

Amazons and Warrior Queens: Females Who Lead



Sumerian Queen Pu-Abi of Ur (Third millennium BCE)

History 2310 03/Women's Studies 3000 02
Professor Renata MacDougal
Webster University
Fall 2005
WEBH 331
TR 10am–11:20am

In this course, we will examine female royal power, the leadership of women who rule, the exploitation of queens by royal males to acquire power and gender stereotypes of women who lead. For millennia, male kingship has been the dominant model of leadership. Were women ever truly the boss, or mere figureheads bedecked in gold and jewels?

When women held positions of immense power, was it by assuming a masculine role, dress, title or disguise, or did females rule by their own merit? In cultures where kings were gods, did women also acquire divinity as royal wives or leaders? In what regard have systems of patriarchy exploited royal female bloodlines? Did women of power have to put on aspects of male kingship in order to rule, or were there models of feminine potency which perhaps exceeded the effectiveness of masculine reign?

We will explore theories of matriarchal and patriarchal royal power in this course, as we study the lives of real queens and women of power. Beginning with archaeological evidence of female regnal histories from the fourth millennium BCE, this course traces the evolution of women's rule in many cultures across the globe, from antiquity to the seventeenth century CE.

Required Reading:

Texts available in bookstore:

1. **WQ** = Fraser, Antonia. 1989. *The Warrior Queens*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
2. **AQ** = Nelson, Sarah Milledge. 2003. *Ancient Queens*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
3. **TWW** = Wilde, Lyn Webster. 2000. *On the Trail of the Women Warriors: Amazons in Myth and History* New York: Thomas Dunne-St. Martin's Press.

Required readings on Library Reserve and electronic reserve:

- Lerner, Gerda. 1986. "The Stand-In Wife and the Pawn", Chapter 3, p. 58b - 75, in *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Robins, Gay. 1993. "Royal Women and Queenship", Chapter 1, and "Queens, Power and the Assumption of Kingship", Chapter 2, in *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

*Other selected books for your research as well as articles or web resources are on reserve or will be added as links to the Webster Connections course homepage.
Please keep current with our homepage for announcements, assignments and links.*

Optional text (not in campus bookstore; but available online):

- Davis-Kimball, Jeannine and Mona Behan. 2002 *Warrior Women: An Archaeologist's Search for History's Hidden Heroines*. New York: Warner Books.

Course Requirements:

ASSIGNMENTS will include discussion questions, group presentations of some of the queens and topics in our reading, a topical paper and two exams. I make every effort not to overload my students at midterm and final exam periods. A tentative calendar will be issued on the homepage.

The paper may be on a theoretical or abstract aspect of queenship, the reign of a historical queen, an in-depth comparative review of two college-level books on a queen, an advanced study (not general) of a famous queen or an aspect of her reign or personality. Details will be discussed in class and I am open to tailoring your project to your personal interests so it will be a valuable experience. Do not wait until the last 2 weeks to start researching. Consider the topic an ongoing interest to work on throughout the semester a little at a time.

Assignments will be announced on the Webster Connections course homepage, which you will need to check daily for updates. I reserve the right to adjust assignments and the syllabus toward the class' interests, abilities and progress as the semester goes on. For many of the topics I will place a brief outline on the course homepage which you should print out ahead of class for your use. The outline will contain terms, and difficult names which you will need to spell.

COLLEGIALITY is determined by how good a colleague you are to your fellow students. Collegiality may be demonstrated by: your on-time arrival and attendance at class; your preparedness of assigned readings, participation with informal responses in class and in collaborative groups; your attention during films and your ability and willingness to master the course material. In addition, you are expected to offer your opinions and thoughts and engage in critical thinking about the readings. I take roll and more than three absences will result in a lower grade. Only serious illness or verified family emergency will be excused. Your participation is valuable and crucial to the success of your colleagues and the dynamic of the class.

GRADING "A" grades are given for superior work.. Details and parameters for each task will be discussed when assignments are announced in class. Your work will be weighed as follows:

20% Collegiality
20% Topical Paper

15% Group Presentation
15% Discussion Questions
30% Exams



PLEASE CONTACT ME right away whenever you need clarification, more information, have concerns I can assist you with, have questions on the course or subject matter or just come by to say hello. I am very prompt with replies, even email in the wee hours of the night, and look forward to working with you and developing an enjoyable learning environment. I appreciate creative insight and you will find me quite open to out-of-the-box thinking, even while we adhere to a high standard of academic excellence. It is my goal, in addition to providing meaningful content in the discipline, to offer you higher level research techniques, thinking and writing skills which will serve you well in your academic and career efforts in the future. Again, don't wait until an assignment is nearly due to get help. Let me know when there is a problem and I can help. Office hours are Tuesday-Thursday, 11:30am-12:00pm, Wed. 11am - 1pm and by appointment. Telephone: 961-2660 X7627 or

email: macdoug@webster.edu. My office is on the second floor of Schultz Hall at Eden campus (across the street) and just past Luhr Library on your right. Enter at the second entrance.

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Fall 05

SYLLABUS

I. Introduction: Defining Feminine Power

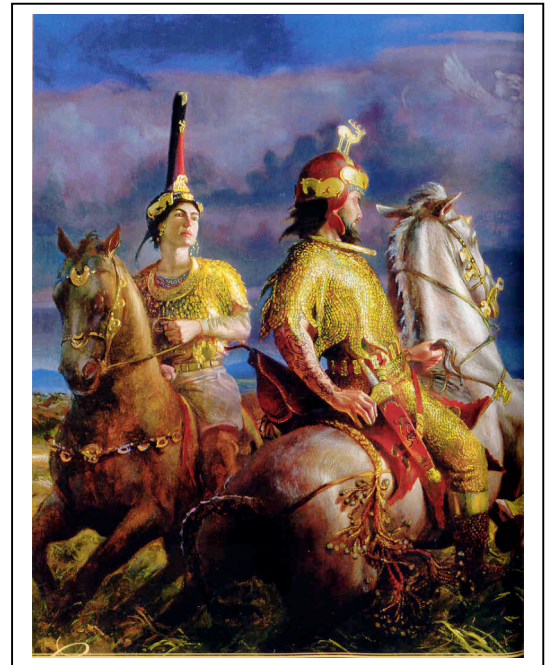
1. Legitimizing Power
2. Queens as Ancestors
3. Gendered Tasks
4. Queens as Rulers and Regents
5. Women of Wealth
6. Retaining the Throne

II. Reigning Queen, Wife or Pawn?

1. Theories of Rule
3. Rewriting History: Unveiling the Problems
4. Feminist Power Models
5. Royal Cemetery of Ur: human sacrifice?
6. What the Documents Reveal: powerful women of Sumer
7. Princess or Priestess?: wife or prostitute?
 - i. Enheduanna, the world's first poet
8. Sex as a Power Base

III. Amazon Warrior Women

1. The Legends
 - i. Islands and Cities of the Amazons
 - ii. Amazons in ancient art
2. Greeks and Spartan Women
3. Queens of Crete and the Snake Goddess
4. Secrets of the Russian Steppes
5. The True Amazon Warrior Queens
 - i. The archaeological evidence
 - ii. Scythian horse warriors
 - iii. Sauromatian Queens and Sarmatian Priestesses
6. Evaluating Ancient Evidence: Gender Bias in Archaeology?



Scythian Warrior Woman

IV. Divine Queens: Egyptian Women of Power

1. Pharaoh's Favor: Ahmose-Nefertari, and Tiye
 - i. Egalitarian Rule and the Balance of Power
 - ii. The God's Wife
2. The Case of King Tut's Wife: Perilous power.
3. Daughter and Sister Marriage: Assuming kingship..
4. The Pharaoh is a Woman: A Gender Analysis of Female Rule
 - i. Hatshepsut: Cross-dressing for power.
 - ii. Nefertiti: Becoming male to rule?
5. Cleopatra VII: The Queen as Goddess.
 - i. Murder Makes Might
 - ii. Husband, Brother, King or Slave?



Queen Nefertari wears the crown of Egyptian queens.

V. Diplomatic Royal Marriage: Manipulating Policy and Politics

1. Queen Puduhepa of the Hittites works a deal with Queen Nefertari (and Rameses II).
2. Royal Women of the House of Mari: Complaining Princesses.
3. Stage mothers: Queens who create kings
 - i. Multiple Wives
 - ii. Women and the Law
 - iii. King Nabonidus and Queen Adad-Guppi of Babylon
 - iv. Usurping the Son: Stealing Male Power

VI. Queens of the Orient

1. Shang China: Gender and Political Power
2. Chinese Queens of Legend and Myth
3. Lady Jing and Lady Hao
4. Korean Queens of Silla: Bone Ranks and Gender Systems
5. Mongolian Royal Women

VII. Fair Isles and Warrior Queens

1. Boadicea and the Iceni: Blood and Chariots
2. Celtic Combat: Queens Medb and Maud
3. Gender Politics and Viking Queens
4. Tamara: the Lion's Claws



Boudicca, Warrior Queen

VIII. Mesoamerica: Questions of Royalty

1. A Queen of the Maya?
2. Sacred Royal Women of Peru
3. Aztec Dynasties and Feminine Rule

A Hebrew Queen

IX. Queens of Babylon, Assyria and the Bible

1. Royal Treasure of the Queens of Assyria
2. Immortal Semiramis
3. Sheba and the Arabian Queens
4. Judith, Athaliah and Deborah
5. Zenobia: A Rival to Rome



X. The Warrior Legacy

1. Isabella of Spain
2. Elizabeth Rex: The Virgin Queen
 - i. Breaking gender stereotypes
 - ii. Sharing power with no man
 - iii. "The Heart and Stomach of a King"

XI. Conclusions: Redefining Leadership

1. The Feminine Touch
2. Fierce Heritage: Female Warriors
3. Defining Power: The FeMale Model
4. Genderless Rule?