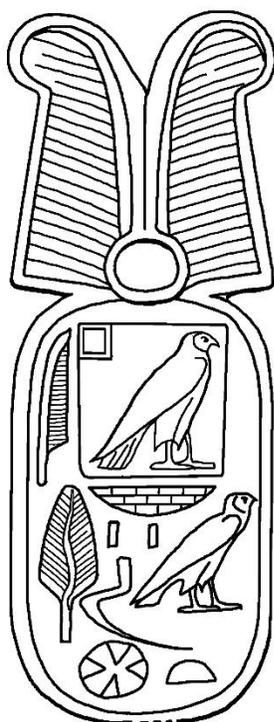


Strong Hathor in Imu

By Joan Ann Lansberry

Chicago's Oriental museum has greatly improved the search function of their website. Thus, I was able to turn up quite a few new Hathor sightings. A brick stamp (#11171) has intriguing glyphs, and I traced it:



OIM #11171

Brick Stamp

New Kingdom to Third Intermediate Period, Dynasties 19-22, ca. 1292-735 BCE

Bronze, Height 11.3 X 4.2 X 2 cm (4 3/8 inches tall)

OIM #11171

"This stamp, in the form of an oval topped by two feather plumes, bears the inscription 'Hathor in Imu.' Imu, known today as Kom el Hism, is located in the west central delta. The site is poorly preserved, but textual sources indicate that the goddess Hathor was the principle deity of the town. This bronze stamp may have been employed to mark the bricks used in that temple." ([Ancient Egypt: Treasures from the Collections of the Oriental Institute University of Chicago](#), by Emily Teeter, (*Oriental Institute Press, 2003*), page 78)

I was so curious to learn more, but unfortunately, I wasn't able to turn up much. I did learn Imu's history goes back further than the New Kingdom. Senwosret I of

the Middle Kingdom "founded a temple to SEKHMET-Hathor at IMU, now called Kom el-Hisn, the Mound of the Fort, in the Delta. The temple was rectangular and contained a bark chapel and pillars. (Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, by Margaret Bunson, *(Facts on File, Inc., 2003)* page 363)

I also found a reference to Hathor as Mistress of Imu from the Old Kingdom. Pepi II, the last 6th Dynasty pharaoh, wrote a letter to a Harkhuf, who made a profitable journey to Nubia:

"...thou has descended in safety from Yam with the army which was with thee. Thou hast said [in] this thy letter that thou hast brought all great and beautiful gifts which Hathor, mistress of Imu, hath given to the ka of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Neferkare (= the prenomen of Pepy II)" (Daily Life of the Nubians, by Robert Steven Bianchi *(Greenwood Press 2004)*, page 49)

Miriam Lichtheim's translation of New Kingdom literature has one reference to Imu, a footnote to Imu being a "word play on *im3*, 'gracious'" (Ancient Egyptian Literature: Volume II: The New Kingdom, by Miriam Lichtheim, *(University of California Press 2006)*, page 199)

While searching in that book, I did a general search for "Hathor", and turned up something quite fascinating. Paheri's 18th Dynasty tomb at El-Kab has a relatively lengthy prayer for offerings. Lichtheim describes it, the "back wall of the main hall of his tomb was given the shape of a round-topped stela with a niche in its center. The niche was filled by three seated statues, and the surface of the stela was inscribed in horizontal lines with a text that begins in the rounded top and continues on the right and left sides of the niche. This is a mortuary text consisting of four parts: (1) the traditional prayer for offerings..." (Page 16)

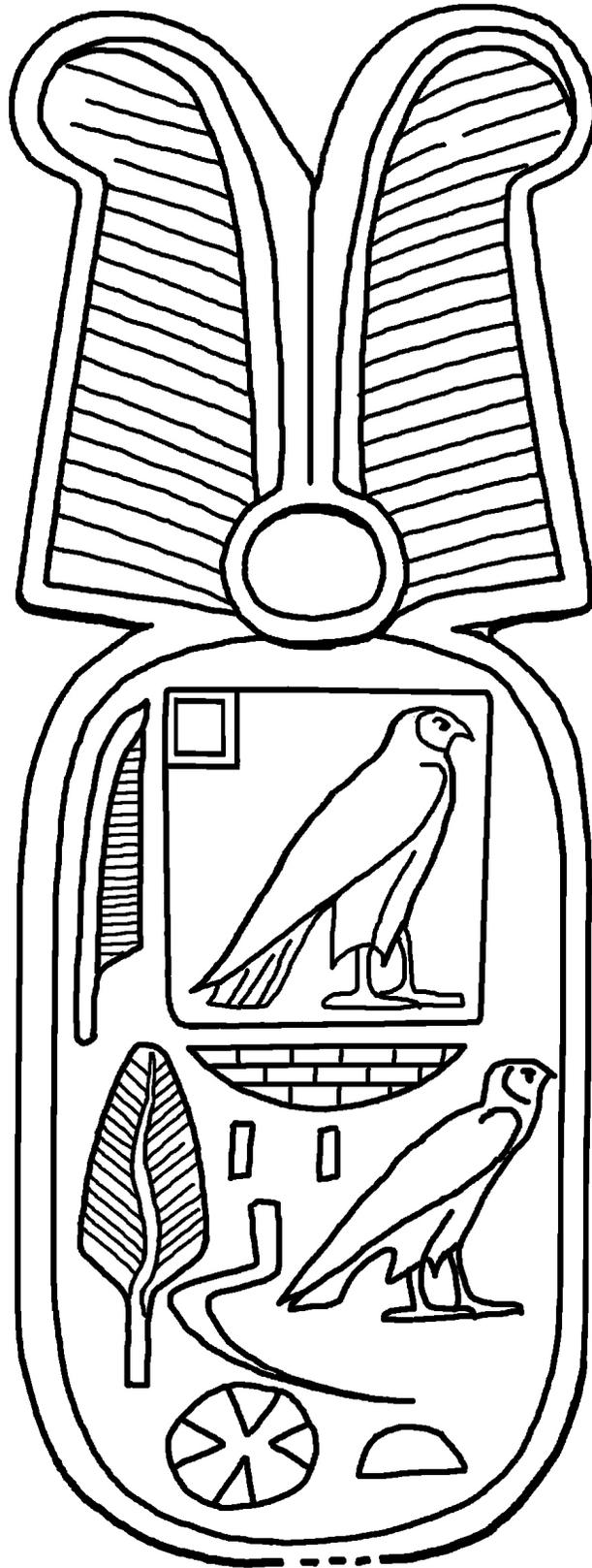
With this information, I could take to the web and hunt photos. Bruce Allardice has the most legible photo, while Osirisnet has a line image with the glyphs). Between the two, I was able to make out the hieroglyphs:

(From right to left)

Hathor, mistress of the desert (foreign lands)

Strong of heart among the gods;

(And) Ptah-Sokar, lord of Shetyt (the Secret Chamber)



OIM #11171