

The Mystery of Queen Hatshepsut

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Author's Name

Professor's Name

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Hatshepsut was the only female pharaoh in the history of Egypt. Having questioned many traditions and conventions of her era, she is believed to be one of the most influential pharaohs that ever existed. She started her reign as a regent for her nephew Thutmose and after some time gained the full power over the country. According to an Egyptian tradition, she was always depicted as a man (Roehrig, Dreyfus & Keller, 2005).

Hatshepsut's life and death are still surrounded by mystery, as no one ever managed to find the mummified remains of the queen, or to answer the question, what was the real cause of her death. Historians, though have many theories to explain the mysterious disappearance of the great pharaoh. Ancient Egyptians believed that the deliberate destruction of a person's memory and images unquestionably leads to the second horrible death in the afterlife. Many scientists agree that Thutmose - queen's nephew hated her for taking away a part of his power. He did not want to keep any memory of Hatshepsut even despite of her numerous accomplishments that helped Egyptians society to flourish for many years. For a long time the theory that his hatred could have played a role in Hatshepsut's disappearance was the main version of the historians (Roehrig, Dreyfus & Keller, 2005).

However, a research recently conducted by the scientists of the Bonn's University witnesses in favor of the theory the Egyptian queen has died a relatively natural death. A flask of lotion with the name of the female pharaoh on it was discovered to contain a carcinogenic substance that could have potentially lead to the death of Hatshepsut . A lotion that was used to treat psoriasis or eczema, contained benzopyrene, which is recognized a highly carcinogenic

product (Wiefenfeld, 2011). However, there exist no real proof that queen obtained the lotion or used it. All theories of Hatshepsut's disappearance still remain only theories.

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References

Roehrig, C., Dreyfus, R., & Keller, C. (2005). *Hatshepsut, from queen to Pharaoh* (1st ed.). New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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