**The growing power of the priesthood of Amun**

With the constant influx of money and flurry of building projects at the temple of Karnak at Thebes, it meant that a large contingent of priests was employed to fulfil the various roles a temple required.

Over time, these priests came to hold a lot of power, both in a religious and an economic sense.

The Karnak temple directly owned a lot of the farmland around Thebes, and the income from them flowed directly into the temple coffers.

By the middle of the 18th Dynasty, the high priest of Amun at Karnak was in control of as much income as the pharaoh himself. This included a great deal of political power.

As a result, the priesthood of Amun was one of the most powerful institutions in New Kingdom Egypt.

By the reign of Amenhotep III (1390 to 1352 BC), tensions between the Karnak priesthood and the pharaoh became well-known.

On one hand, the pharaoh needed to receive legitimacy from the god of Amun to justify his position on the throne and to sanction military expansion.

On the other, the priests of Amun at Karnak relied upon the continued monetary gifts they received from the pharaoh as a result of these successful campaigns.

However, both the high priest and the pharaoh saw each other as a rival centre of power in Egypt.

The conflict between the pharaoh and the Karnak priesthood may have fueled a dramatic religious revolution of pharaoh Amenhotep IV, who was the son of Amenhotep III.

Five years into the reign of the new pharaoh, he announced that he was no longer worshipping Amun.