Hatshepsut and the Image of Kingship: *ink bk* 

Arlette DAVID, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

In his main opus related to Hatshepsut and entitled *La statuaire d'Hatshepsout. Portrait royal et politique sous la 18e Dynastie*, Tefnin has underlined the fact that the royal statuary fulfils two main functions:

- first, a *religious function* in which the king is part of a ritual;
- secondly, a *political function* as embodying an ideological message; this is a particularly fecund field of expression in the case of a woman trying to insert her reign into a masculine tradition of royal power.

Tefnin studied the means by which Hatshepsut conciliates the imperatives of her nature with those of her political vocation. He noted that the inherent duality of her image was first resolved in favour of a hybrid feminine/masculine rendering, but ultimately by a resolutely masculine look. He also dealt with the interplay between the text and the image, as in the case of the two small sphinxes from Cairo (JE 53113) and New York (MMA 31.3.94). Although similar in their plastic treatment, the texts that accompany them emphasize for the Cairo sphinx the masculine aspect of the king and for the Metropolitan exemplar the woman behind the king by using respectively masculine or feminine 3rd person grammatical elements.

Tefnin’s argument is that facing the exceptional challenge of presenting a woman as a king, the artists, and Hatshepsut herself, chose at a certain point to unite the feminine and masculine principles as an ideal totality. Ultimately, she chose to resolve the tension implied by this model by adopting a fiction in conformity with the norm, the wholly masculine and traditional image of an Egyptian king. We may add a further element to the plastic and grammatical considerations put forward by Tefnin and other scholars to elucidate Hatshepsut’s self presentation as a king: what the hieroglyphic script tells us as a system in which lexemes are classified by specific icons, the classifiers (traditionally called "determinatives"), whose function is to categorize the word in a semantic category, exhibiting the way the Egyptians viewed and ordered their world.

In the large corpus consisting of Sethe’s *Urkunden* IV monumental official texts of Hatshepsut’s reign, as well as ulterior publications of chapels and other monuments, many lexemes related to Hatshepsut’s person are devoid of any classifier; even the first person suffixed pronoun is often phonetically spelled as in Old Kingdom texts. Nevertheless, it happens that lexemes such as king (*ni-swt*), "majesty" (*hmt*), ruler (*hk3*), representative (*shm*) are classified and the first person suffix represented by an anthropomorphic or zoomorphic icon:

---

1 Tefnin (1979: 163-5).
2 Concerning the principles of the ancient Egyptian categorization system based on classifier signs, see mainly Goldwasser (1995, 2002); for the classification of the divine, see Shalomi-Hen (2006, 2008); for ancient Egyptian legal categorization, see David (2006, 2007).
3 Since year 7, see e.g. Tefnin (1973).
5 Already noted by Gardiner (*EG* § 34 n.10), and also e.g. by Goldwasser (2006: 273).
6 See Edel (1955-64: §§ 159-60). But note that Thutmose III does the same (e.g. *Urk*. IV 572, 2.6).
7 *EG*, p. 75: Hatshepsut 'who styled herself king, though a woman, employs the feminine form ḫswt'; see also *Wb* III, 92. 13-5.
To explain these choices, let’s have a look at the basic categories of [MALE HUMAN], [KING] and [GOD] during the 18th dynasty: these three categories may be represented by the following anthropomorphic icons, although other options, including zoomorphic ones, are available for the [KING] and [GOD] categories:

![Anthropomorphic Icons]

The [MALE HUMAN] category is represented by the prototypical man in the Egyptian world: a seated man, recognizably Egyptian by his typical haircut and short kilt (A1). The [KING] category is represented by a seated bearded man with a cobra on the forehead and a coif close to the skull, and wearing a long dress (A41). Of course, variants exist with added accessories such as sceptres. The [GOD] category is represented by a seated male bearded figure with long hair, and wearing the same long dress as the king (A40).

The parallel categories in the feminine sphere are the following:

![Anthropomorphic Icons]

The [FEMALE HUMAN] category is represented by a prototypical woman in the Egyptian world: a seated woman, with long tresses and dress (B1). The [QUEEN] category is usually represented by the same icon (or at the end of the 18th dynasty in Tiyi’s and Nefertiti’s cartouches), and so is the indeterminate [GODDESS], which may also be classified by , with a cobra on the forehead.

In view of these, what choices were left to Hatshepsut? If she used the simple female icon or the icons, her special reigning status would not have been acknowledged or emphasized; thus it is the solution adopted in very few cases (e.g. Urk. IV, 306 and 339, and Red Chapel blocs 194 and 21). She could try to erase any human iconic reference to her person, not using classifiers when referring to herself.

The lexeme "image" or "statue" is classified by an icon representing the royal statuary typologies usually associated with the royal function, thus always of male gender (see e.g. Urk. IV, 319 line 13 . Note also that "to sit" may be classified by the image of a royal male seated figure when it describes the queen’s posture (e.g. in the Red Chapel, blocs 48, (1)19 and 54 in Burgos & Larché 2006).

See Appendix. Note that Hatshepsut’s epithets are not classified.

Shalomi-Hen (2008: 185) shows that the and New Kingdom classifiers used to distinguish the queen and the goddess from the ordinary woman, disappear rapidly from the categorization processes.
using the icon as 1st person suffix or not noting at all this suffix; although she did prefer this method in several cases, she could not elude the issue of self-representation in sculpture and reliefs. Representation in art and in script follows the same rules in the ancient Egyptian conceptual sphere. Interestingly, even the original prenomen of Hatshepsut $M^r tktr^c$ has on a few occasions been purged of the female anthropomorphic representation of the goddess $M^r t$, the personification of the order and justice principle:

\[ \text{icon of Hatshepsut's nomen} \rightarrow \text{falcon icon} \]

perhaps to overcome a problematic female reference in the great king’s name and tell the world that it’s better not to chercher la femme. But the best solution in plastic art and script was to represent the function of the reigning persona, a traditionally male-conceived function, represented either by the male king icons such as $M^r t$ (to be a king is to be a man having a beard, a crown, a flail, and a cobra on the forehead), Hatshepsut's major choice, or by the falcon icon referring to Horus’ kingship. This last icon offers a triple advantage: it refers to the divine realm of which Hatshepsut pretends to be a direct offspring, it has an archaic flavour referring to the authority of tradition, and it is not anthropomorphic, hence conceals the woman behind the king. In this last case Hatshepsut becomes one with her function: she exposes her essence of falcon king (she contends in her Red Chapel in Karnak "I am a falcon" ink bik $\text{bik}^{\text{bik}}$; it matches her title $Hrt^{(t)}$, the falcon (queen), used after her by Nitocris during the 26th dynasty, by Berenike and Cleopatra VII. This fusion with the falcon is also expressed in sculpture through a Thutmoseid falcon-king typology probably born during her reign:

\[ \text{falcon king typology} \]

Note that Hatshepsut’s nomen was sometimes written with the seated lady icon (Karnak block A XV5, Lacau’s archives, in Robins 1993: fig. 2) instead of the bearded sitting man $M^r t$.

Urk. IV 381: foundation deposits of the Amun temple and Hathor chapel in Deir el-Bahari (inter al. Berlin 13114-6, 13118). In the Red Chapel in Karnak (block 31), the cartouche of the queen reads $\text{bik}^{\text{bik}}$, which is completely phonetically written; see Lacau & Chevrier (1977: 347): ’écrit d’une façon tout à fait insolite’.

Gabolde & Rondot (1996: 214) and Robins (1999: 112) note that the male representations of Hatshepsut are highlighting her royal function.

Bloc 146, Burgos & Larché (2006: 38). See also in Speos Artemidos (Urk. IV, 391.5): "May my falcon (bik $\text{bik}^{\text{bik}}$) rise high upon the serekh for ever.”

Wb III. 124.10 – 125.3. The rarer use of the title $Hrt$ instead of $Hr$ expresses a renewed hesitation concerning the expression of the king's gender; the tension is still perceptible.

Ratié (1979: 115 n.95).

See mainly Kriéger (1960) and Brunner (1962); the principal examples are: head Brooklyn 55.118 and bust Louvre E 5351 (Hatshepsut?); statuette UC 16020 and statue Cairo JE 33768 (Thutmose III); head Cairo CG 747 (Thutmose III-IV?); statue Cairo CG 42081 and Karnak relief (Thutmose IV); statuette Leiden F 1937/6.9 (Late Period).

Laboury (1998: 442) who also notes that the Brooklyn head is representative of Tefnin’s phase 3 of Hatshepsut’s iconography (ibid., n.1182), an idea not unanimously received (e.g. Sourouzian 2002: 1127). It has been suggested that the falcon-king representations were conceived at the occasion of the coronation or royal jubilee (see references in Laboury 1998: 337). For Martinez (1989: 116), the falcon-king represents the $b^3$ of the royal $k^3$, ‘émanation directe d’Amon qui insuffle au roi son droit à gouverner’, the model of a complex theological program born during the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. See also Eldamaty (1999: 39) for Horus as the king’s $k^3$. 
The falcon icon was definitely her choice in her monolog of Year 9 in Deir el-Bahari to express the 1st person suffix, but not anymore in her monologs of Years 15-20 of the Obelisks and Red chapel in Karnak when she preferred to use the traditional male king icon, in parallel to the main image Hatshepsut chose in the round.

I would thus add to Tefnin’s analysis that Hatshepsut’s statuary and categorization processes reflects the same conceptual choices, the image of a king, in the script as well as in the plastic art, being based on prototypical associations. Hatshepsut’s transformation into a bearded man is to be viewed as the final decision to use the male prototype elect in order to represent the [KINGSHIP] category. Grammatically, Hatshepsut refers to herself mostly in the female gender, although male references are attested (see supra and Appendix); she is a woman doing a man's job whose ultimate reference lies in the divine realm.

---

20 The dating of the other monuments is not always easy to establish in order to provide a timetable of the use of the classifiers.
Appendix: Hatshepsut in her texts

Numbers without addition refer to the *Urk*. IV pages and lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deir el-Bahari texts (Years 21-20):</th>
<th>Grammatical gender of Hatshepsut</th>
<th>Male classifiers</th>
<th>Female classifiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth legend</td>
<td>Feminine (+ masc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>221.7: <em>št pn</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth legend</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>239.9/11: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>257.6: <em>št pn</em></td>
<td>257.16: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punt expedition</td>
<td>Feminine (+ masc.) in titulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hrt</em> = <em>³⁵</em> in titulary (341.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>332.10: <em>³⁴</em></td>
<td>332.11: <em>Rr³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>343.2, 346.12.16: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td>339.13: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td>(with flagellum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>343.10: <em>ni-swt³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punt Expedition monolog (Year 9)</td>
<td>Masculine/Feminine 1st pers. suffix = <em>³⁵</em> (mainly) / <em>³⁵</em> (351.14, 352.16)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>351.5: <em>ink ntr³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>351.14, 352.15: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>351.10: <em>ni-swt³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hathor chapel</td>
<td>Feminine (+ masc.)</td>
<td>239.9.11: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>306.10: <em>hk³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnak texts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th pylon</td>
<td>Feminine (+ masc.)</td>
<td>281.8: <em>hm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>282.1-2: <em>ni-swt³⁴</em>, <em>³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amun chapel reused in North Karnak (Gabolde &amp; Rondot 1996) (early part of the reign)</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>1st pers. suffix = <em>³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obelisks of Years 15-16 for her Sed-Festival</td>
<td>Feminine/masculine</td>
<td>364.10: <em>ni-swt³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolog: 363-9, 372-3</td>
<td>1st pers. suffix = <em>³⁴</em> (mainly) / <em>³⁴</em> (363.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;me&quot; = <em>³⁴</em> (363.8, 364.17)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- stative locutive ending: <em>³⁴</em> (363.15, 364.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <em>Hrt</em> in titulary and epithet (361.4, 362.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red chapel (Years 16-20)</td>
<td>Feminine (+ masc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolog: Burgos &amp; Larché (2006: 38-41)</td>
<td>1st pers. suffix = <em>³⁴</em> (also)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bloc 48: <em>shm³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bloc 147: <em>ni-swt³⁴</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

21 See Hayes (1957: 78-81, fig. IA).
23 *Urk*. IV, 367.
24 See also *Urk*. IV, 407 line 11.
### Bibliography


*EG* = Gardiner (1957)


