

## Key to the plans

Any degree of appreciation for the Amun temple of Karnak as it is now, requires some understanding of its building history. For this purpose, a (very) short summary of that history is here included. The key is therefore presented in chronological order, per contributing king. Work of these kings done elsewhere in the Karnak area - including the north-south axis of the Amun temple, from the 7th till the 10th pylon - is ignored. In the case of Tuthmosis III, several of his works have a different color, to clarify the overall picture.

More details - both about the building history and the meaning of the various parts of the temple - will be given in the (forthcoming) Description.



The "Temple of the Middle Kingdom" is generally attributed to Sesostri I (12th dynasty). Today, only the alabaster pedestal for a shrine, and a series of three large (heavily eroded) granite sills in front of it remain. Of its original plan, nothing more is known with certainty than its general outline, and the sequence of three small rooms at the back.

Although Amenhotep I (18th dynasty) has certainly been active in Karnak, he has had the bad luck that all of his constructions were later taken down by his successors. Thanks to the AE custom of "burying" everything that once belonged to a god - be it statues, or buildings - we can at least reconstruct some of it. The Open Air Museum now holds a fine little alabaster shrine from this period.



Tuthmosis I (18th dynasty) was responsible for a major extension of the temple. His works included the 4th and 5th pylon, a hypostyle (pillared hall) between these pylons, a pair of obelisks before the 4th pylon, and a new enclosure wall surrounding the whole temple. Until Amenhotep III erected the 3rd pylon, the 4th pylon was the entrance to the temple. The first version of the hypostyle between the 4th and 5th pylon had one row of wooden columns, and a wooden roof. Later, Tuthmosis I replaced at least part of the wooden columns by ones of stone. The roof remained of wood.



Against the south wall of the enclosure of Tuthmosis I lies a complex of uncertain meaning - maybe for coronation rites. Since Tuthmosis I projected his enclosure further to the south, apparently for no other reason than to include it, it (or a predecessor of it) must already have existed then. In its current (mostly ruined) state, at least part of it is from Tuthmosis III.



There are some reasons for assuming that Tuthmosis II (18th dynasty) erected two obelisks in front of the 4th pylon, before those of his father Tuthmosis I. They were later removed by Amenhotep III, when he had the 3rd pylon constructed.



Hatshepsut (18th dynasty) added at least the following elements:

- a complex of offering rooms, right in front of the temple of the Middle Kingdom;
- a bark shrine of red quartzite on a black granite plinth in the middle section of this complex, were now stands the bark shrine of Philippus Arrhideus; known as the Red Chapel, it has been rebuild in the Open Air Museum;
- and two giant obelisks inside the hypostyle of her father, Tuthmosis I.

She probably added some other structures too, that were later completely removed by Tuthmosis III.



Under Tuthmosis III (18th dynasty), the "temple proper" behind the 4th pylon, also known as the Ipet-Sut, received its definitive shape. Work consisted of a/o:

- the transition of the hypostyle of Tuthmosis I to its final form (with a double row of stone columns, and a stone roof);
- a pair of massive enclosures around Hatshepsut's obelisks, right up to the new roof of the hypostyle, hiding them from view;

- the 6th pylon (probably replacing an earlier structure at the same site);
- a new bark shrine replacing that of Hatshepsut;
- the hall of Annals between the 6th pylon and the new bark shrine;
- and a third pair of obelisks before the 4th pylon (between those of his grandfather Tuthmosis I and those of his father Tuthmosis II).

#### Other works of Tuthmosis III:



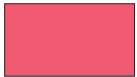
A series of small shrines and some storerooms, surrounding the temple of the Middle Kingdom and the offering rooms of Hatshepsut (possibly copies from earlier buildings by Amenhotep I).



A complex at the back of the temple, dedicated to the person of the king, that was called "Mencheperre Ach Menu": "Tuthmosis III is glorious in monuments". Today, it is usually referred to as "the Achmenu". The series of storerooms north of Tuthmosis I's enclosure wall also belong to the Achmenu.



A new stone enclosure wall around the extended temple, including the Achmenu.



And a small chapel at the back of the Achmenu, facing east, with two more obelisks.



Amenhotep II (18th dynasty) completed the decoration of the southern wing of the hypostyle behind the 4th pylon. He further added two small booths to the sides of the enclosures around Hatshepsut's obelisks. Of these, only the foundations (two re-used column bases) still remain.



Tuthmosis IV (18th dynasty): his work was mainly directed at the entrance of the temple: the 4th pylon and its forecourt. He added an extension to the gate of the pylon, and a portico with two columns - all gilded. In the Open Air Museum, a peristyle (gallery) of square pillars is being reconstructed, that once stood in this area. On the left (north) side of the 4th pylon, the point of its former attachment to the pylon can still be seen.



Amenhotep III (18th dynasty) build the 3rd pylon. It was later modified considerably in connection with the construction of the great hypostyle by Seti I. To make room for his pylon, he removed a/o the two obelisks of Tuthmosis II.



Horemheb (18th dynasty) was responsible for constructing the massive 2nd pylon.



We now finally leave the 18th dynasty: Seti I of the 19th build the great hypostyle, with a total of 134 columns (including the 12 giants of the central nave). In the process, he added a vertical wall to the sloping front of the 3rd pylon, and side walls between the 2nd and 3rd pylons. He also added two small rooms to either side of Tuthmosis III's chapel at the back of the Achmenu.

His son Ramesses II (also 19th dynasty) was mostly active (in Karnak, that is) in decorating already existing walls with reliefs, such as in the great hypostyle of Seti I, and on the outer face of the enclosure wall of Tuthmosis III.



Seti II (19th dynasty): in addition to some restoration works, he build a triple bark station before the 2nd pylon, facing the road that led towards the temple.



Somewhat later, Ramesses III (20th dynasty) build a small temple on the other side of the entrance road. It is a unique building: half temple, half bark station.



During the 19th or 20th dynasty, the southern enclosure wall of Tuthmosis III was extended further west. Ramesses IX constructed the gate in this wall that is now the entrance to the "Cour de la Cachette": the court behind the 7th pylon.



Sheshonq I of the 22nd dynasty constructed a large, open court before the 2nd pylon, fitted with a peristyle. Presumably the walls of this court also continued on the place where now stands the 1st pylon, with a gate - or even a pylon - in the middle. In the court are now also two empty pedestals. They may be from the same period, and once carried small obelisks.



Taharqa: this king of the 25th dynasty build a gigantic colonnade inside the new court, consisting of two rows of five huge columns each.



Although there is no written proof for it, it is generally assumed that Nectanebo I (30th dynasty) was responsible for the construction of the massive 1st pylon, probably replacing a structure from the Third Intermediate Period. He also added the enormous mudbrick enclosure wall that still surrounds the Precinct of Amun.



Philippus Arrhideus: this halfbrother and successor of Alexander the Great had the old bark shrine of Tuthmosis III (then already 1100 years old) replaced by a new one.



The Ptolemies were mostly active as restorers. The constructional elements that they added to the buildings were very modest. They furnished the gates of the 1st and 2nd pylon with a sort of inner door jambs - maybe to allow the use of smaller doors.



Just south of the northern part of Tuthmosis I's enclosure wall lie a few structures of unknown date, and uncertain meaning. To the east is a pit in the form of a Nilometer. West of this is another pit. Both contain groundwater. On the far west are the remains of a few rooms.



All statues, sphinxes and empty pedestals for statues, regardless of period, are represented in yellow. In this way, they can be distinguished from pillars, altars and pedestals meant for barks, naoses and obelisks.

There are further a couple of conspicuously empty spots on the plan, notably on the north side. This does not per se mean that there was never anything there. Further excavations may still reveal new structures.