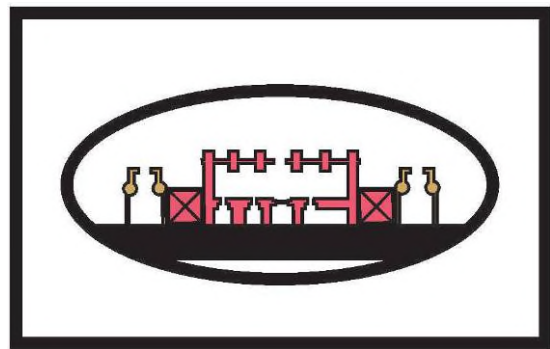




### 3. The Back Temple

Egyptian temples were normally orientated west-east, with their entrance on the west side. Because of the importance of the east as the place where the sun rises, many temples were over time supplemented with a small “Back Temple”: located behind the temple proper, facing east. So too the Amun temple.



*On either side of the Back Temple was an obelisk (now both gone).*



*To the left the Amun's temple's back wall, to the right of this the Back Temple.*



The outer wall of the Back Temple was ornamented with king's statues.

In the middle, right in the pathway of the rising sun, was a gate.

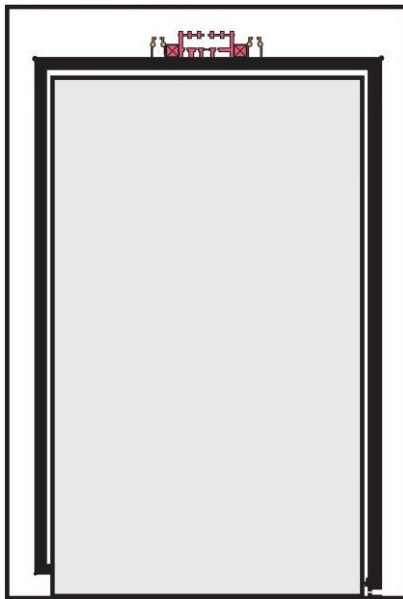


Through it, the sun shone on a more than life-size alabaster double statue, of the king and his god, their arms around each other's shoulder.





#### 4. The Inner Enclosure Wall

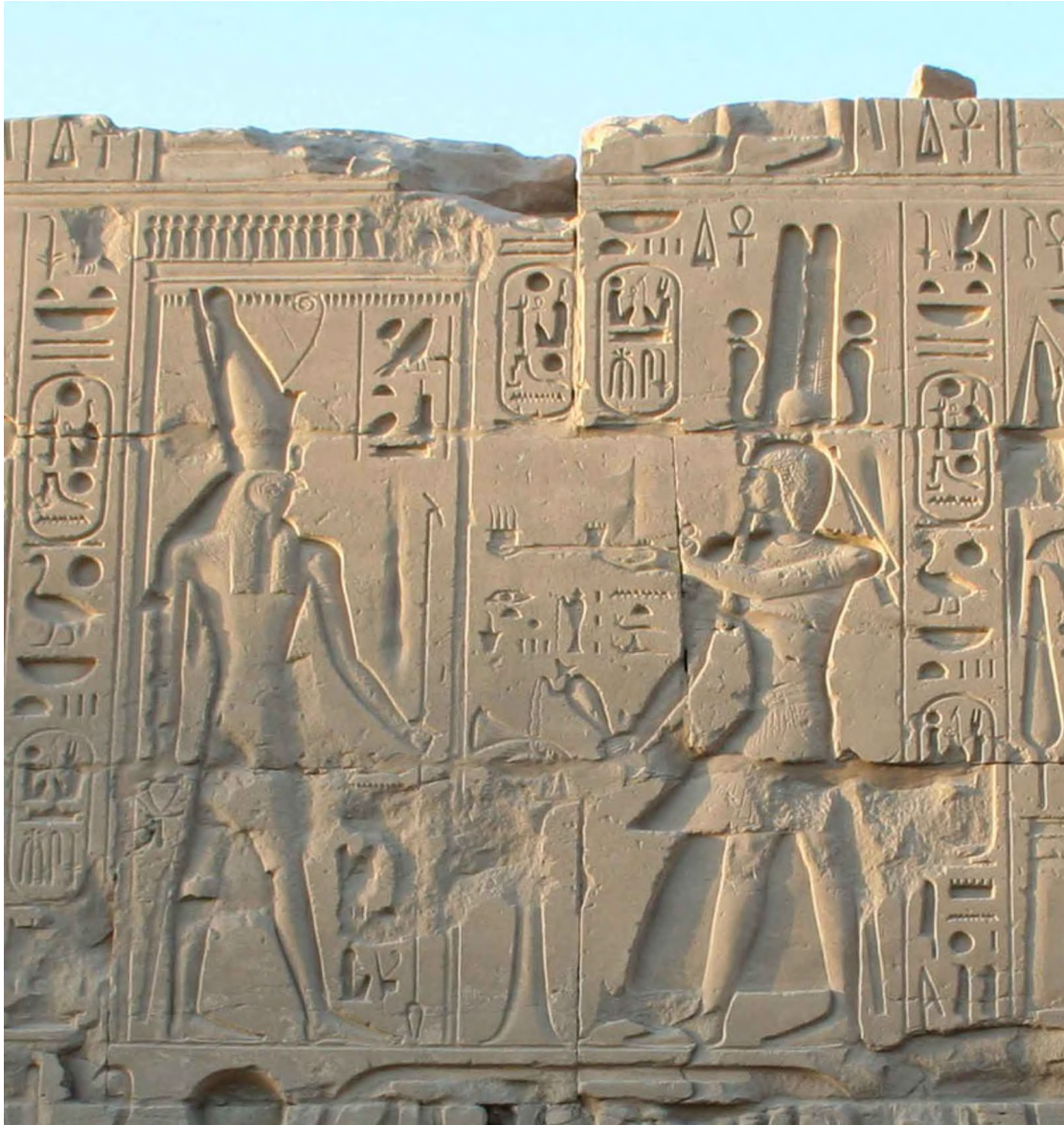


As we have seen on the plan on page 4, the Amun complex as such was surrounded by a mud-brick enclosure wall. In addition to this, part of the primary axis had its own stone enclosure wall. It stood tightly around the buildings that made up the main part of the complex in the days of Thutmosis III (who had it erected): from the 4<sup>th</sup> pylon till the Akhmenu.

(This added separation is reminiscent of the inner enclosure walls that formerly stood closely around pyramids.)

Below is part of this wall's inside. The design of the relief is a series of groups of two, comprising of the king and a god. The king comes to this house as a guest, and as courtesy requires: he brings gifts along. From right to left we see him bringing a series of stone vases, a tray with food, an offering of burning incense, and a sphinx (the sphinx as a token, in the form of a miniature sphinx).





This is a blow-up of the previous picture. The god to the left, with the falcon's head, is "Horus, son of Isis, her beloved". Although this is a temple of Amun, who resides here together with his wife Mut and their son Khons, we meet here - as indeed in all Egyptian temples - a host of other gods: guests of the house. So the king brings gifts for them, too. With his right hand, he pours a libation, while he holds in his left hand a carrying stick with two cups with smoldering incense. The caption reads: "Making incense offerings and libations for his father (the god)".

By the way: one can always orientate oneself in an Egyptian temple, using the reliefs as signposts. The king has come to visit the god, and we see him walking here from right to left, towards the god. This means that the shrine of the god (which is always at the far end of the temple) is to the left, and the temple's entrance (where your bus will be waiting) is to the right.





On the outside of the enclosure wall, a long series of reliefs is virtually untouched. Here we see how the king offers a small figurine to the god Ptah. It is an image of the goddess Maat. So the caption reads: "Presenting Maat to his father (the god)."

Ancient Egyptian iconography must in almost every case be understood in a literal sense, but in this case, the action is symbolic. The goddess Maat personifies the principle of justice and order; more specifically: the ordained, god-given cosmic order of things. It is one of the king's primary tasks to safeguard this natural, cosmic order. When the king "presents Maat to the god", this means that he is acquitting himself of his sacred duty to protect and preserve the fabric of creation.



Here the king holds a large tray in his hands, with all sorts of food: different types of bread, cakes and fruits. He offers it to the goddess Mut: "Mut the Great, lady of the sky, mistress of the Two Lands ( Egypt)." In addition to the tray, other gifts are placed before her: a low stand with three systra (musical instruments: a sort of tambourines) and two pectorals on a necklace. Above this we see four stone pots containing unguents, each with a lotus flower. The caption reads: "Presenting all [good] things to the mistress of heaven".

Her reply is also recorded: "I give to you all food [you may require]".