

Ancient Egyptian kings under Divine Protection; Reflection in Art

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Abstract

This paper will study the protection gesture of the ancient Egyptian kings represented before different gods in statuary and scenes of those kings and gods together. The ancient Egyptian kings were protected from behind by different gods and goddesses like Horus, Amun, Hathor, Nekhbet, Seth, Meretseger, Anubis, etc. The gods were protecting the kings from the back in different ways. Some gods were stretching their wings around the kings' heads and crown or around the thrones' backrest like god Horus and goddess Nekhbet. Other gods protecting the kings by putting their hands on the kings' shoulders like Amun in his human form. Sometimes the kings were depicting stands under the gods' chins in their animal form such as Amun as a ram, Hathor as a cow, Anubis as a jackal and Seth as a jackal or dog. The connection between the king and the gods assures that he plays a role of cosmic and political importance and was regarded as one of the guarantors of kingship, aiming to prove their ancestry from one of the gods as a sign of kingship. This study will examine through different scenes from temples and tombs and from different statues exhibited in museums from the Old Kingdom till the Late Period (from the 3rd Dynasty till the 30th Dynasty).

Introduction

The king had a central role in ancient Egyptian society, for he was perceived as a divine ruler. This divinity referred, among other things, to the ritual status of the king as the sole mediator between gods and men and his responsibility for the maintenance of the cosmic order, which the Egyptians called mAat. It has been argued that the king, by being ritually, his mythical counterpart, ensured that the primeval pattern of creation was reproduced to uphold and renew the world. This cosmology of Egyptian kingship drew from divine genealogy. Traditionally (from 2450 B.C. onward), this meant that the king was both the god Horus and the son of Re, the former identifying the king with Horus, son and heir of Egypt's mythical ruler, Osiris, and the latter representing his position within the divine hierarchy as the creator's son (Assmann 1991. 24ff).

The new king, acting as Horus, proves his godly ancestry as, he will assure the Osirian theology. Art was one of the ways that enabled the kings to insure their royal descendancy from the first king who ruled as the representative of Horus on earth. The association between the kings and the deities was regarded as one of the guarantors of kingship, aiming to prove their ancestry from one of the gods as a sign of kingship (Gregory 2014, 63-6).

Royal iconography, from the Old Kingdom till the Late Period, is rich with many examples depicting the king with different gods in a protection posture, especially in the intimate gesture of embracing from the back which signifies their closeness and association with the divinities since it is regarded as a sign of intimacy and spiritual union, as they are depicted stands before the gods or under their protection (Hammad & Aly 2017, 1).

In ancient Egypt, there are different gods that are responsible for the protection of kings, like god Horus, Amun, Hathor, Nekhbet, etc. Moreover, through protecting, the eternal being, the divine essence and the scent of life residing in the gods are all transformed to the king (Mayassis 1964, 418-419) which raises him to the divine rank (Seidel 1996, 262).

Aims of the study

- Explaining the different religious significances achieved through the protection gesture of the gods to kings.
- The gods who were responsible for protection in ancient Egypt.
- Different ways of kings represented in front of the gods or under the protection of gods

Protection in Ancient Egyptian Language

There are different words in ancient Egyptian language means protection

-  *mkw.t* (Wb2, 160.22-161.4).
-  *nh.t* (Wb 2, 281.10-11),.
-  *nd.w* (Wb 2, 375.9).
-  *hw* (Wb 3, 246.1).
-  *h3* (Wb 3, 13.2),  *hcd* (Wb 3, 36.10) which means “to spread out (wings protectively)” that refers to the gods who protect the kings by using their wings like Horus and Nekhbet.
-  *ssr.w* means “protective deities” (Wb 4, 547.1).

The Representation of kings before different deities

Representation of kings before God Horus

Horus is one of the most powerful of the many ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses and is often considered the ancient Egyptian patron deity. He is widely regarded as the son of Isis and Osiris, although there are some differences in his origin story depending on which part of Egypt, he lived in. He is at constant battle with his uncle Seth, who is the god of chaos. Eventually Horus defeats Seth. This triumph is said to be symbolic of the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt. Horus is the god of kingship, the sun, and the sky. Kings were often considered the living manifestation of the god Horus and often adopted an additional name that identified the king with the god of kings. This name was usually the most important of the king’s many names.

Firstly: Statues of Kings with Horus

Statue of king Khafre with God Horus(Fig.1)

- From the 4th Dynasty, at the Egyptian Museum at Cairo, JE10062
- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

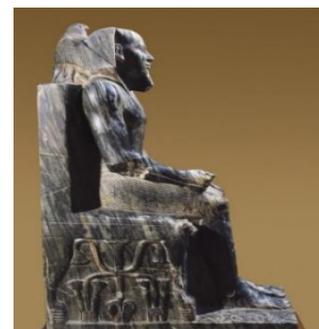


Fig. 1

Description: The king is represented seated on a throne wearing the *nms* headdress, surmounted by the uraeus, the *šndit* kilt and the ceremonial beard. He is protected by the god Horus, perched at the back of his neck, represented as a falcon spreads his wings around the king's head in a gesture of protection.

Statue of King Neferefre with Horus(Fig.2)

- From the 5th Dynasty at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, JE 98171.
- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

Description: It shows the king sitting on a throne (missing). The king wears a short wig. At his forehead there is now a hole for holding an Uraeus, which is lost today. On his neck is sitting a falcon spreading its wings over the back of the king's head.

In both crawls it is holding a *šn* ring (Miroslav 2018, fig5).

Cult Statuette of King Pepi I with Horus(Fig.3)

- From the 6th Dynasty at the Brooklyn Museum, 29.120.
- Source :(<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3447>)(Last accessed 20/05/2022).

Description: the king is seated on a throne, holding the signs of the rule. Behind the king stands the idol Horus in majesty as

a falcon and is in a position of protection for the king.

Statue of Ramsess II with Horus(Fig.4)

- From the 19th Dynasty at the Egyptian Museum at Cairo, JE 46735.
- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

Description: This statue represents king Ramesses II as a child, sitting in front of the Levantine sun god Hauron, who is in the shape of a hawk protects the king. Ramesses II is presented in the typical manner for an Egyptian child: naked, his finger to his mouth, with a large side-lock of youth hanging from the right side of his head. Ramesses II seems to have been fond of representing his name in the form of rebus (Habachi 1969, 38). Horon has a strong connection with the area of Giza, where a chapel had been constructed. The connection of this area's gods with the kings as princes adds to the piece's symbolism.

Statue of Ramses II with Re-Horakhty(Fig.5)

- From the 19th Dynasty, at the British museum, EA 1006.
- Source:(https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA1006 (Last accessed 12/04/2022).

Description: A statue depicts the falcon god Ra-Horakhty on a pedestal protecting an oval deeply incised cartouche that encloses the name of the king Rameses II. An incised inscription on the front of the pedestal names the god Ra-Horakhty, which means "Ra-Horus of the two horizons" symbolizes the union between the deities Ra and Horus. One of Ancient Egypt's most powerful solar deities, the creator god Ra represented the midday sun at its highest. Horus symbolized royalty, and the king was a manifestation of the god during his reign. Both gods could be portrayed as falcons.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

Statue of Rameses VI with Horus(Fig.6)

- From the 20th Dynasty, at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo museum, CG 42152.
- Source:(<https://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/cachette/ck302>Grey granite (Last accessed 12/04/2022)).

Description: This statue, which once stood in the temple of Amun at Karnak, shows Ramses VI standing, grasping the hair of a Libyan prisoner in his left hand, and an axe in his right hand. Ramses is protected by a now headless figure of Horus as a falcon, spreading its wings over the back of the king's crown.



Fig. 6

Statues of king Nectanebu II with Horus

Nectanebu II utilised cryptography on his cult statues that were found in Memphis and Heliopolis. These can now be found in different Museums. These statues show the king as a small figure standing between the claws of the falcon god Horus. This corresponds to the fact that Nectanebu II had a royal cult that included priests who served his statues that bore the name of *Nht-hr-hbyt-p3-bik*, "Nectanebu the falcon" (Beeson,1972, 117, fig.46; Lesuer, 2012, 37,40). Nectanebus' cult statues show that his name consists of three elements: The falcon has the phonetic value *hr* and embodied the protection and legitimacy for the king at the same time, the sword that is in his left hand called *nht*, "power", and in his right hand *hb(t)* sign (Arnold, 1995, 45; Aldred, 1999, 237, fig. 196). The royal cult statues of Nectanebu "the falcon", or "*p3-bik*", were spread in the main temples of Egypt and the king dedicated priesthoods for them. Nectanebu II had thus succeeded in making himself a god through the cult of his statues and cryptographic cartouches; therefore, he gained for himself protection forever (Mohamed, 2018,119).

The Metropolitan statue(Fig.7)

- From the 30th Dynasty, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, No. 34.2.1.
- Source: (Beeson,1972 , fig.46)

Description: In this statue, Horus is represented as a fearsome bird of prey, with sharp eyes and dangerous talon. His double crown, symbolizing dominion over Upper and Lower Egypt, is graced with the uraeus, another divine protector of the ruler. The small figure of Nectanebu stands between the great talons, wearing a *nms* headcloth and uraeus." The composition may be read as a rebus of the Nectanebu's Egyptian name, Nakhthorheb: *nht*, the sword held in the king's left hand; *hr*, the falcon; and *hb(t)*, the festival sign in the king's right hand. The last sign probably



Fig. 7

refers to the city of Hebyt, which was the site of the great temple constructed by Nectanebu II for Isis, mother of Horus (Ladynin, 2013,6-7). The statue follows the late Dynastic period tradition of depicting animal images in hard stone with remarkably naturalistic details in head and feet, while the body and wings are simplified renderings of the bird's natural form (Arnold, 1999, 124).

The Louvre Museum statue(Fig.8)

- From the 30th Dynasty, at Louvre Museum, Paris. No. E III52
- Source:(<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010005912> (Last accessed 10/04/2022))

Description: God Horus depicted as a falcon; protects the praying figure of Nectanebu II. The king stands between the paws of the falcon in a prayer form wearing the *Nms* headdress and a long kilt, with his palms resting flat against his thighs and his legs together.



Fig. 8

The Munich statue(Fig.9)

- From the 30th Dynasty, at the Museum of Egyptian Art, Munich, Germany, ÄS 7152.
- Source:(<https://www.worldhistory.org/image/3429/horus--nectanebo-ii/>)(Last accessed 10/04/2022)

Description: Like the other statues which represents the divine power of kingship. The God Horus depicted as a falcon whose head is lost, protects the praying figure of Nectanebu II.



Fig. 9

The Cairo statues(Fig.10)

- From the 30th Dynasty, at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 33262.
- Source :(<https://museummetamorphosis.wordpress.com/2018/04/23/egypts-sunken-cities/>) (Last accessed 10/04/2022).

Description: The remarkable statue shows the divine falcon, Horus, protecting Nectanebu II. The king depicted between the bird's legs is wearing a long kilt, with his palms resting flat against his thighs and his legs together- a position of prayer. Although there is no inscription to confirm the name of the king, it is highly likely that the statue can be identified as Nectanebu II, because similar examples exist with his name which mentioned before.



Fig. 10

Secondly: Scenes of Kings with God Horus**I. Temples' scenes****King Akhenaten with God Horus(Fig.11)**

Location: Aten temple at Karnak talatat.

Source: (Gohary, 1992, pl.I).

Description: The king Akhenaten in Jubilee attire and seated on throne decorated with a falcon Horus with the sun disk as a backrest of the throne and stretch his wings around the king in a position of protection for the king. His feet rest on a *hb* ("festival") hieroglyph.



Fig. 11

King Ramses III with God Horus(Fig.12)

Location: Temple of Madient Habu, Luxor

Source: (Adolf 1894, 79).

Description: King Ramses III playing Senet with one of his wives. The king is depicted seated on a throne *hprš* crown and uraus. Behind the king stands the falcon god Horus as a backrest with the sun disk upon his head and stretch his wings around the king in a position of protection.

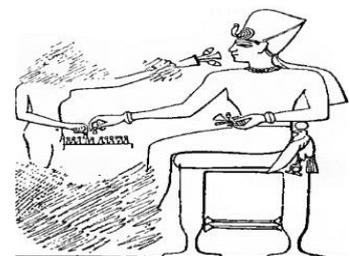


Fig. 12

II. Private tombs' scenes**Scene of Thutmosis III with Horus(Fig.13)**

Location: Tomb of *hnsu*, TT31, Thebes.

Source:(https://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/nobles/khonsou31/e_khonsou31_03.htm(last accessed 01/04/2022)).

Description: scene represents pylon of a temple, between which is the entrance, carry the cartouches of Thutmosis III and the entry itself is named "Beautiful is his appearing". The Temple depicted may be the temple of Montu. At the bottom of the left pylon is an image of the hawk protecting the small figure of the king. This is presumably on a perch and could

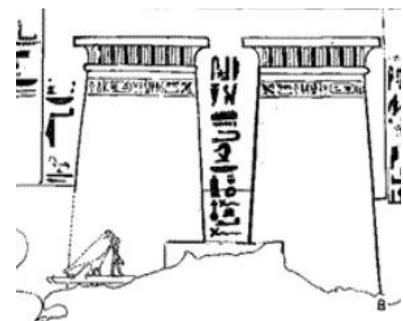


Fig. 13

have been carried at the of the small procession. The king is depicted under the protection of Horus in a prayer position wearing the *Nms* headdress and the *šndt* kilt (Heffernan, 2010, 17).

Scene of Amenhotep III with Horus(Fig.14)

Location: Tomb of Kheruef, TT192, west portico.

Source:(https://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/nobles/kheruef_kherouef_04.htm) (Last accessed 01/04/2022).

Description: The king is seated on a cuboid seat, on his 3rd Jubilee, at waist level, a protective Horus falcon with the expanded wings. This falcon is a reminder that the king is the god Horus's successor.

Scene of Ramses III with Horus(Fig.15)

Location: Tomb of Khaemwaset (QV 44), Valley of the queens, Thebes.



Fig. 14

Source:(<http://www.artofcounting.com/2012/09/16/variable-of-the-day-ancient-egypt-falcon-on-headgear/>)(Last accessed 19/04/2022).

Description: scene for the king Ramses III wearing *h3t* headdress with falcon Hours shown wrapped around the back of the head, as seen here, but sometimes the bird–representative of the god Horus–perches atop the crown instead. There is another scene with the king wearing the *hprš* crown with Horus at the back of the crown.



Fig. 15

The Protection of Amun

Amun as a ram

Statue of Amonhotep III with Amun(Fig.16)

- Amenhotep III statue from the 18th Dynasty, at Turin Museum, Italy, Inv. no.: Cat. 836.
- Source:(https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_836) (Last accessed 12/03/2022))

Description: A figure of Amenhotep III in an Osirian form, stands under the chin and between the front legs of the ram representing the sun god Amun. There is a hole in the top of the ram's head for the insertion of a solar disc and a metal Uraeus. This statue was found in the temple of Mut in Karnak, but it may have originally stood in Soleb in Nubia (present-day Sudan), as it may have been moved to Karnak during the 25th Dynasty. (Galvano 1938, 31, fig. 35).



Fig. 16

Statue of Rameses II with Amun(Fig.17)

- Rameses II statue from the 19th Dynasty, at Karnak Temple
- Source:(https://madainproject.com/precinct_of_amun_re#pylons) (Last accessed 12/03/2022)).

Description: The king is stands in an Osirian form, under the chin and between the front legs of the ram god Amun as a symbol of protection.

Statues of King Tahrqa with God Amun

Statue I (Fig.18)



Fig. 17

- Taharqa statue from the 25th Dynasty, at the British Museum, EA 1779
- Source: (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA1779) (last accessed 17/04/2022).

Description: The designer showed the ram setting on all its legs with king Taharqa between its front legs and under its chin as a symbol for protection (as they believed). The king is wearing the *nms* headdress with uraus and the *šndt* kilt. This statue emphasizes the divine nature of the king, enjoying the blessing and protection of Amun in his ram form. The Nubian connection with Amun in his ram form goes back to the colonial occupation of Nubia during the early New Kingdom (Myśliwiec 1988,33-40).



Fig. 18

Statue II(Fig.19)

- Taharqa statue at the temple of Mut at Karnak.
- Source: (<https://www.arce.org/project/mut-temple>) (Last accessed 12/04/2022)

Description: The unscribed head of a large pink granite ram with the figure of a king below its chin, clearly Kushite in style. Several years later, the companion ram was found north of the west porch, its head missing, but its base preserving Taharqa's cartouches.



Fig. 19

God Amun as a complete human form

Statues of Amenhotep III and Amun

Statue I (Fig.20)

- Amenhotep III statue from the 18th Dynasty, at Luxor Museum.
- Source: (<https://www.thenotsoinnocentsabroad.com/blog/tag/amenhotep+iii>) (Last accessed 12/04/2022).

Description: This sculpture depicts the kneeling figure of king Amenhotep III, holding a pair of *nhh*, wearing *hprš* crown with uraus on the forehead and he is dressed a tunic. The king is kneeling during his coronation ceremony by the god Amun-Ra, whose now-missing hand would have originally rested upon Amenhotep's crown.



Fig. 20

Statue II(Fig.21)

- From 18th Dynasty, at The Egyptian National Museum, Cairo.
- Source: ([https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Egyptian-18th-Dynasty/424580/Amun-protecting-Amenhotep-III-\(1382-44-BC\)-from-the-Temple-of-Amun,-Karnak-\(limestone\).html](https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/Egyptian-18th-Dynasty/424580/Amun-protecting-Amenhotep-III-(1382-44-BC)-from-the-Temple-of-Amun,-Karnak-(limestone).html)) (Last accessed 11/03/2022).

Description: The statuary group represents the god Amun standing, with his hands resting as a sign of protection on the shoulders of Amenhotep III, who is standing in front of him and who is represented on a much smaller scale



Fig. 21

Statue of Tutankhamun and Amun(Fig.22)

- From 18th Dynasty, at Louvre Museum. Paris. inv. E 11609.
- Source:(<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010009969>) (Last accessed 10/04/2022).

Description: The statuary group represents God Amun, seated on a cubic throne, with his hands resting as a sign of protection on the shoulders of Tutankhamun, who is standing in front of him on a much smaller scale with his arms outstretched in the attitude of prayer. God Amun wears his traditional costumes. His body is of ideal proportions, with square shoulders and: “powerful legs, which help to accentuate the impression of strength and stability”. The king is dressed in the “costume of the priests of Amun”. The “symbolism” of the statue lies in the attitude that the god manifests to the sovereign: he, in fact, gives him “the investiture, because the divine gesture is both of protection and presentation”. (Eaton-Krauss, 1988, 11).



Fig. 22

Statue of Hormoheb and Amun(Fig.23)

- Hormoheb statue from the 18th Dynasty, at Luxor Museum
- Source:(http://www.ancientegypt.co.uk/luxor_museum/pages/horemheb,%20before%20amun%202.htm) (Last accessed 19/04/2022)

Description: A diminutive statue of king Horemheb standing in front of God Amun. God Amun, seated on a cubic throne, with his hands resting as a sign of protection on the shoulders of Hormoheb, who is standing in front of him on a much smaller scale with his left leg forward. Amun is wearing the characteristic costumes. His body is also in this statue of ideal proportions to accentuate the impression of strength and stability”. The king is wearing the *Nms* head-dress, Uraeus on his forehead and the false beard. He is holding a *hkb* against his chest - the left hand is holding a scroll.



Fig. 23

Statue of Ramses II and Amun(Fig.24)

- Ramses II statue from the 19th Dynasty, at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 37384.
- Source:(<https://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/cache/ck288>) (Last accessed 12/04/2022).

Description: Group statue of God Amun who is seated on a throne protecting king Ramesses II who is kneeling in front of him on the same size. God Amun, seated on a cubic throne.



Fig. 24

The protection of goddess Hathor

Firstly: Statues of kings with Hathor

I. Freestanding statues

Thutmosis III with Hathor(Fig.25)

- From the 18th Dynasty at the Egyptian Museum. Cairo, JE 38574.
- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

Description: This chapel was originally cut and dedicated to Hathor by Thutmosis III, and it has the royal cartouche of his son and successor Amenhotep II. Goddess Hathor, the patron of the necropolis of the west. She is represented as a cow coming from the cliffs of the western mountain is rendered by depicting the papyrus on the head of the cow.



Fig. 25

Thutmosis III places himself under her protection, wearing the *nms* headdress and the *šndt* kilt with his arms outstretched in the attitude of prayer (Rashed & Bdr El Din 2018, fig.5).

II. Statues inside private tombs and temples.

Statue of king with goddess Hathor(Fig.26)

Location: Tomb TT2 of *ḥꜥ pꜣ nḥt* at Thebes

Source: (فاطمة محسن، ٢٠١٩، شكل ٢٢)

Description: A prominent sculpture of three statues with their heads broken, in the middle is the head of the cow Hathor and protects a small king sitting under her head, perhaps King Amenhotep I or King Rameses II, on the right the god Ra and on the left the god Osiris. It is clear from the view that the king's desire to be with the holy gods, as the protection of the goddess Hathor in the next world, and the god Ra, the holy father and protector of the king, and the god Osiris, the renewer of life on earth the guarantor of resurrection and immortality in the other world. (فاطمة محسن، ٢٠١٩، ص.٤٧)



Fig. 26

Statue of King Amenhotep I with goddess Hathor(Fig.27)

Location: Tomb TT4, of Qn, at Thebes

Source: (فاطمة محسن، ٢٠١٩، شكل ٢٤)

Description: The head of the cow Hathor appears in a prominent inscription from the wall. Above her head the sun disc between her horns and topped by the two feathers. Below her head, King Amenhotep I stand protecting her in a prominent inscription as well. On both sides of the king stand two queens coloured in yellow on the left of the king his mother Queen Ahmose-Nefertari, and on his right his sister and his wife Queen Merit Amun. Only King Amenhotep is left with his torso, wearing the *šndt*. His head and the head of the goddess Hathor were broken (Černý 1927, p.174).



Fig. 27

Statue of king Ramssess II with Hathor(Fig.28)

- Location: The Tomb of Netcherouymes, Saqqara Necropolis.
- Memphis, 19th Dynasty
- Source: (http://www.egyptologyforum.org/MOA/MoA_Newsletter_1_English.pdf (Last accessed 12/04/2022).

Description: Statue of the goddess Hathor in the form of a cow, with the sun disk between the two horns above her head, protecting the king Ramssess II, from the Tomb of Netcherouymes, high official of during the reign of Ramesses II. The king is represents wearing the *Nms* headdress and the *šndt* kilt, and he is standing in a prayer position. There is similar scene of Ramses II at the back wall of the sanctuary of Nefertari temple at Abu Simbel. A nich in which Hathor coming out of the mountain and under its head stand the king in a prayer form (https://madainproject.com/abu_simbel_small_temple).

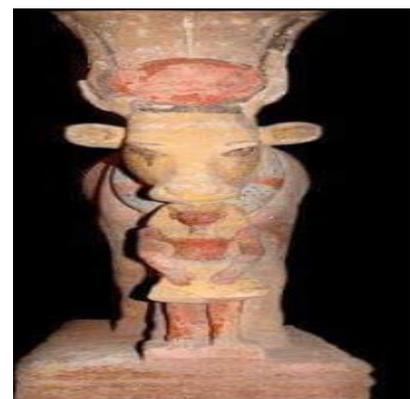


Fig. 28

Secondly: Scenes of Kings with goddess Hathor.

I. Private tomb scenes

The king was represented protected by the deities in several scenes in the tombs in ancient Egypt specially at Thebes and Saqqara.

Scenes of King Amenhotep I with Hathor

Scene I (Fig.29)

Location: tomb of *p3 šd*, TT326, Deir El Madeina, Thebes. (Fig.30)

Source: (Bruyère 1924, Pl. xiii [b]).

Description: Goddess Hathor represents in a papyrus boat, and the king stands under her chin in a protection position. The king stands with the left leg. There is a similar scene on a block for king Ramses II discovered at Deir El Madina and now in the Louvre Museum (Paris, France)

(<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/c1010006771>

(Last accessed 12/04/2022).

Scenes of King Ramses II with Hathor (Fig.30)

Location: Tomb of *t3y*, TT23, of Sheikh Abd El-Qurna (El-Khokha, Luxor)

Source: (Ivanov 2018, fig.7)

Description: Here goddess Hathor go out from the western mountain, and the king Ramses II stands under her chin. His skin is black, the colour of the fertile soil, a symbol of rebirth. In front of him, on a pedestal, is an open lotus flower and a libation vessel. (Muhammed 1966, 240.

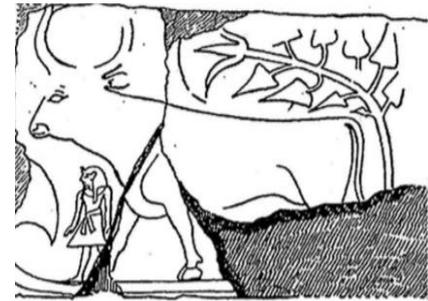


Fig. 29



Fig. 30

Temples' scenes

Scene of Queen Hatshepsut and goddess Hathor (Fig.31)

Location: The outer sanctuary of Hathor's shrine, Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir Al-Bahari.

Source: (Christian 2002, 321).

Description: The scene is in a bad condition. Hathor is depicted here in her animal form as a cow standing on a boat and stepping out a shrine. Queen Hatshepsut is represented standing under the neck of the cow with the left leg forward and wearing the *šndt* royal kilt (Noblecourt, 2002, 321).

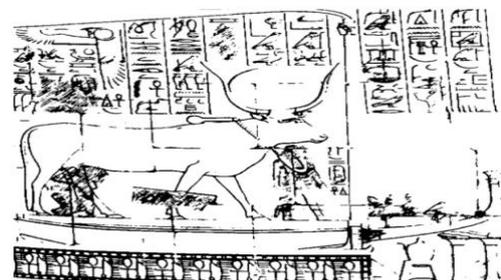


Fig. 31

The protection of goddess Nekhbet

Scenes of Amenhotep I with goddess Nekhbet (Fig.32)

Location: Block in the Open-Air Museum in Karnak.

Source: (Monika 2008, Pl.I).

Description: The block represented a vulture at the back of the Atef crown. The other example from the same reign comes from the alabaster bark shrine of Amenhotep I, also in the Open-Air Museum at Karnak. The king performs the ceremony *hwt bħsw*, dressed in a triangular, feathered kilt and a feathered shirt with one strap. One more example featuring Amenhotep I is preserved on one of the blocks housed in the southern block yard of the temple of Karnak (Monika 2008, 1018). The vulture which represents goddess Nekhbet stretch its wings around the neck of the king as a symbol of protection.



Fig. 32

Scene of Hatshepsut with goddess Nekhbet (Fig.33)

The longest series of Atefs with birds comes from the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. There are altogether 12 examples. They adorn heads of both Tuthmosis II (changed from those of the queen) and Tuthmosis III. The ritual acts performed by both kings are manifold: adoring gods, consecrating offerings, offering incense, running with a bird and staves, running with an oar, driving calves, striking a ball, etc. The royal figure can be clad in a kilt, a *šndt* or a feathered dress. In Brussels there is a fragment of a relief showing the king (Hatshepsut recurved as Tuthmosis II) with the atef crown with a vulture, coming probably also from Deir el-Bahari. So, this would be the thirteen example from this temple.



Fig. 33

Location: Hathor's chapel, Hatshepsut Temple.

Source: (Monika 2008, pl. 3).

Description: Hatshepsut (changed into Tuthmosis II) entering a chapel. Here the queen wearing the atef crown with a vulture at the back of the queen's neck stretches its wings in a protection position.

Scenes of Thutmoses III with goddess Nekhbet(Fig.34)

The next series of examples come from temples built in the period of the solitary rule of Tuthmosis III. Examples come from the Akhmenu and the Djoser-akhet temple of Tuthmosis III at Deir el-Bahari. There exist two fragmentary (one in the Nicholson Museum, Sydney, and the second one in the Luxor Museum) and two complete examples of this crown (Monika 2008, 1020) .



Fig. 34

Location: Akhmenu, "heret ib" hall, pillar 9 East.

Source: (Monika 2008, pl 7).

Description: The king is depicted wearing the atef crown with the royal cobra at the forehead, and a vulture which spread its wings around the neck of the king as a symbol of protection. there is a similar scene of the king at Hathor's chapel at Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el Bahari (Monika 2008, pls. 2, 2a).

Scene of Amenhotep III with goddess Nekhbet(Fig.35)

Location: Tomb of Kheruef, TT192, west portico, North of doorway, Southernmost scene.

Source: (The Epigraphic Survey 1990 102,198, pl.47)

Description: Amenhotep III in Jubilee attire and seated on throne, accompanied with Hathor and queen Tiye. The king is seated on a cuboid throne, decorated with a vulture with outstretched wings, which enclose him around his waist. The bird probably represents the goddess Nekhbet, who thus spreads her protective wings around him, as she does in sacred buildings. His feet rest on a *hb* ("festival") hieroglyph.

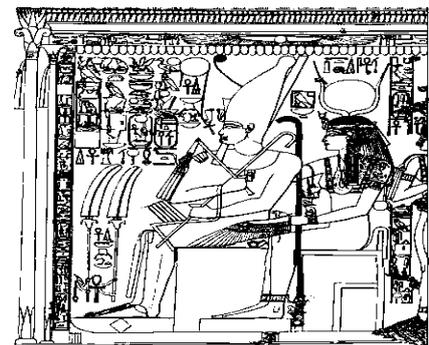


Fig. 35

The protection of goddess Meretseger

Meretseger was a Theban cobra-goddess in ancient Egyptian religion in charge with guarding and protecting the vast Theban Necropolis on the west bank of the Nile, in front of Thebes and especially the heavily guarded Valley of the Kings. Her cult was typical of the New Kingdom.

Statue of king Amenhotep II and Meretseger(Fig.36)

- From the 18th Dynasty at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 39394.

- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

Description: Even more illustrative of the royal and divine interactions were the group statues, including such esoteric ones as that of Amenhotep II before the cobra-goddess Meretseger, whose body and head surround the frontal image of the ruler. The king Amenhotep II is standing with his left leg striding forward. Each foot stands on the image of the nine bows. Both arms reach down and are held against his short kilt, which is decorated with a belt, in a prayer position. Behind Amenhotep is the goddess Meretseger, goddess of the necropolis, represented in the shape of a cobra. Her head is surmounted by a sun-disc and cow's horns since she was associated with Hathor as a patroness of the west, she is standing behind the king to protect him.



Fig. 36

The protection of God Seth

Statue of king Seti I with God Seth(Fig.37)

- From the 19th Dynasty at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. CG 42993.

- Source: Photo was taken by the researcher.

Description: A detail of a statue of the god Seth depicts as a protector of King Menmaatre Seti I. The name 'Seti' means "of Set", which indicates that he was consecrated to the god Seth. The god set depicted here as a jackal or dog. The king stands under the chin of the jackal, as a symbol of protection, in a prayer position.



Fig. 37

The protection of God Anubis

The statue of Ramses II with Anubis(Fig.38)

- From the 19th Dynasty at Ramesseum temple- Luxor

- Source : (<https://amntenofre.tumblr.com/post/184467562626/anubis-sphinx-protecting-king-ramses-ii-one-of>) (Last accessed 19/04/2022).

Description: Anubis sphinx protecting King Ramses II; one of the statues of the God Anubis in his form of sacred jackal crouching upon a shrine flanking the northern processional way of the Ramesseum temple. Under the chin of the jackal stands a royal statue of king Ramses II. The king is stands in an Osirian form.



Fig. 38

Conclusion

The role of the king and his relationship with deities was known in the ancient Egyptian religion, where the king stood as a mediator between the gods and humans, but he is also their only interlocutor, and this mediation works to stabilize the founding elements of creation to maintain this balance, and it is noted that the task for which the king was tested is ritual work, and the offerings are an important complement to the rituals, as if they are a restoration of vitality.

The ruling king was seen as a sacred person higher than the status of humans, and his manifestation was either a king, or an embodiment of the body of the god Ra on earth, as he sat on the same throne of the two lands on which the god Osiris and his son god Horus sat and were ruling him, so it is logical to see the divine personality of the king, and it is certain that thanks to him the satisfaction of the deities is achieved. And this is evident through the formula of offering offerings *htp di nsw*, through which the owner of the cemetery wishes that the king receives gifts and present them to the deities. The intercession of the king in the netherworld was necessary for the owner of the tomb, as the king was one of the gods, and he was called “the good god” during his life, and he becomes “the great god” after his death. And this is the reason why the kings were depicted under the protection of gods specially (Horus and Hathor) inside the private tombs.

The king was represented protected by the deities in several scenes in the private tombs of Thebes and Saqqara, and it seems that the choice of deities is due to the local worship and beliefs associated with the king

Table 1: The Collected Examples For the Presentations of Kings Under Protection of Gods in Scenes and Statuary

No.	Statue/Scene	Date	Location	The God/ his-her shape	Significance of Protection gesture	Position of God/ Size of God	Position of king/ Size of king
1.	Statue of Khafre	Old Kingdom, 4 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum at Cairo, JE10062	Horus - Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the neck-small size	Infront of the god-big size
2.	Statue of Neferefre	Old Kingdom, 5 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum in Cairo, JE 98171.	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the neck-small size	Infront of the god-big size
3.	Cult Statuette of Pepi I	Old Kingdom, 6 th Dynasty	Brooklyn Museum, 29.120.	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the neck-small size	Infront of the god-big size
4.	Statue of Ramsess II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum at Cairo, JE 46735.	Horun-Falcon	Horoun has a strong connection with Giza.The connection of this area's gods with the kings as princes adds to the piece's symbolism.	Back of the king-Bigger than the king	Infront of the god (under falcon's chin)-small size
5.	Statue of Ramses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	British museum, EA 1006	Re-Horakhty-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the king's name-Bigger than the king's name	Infront of the god (under falcon's chin)-small size
6.	Statue of Rameses VI	New Kingdom, 20 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum, Cairo Museum, CG 42152	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the neck-small size	Infront of the god-big size
7.	Statue of NectanebuII	Late period,	Metropolitan Museum of Art	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification	Back of the king-	Infront of the god

		30 th Dynasty.	under No. 34.2.1.		of Horus on earth	bigger than the king	(between falcon's paws)-small size
8.	Statue of NectanebuII	Late period, 30 th Dynasty.	Louvre Museum. No. E III52	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the king-bigger than the king	Infront of the god (between falcon's paws)-small size
9.	Statue of NectanebuII	Late period, 30 th Dynasty.	Museum of Egyptian Art, Munich, ÄS 7152.	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the king-bigger than the king	Infront of the god (between falcon's paws)-small size
10.	Statue of NectanebuII	Late period, 30 th Dynasty.	Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 33262.	Horus-Falcon	The king is Personification of Horus on earth	Back of the king-bigger than the king	Between falcon's paws-small size
11.	Scene of Akhenaten	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Aten temple at Karnak Talatat.	Horus-Falcon	The king is manifestation of Horus on earth	Backrest of king's throne-small size	Infront of the god - big size
12.	Scene of Rameses III	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Temple of Madient Habu, Luxor	Horus-Falcon	The king is manifestation of Horus on earth	Backrest of king's throne-small size	Infront of the god - big size
13.	Scene of Thutmosis III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Tomb of <i>hmsw</i> , TT31, Thebes.	Horus-Falcon	The king is manifestation of Horus on earth	Back of the king-bigger than the king	under the falcon's chin – small size
14.	Scene of Amenhotep III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Tomb of Kheruef, TT192, Thebes	Horus-Falcon	The king is manifestation of Horus on earth	Back of the crown-small size	Infront of the god - big size
15.	Scene of Ramses III	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Tomb of Khaemwaset (QV 44), Thebes.	Horus-Falcon	The king is manifestation of Horus on earth	Backrest of king's throne-small size	Infront of the god - big size
16.	Statue of Amenhotep III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Turin Museum, Italy, Inv. no.: Cat. 836.	Amun-Ram	Father-son relationship between Amun and king-Regeneration and fertility of king.	Back of the king-big size	under the ram's chin - small size
17.	Statue of Ramses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Karnak Temple	Amun-Ram	Father-son relationship between Amun and king-Regeneration and fertility of king.	Back of the king-big size	under the ram's chin - small size

18.	Statue of Tahrqa	Late Period, 25 th Dynasty.	British Museum, EA 1779	Amun-Ram	Father-son relationship between Amun and king-Regeneration and fertility of king.	Back of the king-big size	under the ram's chin - small size
19.	Statue of Tahrqa	Late Period, 25 th Dynasty.	Temple of Mut at Karnak	Amun-Ram	Father-son relationship between Amun and king-Regeneration and fertility of king	Back of the king-big size	under the ram's chin - small size
20.	Statue of Amenhotep III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Luxor museum	Amun-human form	Father-son relationship between Amun and king-Regeneration and fertility of king	Back of the king-big size	Kneeling in front of the god - small size
21.	Statues of Amenhotep III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Egyptian National Museum, Cairo.	Amun-human form	Father-son relationship between Amun and king.	Back of the king-big size	Standing in front of the god - small size
22.	Statue of Tutankhamun	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Louvre museum. Paris. inv. E 11609.	Amun-human form	Father-son relationship between Amun and king.	Back of the king-big size	Standing in front of the god - small size
23.	Statue of Hormoheb	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Luxor Museum.	Amun-human form	Father-son relationship between Amun and king.	Back of the king-big size	Standing in front of the god - small size
24.	Statue of Ramses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 37384.	Amun-human form	Father-son relationship between Amun and king.	Back of the king-same size of the king	Standing in front of the god - same size of the god
25.	Statue of Thutmosis III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum. Cairo, JE 38574	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
26.	Statue of Amenhotep I or Rameses II	New Kingdom, 18 th . or 19 th Dynasty	Tomb TT2 of <i>h^c p3 nht</i> at Thebes	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
27.	Statue of Amenhotep I	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Tomb TT4, of Qn, at Thebes.	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
28.	Statue of Rameses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	The Tomb of Netcherouymes, Saqqara Necropolises.	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size

29.	Scene of Amenhotep I	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	tomb of <i>p3 šd</i> , TT326, Deir El Madeina, Thebes.	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
30.	Scene of Ramses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Tomb of <i>t3y</i> , TT23, of Sheikh Abd El-Qurna (El-Khokha, Luxor)	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the king.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
31.	Scene of Hatshepsut	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	The outer sanctuary of Hathor's shrine, Hatshepsut's Temple at Deir Al-Bahari	Hathor-Cow	Mother and nursery of the god Horus as well as the queen.	Back of the king-big size	Under the cow's chin - small size
32.	Scene of Amenhotep I	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Block in the Open-Air Museum in Karnak.	Nekhbet-Vulture	Protector of the king since the beginning of the Egyptian state.	Back of king's Atef crown-small size	Infront of the goddess - big size
33.	Scene of Hatshepsut	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Hathor's chapel, Hatshepsut Temple.	Nekhbet-Vulture	Protector of the king since the beginning of the Egyptian state.	Back of queen's Atef crown-small size	Infront of the goddess - big size
34.	Scenes of Thutmosis III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Akhmenu, "heret ib" hall, pillar 9 East.	Nekhbet-Vulture	Protector of the king since the beginning of the Egyptian state.	Back of king's Atef crown-small size	Infront of the goddess - big size
35.	Scene of Amenhotep III	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Tomb of Kheruef, TT192, west portico.	Nekhbet-Vulture	Protector of the king since the beginning of the Egyptian state.	Backrest of king's throne-small size	Infront of goddess - big size
36.	Statue of Amenhotep II	New Kingdom, 18 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 39394	Meretseger-Cobra	She was associated with Hathor as a patroness of the west	Back of the king-big size	Under cobra's chin - small size
37.	Statue of Seti I	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Egyptian Museum, Cairo. CG 42993.	Seth- Jackal	The Ramessides worshipped him as a family god	Back of the king-big size	Under Jackal's chin - small size
38.	The statue of Ramses II	New Kingdom, 19 th Dynasty	Ramesseum temple- Luxor	Anubis-Jackal	God related to the protection in the netherworld	Back of the king-big size	Under Jackal's chin - small size

- All the statues and scenes of kings under the protection of gods dates back to the Old Kingdom, New kingdom and the Late Period, there is no statue or scene that dates back to the Middle kingdom.
- Horus is seen hovering over the head of kings in ancient art, a symbol representing that the king is being protected and watched over by God. The protecting posture between Horus and the king is assuring the close relationship between them. This association would

guarantee him a smooth accession to the throne of Egypt as the earthly representative of Horus, the motherly protection as the son of Isis and Hathor as well as the regeneration of Osiris. Thus, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt is playing an important role in his relationship with Horus as he is the ruler on Earth and the son of Isis. As for being the living Horus on Earth, the king was playing different roles in which he was regarded as the celestial Horus son of Re, the ruling Horus son of Isis and Osiris who becomes after his death the dead Osiris, ruler of the Netherworld. He was considered as the son of Re, the fact that brought him in contact with the power of the cosmic gods of heaven.

- From the Old Kingdom god Horus wrapped protectively around the back of king's head; a well-known and a first example is the Statue of Khafra but by the New Kingdom as well as the Late Period, Horus was depicted bigger than the king like the statues of king Nectanebu II and the king is depicted between the legs of the falcon. These is because the king Nectanebu II often invoked a very close connection - even a merging -between himself and the falcon god of kingship, Horus. In fact, Nectanebu II was the focus of a cult in which he was referred to as 'Nectanebu-the-Falcon,' which could indeed be what is represented by this striking conjunction of a powerful falcon and the king. Nectanebu created for himself a special divine magical personality, which clearly appears by giving a mysterious magical power to his names. Nectanebu II had thus succeeded in making himself a god through the cult of his statues and cryptographic cartouches, therefore he gained for himself protection forever. So, the statues of Nectanebu II were a cult statue that's way god Horus is depicted as a huge falcon.
- From the New Kingdom scenes god Horus was depicted at the back rest of the kings' throne stretching his wings as a protector, also goddess Nekhbet depicted in the same position as a vulture spreading her wings as a protector of the king.
- From the New Kingdom scenes of the god Horus was depicted wrapped protectively around the back of king's crown, Also the researcher noticed that the birds depicted at the back of only Atef crowns are, in general, most probably vultures. The oldest example of this kind of decoration on the atef crown, dates to the reign of Amenhotep I. Looking at the crown, we see a vulture at the back and an uraeus at the front, forming thus the couple of titulary goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt. In this way the Atef with a vulture at the back could be seen as a precursor of the crowns with an uraeus and a head of a vulture on the brow of the king or the crowns with two uraei wearing the Red and White Crown. The vulture is also a protector of the king since the beginning of the Egyptian state: it is represented hovering above Narmer or above his name hieroglyph on a mace or on a seal from Hierakonpolis, both now in Oxford. This vulture can also possibly be Nekhbet, considering her later representations alternating with those of Behdeti and placed above royal figures. Indeed, it seems probable that the image of the Atef crown with a vulture reflects a real crown that rulers of the first half of the 18th Dynasty wore on special occasions.
- The vulture goddess Nekhbet was represented as a protector goddess from the back side of the rulers only at the scenes.
- Most of the statues and scenes represent kings standing in a prayer position.
- There are two reasons of depiction of the god Amun in his human form behind the kings; firstly, as a protector if the king was depicted in standing position of during the coronation festivals when the king is depicted in a seated position.

- The significance of the representations of Amun and the ruler reflects; the father-son relationship between Amun and the King. Thus, the king appears before or under Amun because he is his father, since all the kings looked upon their divinities as fathers.
- Amun depicted behind the rulers in a human form with his hands resting on their shoulder as a protector or resting on their crowns in the coronation festivals.
- The association of the goddess Hathor with the king in the Egyptian beliefs as the mother of the god Horus. Hathor appeared as a lady of the West, and a little later, in the era of the 11th Dynasty, the goddess Hathor appeared as a lady of the Theban cemetery, and then continued as well in the New Kingdom. Her presence in the form of a cow symbolises her nourishing and protective role of the heir to the throne. In the Theban tombs of the Ramesside period, the goddess Hathor is often represented associated with the king. She was close to Isis, and therefore often considered as the wife and the mother of Horus (which is shown in her name, *ḥwt-ḥr*, which can be translated "the house of Horus").
- An additional allusion to Hathor appears on both sides of Mertseger's body at her statue with king Amenhotep II, which is flanked by papyrus stalks and flowers, in a manner very similar to Amenhotep II's Hathor statue from Thutmose III's Deir el-Bahri temple that depicts the child king nursing from the Hathor cow. There too the striding image of the king in the same pose and kilt appeared at the front of the statue with the head, horns, and disc of the goddess showing above him. Since Meretseger was also connected with Hathor at Deir el-Bahri, the intentional similarities of the two group statues may have been designed to link the origin and destination of the Beautiful Feast of the Valley procession. When taken together with the Hathor image as cobra on the east and cow on the west one is reminded of Hathor's multiple roles as solar accompaniment, and we are tempted to read the images as enactments of the king's own prenomen, *ʿ3-ḥprw-rʿ*, "Great of Transformations is Re." At a minimum the various elements of both statues communicate much more than the simple protection of the king by a goddess, when one sees that the king is fused with both deities' heads and, therefore, emerges from her
- The cartouches of king Seti I in Abydos temple, have the Seth figure in the nomen replaced by a figure of Osiris and a tit-k not, to write the name cryptographically so as not to offend Osiris by depicting his supposed murderer against. Both translate as 'he of the god Seth, beloved of Ptah'. Suggests that following the Amarna period there was a major reinterpretation of the solar cult and a re-examination of the position of various deities within that scenario, during these discussions Seth's role could well have entered the picture, especially as the Ramessides worshipped him as a family god.
- The funerary character of Anubis is evidenced also by the scenes in which he is represented: apart from the offering scenes, that are common to all the Gods, Anubis is represented especially in the scenes of the judgment in the Court of Osiris in the afterlife, where is always in connection with the Balance, and in fact Anubis is the God Who weighs the hearts, Moreover, in almost all cases Anubis is also the God Who leads the deceased to the Hall of Judgment of Osiris. Anubis is also present in all those scenes related to the purification rituals and funeral rites for the deceased assimilated with the God Osiris.
- Finally, the kings depicted under the chin of the gods in their animal form like falcon of Horus, Ram of Amun, cow of Hathor, jackal of Anubis and Seth, snake of Mertseger, and in front of the god in his human form like god Amun.

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ملوك مصر القديمة تحت الحماية الإلهية؛ وانعكاسها في الفن

ملخص البحث

يدرس هذا البحث شكل حماية الملوك المصريين القدماء المصورين أمام العديد من الآلهة المختلفة في التماثيل والمناظر الخاصة بهؤلاء الملوك والآلهة معًا. فقد كانت حماية الملوك تتم من قبل آلهة مختلفة مثل حورس وأمون وحتحور ونخبت وست وميريت سجر وأنوبيس وغيرهم. كانت هذه الآلهة تحمي الملوك من الخلف بطرق مختلفة؛ فقد كان بعض الآلهة تمد أجنحتها حول رؤوس الملوك وتيجانهم أو حول مسند ظهر عروش الملوك مثل الإله حورس والإلهة نخبت. وكان البعض الآخر بوضع أيديهم على أكتاف الملوك مثل أمون في صورته البشرية. في بعض الأحيان كان الملوك يصورون تحت ذنق الآلهة في شكلها الحيواني مثل كبش أمون وبقرة حتحور وابن آوى أنوبيس. يؤكد الارتباط بين الملك والآلهة أن الملك كان يلعب دورًا ذا أهمية كونية وسياسية، وكان يُنظر إليه على أنه أحد ضامني الملكية، بهدف إثبات أصلهم من أحد الآلهة كدليل على الملكية. وستتم هذه الدراسة من خلال مناظر مختلفة من المعابد والمقابر وأيضًا من التماثيل المختلفة المعروضة في متاحف من الدولة القديمة حتى العصر المتأخر (من الأسرة الثالثة حتى الأسرة الثلاثين).

معلومات المقال

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ملك

إله

حماية

حورس

أمون.