

## Fragment of painting from the tomb of Kynebu: Ahmose-Nefertari

*Thebes, Egypt  
20th Dynasty, around 1145 BC*

Kynebu was a priest 'over the secrets of the estate of Amun'. He held office during the reign of Ramesses VIII towards the end of the New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC). Three painted fragments from the tomb decoration are now in the British Museum, depicting the god Osiris, and two royal figures who lived almost 400 years before Kynebu: king Amenhotep I and his mother, Ahmose-Nefertari. Ahmose-Nefertari was venerated as a god, alongside Amenhotep I, throughout the New Kingdom. In particular, the inhabitants of the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina displayed reverence for the royal pair, attested on stelae, small statuary and in the decoration of their tombs.



Ahmose-Nefertari is here shown in a flowing, pleated dress, typical in representations of elite women of the Ramesside period (about 1295-1069 BC) rather than the period during which the Queen was alive. She wears the vulture head-dress of the goddess Mut, consort of Amun of Thebes, surmounted by a sun-disc and ostrich plumes. The cobra on her crown and the flail in one hand indicate her royal status. The lotus bloom was often held by deceased women, representing rebirth. The black colour of her skin does not reflect her true coloration, but may symbolize regeneration.

Acquired by the British Museum in 1868

Museum Number: EA 37994

Museum Location: Room 61, Temporary display, temporary display.

### Further Reading

T.G.H. James, *An introduction to ancient Egypt* (London, 1979), plate 11