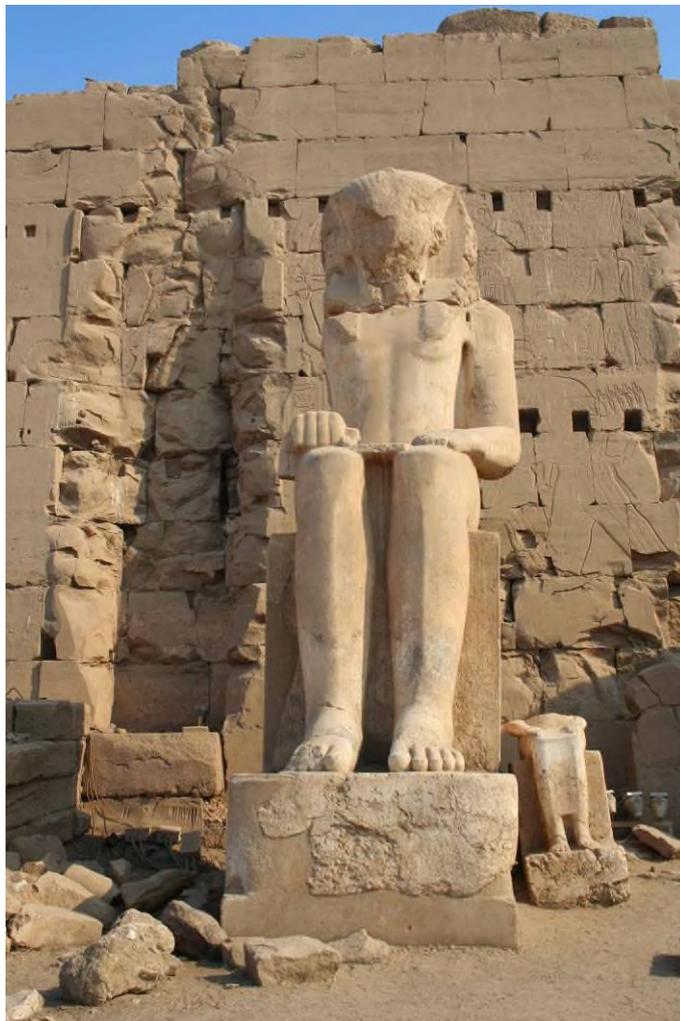




These colossal statues are queen Hatshepsut's. She mostly had herself represented as a man.⁹

The small, rectangular holes in the surface of the pylon are of much later date. After the collapse of ancient Egyptian culture, its monuments often served as convenient quarries for dressed stone, but at times also as starting point for new housing development: providing a solid back wall for new dwellings. The holes were cut to receive wooden beams supporting a new story or the roof.

By the time the ancient buildings were re-colonized in this manner, some had disappeared partly under the sands. That is why these holes can be sometimes so far up on the walls.



⁹ Which is probably why her memory later had to be erased. The Egyptians had no objections to a queen every now and again, but travesty could under no circumstances be condoned.



Here is part of the passageway in the 8th pylon. The way in, to the center of the temple, runs from left to right. So the king, having come to visit his kin, walks from left to right. He is accompanied by Khonsu (to the left), and Mut (to the right). Both hold an ankh-sign - symbol of life - to his nose: they grant him life.

(The shallow, vertical markings in the image are the result of scraping off chalk dust, to serve in medicines and magic potions... You can see these everywhere.)

Further to the right, the king is being welcomed by Amun, who is seated on his throne.



With his right hand, Amun presents him with a staff: symbol of dominion. On top of the staff is an ankh-sign: so he receives life and dominion at the same time. In his left hand, the god extends a long staff with countless notches: each notch stands for one regnal year. The three emblems on top of the staff symbolize the celebration of jubilees. Taken together this means, that the god grants him a long reign, with many jubilees.

6.3. The 10th pylon



The 9th pylon is all but gone, and at first sight, the 10th appears to be hardly more than a ruin, too.

As we approach, we see a low platform, laden with blocks of stone.

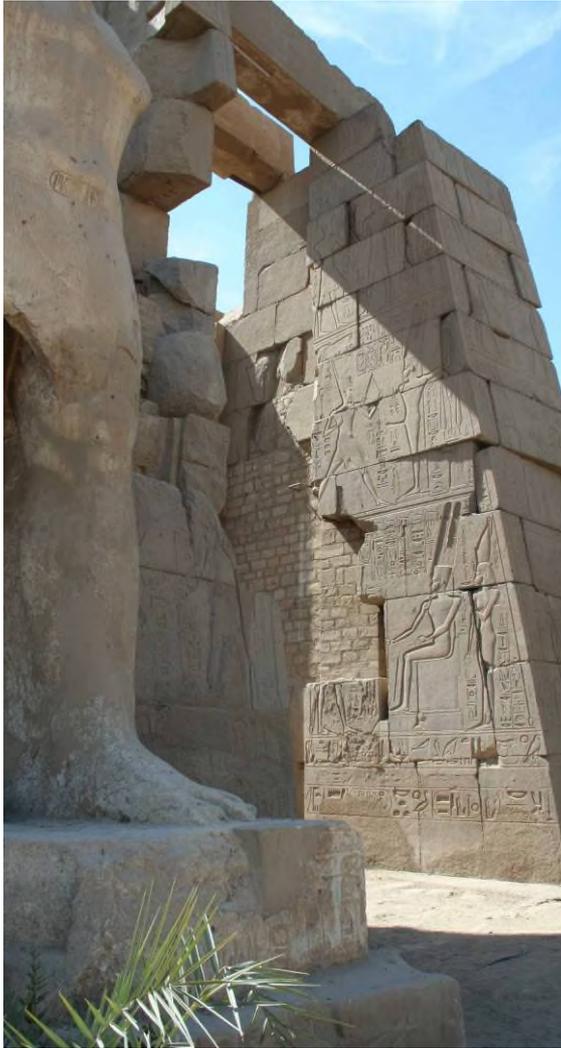
Stone blocks of all shapes and sizes can be found everywhere on this vast terrain. Platforms like this serve as storage facility, designed to protect the blocks against the influence of ground water. Since the construction of the Aswan dam, which allowed for much more intensive irrigation, the water table has risen considerably,



now threatening tombs and temples alike all over the country. (As it rains here less than once a year, a roof could be dispensed with).

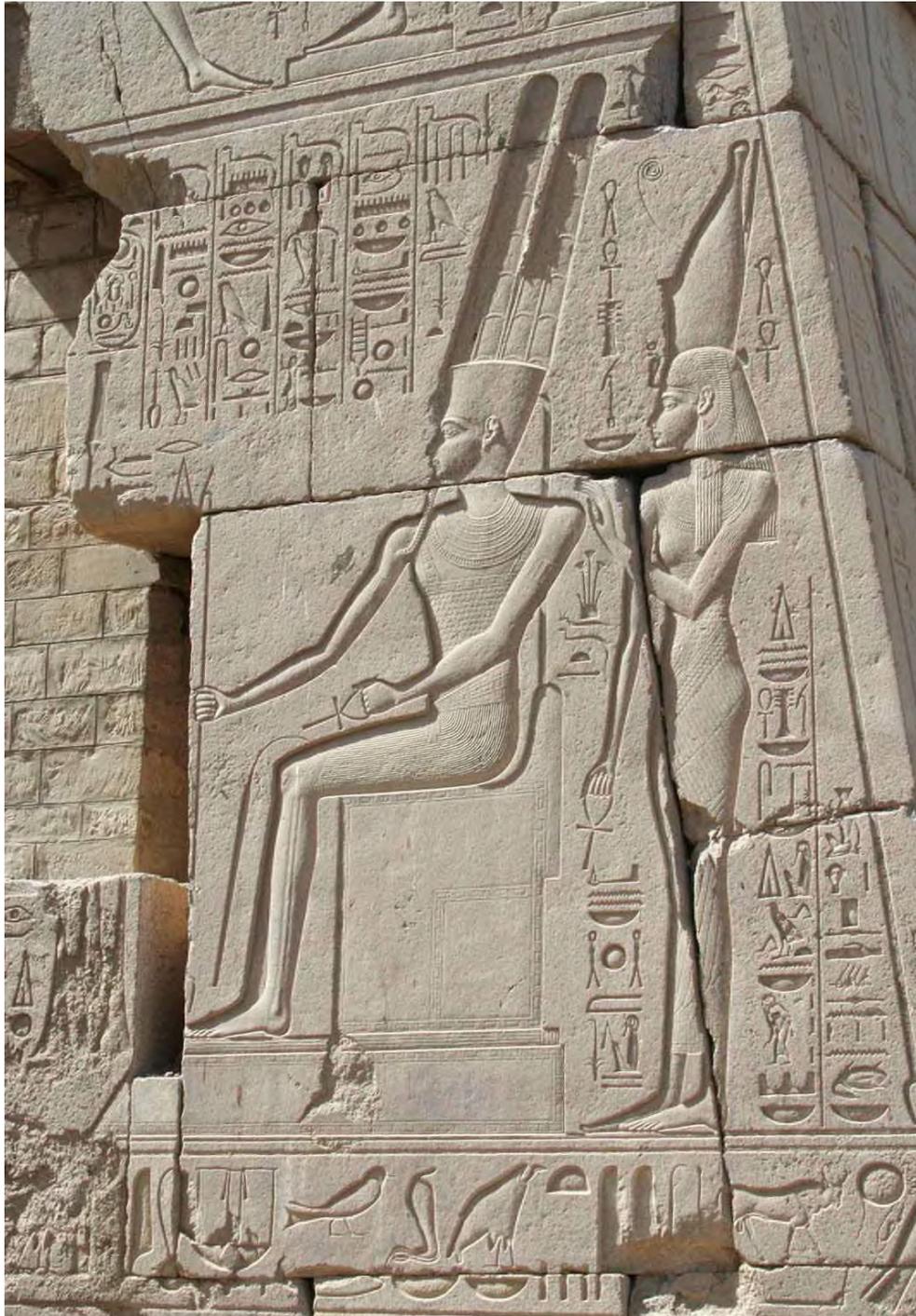


Coming closer to the pylon, we find that two colossi are still standing upright - even if they have to do without a head.



And the doorway is also still there - be it in a most precarious state.





In the passageway of the 10th pylon, we suddenly find this stunningly beautiful relief, with the now familiar theme of the gods, awaiting the king. Amun is sitting on his throne. Behind him stands his faithful wife Mut. As the 10th pylon represents the outermost boundary of the complex, they really look out: into the outside world. The text reads:

Words, spoken by Amun-Re, king of the gods: "How beautiful is the monument that you have made for me. (...) [For this,] I give to you the lifetime of Re, and the years-of-Horus as king (i.e.: that you will be king for as long as Horus was)."

And Mut adds: "I give to you an eternity as king of the Two Lands"...

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