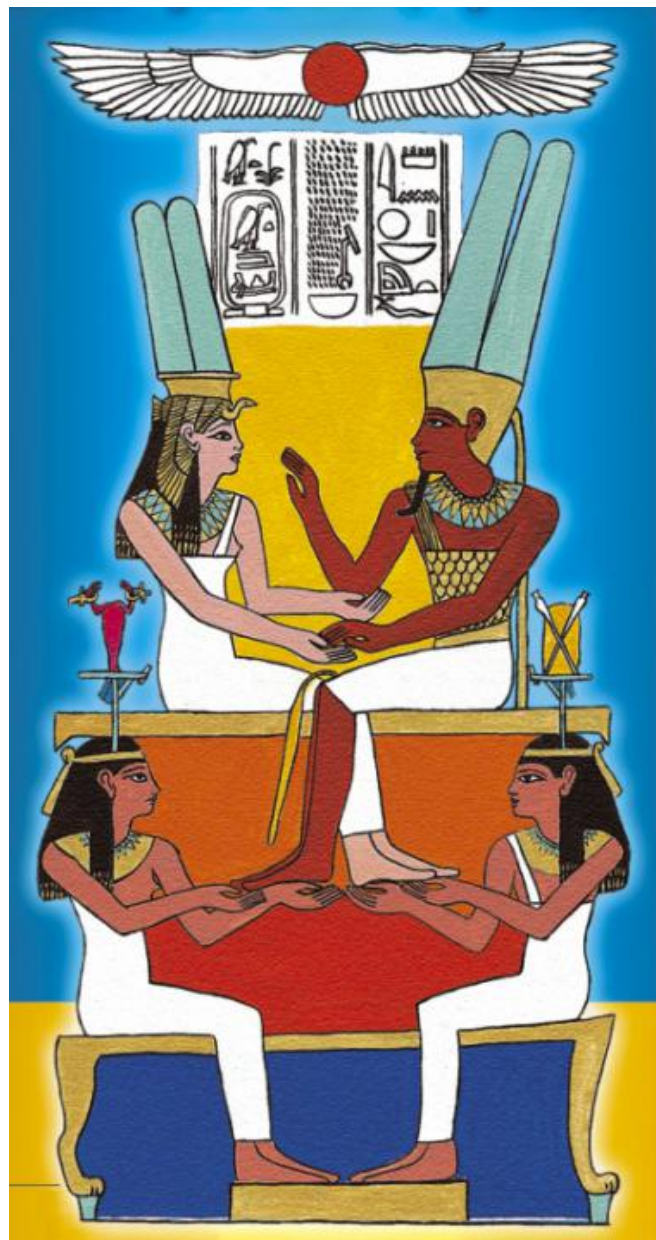


## 17 Tarot During the Rest of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty

The creation of the **Litany of Ra** Tarot deck by Tutmose III and Weser Amen did not become widely known to the public, probably because it was only circulated among the royal family and the elites as part of the Shedy discipline, an educational program for training future pharaohs and high officials. The **Litany** does not appear in any other royal tombs of the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty. It became “dormant”, but definitely not forgotten.

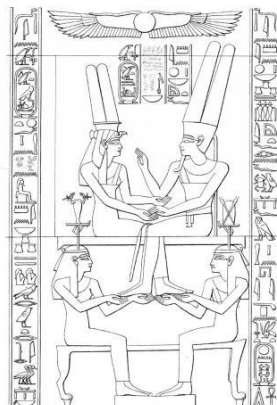
Tutmose III was succeeded by Amenhotep II and then Tutmose IV, who created the wonderful tableau in the Luxor temple that I chose for the “Transcendental Lovers” card in my Senet Tarot deck.



In this tableau Tutmose IV plays the role of Amen Ra, Lord of his Private Quarter. His wife, Mut-em-Waa (Mother in the Boat) sits facing him. They are both sitting on the glyph for Heaven (Pet). The boat is a symbol for the Boat of Ra, and also means the Meditation of Ra. She will become the Mother of the Future Pharaoh, and is thus an incarnation of Mut Amenet, also known as Hathor, the Cosmic Mother and partner of Amen Ra. Above them Ra spreads his wings and soars to the zenith.

Below them two angels sit on an earthly bed that suggests a lion. These two divine ladies support the feet of the divine royal couple. The one on the right is Neith with her divine headdress of crossed arrows. She represents the optic chiasm in the brain. There the optical nerves from the eyes cross over as they pass to the optical cortex in the back of the brain.

The other angel is Serqet, the scorpion goddess wearing her divine scorpion headdress. She is related to the moon and is a nanny goddess who will tend the to-be-born incarnation of Horus as the crown prince and future pharaoh. The scorpion's claws both grasp "ankh" life symbols, showing that the challenges the prince will face in life will be like toys to him. The scorpion represents the primitive brain stem with its instincts. The stinger on the scorpion's tail is the pineal gland, which, when opened up, becomes the Eye of Ra, the inner eye of Osiris. The other two angels who are there by implication are the divine sisters Isis and Nephthys. In the brain Isis is the pituitary that governs most of the glandular activity in the body, and Nephthys is the area known as the septum pellucidum, the pleasure center of the brain. The pineal and the pituitary are like Osiris and Isis in the brain. The four divine ladies give care and protection to Osiris. We will discuss this work in more detail later.



The above drawing of the wall etching was probably made by Lucie Lamy, assistant to Schwaller de Lubicz, who spent many years studying the Luxor temple. The current deteriorated state of the art work is now almost unrecognizable and parts have been hacked up or fallen off. So we thank Schwaller and his assistant and I thank my artist Amy Hsiao who brought the drawing to life in full color for future lovers of art to enjoy. Without the drawing that preserves this work it would have disappeared from Egypt's list of masterworks and be lost forever.

On other parts of the wall are scenes depicting the pregnancy of Isis and the birth of Horus. The crown prince was considered to be an avatar of Horus.

This tableau designed by Tutmose IV and etched on the wall of an inner chamber at Luxor was intended to bestow great felicity upon the pharaoh and his queen to enjoy a loving relationship that produced an excellent male heir to the throne -- which it did. The result of their bond was Amenhotep III, who had a prosperous reign.



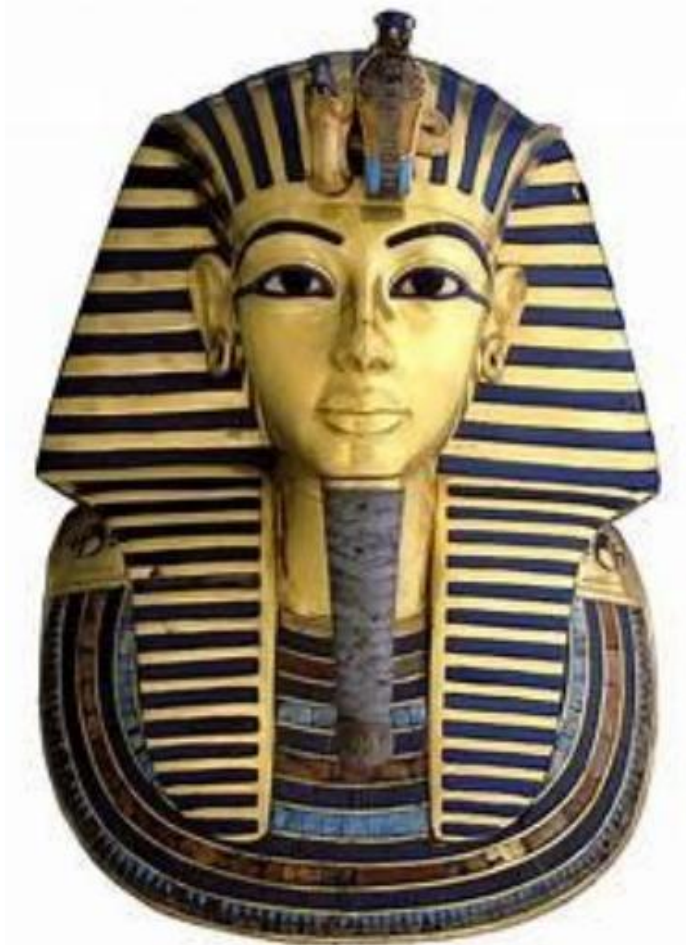
On the left is a megalithic statue of Amenhotep III and his wife, Tuya. On the right is Amenhotep III as Amen Ra in his tantric mode. Both are in the Cairo Museum.

The son of Amenhotep III became Amenhotep IV, but somehow he rebelled against Egyptian tradition. He was a strange man. When he became pharaoh he changed his name to Akhen-Aten and tried to overthrow the whole ancient temple system and set up worship of Aten as the highest god.



Statue of Akhenaten, Cairo Museum

He closed all the various other temples and moved his capital city from Thebes to Akhet-Aten, a new city he built in the center of Egypt near Hermopolis (Khemenu, City of the Eight Primordials). Khemenu was the location of Egypt's heart chakra and was under the guidance of Thoth. Apparently Akhenaten wanted to operate from the "heart" of Egypt, but he lost the hearts of the people, and a lot of turbulence ensued. He believed in the visible Sun at Noon, but disavowed the importance of the Hidden (Amen) aspect of the Sun. After his reign Egypt shifted back toward its old traditions. During his brief reign the young pharaoh Tut-ankh-aten changed his name to Tut-ankh-amen and began to restore the dynasty to its glory. However, he died young with no heir. The treasure of his tomb in the Valley of the Kings was found almost intact and is on display in the Cairo Museum. In his tomb he had four Senet game boards, indicating the ritual importance of the game in his day. (See photo) The dynasty ended with Hor-em-heb who was a military man and not even part of the royal family line. He had no heir, so it was time for a new dynasty.



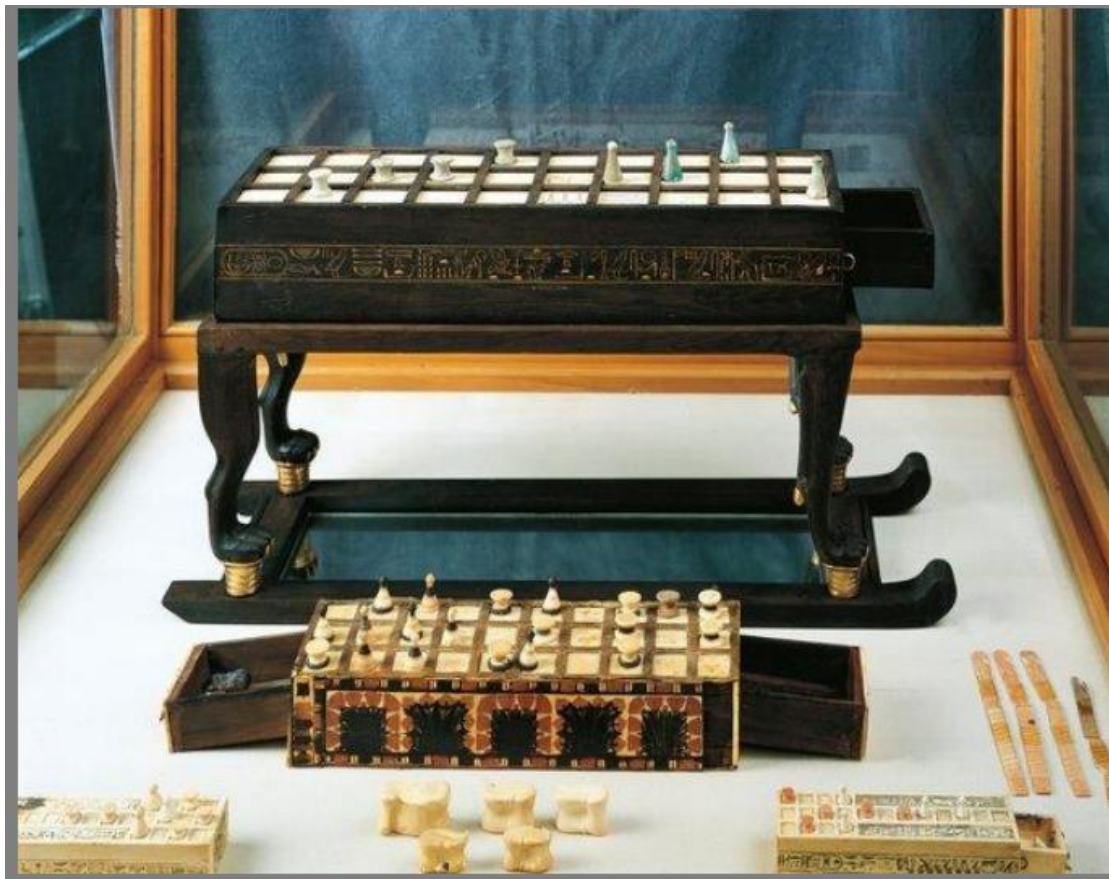
Golden mask of the boy pharaoh Tutankhamen who began to restore Egypt from the upheavals of Akhenaten, but died too young (about 19 years old) to create a great legacy, except for his marvelous funerary treasure that we now enjoy.







A box containing relics from the tomb of Tutankhamen. Notice the angel ladies protecting it. Above are Isis and Serqet. Below are Neith and Nephtys.



The four Senet Oracle Game Boards found in Tutankhamen's tomb. Notice the wooden throw sticks and the knucklebone dice used to calculate moves in the game or do readings in the oracle. The two

smaller boards have the Game of Ur on one side and a Senet Board on the other.



The Cartouches of Tutmoses IV

## 17 Study Questions

- \* Why was the **Litany of Ra** Tarot deck not widely known after it was introduced by Tutmoses III?
- \* What was the remarkable artistic creation designed by Tutmoses IV?
- \* Where is it?
- \* Why was it made?
- \* Was it successful?
- \* Why did Amenhotep IV change his name to Akhen-Aten?
- \* What happened in Egypt as a result of this change?
- \* Why do you think Tutankhamen had 4 game boards in his tomb?
- \* How did the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty come to an end?