

Unknown / Birth of Hatshepsut

Source: Translated from Emma Brunner-Traut, *AltÄgyptische Märchen*, 5th ed. (Dusseldorf und Ksln, 1979), pp. 76-87.

*The **bold faced type** represents a narrative interpretation of the reliefs in Hatshepsut's temple.*

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Amun summoned the Great Ennead in heaven to him and proclaimed to them his decision to procreate for the land of Egypt a new king, and he promised to the gods all good through it. As successor, Hatshepsut was chosen the unique woman; the royal office for her was claimed.

“She builds your chapels,” said Amun to the Ennead. “She consecrates your temples . . . she makes you rich offerings . . . the dew of heaven shall fall in her time . . . and the Nile shall be high in her time. Surround her with your protection, with life, happiness unto eternity.”

The Ennead answered, “We have come herewith. We surround her with our protection, with life and happiness . . . **Amun charged Thoth, the god of wisdom and messenger, to seek Queen Iahmes, the wife of the reigning king, whom he selected as the future mother of the successor, and Thoth answered him as follows:** “This young woman is a princess. She is called Iahmes. She is more beautiful than all the women in the whole land. She is the wife of the king, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tuthmosis I, and his majesty is still a youth. Go therefore to her . . .” **Then Thoth led Amun to Queen Iahmes.**

There came the ruling god, Amun, Lord of the throne of the Two Lands, after he had assumed the form of the majesty of her husband, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tuthmosis I. He found her as she rested in the innermost (area) of her palace. Then she awoke because of the scent of the god, and she smiled at his majesty. At the same time, he went there to her and was full of desire for her. He gave her his heart and allowed her to recognize him in his divine form, after which he approached her. She rejoiced to show her beauty, and his love went over into her body. The palace was flooded with the fragrance of the god. All his scent was the fragrance from Punt.

The royal wife and king’s mother Iahmes spoke to the majesty of the splendid god Amun, to the lord of the throne of the Two Lands, “My lord, how great is your glory. How splendid it is to see your face. You have enclosed my majesty with your glance. Your fragrance is in all my parts.” [Thus she spoke,] after the majesty of this god had done with her all which he wished.

Then Amun, the lord of the throne of the Two Lands spoke to her, “Hatshepsut is thus the name of this your daughter whom I have laid in your body, according to the speech of your mouth. She will exercise the splendid kingship in the whole land. My glory will belong to her, my authority will belong to her, and my crown will belong to her. She will rule the Two Lands (Egypt) . . . I will surround her every day with my protection in common with the god of the respective day.”

After Amun attended the queen, determined the name of the child, and promised her the lordship over Egypt, he spoke with the creator god Khnum who would form the child on the potter’s wheel from mud. Thereby he commissioned him to create for the child a ka. And Khnum answered him :

“I form this your daughter prepared for life, prosperity, and health, for food, nourishment, for respect, popularity, and all good. I distinguish her form from the gods in her great dignity of king of Upper and Lower Egypt.”

Then according to the divine instruction, Khnum created the royal child Hatshepsut and her ka on the potter’s wheel, and the goddess of birth, the frog-headed Heket, proffered life to her. Khnum spoke in addition, “I form you with this divine body . . . I have come to you to form you completely as all gods (Kings), give to you all life and prosperity, give to you enduring and joy . . . and give to you all health, deliver to you all flat lands and all mountain lands as well as all subjects, give to you every food and nourishment and cause that you appear on the throne of

Horus like (the sun god) Re (himself). I cause that you stand as the head of all the living when you appear as king of Upper and Lower Egypt. Thus as your father Amun-Re who loves you has commanded it.”

Khnum’s divine companion Heket concluded with speeches of blessing and gave the child with her word, life, enduring, and happiness in all eternity.

The divine messenger Thoth, dispatched by Amun, proclaimed to the royal mother Iahmes the office and title which heaven had conferred on her. He called her “the daughter of Geb, heir of Osiris, princess of Egypt, and mother of the king of Egypt. Amun the lord of the throne of the Two Lands is content with your great dignity of Princess who is great of favor, cheerfulness, charm, loveliness, and popularity,” and his message to the great royal wife Iahmes concluded with the wish that she live, endure, be happy and everlastingly joyful in heart.

Khnum, the creator god, and his divine companion Heket conducted the pregnant queen to the birth and the birth place and there pronounced their blessings. Khnum spoke to her, “I surround your daughter with my protection. You are great, but the one who opens your womb will be greater than all kings till now . . . “ Thus spoke Khnum, the potter . . . and Heket, the deliverer.

The queen who accordingly immediately became pregnant and now suffers the birth pains was delivered in the presence of the god Amun and goddess of the birth place Mesekhnet with the assistance of many spirits and divine nurses.

After a long speech by Amun, Mesekhnet executed her blessing on the child.