Hatshepsut was an ancient Egyptian queen who ruled as pharaoh during the 18th Dynasty, from approximately 1479 to 1458 BCE. She is considered one of the most successful and influential female pharaohs in ancient Egyptian history.

Hatshepsut was born in 1507 BCE to Pharaoh Thutmose I and Queen Ahmose. She was not originally designated to become pharaoh but ascended to the throne following the death of her husband and stepbrother, Thutmose II.

As pharaoh, Hatshepsut assumed the full regalia of kingship, including the traditional male pharaonic headdress, false beard, and kilt. She adopted the title of "Maatkare," meaning "Maat is the soul of Ra," symbolizing her divine authority.

Hatshepsut is known for her ambitious building projects and architectural achievements. The most famous of these is her mortuary temple, Deir el-Bahari, located on the west bank of the Nile in Thebes. It is renowned for its innovative design and the exquisite reliefs depicting the queen's accomplishments.

Hatshepsut's reign was marked by stability and prosperity. She fostered trade expeditions to the land of Punt (modern-day Somalia and Ethiopia), bringing back exotic goods such as incense, gold, and precious woods, which enriched Egypt's economy.

Hatshepsut's reign saw a period of artistic and cultural flourishing in ancient Egypt. Her artistic commissions emphasized realism and naturalism, with her statues portraying her with softer and more feminine features compared to traditional pharaonic depictions.

Hatshepsut employed Senenmut, an architect and administrator, as one of her most trusted advisors. He oversaw many of her building projects and held significant influence during her reign. Some historians speculate about a possible romantic relationship between them.

Hatshepsut's reign was not without controversy. The fact that she was a female ruler in a predominantly male-dominated society led to attempts by subsequent pharaohs to erase her legacy. Many of her statues and reliefs were defaced or destroyed, and her name was omitted from official records.

The mummy of Hatshepsut was discovered in 1903 in the Valley of the Kings by Howard Carter, the same archaeologist who later discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun. The examination of her remains provided valuable insights into her life, health, and cause of death.

Hatshepsut's reign had a lasting impact on ancient Egyptian history. Her reign and accomplishments challenged traditional gender roles and demonstrated that a woman could successfully rule as pharaoh. Her reign is considered a pivotal moment in the history of female empowerment in ancient Egypt.