed a number of features that also appeared

in the mortuary temples of kings, they never possessed all the distinct elements of a king's mortuary temple.⁵ This was in spite of the fact that the queens were eventually given an extension of the religious privileges of the king in the afterlife by the inclusion of Pyramid Texts in their tombs. By the time of Pepy II the status of the queen consort in regard to the afterlife was much more elevated than that of other people.

The mortuary services for the queens consort were also well-provided for: some of their cults (both hwt k3 and hwt ntr) were tended for centuries.⁶ From these different sources of evidence it is clear that the social position of the king's consort made steady progress over the centuries, reaching its climax in the reign of Pepy II. This picture is further endorsed by the written and iconographical records for the same period.

The most remarkable characteristic of tombs for the kings' wives in the Middle Kingdom was their lack of standardisation both between the dynasties and within them. In the Eleventh Dynasty this variety is noticeable within the reign of one king. Several of Mentuhotep I's wives were buried in shaft tombs with exterior chapels set into his

mortuary temple at Deir el Bahri; Nfrw had a rock-cut tomb excavated in the peribolos wall while, at the back of the temple, Queen Im had a dromos tomb that was similar to the design of Mentuhotep's own tomb. No other Eleventh Dynasty burials of queens are known.

This mortuary complex has so far defied attempts to resolve the enigma of those different burials. Was the lack of similarity due to differences in the status of the queens? Or were their different architectural forms due to changes in the ideas associated with the afterlife? The time-span between the earlier and the later burials might allow for this possibility.

Although the Twelfth Dynasty showed consistency within the reigns of each of the kings, there was remarkable diversity between one reign and the next. Some kings showed a preference for mastaba structures.⁷ Senwosret I's mortuary complex has satellite pyramids (some of which may not have belonged to his time at all⁸), and Amenemhat III buried his wives in a pyramid he had intended to use himself. Furthermore, the funerary provisions made for Amenemhat's queens were similar to those of the king.

No solution has as yet been found for the disparate monuments of the Twelfth Dynasty - as was the case for the queenly burials of Mentuhotep's reign. Do they merely represent an alteration due to the dictates of architectural preference? Or do they represent a continuous attempt to draw the queen more fully into the afterlife of the king?

Dodson believes that this design differentiation between one reign and another was due to the desire to maximise the security of those who were interred in these tombs⁹ but, for Amenemhat's wives at least,¹⁰ these changes may have been intended to express evolving religious ideas.¹¹ Arnold has shown that the elaborate suite of rooms for each of Amenemhat's queens was similar not only to Amenemhat's own suite of rooms, but also to the substructures of a number of royal tombs in Dynasties IV and VI. What one also needs to appreciate here is that the queens were now entombed with the king, and connected with his burial place by an elaborate system of corridors. It is difficult to escape the implication that these queens were now considered to be more closely associated with the king in the afterlife, and that they were intended to share fully in the benefits of his mortuary cult.

After Amenemhat shifted his mausoleum from the Dahshur pyramid complex to that at Hawara, provision was also made for the burial of Nfrw-Pth alongside the sarcophagus of the king. While it is now apparent that Senwosret III and Amenemhat III based many of their ideas for their mortuary complexes on the precedent set by King Djoser,¹² it is the earliest occasion for which a female burial occupies a place in such close proximity to the ruler. Unfortunately, neither the relationship between Amenemhat and Nfrw-Pth, nor the reasons for her interment in this tomb is known. However, the incident marks another significant step forward in the increase of royal burial privileges for the queen.¹³ Nonetheless, for some reason as yet unknown, this joint burial must have been considered an unsatisfactory arrangement in the minds of some successor to Amenemhat III: Nfrw-Pth's body was transferred to her own pyramid near the Wahbi Canal.¹⁴ Neither the reason for, nor the implications of this transfer have been discovered as yet. It may, however, be connected to some ancestry cult for a later ruler.

Only two queenly tombs can be assigned a Thirteenth Dynasty date: that of Snb-hn^c.s I,¹⁵ in the satellite pyramid within the complex of King Khendjer,¹⁶ and that of Kmj-nwb¹⁷

within the courtyard of the complex of Amenemhat II, at Dahshur.¹⁸ Once again, however, the lack of standardisation within these two tombs might indicate that no resolution about the most appropriate monument for the king's consort had been formulated.

No actual tomb for a queen has been discovered for the period between these burials and that of the late Seventeenth Dynasty queens, Jn-Hꜥpj (perhaps a wife of Seqenenre),¹⁹ and Mrjt-Jmn, wife of Amenhotep I.²⁰ On the other hand, there is a reference in the Amherst Papyrus to Queen Nwb-hꜥs II having been buried beside her husband in a tomb at Dra Abu el-Naga.²¹ Such evidence would suggest that this type of burial may be the reason why we have no separate tombs for queens in the Seventeenth Dynasty.

Jn-Hꜥpj's tomb is probably the earliest of the Seventeenth Dynasty structures made for a queen that we can identify, but her tomb was so altered by the Twentieth Dynasty workers that its original design may never be discovered.²² This makes the tomb of Mrjt-Jmn so very important, since hers is the only known example from that dynasty to have been discovered with its structural elements untouched. Her tomb design is very interesting, having as it does marked

affinities with the tomb of Queen Nfrw of Dynasty XI, as well as affinities with other tombs for New Kingdom queens.²³ It thus provides a vital benchmark for the architectural history of the mortuary structures provided for the wives of the kings.

Although there appears to be a substantial body of information concerning the tombs of the queens, there is an even larger gap in our sources. The vast majority of queens are not associated with any tomb at all,²⁴ while the wives of many kings are not even known.²⁵ In addition, excavation work carried out on many of the royal funerary complexes - such as that of Amenemhat III's Dahshur pyramid - undertaken at the end of the last century has not always been adequate. Recent work on this site has shown just how much important material concerning the queens may yet be found.²⁶ The overall picture of the Middle Kingdom and later period is thus incomplete. In spite of their more recent history, these epochs are in some ways more difficult to understand than that of the Old Kingdom because of their lacunae.

In the later Seventeenth Dynasty the burial arrangements of Amenhotep I may have made provision for the king's mother, rather than his wife, to share his tomb. The sharing of the

tomb may partly explain the dispute over the ownership of AN B.²⁷ This alleged double burial for Amenhotep I and Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj - which has some affinity with Amenemhat's Hawara burial arrangements - highlights the provisions made for Queen Mrjt-Jmn at Deir el Bahri. Her tomb marks a return to the practice of individual burial arrangements for the wives of the kings - a practice that continued to be the preferred model for most of the New Kingdom.²⁸

One could conclude from these various mortuary practices that the Egyptians were working towards a satisfactory arrangement concerning the position of the queen in their spiritual cosmos. The variant forms with which they experimented suggests that a satisfactory solution had not been found prior to the Eighteenth Dynasty.

(2) Titles

From the beginning of historical records in Dynasty I the women closely associated with the king possessed at least one title.²⁹ Sm3 Nbwj was probably the earliest title,³⁰ although there is still dispute regarding its application to the queen.³¹

Other titles evident for a few of the women from Djer's

cemetery were m33t Hr c Sth (probably a forerunner of the m33t Hr Sth title familiar from Old Kingdom titulary³²) and, possibly, hts Hr³³ and im3t Hr.³⁴ Variations of these titles appeared throughout the Old Kingdom as well.

Relationship titles for queens are poorly attested for the Early Dynastic period. The earliest known example of a queen's relationship title is that of mwt nswt for Mrjt-Nt on two fragments of a seal impression recently discovered at Abydos,³⁵ but no other record has yet been found for other women. At the end of that epoch, however, Queen Nj-m3<t-H<p I's seal impressions again record the mwt nswt relationship, together with its extension, mwt nswt bitj. That these two titles do not appear to have been synonymous has been argued in an earlier chapter.³⁶

Although the titulary of the queen is incomplete for the first three dynasties, the Fourth Dynasty reveals a noticeable increase in the number and variety of titles used by the wives of the kings.³⁷

The inspiration for a number of these newly introduced titles appears to have come from titles already in use for male officials. The composition of the queen's titles is thus

very interesting, reflecting the particular position of the queen in her society, balanced as she was between the king and the nobility. Even as her mortuary monuments represented this position by their mixture of royal and private mortuary elements so, too, did her titulary. While a couple of the queen's titles were derived from references to the king or his titulary,³⁸ the greater proportion of her titles were modelled on those of male officials,³⁹ even though these titles may not always have had a direct equivalent value.⁴⁰ The queens, like the male officials, accumulated titular strings that became more complex over time. Unlike the king, however, both queens and officials displayed a less predictable ordering of their different titles. Thus, although there were differences, the links between the titularies of queens and officials were quite strong.

The increase in the numbers and types of queens' titles between the First and Sixth Dynasties seems indicative of a conscious evolution in the position of the king's consort during that period. By endowing the queen with titles some verbal acknowledgement of her pre-eminent position among females was given. In the same way titular acknowledgement of the relative importance of the king's officials was given to

them.

In the decades following the collapse of the Old Kingdom there was a period where not even one name or title of a queen survived. This is a serious deprivation, for we thereby lose the thread of continuity at a time when considerable alterations were made to the titularies of queens.

When records for queens made their reappearance in the Eleventh Dynasty they posed considerable problems. Neither the titles for Queen Nfrw-k3jt, nor Mentuhotep I's wives displayed any consistency. Like the situation regarding their tombs, the reasons for these variations among the titularies are not at all clear.⁴¹

The Eleventh Dynasty titularies were not the only group to produce anomalies, either. In the Twelfth Dynasty three important royal women who, because of their rich titularies, are thought to have been the wives of kings, lacked the title of hmt nswt. They were Jt-k3jt, Nfrt I, and Nfrw-Pth. Adding to this complexity, these women include other titles used only by queens in the Old Kingdom period but not used by other queens in the Twelfth Dynasty.⁴² This has made their relationship to the king uncertain,⁴³ so that some scholars

have been prompted to class them as princesses, rather than kings' consorts. Kuchman Sabbahy,⁴⁴ however, has suggested that each of these three women might have been married to a co-regent, dying before he could become sole ruler, and this seems a plausible solution to the problem.

The Twelfth Dynasty also saw the introduction of new titles: nbt t3wj, nbt t3wj tm, and hnmt nfr hdt. Perhaps the most important of these was the title of hnmt nfr hdt, a title that appears to have indicated a special rank among both queens and princesses.⁴⁵ Although the earliest queens associated with the phrase were the mother, and the wife of Senwosret III (both of whom carried it as a personal name ⁴⁶), it was Senwosret's other wife, Queen Nfrt-hnwt,⁴⁷ who became the first queen to have the phrase used as a title.⁴⁸ From that time on, as far as we can tell, it seems to have been held by only one queen during each reign.

The importance of hnmt nfr hdt is indicated by its customary position, immediately in front of the name of the queen. Only the title of mwt nswt is found having priority over hnmt nfr hdt in this final position. Its importance is furthermore emphasised by its being one of the two titles used in the short titularies of queens between Dynasties XIII -

XVII. What it also seems to indicate is that the kings by this time had some need to establish one wife as pre-eminent and, it follows from this, that the kings by that stage at least must have been practising polygamy. This information raises the issue of the existence of a harim, discussion of which can be found in Chapter 3.

Apart from a single inscription recorded for Hatshepsut when she carried queenly titles,⁴⁹ Mrjt-Jmn was the last queen to carry the title of hnmt nfr hdt, a title synonymous with the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period. Quirke⁵⁰ has already suggested that the Middle Kingdom falls into two halves, one prior to the reign of Senwosret III, the second beginning with the reign of Senwosret III and reaching well into the Seventeenth Dynasty. This particular title is in harmony with that proposed dichotomy.

Another significant innovation was the use of the cartouche for the royal women. This was introduced for Nfrw-Pth. Unfortunately, her relationship to none of the kings for this period is clear, so that its significance for the Twelfth Dynasty queens cannot at present be gauged.⁵¹ What is clear, however, is that this insignia became adopted by a number of queens in the Thirteenth Dynasty and, by the end of

the Seventeenth Dynasty, it had become a common feature in the writing of the queen's name.

As with a number of Middle Kingdom alterations concerning the queen, the use of the cartouche drew its inspiration from the kingly model, and seems to indicate a further revalorisation of the consort. Strangely, when we remember the original introduction of the pyramid, the use of the cartouche was not extended to the king's mother. Perhaps it signifies the relative importance of these two royal women then, and further underlines the growing prestige of the consort in this period.

The Thirteenth Dynasty saw the introduction of another important title, hmt nswt wrt, for the queen. The earliest recipient appears to have been Queen Nwb-ḥtp.tj, mother of King Sebekhotep.⁵² Vercoutter⁵³ and Spalinger⁵⁴ consider her to have been the mother of Sebekhotep II. Unfortunately, none of the queens who held this title is easily dated prior to Nwb-ḥ^c.s I, who now seems to belong to the period just after that of Neferhotep I, and the actual date when this title was introduced is as yet unknown.

The greatest number of records for the titularies of

queens during the Second Intermediate Period come from the scarabs. On these the short titularies are most consistent, usually bearing the titles hmt nswt wrt and hnmt nfr hdt. There are few examples of the longer titular strings for queens until the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty is reached, when our records for the time of Ahmose and his son are numerous. Nevertheless, when the extant longer titularies of the Second Intermediate Period are compared, they show a marked consistency. It would thus appear that the Second Intermediate Period witnessed a greater standardisation in the titulary of the queen, suggesting a more formal recognition of the aspects of queenship as perceived in that time.

This consistency did not exclude the introduction of new titles, however. Towards the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty further alterations in the queen's titulary are noticeable. Princess J^ch-ms may have been the first to use the title of hmt ntr on her ivory wand,⁵⁵ but the title became an important element in the titulary of a number of queens from the late Seventeenth Dynasty.⁵⁶

A great deal of investigation into both the office,⁵⁷ and the individual hmwt ntr has taken place over the last decade. As a result, we no longer think that the God's Wife was the

designated royal heiress,⁵⁸ and Gitton's suggestion that the office of the hmt ntr n Jmn originated with J^ch-ms-nfrr-jrj⁵⁹ may not be as likely as once thought.⁶⁰ It is also possible that more than one woman held the title (if not the office) concurrently.⁶¹

One of the queens who may have held the title of hmt ntr was J^ch-htp II. Her titulary also included the unusual titles of hnwt idbw H3w-nbwt and jtj. J^ch-ms-nfrr-jrj, who was probably J^ch-htp's daughter, had the titles of hrj-tp Rsj Mhw, itj, and drt ntr.⁶² With the exception of the last, none of these titles is frequently found in the titularies of later queens. Hrj-tp Šm^c Mhw was also introduced for J^ch-ms-nfrr-jrj.⁶³

Additional titles, such as these, is suggestive of a greater participation of the queen in the governing of the land.

While some of these newer titles might have been in response to unusual situations (such as the sudden death of a king, or his absence due to campaign commitments), not all of the titles originated from religious or administrative impulses. Some titles, and all of the epithets carried by the queens, were designed to enhance the queen's majesty. It also

would suggest a growing awareness of the importance of the queen's role. A similar effect is also to be found in the changes we encounter in the iconography of the consort between the First and Seventeenth Dynasties.

(3) Iconography

The queens do not seem to have been well represented on the public monuments of the Old Kingdom, although some statuary and fragmentary reliefs making reference to them have been found in the funerary monuments of the kings.⁶⁴ It is only in the tombs of the Fourth to the Sixth Dynasties that we encounter more substantial iconography relating to royal consorts.⁶⁵ Occasionally, there are fragments from royal temples that supplement those images.⁶⁶

Dynasties IV⁶⁷ and VI⁶⁸ provide us with a few examples of sculpture in the round, but there is insufficient material to make any meaningful comparisons.⁶⁹

In the papyri a tantalising and incomplete collection of fragments relating to Queen Hnt-k3w.s⁷⁰ might have provided us with the best range of queenly iconography as represented by her cult statues used at Abusir.⁷¹ Unfortunately, on the fragments surviving none of the statues is described, but only

mentioned in such a way as to suggest that they were different from each other,⁷² so this avenue, too, has been disappointing.

If we are to judge from the sole iconographical representation of Htp-hr-Nbtj,⁷³ and from representations of queens from the Fourth Dynasty onwards, there was no distinctive clothing or hairstyle which would have separated the iconography of the queen from that of an upper class noblewoman during the Old Kingdom. Both appeared in long or short wig, and with the fillet, and the queens' garments do not appear to have been any different from those of noblewomen.⁷⁴

Only one item, the vulture cap, which seems to have been first worn in Khafre's reign, made any distinction between queens and other women. This distinction, however, applied only to the mother of the king. The cap was not only a concrete symbol of motherhood but, more importantly, a detail taken directly from the iconography of goddesses. Enough representations of queens survive from the Old Kingdom to suggest that it was only the queen mother who was accorded this particular honour, although it later was used by the wives of some kings.

The precise point when the vulture cap became extended to consorts is not known. The earliest consort (but not mother) of the king to be shown wearing this headgear was Queen *Ḳ3t*,⁷⁵ wife of Amenemhat III. But, as with so much of the evidence regarding queens, our iconographical records prior to *Ḳ3t*'s time are few. Those that do survive from Dynasties XI and XII either feature the queen with a simple wig,⁷⁶ or with the Hathoric headdress. *Ḳ3t* was the only Twelfth Dynasty consort who is depicted with the vulture cap, although the custom was more frequently represented in the Thirteenth Dynasty.⁷⁷ Because of this limited quantity of material we are unable to form any constructive idea of the nature and variety of the queen's headdresses during the Middle Kingdom and, to date, it has been impossible to discover precisely when the custom of reserving the vulture cap for the queen mother alone died out - but the reign of Amenemhat III seems to be indicated.

The Hathoric headdress was another extension of religious iconography taken up by the queen and other royal women from Dynasty XII onward.⁷⁸ Its essential significance seems to have been the closer identification of the queen with the goddess who was the mother of Horus. The reason for this seems to have

been that the royal women were themselves the prospective mothers of the earthly Horus.⁷⁹ Then, too, the association of Hathor with the afterlife⁸⁰ may have had significance for the burial of the king's consort in proximity to the king's own tomb. Like Hathor, the royal women were essential for the regenerative function of the king.⁸¹

Troy has remarked that the Egyptians saw their relationships in terms of family rôles which were given 'a mythic perspective'.⁸² For the queens the mythic prototype was provided by the goddesses, particularly Hathor and, later, Maat. This mythic perspective is apparent in the queen's iconography and titulary, which came to be more closely identified with that of the goddess Hathor. The queen's title of nbt t3wj, which seems to have first appeared in the Middle Kingdom, was not only a feminine version of the king's title nb t3wj, but was also a title given to Hathor in CT IV, 176 g.⁸³ J^ch-^htp II's title of nbt idbw H3w-nbwt also echoes Hathor's Hwt-Hr m idbw (CT VI, 297 j), while Hathor's title of špswt nt ntrw may be the reason for the unusual title of špswt for J^ch-^htp cited in Urk. IV.21. In the Old Kingdom Mrj-R^c-^cnh.n.s II and ^cnh.s.n-Ppj were both entitled im3hwt nt ntrw, which may also reflect the epithet, špswt nt ntrw, given

to Hathor.

In the Twelfth Dynasty the relative esteem in which the queen was held appears to have been fairly high. This observation is given support from the mortuary provisions, and from the titulary of the queen, as has been mentioned above, but it is also evident in the iconography. While one needs to exercise caution in making comparisons between the early and later periods, the number of statue remains suggests that statuary depicting the queen may have been more common in the Middle Kingdom than during the Old Kingdom. In style, however, there appears to have been little alteration to the typical posture adopted by the statuary of the queen between the two periods.⁸⁴

The introduction of the sphinx into female iconography also signals some new religious rôle for the royal women.⁸⁵ Troy⁸⁶ has suggested that the sphinxes may portray the royal women as solar daughters, and this is very likely, in view of the close modelling of the stereotype of the queen upon the Hathoric prototype.⁸⁷ In the example of the sphinx of Queen Sebekneferu,⁸⁸ found by Habachi at Tell ed-Dab^ca, and in the numerous sphinxes known for Hatshepsut, we may be presented with an iconographic idea of the solar daughter (s3t R^c, in

both instances) for those two regnant queens.

The image of the queen as a sphinx was extended even further in the New Kingdom: there are representations of Hatshepsut^{-admittedly, as a ruler-} and Tjkk as sphinxes trampling down the enemies of Egypt. And, in what appears to be a clear reference to the function of the queen as solar daughter, Mwt-ndmt is depicted as a Syrian sphinx on the box chair of the dual statue of herself and Horemheb,⁸⁹ her arm uplifted in praise of the solar disc with šwtj feathers surmounting her own cartouche. Troy sees the sphinx as a 'defender of the kingship'.⁹⁰ Given the possible relationship of Mwt-ndmt as the daughter of King Ay, this double statue has especial significance for her rôle as a direct link to Horemheb's succession.

In the jewelled circlet of Princess S3t-Hwt-Hr-jwnt the two upright falcon feathers, frequently seen on the head of the king, appear at the back of this crown.⁹¹ but it was not until the Thirteenth Dynasty that the introduction of the šwtj feathers appeared on the head of a queen. The šwtj feathers for the queens could be seen both 'as a symbol of kingship',⁹² and as a symbol of the male gods, Min, Amun, Sopdu and Montu.⁹³ By the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty the combined vulture cap, šwtj feathers and platform crown appear to be the

usual headdress for the chief wife of a king, whether or not she were eventually the mother of his successor.⁹⁴

Thus, by the time of Sebekhotep III at the latest, the queen had been given the papyrus platform crown of Wadjet, the vulture cap of Mut and Nekhbet, and the upright feathers of the male gods and the kings. Unlike the iconography of the queen in the Old Kingdom, both the Middle and New Kingdom queens were depicted very differently from non-royal women. The extension of religious iconography towards these queens, suggests a corresponding increase in esteem for the royal consort in the later periods of Egyptian history.

Evidence from the papyri indicates the real extent of this esteem during the early Thirteenth Dynasty. Pap. Boulaq 18 reveals that Jj had her own household and estate, and on each occasion that she is mentioned in the ration lists, she received more than double the amount of benefit. Furthermore, she was at the head of the list of recipients, followed by Prince R^c.n.f, then three princesses and finally, the king's sisters. Thus, Pap. Boulaq 18 has preserved a model of the social hierarchy in the court during King Sebekhotep II's time, giving us a clear indication of the elevated station of the queen at that time. We have also noticed signs of this

status in the iconography for the period.

Conclusion

Between Dynasties I and XVII there are interesting stages in which one can see that the status of the queenship was subject to a gradual enlargement and reshaping. In the earliest stages the queen does not appear to have had any significant rôle as a consort,⁹⁵ although it is probable from the evidence available for Nt-ḥtp and Mrjt-Nt that sometimes a woman (probably the mother of the king) could assume the office of regent, if not ruler of Egypt. Our limited sources, however, may have presented a skewed view of the situation.

It is now clear that within each of these three major periods there were noticeable signs of change and development in the entitling of a queen. Some of the older titles were discarded, and new ones were introduced. Such changes as these appear to have reflected alterations in the position of the queen within her social milieu. Whereas it is clear that during the Old Kingdom some of the queen's titles were derived from titles held by the official class, in the Middle Kingdom it is apparent that the newer titulary for the queen was modelled on the titles of the king and the goddess Hathor,

rather than the officials. Titles such as nbt t3wj, nbt t3wj
tm and hnwt hmwt nbwt are suggestive of this.⁹⁶

When our records are sufficiently well preserved it is possible to see that all three periods had different sets of titles, and placed different emphasis on which of the titles was the more important. For none of the periods is the titular string of the queen rigid in its order but, while the Old Kingdom was the most erratic in the composition of its titular strings, the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period titular strings displayed a greater conformity within their sequences. By the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty it is possible to see that there was a greater standardisation within the titular strings of one queen and another.⁹⁷

It might thus be reasonable to say that, as reflected by the titulary, iconography, and mortuary evidence, the status of the queen was not static between Dynasties I - XVII. Indeed, it was not until the Nineteenth Dynasty that a predictable model for the interment of the king's consort was adopted.

From the early Thirteenth and late Seventeenth Dynasties there are also a few records indicative of the economic

resources⁹⁸ and administrative participation of the queen in the affairs of Egypt.⁹⁹ Gitton¹⁰⁰ has suggested that Queen Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj could have played an even more active rôle than is suggested by King Ahmose's consultation with this queen as recorded on CG 34002, the relief from Maasara (Urk. IV.25), and the Donation Stele.¹⁰¹ For Queen Jḥ-ḥtp II there is evidence not only of the queen as female sovereign (presumably regent), but of also directing, if not leading, military forces.¹⁰² In the light of Jḥ-ḥtp's military participation Hatshepsut's later campaigns may not have set the precedent that is usually supposed.

There would also appear to have been a rôle for the king's consort as regent from time to time. While the evidence for Mrjt-Nt is ambiguous, there is no doubt that she held a pre-eminent position in the kingdom.¹⁰³ Mrj-Rḥ-ḥnh.n.s II, Jḥ-ḥtp II, Jḥ-ms-nfrt-jrj, Hatshepsut and Twosret also held regencies for kings. We have little evidence for the reality of powers held by these regents at such times, but we do know that such queens could send out mining expeditions,¹⁰⁴ erect monuments (as is well known for both Hatshepsut and Twosret during their regencies), and conduct military excursions.¹⁰⁵ It seems significant that, of the queens for

whom we do have unequivocal evidence, the queen's regency was a major stepping-stone to ultimate control of the kingdom.

It is thus possible to detect a number of patterns for each of the several epochs covered by this study. However, none of our material is as complete as we would like, so the patterns outlined above can only offer a tentative view of the status of the queen. What is clear is that, throughout the pharaonic period, there was a demonstrable progression in the religious esteem, the administrative participation, economic standing and general social position of the queens. This cumulative process resulted in a more prominent and public rôle for the king's wife, and her representations in the archaeological and literary material frequently link her with aspects of various goddesses. While the earlier records do not indicate that the wife of the king was always held in high esteem, by the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty the queen had attained a position second only to that of the king. Her mortuary monuments continued the process of elaboration until they were almost as beautiful as those of the king,¹⁰⁶ her titulary drew inspiration from that of the king, and her iconography increasingly included symbols directly taken from images of the goddesses,¹⁰⁷ the consort J_h-ms-nfrt-jrj

actually attaining the status of a goddess herself.¹⁰⁸