

Tausret: The Forgotten Queen and Pharaoh of Egypt

In the annals of Ancient Egypt, the names of powerful pharaohs such as Ramses II and Cleopatra VII often dominate the historical narrative. However, there are lesser-known figures whose stories deserve to be told, and one such individual is Tausret, the last ruler of the 19th Dynasty.



Tausret: Forgotten Queen and Pharaoh of Egypt

by Richard H. Wilkinson

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Tausret's life is veiled in mystery, but what we do know is that she lived during a turbulent period in Egyptian history. The once-mighty empire was in decline, and the country was plagued by political instability and external threats.

Early Life and Marriage

Tausret's origins and early life are shrouded in obscurity. Some scholars speculate that she was a member of the Egyptian royal family, while others

believe she was of foreign origin.

At some point, Tausret married Seti II, the pharaoh who succeeded Merneptah, Ramses II's son. Seti II's reign was short-lived, and after his death around 1203 BCE, Tausret became queen regent for his young son, Siptah.

Reign as Queen Regent

As queen regent, Tausret faced numerous challenges. The empire was beset by internal conflicts and external pressures. The Hittites, a powerful empire to the north, were encroaching on Egypt's borders, while internal factions sought to weaken the royal authority.

In the face of these challenges, Tausret proved herself to be a capable and resolute leader. She maintained diplomatic relations with the Hittites and managed to quell internal dissent. She also oversaw the completion of several ambitious building projects, including the construction of the Temple of Karnak in Thebes.

Ascension to the Throne

In 1190 BCE, Siptah died suspiciously at a young age. The circumstances surrounding his death are unclear, but some historians speculate that Tausret was involved in a plot to eliminate him.

With Siptah gone, Tausret ascended to the throne as pharaoh, becoming the second female ruler in Egyptian history after Hatshepsut. Her reign, however, was marked by instability and chaos.

Challenges as Pharaoh

Tausret's reign as pharaoh was fraught with difficulties. The empire continued to be plagued by external threats and internal strife. The Hittites invaded Egypt, and Tausret was forced to sign a treaty that ceded territory.

Internally, there were challenges to her authority. Bay, the viceroy of Nubia, declared himself independent and formed an alliance with the Hittites. Tausret's inability to control her own officials weakened her authority.

Death and Legacy

Tausret's reign came to an end in 1186 BCE. The circumstances surrounding her death are unknown, but some historians speculate that she was assassinated. She was buried in the Valley of the Queens, where her tomb was later discovered by archaeologists.

For centuries, Tausret's legacy was largely forgotten. She was overshadowed by her more famous predecessors and successors. However, in recent years, historians have begun to reassess her reign.

Tausret was a remarkable woman who ruled Egypt during a challenging period. Despite the obstacles she faced, she left her mark on history. She was a capable administrator, a skilled diplomat, and a strong leader.

Today, Tausret's legacy continues to inspire. She is a reminder that women can achieve great things even in times of adversity. Her story is a lesson in resilience, determination, and the indomitable spirit of the human soul.



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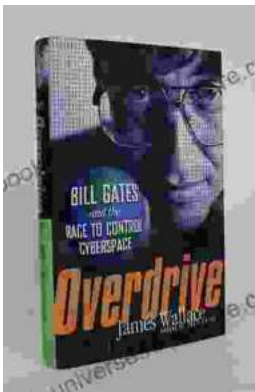
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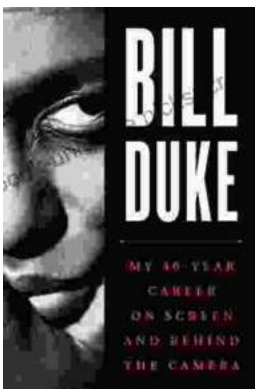


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