

A Place of Worship and Burial:
The Site of the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III in Thebes

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A PLACE OF WORSHIP
AND BURIAL: THE SITE OF
THE TEMPLE OF MILLIONS
OF YEARS OF THUTMOSE III
IN THEBES

— S H A D U M —

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	15
Fathi Yassin Abd El-Karim	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	17
INTRODUCTION	19
Christian Leblanc	
Chapter 1	
THE TEMPLE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES	23
Myriam Seco Álvarez & Javier Martínez Babón	
1.1. Introduction	24
1.2. Previous Works	24
1.3. Synthesis of the Construction Phases	25
1.4. Description of the Temple	28
1.4.1. The Entrance Pylon	28
1.4.2. The First Courtyard	30
1.4.3. The Second Courtyard	31
1.4.4. Upper Terrace	41
1.5. Finds	50
1.5.1. Sandstone and Limestone Reliefs and Inscriptions	50
1.5.2. Lintels from the Khonsu Complex	58
1.5.3. Statues and Stelae	59
1.5.4. Foundation Deposit	64
1.5.5. Papyri, Ostraca and Graffiti	65
1.5.6. Seal Impressions and Stoppers	68
1.5.7. Mudbricks	73
1.6. Conclusions	75
References	76

Chapter 2

THE STUDY OF THE SANDSTONE RELIEF FRAGMENTS

DISCOVERED IN THE <i>HENKET-ANKH</i>	83
Linda Chapon	
2.1. Introduction.....	84
2.2. King Titulary and Iconography Preserved on Sandstone Remains.....	85
2.2.1. The Titulary of Thutmose III	85
2.2.2. The Figure of the King Preserved on Sandstone Remains	88
2.3. Members of the Royal Family	92
2.3.1. Fragments Referring to Thutmose I, Thutmose II and Amenhotep II.....	92
2.3.2. Fragments Referring to Hatshepsut	94
2.3.3. Fragments Referring to Queens and Princesses	95
2.4. Divinities.....	96
2.5. Offering Scenes.....	98
2.5.1. Scenes Related to the Royal Cult	98
2.5.2. Ritual Scenes Related to Divinities	102
2.5.3. Fragments of a Festival Calendar	104
2.6. Scenes Probably Included in the Hypostyle Hall and the Peristyle.....	107
2.6.1. Processions	107
2.6.2. Fragments Related to Military Scenes.....	109
2.6.3. Other Type of Scenes Identified Based on Sandstone Fragments of Reliefs	109
2.7. Architectural Elements other than Walls Scenes	112
2.7.1. Columns.....	112
2.7.2. Pillars	112
2.8. Conclusion	115
References.....	117

Chapter 3

REPORT ON THE RITUAL OF THE HOURS FROM THE TEMPLE
OF THUTMOSE III

125

Kenneth Griffin

3.1. Introduction.....	126
3.2. Architecture of the Room.....	126

3.3. General Remarks.....	128
3.4. The Hours of the Day.....	129
3.5. The Hours of the Night	134
3.6. Conclusions.....	139
References.....	140

Chapter 4

VOTIVE PRACTICES AND DAILY ACTIVITIES

IN THE <i>HENKET-ANKH</i>	143
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María Franco González

4.1. Introduction.....	144
4.2. Archaeological Context: Issues Regarding the Artefacts.....	145
4.3. Stelae.....	146
4.4. Figurines and Models.....	151
4.5. Objects of Personal Adornment	155
4.6. Mud Sealings and Seal Impressions	158
4.7. Tools and Implements of Daily Use.....	160
4.8. Stone Receptacles and Portable Offering Tables	164
4.9. Conclusions.....	166
References.....	167

Chapter 5

THE HIERATIC MATERIAL FROM THE TEMPLE OF MILLIONS
OF YEARS OF THUTMOSE III: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

171

Fredrik Hagen

5.1. Introduction.....	172
5.2. Archaeological Context.....	173
5.3. Administrative Texts	175
5.4. Literary Texts	189
5.5. Research Perspectives.....	196
References.....	199

Chapter 6

TOMBS OF THE FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD AND THE MIDDLE KINGDOM.....	205
Myriam Seco Álvarez & Javier Martínez Babón	
6.1. Introduction.....	206
6.2. Tombs Dating to the First Intermediate Period/Early Middle Kingdom	206
6.2.1. Grave 1	208
6.2.2. Grave 2	210
6.2.3. Graves 3 and 4	212
6.2.4. Grave 5	214
6.2.5. Grave 6	216
6.2.6. Tomb XVIII	218
6.2.7. Tomb XIX.....	221
6.2.8. Tomb XX	224
6.2.9. Grave 13	227
6.2.10. Grave 18	228
6.2.11. Grave 28.....	236
6.2.12. Grave 29	238
6.2.13. Grave 32	240
6.2.14. Barrow 1	241
6.2.15. Barrow 2	241
6.3. Middle Kingdom Tombs: Twelfth Dynasty/Early Thirteenth Dynasty.	245
6.3.1. Tomb III.....	245
6.3.2. Tomb VIII	248
6.3.3. Tomb IX.....	248
6.3.4. Tomb X	255
6.3.5. Tomb XI.....	258
6.3.6. Tomb XIV	273
6.3.7. Tomb XV	277
6.3.8. Tomb XXIII	281
6.4. Conclusions.....	281
References.....	284

Chapter 7

TOMBS OF THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE AND LATE PERIODS 293

Myriam Seco Álvarez & Javier Martínez Babón

7.1. Introduction.....	294
7.2. Tombs Dating to the Third Intermediate Period / Twenty-second Dynasty	294
7.2.1. Tomb XXIV	294
7.3. Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasty Tombs.....	308
7.3.1. Tomb XVII.....	310
7.3.2. Tomb XXI.....	313
7.3.3. Tomb XXII.....	319
7.3.4. Tomb XXVI.....	336
7.3.5. Tomb XXVII.....	340
7.3.6. Tomb XXVIII	346
7.4. Conclusions.....	353
References.....	353

Chapter 8

 FRAGMENTS OF CARTONNAGES AND COFFINS OF THE 1ST
 MILLENNIUM BC DISCOVERED OUTSIDE THE ENCLOSURES
 OF THE THEBAN MEMORIAL TEMPLE OF THUTMOSE III 359

France Jamen

8.1. Introduction.....	360
8.2. Cartonnage Cases and Coffins of the Third Intermediate Period and the Late Period.....	360
8.2.1. Cartonnages Cases and Coffins from the Tomb XVII	360
8.2.1.1. Description of the Context of the Discovery and of the Fragments.....	360
8.2.1.2. Interpretation and Dating	364
8.2.2. Cartonnages Cases and Coffins from the Tomb XXII	368
8.2.2.1. Second Burial Chamber	369
8.2.2.2. Third Burial Chamber:	373
8.2.3. Cartonnage Case and Coffin from the Tomb XXIV	381
8.2.4. Cartonnages Cases and Coffins from the Tomb XXVII	382
8.2.4.1. Archaeological Context of the Discovery	382
8.2.4.2. Description of the Coffin Fragments	383

8.2.4.3. Identity of the Owner and Other Persons mentioned ..	384
8.2.4.4. Interpretation and Dating	388
8.3. Cartonnages Cases of the Ptolemaic Period	389
8.3.1. The Cartonnage Case from the Tomb XXII.....	389
8.3.1.1. Funeral Masks	389
8.3.1.2. <i>Wesekh</i> Collars	395
8.3.1.3. Cartonnage Apron	397
8.3.1.4. A Hypocephalus	401
8.4. Conclusion	406
References.....	407

Capítulo 9

UN GRAN PROYECTO EN MARCHA. EL ESTUDIO ANTROPOLÓGICO Y TAFONÓMICO DE LOS RESTOS HUMANOS DE LAS NECRÓPOLIS ASOCIADAS AL TEMPLO DE MILLONES DE AÑOS DE TUTMOSIS III.....	413
---	-----

Victoria Peña Romo

9.1. Introducción.....	414
9.2. Material y métodos	415
9.3. La variedad de los tipos de enterramiento, una constante de interés cultural y social.....	416
9.4. Los enterramientos de la necrópolis del promontorio (dinastía XI): una primera aproximación.....	419
9.4.1. Características de los depósitos y objetivos	419
9.4.2. Protocolo y tafonomía	420
9.4.3. El ejemplo de la tumba colectiva Grave 31 en la Necrópolis del Promontorio.....	421
9.5. El ejemplo de una sepultura compleja. La tumba XXVII situada al exterior del muro perimetral oeste.....	428
9.5.1. Características de los depósitos y objetivos	428
9.5.2. Listado de individuos.....	431
9.6. Conclusión	441
Bibliografía	443

Capítulo 10

OFRENDAS ANIMALES EN LAS TUMBAS DEL ENTORNO DEL TEMPLO DE MILLONES DE AÑOS DE TUTMOSIS III.....	445
Eloísa Bernáldez-Sánchez, Esteban García-Viñas y José Luis Ramos-Soldado	
10.1. Introducción	446
10.2. Material y metodología.....	448
10.3. Resultados	449
10.3.1. Final del Primer Periodo Intermedio e inicios del Reino Medio	453
10.3.2. Reino Medio	455
10.3.3. Final del Reino Medio y Segundo Periodo Intermedio	455
10.3.4. Reino Nuevo	462
10.3.5. Tercer Período Intermedio-Periodo Tardío	462
10.3.6. Época Baja.....	462
10.3.7. Reino Medio con reocupaciones.....	465
10.3.8. Especies intrusivas.....	468
10.4. Discusión	468
Bibliografía	475

FOREWORD

The Theban Necropolis

Luxor, ancient Thebes, is one of the largest and wealthiest archaeological sites in the world. It lies approximately 700 kilometres south of Cairo, where the modern city mainly occupies the East Bank. Although modern Luxor has covered a large part of the remains of Thebes, the ancient capital of Egypt still shines through the tombs and treasures of Western Thebes. It is a very rich archaeological site with hundreds of excavated and unexcavated tombs belonging to royalty, officials, priests, and warriors. In 1979, UNESCO listed Thebes as one of the primary sites in World Heritage. The necropolis is commonly divided into several parts, called by their modern Arabic names. These parts are, from north to south: el-Tarif, Dra Abu el-Naga (north and south), Asasif, el-Khokha, Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (upper and lower part), Southern Asasif, and Qurnet Murai. Additionally, there is the site of Deir el-Medina, with the tombs of the workmen, and the royal necropolises of the Valleys of the Kings and Queens. The entire necropolis stretches for more than five kilometres north to south.

At the moment, the necropolis of Thebes is administratively divided into three areas: northern, central, and southern. The central one extends from Jabal Deir al-Bahari in the north to Qurnet Marai in the south and includes the temples of Deir al-Bahari, the tombs of Asasif, el-Khokha, and Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, in addition to the memorial temples of kings Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, Ramses II, and Merneptah. The plan of the Supreme Council of Antiquities is to develop a site management plan to facilitate work in the area and increase the archaeological locations available to visitors. Obviously, this plan includes the *Henket-ankh*, the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III, especially after the excavations and restoration work carried out by the Egyptian-Spanish mission at the site of the temple. Thanks to this project, the temple can be placed on a tourist map so that visitors can enjoy visiting this fascinating site.

Dr. Fathi Yassin Abd El-Karim

*General Director of the Upper Egypt Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
and Egyptian partner of Thutmosis III Temple Project*

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INTRODUCTION

Dans la lignée de ses prédécesseurs comme de ses successeurs, Thoutmosis III a fait construire sur la rive gauche de Thèbes, dans ce “Bel Occident” comme se plaisaient à l’appeler les anciens Égyptiens, un “temple de millions d’années”. Situé entre celui de la reine Hatshepsout au nord et celui de son fils Amenhotep II au sud, cet édifice aux structures en brique crue et en pierre était désigné jadis sous le beau nom de “Celle-qui-dote-*Menkheperré*-de-vie” (*t3 hwt Mn-hpr-Rꜥ hnkt ʿnh*). Lieu où était glorifié le culte royal et magnifiée la fonction qui était celle de Pharaon au Nouvel Empire (-1580 à -1080), le “temple de millions d’années”, était une sorte de conservatoire de la grandeur d’un règne. Par son architecture comme par son iconographie, il devait pérenniser l’image quasi divine de son constructeur et perpétuer sa mémoire pour l’éternité. Déjà de son vivant, le roi y était célébré lors de ses jubilé et des autres fêtes qui scandaient l’année. Sous une forme particulière, il y faisait l’objet d’un véritable culte auquel était rattaché un clergé spécifique. À la mort du souverain, le “temple de millions d’années” rejoignait les biens de la Couronne. Il continuait de fonctionner sous ses successeurs et d’être entretenu, voire restauré selon les besoins. Un culte funéraire y était alors mis en place, ce qui a souvent fait croire, à tort, que ces temples n’avaient que cette vocation exclusive. Ce qui n’était visiblement pas le cas. Lorsqu’ils disparaissent à la fin du Nouvel Empire, après l’extinction du culte royal, ces mémoriaux seront placés, à Thèbes, sous l’autorité du clergé d’Amon de Karnak et parfois repris, comme le temple de Thoutmosis III ou le Ramesseum, pour y organiser une nouvelle gestion sur leur périmètre. Durant la Troisième Période intermédiaire, ils servirent notamment de nécropole.

Outre son temple de millions d’années, on sait que Thoutmosis III fut le constructeur d’un autre temple, le *Djeser-Akhet* ou “L’horizon-(d’Amon)-est-sublime”, mi-toyen au temple de la reine Hatshepsout à Deir el-Bahari, et aujourd’hui en grande partie détruit. À l’entrée du dromos conduisant à cet édifice se dressait jadis un kiosque dont la toponymie a gardé le souvenir (*P3 s3h ntr n nswt* ou “La proximité du dieu et du roi”). Il abritait une statue de Thoutmosis III à laquelle rendait visite le dieu de Karnak lors de son séjour à l’occident de la capitale méridionale. Il semble également que Thoutmosis III fut le co-fondateur avec la reine Hatshepsout, d’un autre édifice, toujours établi sur cette même rive du Nil et auquel on avait donné le

nom de *Kha-Akhet* ou “L’horizon-où-apparaît-Amon”. Si ce dernier fut entièrement démantelé comme le prouvent les centaines de blocs réutilisés notamment lors de la mise en œuvre du Ramesseum, son emplacement initial reste jusqu’à présent problématique.

Comme pour ces deux autres fondations, l’histoire du temple de millions d’années de Thoutmosis III est fondamentalement associée à l’histoire de la rive gauche de Thèbes. Au temps de sa splendeur, “Celle-qui-dote-*Menkheperre*-de-vie” constituait une station privilégiée où la barque d’Amon venait se reposer au cours de la “Belle Fête de la Vallée”. C’est d’ailleurs sans doute à cette occasion où l’on célébrait le réveil d’un nouveau cycle, que s’incarnait cette fusion filiale si particulière entre l’entité royale et le dieu, donnant ainsi vie à l’image de l’Amon-de-*Menkheperre*, hypostase divine de Thoutmosis III.

Si dans ce contexte, un clergé était chargé d’honorer quotidiennement cette transfiguration royale qui prenait place au cœur du sanctuaire, d’autres tâches qui pouvaient paraître moins sacrées ou moins nobles, étaient pourtant tout aussi essentielles pour assurer le bon fonctionnement du temple. En effet, on sait que ces institutions avaient également un rôle économique et administratif à jouer dans le cadre de la vie sociale qui était celle des Thébains de l’époque. C’est ainsi que l’on stockait là, dans des magasins bordant le temenos, des produits et des denrées nécessaires pour entretenir les cultes mais aussi pour répondre aux besoins de la population locale et notamment de celle des artisans de la Set Maât (Deir el-Medineh), qui œuvrait sur les chantiers du roi. Des fonctionnaires royaux devaient donc gérer ces entrepôts, pourvoir à leur réapprovisionnement et redistribuer les productions ou victuailles solides (blé, pains, viandes et poissons séchés, légumes divers) et liquides (vin, bière, huile, etc.) qui venaient des domaines de la Couronne ou qui étaient, pour certaines, préparées sur place. Après de belles époques de prospérité, le royaume dut faire face à des périodes de pénurie ou de pauvreté. Vers la fin du règne de Ramsès III, par exemple, alors qu’une activité était toujours présente dans le temple de millions d’années de Thoutmosis III, on sait grâce à des archives conservées de l’époque, que les artisans de Deir el-Medineh s’étaient mis en grève. N’ayant pas reçu depuis plusieurs décades leur salaire en nature, ils vinrent alors manifester au Ramesseum, aux abords du temple d’Aÿ-Horemheb et à l’arrière de celui de Thoutmosis III. Lors de ces circonstances, accourus pour tenter de les raisonner, le scribe Nakhtamon, fils d’Ipouy, les deux chefs d’équipe et les inspecteurs de Thèbes-Ouest ne purent qu’écouter en silence leurs doléances... La manifestation se poursuivit jusqu’au soir et ce n’est certainement que sur la promesse de voir aboutir leurs revendications que

les artisans regagnèrent le village. Au fil des règnes suivants, la situation continua de s'aggraver jusqu'à causer, à la fin de l'époque ramesside, la profanation, le pillage, puis l'abandon de ces vénérables mémoriaux.

Avec le temps, le temple de millions d'années de Thoutmosis III dut subir les outrages de prédateurs : dès la Troisième Période intermédiaire jusqu'à bien plus tard encore, on vint se servir abondamment en briques crues, matériau avec lequel cet édifice avait été en grande partie construit. Jadis et sans doute aménagée par les habitants des villages voisins, une piste en traversa la première cour du sud au nord et fut malheureusement transformée par la suite en une route asphaltée (le Tariq el-Saff) séparant dès lors le mémorial en deux. Abandonné et négligé pendant des décennies, le temple de Thoutmosis III n'était plus qu'une imposante ruine, connue sous les noms de Birbet el-Brinz ("Le Temple du Prince") ou encore de El-Makhzin ("Le Magasin"), tandis que son premier pylône, bordant la zone agricole était dénommée Hettan Abou Daraa ("Les murs du Père Daraa"), en raison des vestiges encore debout de ses deux montants.

Sous l'autorité du Prof. Dr. Myriam Seco Álvarez du Département de Préhistoire et d'Archéologie de l'Université de Séville, une importante activité archéologique y a pris naissance en 2008 et se poursuit jusqu'à présent avec toujours la même intensité. Une équipe pluridisciplinaire participe à ces travaux durant lesquels de très appréciables découvertes ont pu être effectuées. Il faut aussi reconnaître à cette Mission la belle et courageuse entreprise de restaurer et de valoriser ce site archéologique qui était, il faut bien le reconnaître, en perdition. La monographie qui paraît aujourd'hui livre en une dizaine de chapitres, une abondante somme d'informations nouvelles recueillies grâce aux fouilles et à l'étude du matériel archéologique. Par la variété des sujets abordés par les auteurs, cette publication nous dévoile au fil des pages, une substantielle matière qui attise notre curiosité et vient tout autant et avec profit enrichir nos connaissances sur ce temple dédié à l'illustre mémoire de celui que James Henry Breasted avait surnommé, en raison de ses conquêtes asiatiques, le "Napoléon de l'Égypte antique".

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Chapter 1
THE TEMPLE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

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Abstract:

This chapter presents the most up-to-date discussion on the archaeology of the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III, investigated by the joint Spanish-Egyptian project since 2008. The first archaeological works took place at the site at the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth century. Archaeological efforts spanning twelve campaigns have led to excavations and restorations of the perimeter walls of the building, as well as some architectural elements of the temple.

This paper also offers an overview of some of the most important finds collected during this research period and presents the first results of the analysis, showing how these materials allow us to better understand the history and administration of the temple, the priests, and the rituals that took place there.

Keywords: New Kingdom, Egypt, temple, Thutmose III, West Bank, Thebes

Resumen:

En este capítulo se presenta el estudio arqueológico llevado a término por el proyecto de cooperación hispano-egipcio en el templo de Millones de Años de Tutmosis III, desde el año 2008. Las primeras intervenciones arqueológicas en el yacimiento se remontan a finales del siglo XIX y principios del siglo XX. Sin embargo, las recientes intervenciones arqueológicas, durante doce campañas, han permitido excavar y restaurar los muros perimetrales del edificio y algunos elementos arquitectónicos del templo. Asimismo, este capítulo presenta una relación de los hallazgos más representativos y primeras conclusiones de estudios realizados, las cuales permiten

comprender mejor la historia y la administración del templo, así como las tareas de los sacerdotes y los rituales que se llevaron a término en aquel recinto sagrado.

Palabras claves: Reino Nuevo, Egipto, templo, Tutmosis III, Ribera Oeste, Tebas.

1.1. Introduction

The *Henket-ankh* temple (*ḥwt Ḥnkt-‘nh-Mn-ḥpr-R*, ‘the temple which endows [Menkheperre] | with life’) lies in a wealthy enclave of ancient western Thebes between the hills of the Asasif and el-Khokha and was built over a necropolis dated to the Middle Kingdom.¹

The architects designed this temple on three different levels, extending between the pylon located to the east and the chapels built in the west (see Fig. 1). Very similar to what we find in Hatshepsut’s temple at Deir el-Bahari (Naville 1895; Wysocki 1992: 233-254, pls. 42-47; 1986: 213-228), the second and third levels were connected by a ramp. Today, a modern road crosses the first courtyard, so little can be said of the connection between the first and second levels. The difference in elevation between the ground level (the area of the entrance pylon) and the uppermost part of the temple (the sanctuary located in the uppermost terrace) is about 7.3m (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2020: 179-220).

1.2. Previous Works

The temple was included by Richard Lepsius (1844: pl. 73) in his map of Thebes. Subsequently, three different teams worked there throughout the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. In 1888 and 1889, Georges Daressy excavated architectural remains bonded to the northern enclosure wall (Daressy 1926: 13-16), and in 1905, Arthur Weigall, the chief inspector of the Antiquities Service, worked at various sections of the temple, locating new structures, two foundation deposits, and a Middle Kingdom tomb (Weigall 1906: 121-141 & 1907: 286; Legrain 1906). His report focused on the importance of movable finds such as statue fragments and stelae with royal names of the first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

1. See the chapter titled “Tombs of the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom” by Myriam Seco Álvarez and Javier Martínez Babón in this volume.



Figure 1. Temple aerial photo 2021 (Photographer: M. Abelleira Durán © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

Herbert Ricke carried out four campaigns there over three years 1934, 1936 and 1937 (Ricke 1938). His objective was to establish a sequence for the construction phases of the temple. For many years, his publication has been the most prominent reference for the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III. After Ricke, research at the site was suspended for several decades. Sand once again covered the temple ruins, and the complex was split into two by a road (Fig. 2). What had been one of the most sacred temples of ancient Thebes, serviced by a special priesthood, quickly fell into neglect (Maruéjol 2007: 239-242; Legrain 1906: 186-187).

1.3. Synthesis of the Construction Phases

According to Ricke, the temple was constructed in three phases, all dating to the reign of Thutmose III. However, the activity of later rulers is also well documented at the site. In the first phase identified by Ricke, which took place during the period



Figure 2. Temple aerial photo 2004 (Photographer: M. Seco Álvarez © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

of co-regency of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, part of the bedrock, especially in the southwestern area, was lowered to facilitate the construction of the enclosure wall. Moreover, the area was divided into two levels connected by a ramp: a court and a terrace. The mudbrick enclosure wall was also constructed, 5m thick at the base and gradually narrowing upwards to a height of at least 10m. The oldest enclosure wall encircles an area measuring 106m from east to west and around 87.5m from north to south (Plan 1). Traces of plastering affixed to the mudbricks are preserved on various parts of this wall (Navarro *et al.* 2014: 27-38).

The second phase is dated to the first years of the individual rule of Thutmose III, perhaps around the time of his *sed*-festival and included the enlargement of the temple to the east and the construction of a large mudbrick pylon.² The north and south enclosure walls were extended 53.25m towards the pylon, thus encircling the lowermost terrace.

2. For a discussion of this pharaoh's *sed*-festival(s) see Chapon 2018a: 138, nos. 66-68.



Plan 1. General plan of the temple (Surveyor: J. Tre García; drawing: E. Úbeda © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

The third phase took place at the end of the pharaoh's reign, probably around the years 49 or 50. It is documented by the opening of an entrance in the southern half of the east enclosure wall of the second courtyard (Ricke 1938: 24). The entrance led to a new ramp, which allowed access to a sanctuary dedicated to Hathor.

It is worth noting here that evidence of later building activities has been uncovered. Walls built of mudbricks stamped by Amenhotep IV have been found, as well as the house of Khonsu, the first priest of this temple during the reign of Ramesses II.

1.4. Description of the Temple

1.4.1. The Entrance Pylon

The entrance pylon of the temple was built of mudbricks (Fig. 3). Its southern wing is highly damaged due to erosion and modern construction, but three corners of the northern wing were identified during excavations, allowing us to reconstruct each wing as 26.75m x 9m in size (Seco Álvarez *et al.* 2012-2013: 330-331). Hölscher describes the pylon of the temple of Horemheb as of very similar dimensions to that of Thutmose III (Hölscher 1934: pl. 33) and both were compared by Ricke (1938: 19). Ricke tried to reconstruct the dimensions of the pylon, although at that time, it was impossible due to problems involving the local community. On the outside face of the north wing, there is a partial base of a flagpole stand.

Large blocks of sandstone that were part of the pavement can still be seen at the entrance. To the east of the entrance on both sides, there is an alignment of sandstone blocks (Fig. 4) with irregularly cut stones at the outer ends. Many limestone fragments, decorated with good quality reliefs and inscriptions and bold carving on fine-grain limestone, were also found by the pylon door area; they are still being examined.

In front of the pylon, two large symmetrical pits, 3.5m in diameter and sunken into the bedrock, were discovered. Both were excavated to a depth of 4.5m down to the water table. These pits were filled with fertile soil of the Nile and were probably used as tree planters with both decorative and symbolic functions, although no remains corroborating this hypothesis were recorded. They were highly eroded due to former flooding of the Nile.³

3. For examples of tree planters see Arnold 1979: 144-145; Jacquet 1994: 21-22 and pls. 38, 42.



Figure 3. Pylon of Thutmosis III Temple, view from the east (Photographer: A. Amin © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



Figure 4. Some large blocks of sandstone from the pylon entrance (Photographer: I. Nouredine © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

1.4.2. The First Courtyard

The first courtyard and the pylon date to phase two of the temple's construction, evidenced by the fact that the two mudbrick walls defining the first courtyard were not attached to the original eastern enclosure wall.

In the north-western corner of the courtyard, there was a mudbrick structure with three rooms, probably storerooms, one showing evidence of a vaulted ceiling.

In front of the central entrance to the second courtyard, limestone blocks from the original pavement were found *in situ*. The pavement was built above a platform of unstamped mudbricks measuring 42 x 27 x 9cm (Fig. 5).

During the third construction phase, according to Ricke (1938: 21) a door was created in the southern section of the original eastern enclosure wall. Remains of a portico with two rows of sandstone pillars were detected along the western limits of the courtyard: two bases corresponding to the outer row, and four bases of the inner row were observed *in situ*. In the north and east, there are traces of mudbrick walls that most likely surrounded this part of the portico.

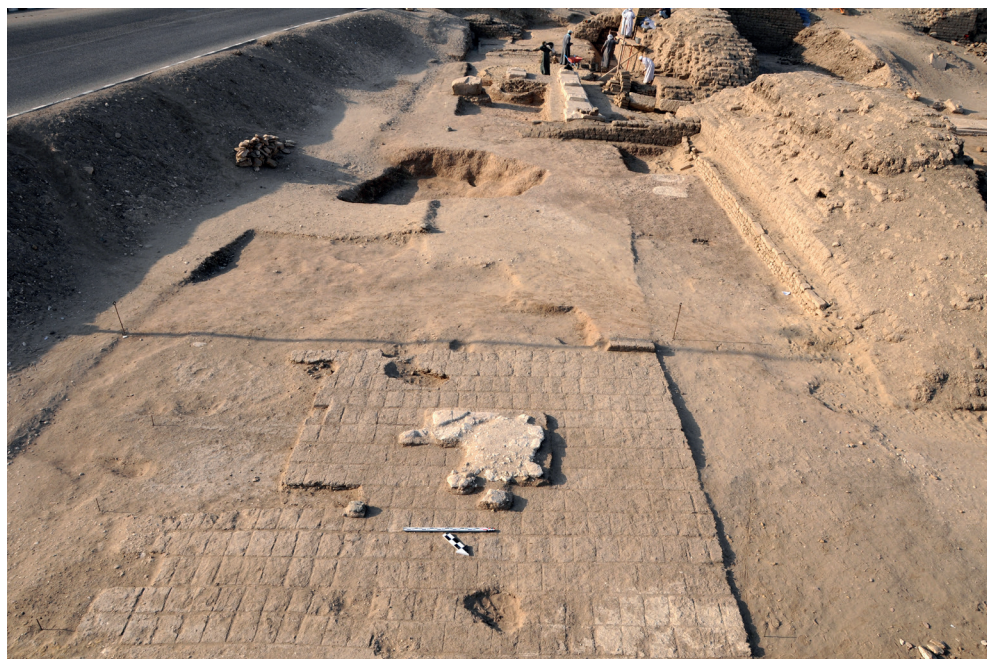


Figure 5. First court, some blocks of limestone *in situ*, forming part of the original pavement, (Photographer: I. Nouredine © Thutmosis III Temple Project)

Next to the outer face of the original enclosure wall, two kilns of slaked lime were found, one to the south and the other to the north. Both were detected below the level of the temple floor. They are thus contemporaneous to the construction phase of the temple. In this area, the original pavement has not been preserved, allowing us to reach deeper levels (Navarro *et al.* 2014: 33-35).

1.4.3. The Second Courtyard

In the centre of the second courtyard (Plan 2), a ramp was built to allow access to a higher level. In the northern part, very close to the base, there is a preserved alignment of two large sandstone blocks with trimmed ends that probably belonged to the lining of the ramp. During restoration (Gamarra Campuzano 2015: 273-291), the mudbrick core of the ramp was reconstructed with the following measurements: L 22.5m; W 3.5m; angle of incline 7.5°; drop 3.1m.

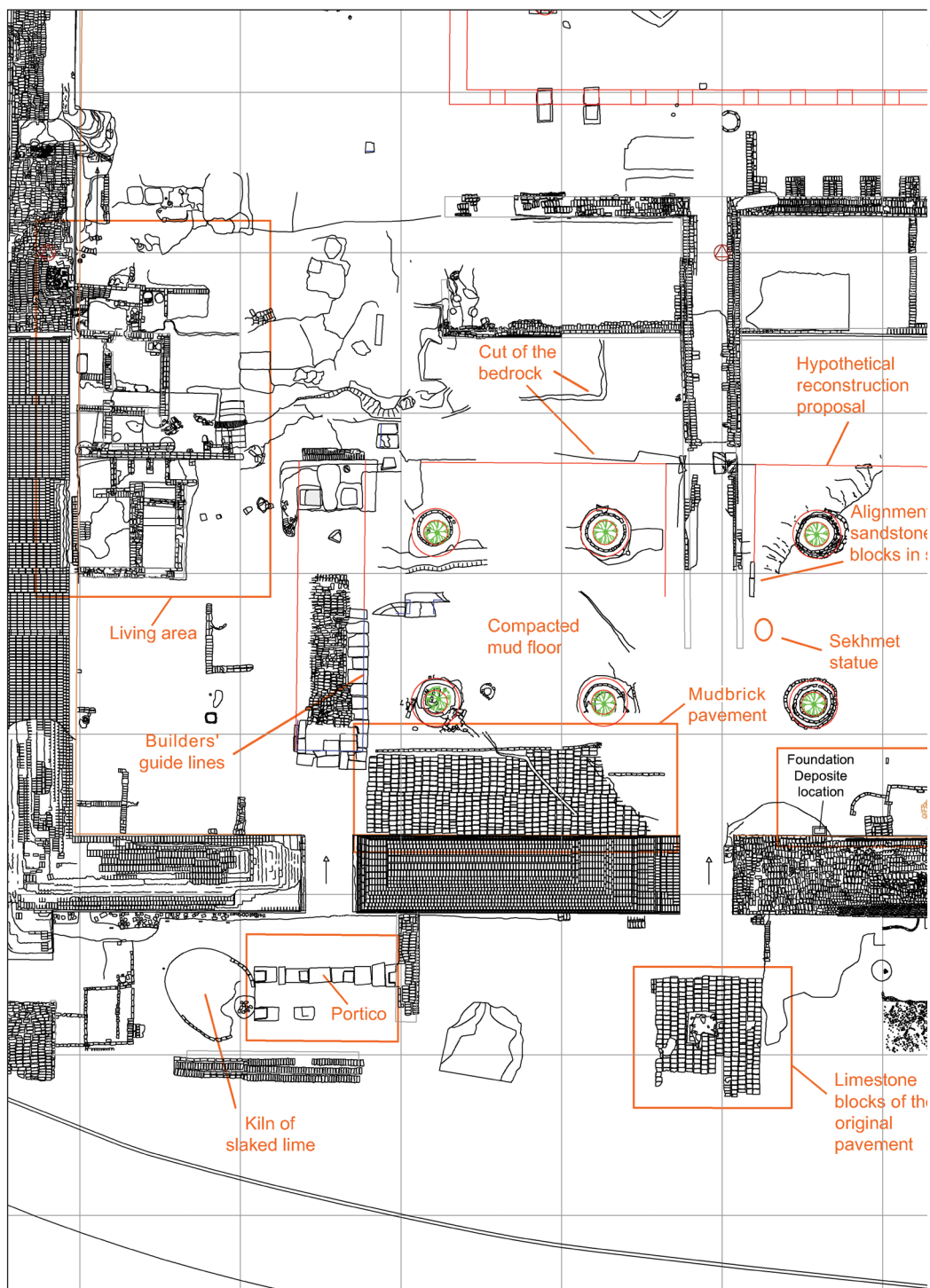
To the north of the ramp, three large sandstone blocks are preserved *in situ* in an alignment parallel to the façade of the terrace. At their north end, there is a smaller block of limestone.

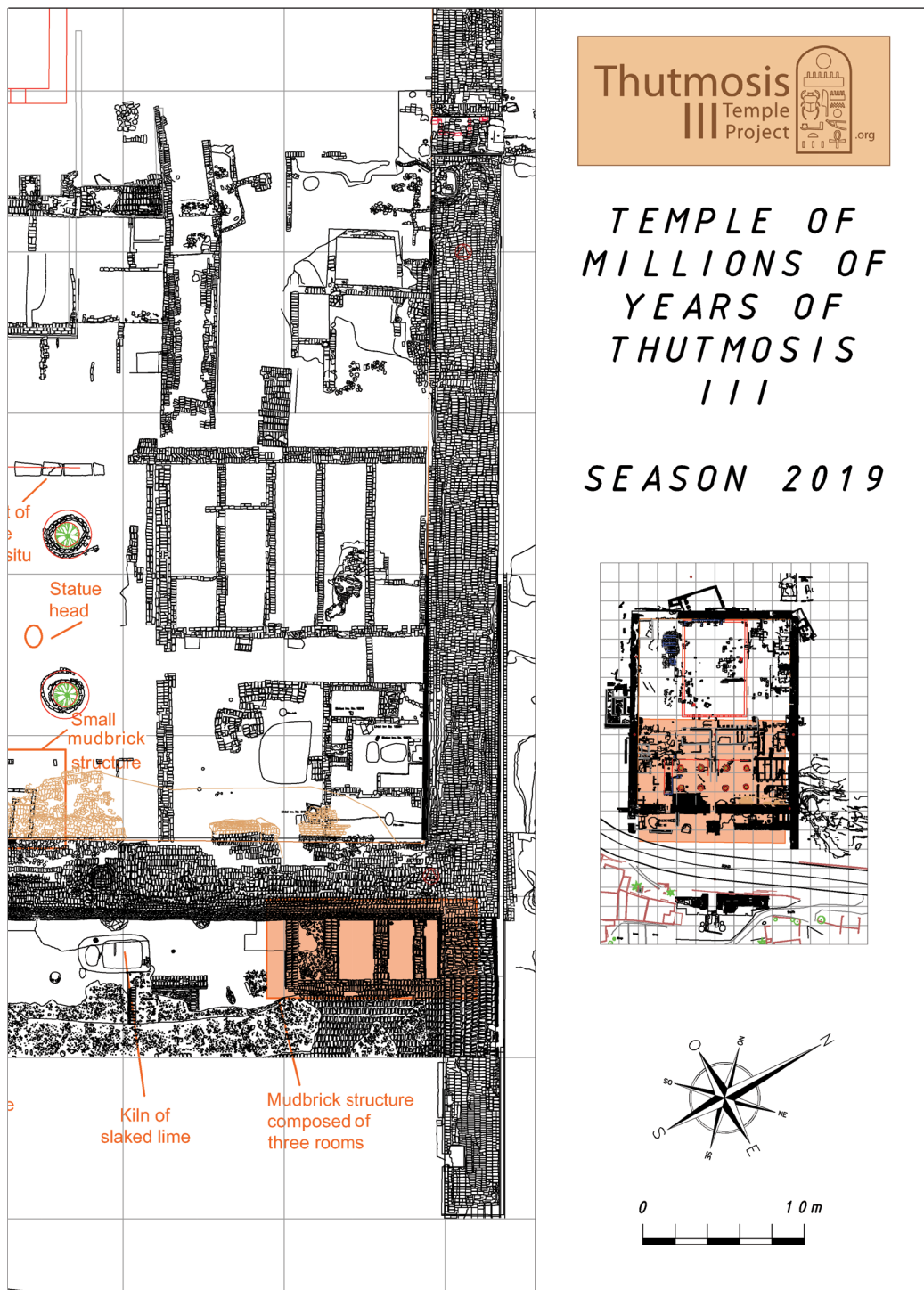
Symmetrically, on both sides of the ramp, eight tree planters were found (Fig. 6) in a better state of preservation than those at the front of the pylon, probably due to their location on a higher terrace above the water table. South of the ramp, one was excavated to a depth of 8.4m. This has a diameter of 3.3m in the upper part and narrows towards the bottom. Remarkably, the remains of tree roots and dry leaves were found inside some tree pits. The remains of tree roots present different shapes, but their anatomy is consistent with the characteristic of the genus *Mimosups sp.*, according to the analysis of R. Piqué⁴. There is also evidence of a mud floor, which would have covered part of the tree planters⁵.

On the north side of the entrance to the courtyard next to the inner face of its eastern enclosure wall—originally an outer wall of the complex—a foundation

4. Research done by Raquel Piqué i Huerta, from the Department of Prehistory, Universidad Autònoma of Barcelona.

5. Other examples of trees distributed around a temple courtyard are (Lipińska 1977: 60-61 and 98) the Lower Courtyard of the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari (Arnold 1975: 1014, 1019 (6) and fig. 1.11); at the temple of Mentuhotep III at Deir el Bahari (see Arnold 1979: pl. 44; Winlock 1932: fig. 2); and the temple of Amenhotep son of Hapu (Robichon, Varille 1936: 27-29 and pls. V, XX, XXI).





Plan 2: Detailed plan of the second court (Surveyor: J. Tre García; drawing: E. Úbeda © Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Figures 6 a and b. Tree holes from the second court, during and after excavation (Photographer: M. Seco Álvarez
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)

deposit was found within the trench prepared for the mudbrick enclosure wall by the lowest course.

Not far to the north of this deposit, attached to the enclosure wall, there is a small structure consisting of a single row of mudbricks with two distinguishable rooms. The entrance is between a curved wall on one side and a mudbrick platform attached to the enclosure wall on the other. This structure was found below the floor level of the temple but higher than the foundation deposit with no direct relation to it and could be associated with the temple building process. Artefacts, such as bases of Eighteenth Dynasty beer vessels, were reused as containers for gypsum/mortar. The remains bear finger marks indicating usage in a building process. The presence of vessels with such contents beneath the floor of the temple indicates their use to level the floor after the completion of construction (Studied by M. Naguib Reda and M. El-Shafai).

In the southern part of the courtyard, a pavement of mudbricks was identified extending 5.25m from the eastern enclosure wall. A visible row of mudbricks defines the pavement on the west, beyond which there is evidence of a compacted mud floor, thus levelling bedrock irregularities.

In the south-western part of the courtyard, a north-south cut of the bedrock can be distinguished parallel to the terrace façade and possibly connected to the alignment of sandstone blocks in the north-western part. Close to the southern enclosure wall, important structures were erected during the third phase of construction. The first is a highly damaged ramp leading to a sanctuary dedicated to Hathor composed of a mudbrick core, some sandstone, and undecorated limestone blocks (Fig. 7). In the northern section of the ramp, there is an alignment of thirteen large sandstone blocks with irregular edges. In the southern section, three other blocks are visible, likely part of the stone casing. To the east, there is an elongated cut in the bedrock, probably a foundation trench for further blocks removed in the past.

Some limestone blocks are also preserved at the beginning of the ramp: they are inclined, plane, ascending in the centre, flanked by stairs on each side, and with 1.08m-wide steps. At the western end of the ramp - almost completely destroyed - we can still see sandstone foundation blocks, two overlapping on the southern side and one to the north. These were probably part of the stone footing that supported the ramp's stone casing. Among these blocks there are still some mudbricks from the ramp's core.

Perpendicular to the ramp on its northern side, a long trench was cut into the bedrock in which sandstone blocks were probably fitted. Three blocks are preserved at the southern end of the trench with builders' guidelines, 1.56m apart, indicating the



Figure 7. Southern ramp leading to a sanctuary area dedicated to Hathor (Photographer: A. Amin © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

position of two pillars. A third one was bonded to the ramp, with only a small mark remaining in the ground.

Some mudbrick walls of small buildings are in the southeast corner of the courtyard. Near the southern end of the southern ramp, there is an L-shaped mudbrick construction. Finally, in the western corner of the courtyard, a multi-room building was documented dating to the Ramesside period according to Ricke (Fig. 8). This area was not excavated by Daressy but only by Weigall in 1906 and by Ricke in the 1930s (Ricke 1938: pl. 4). The area on the other, southern side of the enclosure wall was not researched by any of our predecessors since this was where they dumped material. Some sizeable mudbrick structures with wide walls were found there (see also below), which are still under investigation.

In the northern part of the terrace was a complex of warehouses, partially modified after the reign of Thutmose III. The only remnant from this era is a wall with a similar orientation to the façade of the enclosure wall, and with a mudbrick staircase in its central section, leading to an upper storey, which is no longer preserved. Towards the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the staircase became unusable.



Figure 8. Mudbrick buildings of the southern sector (Photographer: M. Seco Álvarez © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

The architectural complex had an entrance in the middle of the southern wall leading to a corridor (L 15.50m; W 2.75m) separating the complex into two wings. In the west, there were five rectangular rooms with entrances from the east (L 10.20m each; W 2.60 for the three centre ones and W 2.80 for the remaining two), while in the east, according to Ricke, there were many others (Ricke 1938: 16-17 & pls 5, 6). Little from this western part is preserved. Part of a vaulted ceiling fallen to the ground was found in one room (Fig. 9).

From the reign of Amenhotep IV, only part of a southern outer wall of the complex, perpendicular to the eastern enclosure wall, is preserved; some stamped mudbricks corroborate its date.

Earlier archaeologists (Weigall 1907: 286; Ricke 1938: 16-17 and pl. 4) were unable to finish excavation of this complex since it was covered by the fallen enclosure wall, which collapsed during a severe earthquake. After removing the debris from this wall, it was possible to excavate a new area, most importantly the house of Khonsu, the first priest of this temple in the time of Ramesses II (Fig. 10 a and b). The date of this complex and the fact that all the portable finds found below the



Figure 9: Mudbrick buildings of the northern sector (Photographer: Ahmed Amin © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

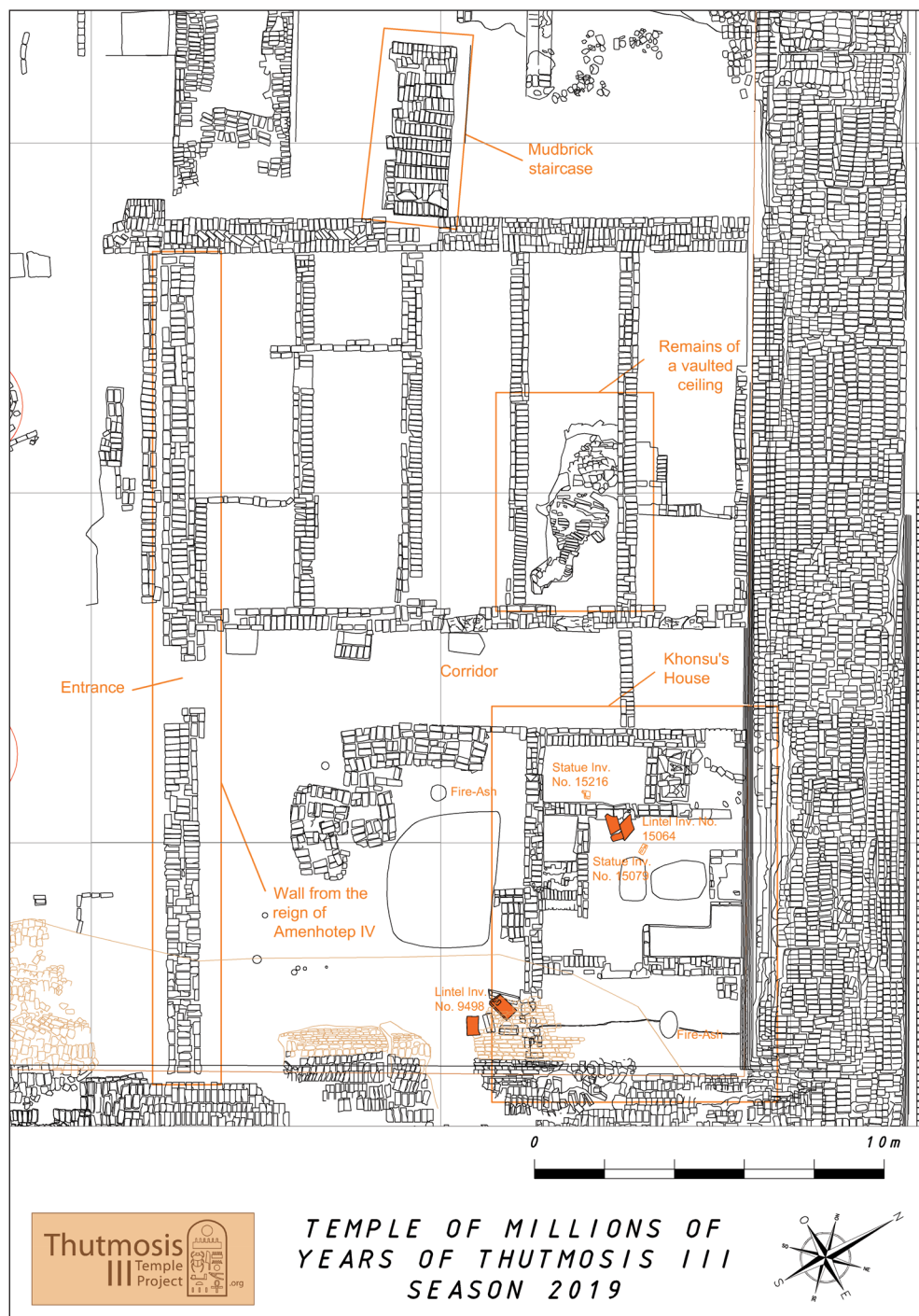
collapsed wall are of the Ramesside period allow us to date the earthquake to the time of Ramesses II or later in this period.⁶

During the 2013 field season, the old area of excavation was cleaned, and a new excavation yielded a multi-room mudbrick building with an entrance in the south (Plan 3), where the remains of two limestone jambs and a limestone lintel were found. The entrance leads to a rectangular room and an irregular courtyard located further to the west. To the south of the courtyard, there was a staircase of which only some mudbrick steps remain, most probably giving access to the upper floor. In the western part of the courtyard are several rooms. The southernmost contained several broken sandstone fragments of a lintel. In the room located to the north, some mudbricks stamped with the cartouche of the throne name of Ramesses II were found: (*Wsr-m3 't-R 'stp-n-R*). In the western part of the room, there was another door that probably led to warehouses.

6. For other evidence of the earthquakes that have taken place in the region see Karakhanyan & Avagyan 2010: 264-270; Karakhanyan, Avagyan & Stadelmann 2014; Sourouzian *et al.* 2011; Stadelmann 2014; Sourouzian 2014; Karakhanyan *et al.* 2014 and Lurson 2017.



Figures 10 a and b. Mudbrick buildings in the northern part of the second court (Photographer: M. Seco Álvarez
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Plan 3: Area of warehouses in the northern part of the second courtyard (Surveyor: J. Tre García; drawing: E. Úbeda © Thutmosis III Temple Project).

1.4.4. Upper Terrace

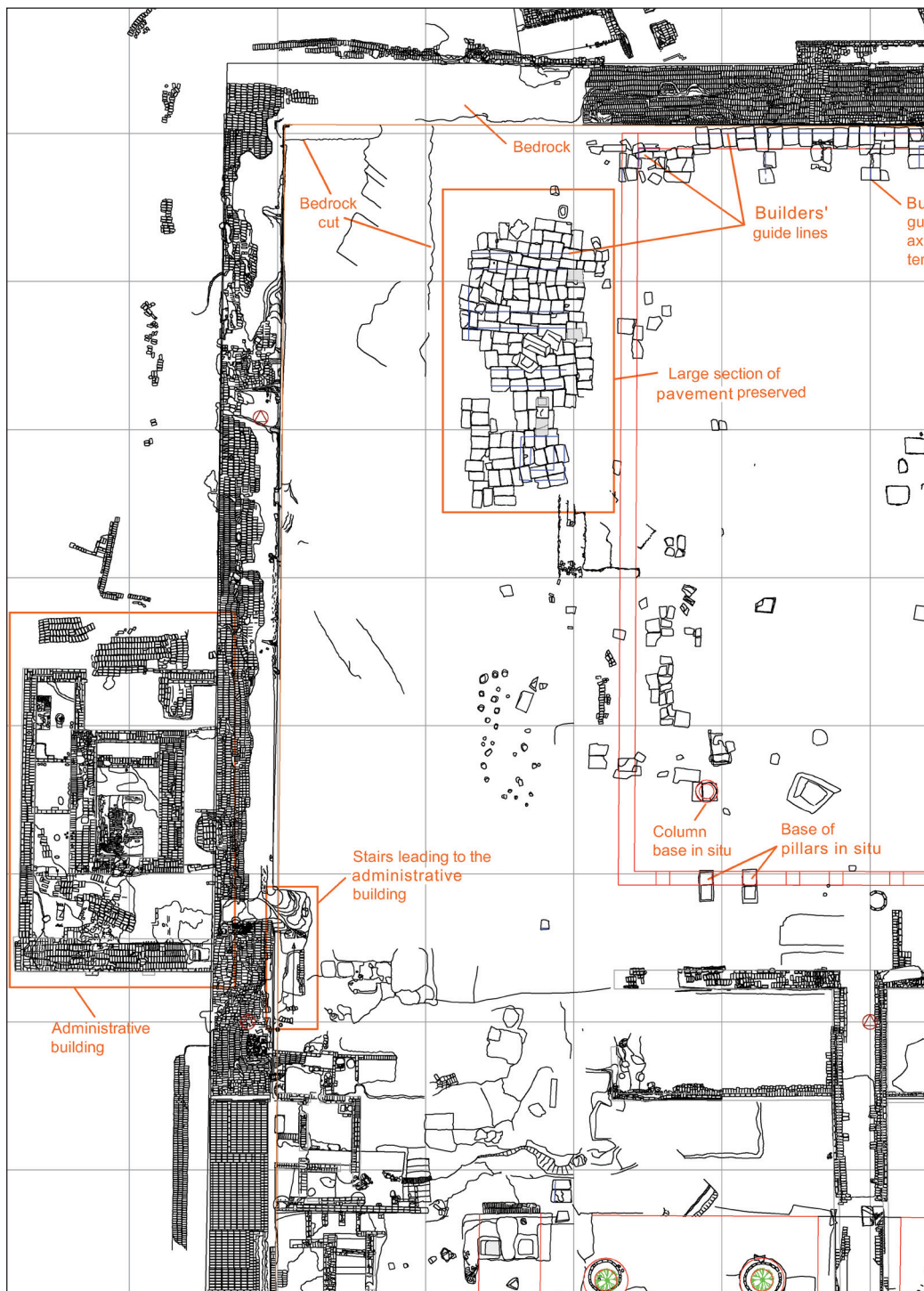
The upper terrace consisted, from east to west, of a portico, peristyle, hypostyle hall, and chapel area (Ricke 1938: 9-15), all surrounded by a wall built of large sandstone blocks. The enclosed area measured 33.46 x 50.7m, based on the negatives of the wall preserved on some of the pavement blocks *in situ*. The high level of destruction hinders any attempt to study the original architecture of the temple, however, Ricke raised various hypotheses about the structures once located on this terrace (Ricke 1938: pls. 5, 6). The following is a description of the remains currently visible in this part of the temple (Plan 4).

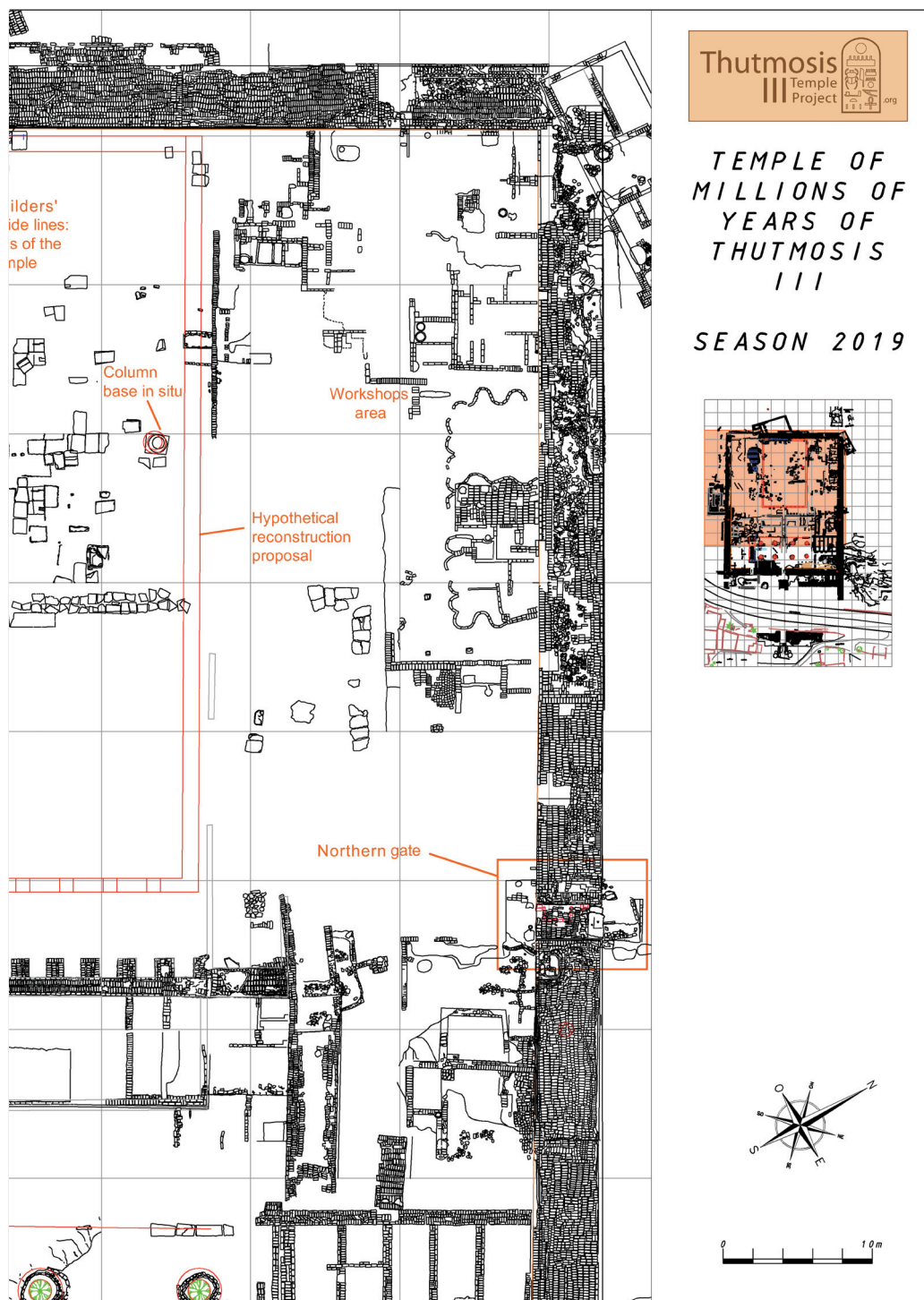
Only two rectangular sandstone bases are preserved from the portico. The cuts on their upper part allow us to suppose that above them were large Osiride statues with characteristic back pillars (Ricke 1938: 10, however, we have not found evidence of Osiride statues).

To the west of the portico, there is a sandstone column base; near it, there are some slabs of the original sandstone pavement in place. It is uncertain whether this column was part of the peristyle or of a double portico, however, Ricke proposes several hypotheses (Ricke 1938: 10 and pl. 6). The preserved slabs create an alignment, oriented east-west. About 14m north of these slabs, there are remains of a wall of large limestone blocks oriented north-south, parallel to the portico. In this wall, there is evidence of a doorway leading to rooms to the west, of which an entrance to the north and a column base to the west are preserved, probably belonging to one of the rooms of the hypostyle hall.

Traces of pavement formed by large sandstone slabs are visible in various parts of this area. Some, adjacent to the western enclosure wall, are crucial for the temple layout reconstruction. On two of them, the mark that indicated the axis of the temple can be identified (Fig. 11). Analysis of these slabs also allows us to reconstruct the position of chapels that are not preserved.

In Ricke's opinion, there were five chapels and a solar court in this part of the temple. The central one would correspond to Amun-Re's Bark Hall. Large blocks of limestone with iconography and inscriptions related to this god may originate from this chapel (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2015c: 525-536). Most of them, along with many others in sandstone, were in a shack, built by Weigall, inside the temple and next to the western enclosure wall. This shack was also used by Ricke to store finds. Over time, these materials were forgotten and covered by sand. They were found by the Spanish team during the 2008 field season. Other blocks were scattered over the western part of the temple.





Plan 4. Detailed upper terrace plan (Surveyor: J. Tre García; drawing: E. Úbeda © Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Figure 11: Area of main sanctuary, upper terrace (Photographer: M. Seco Álvarez © *Thutmose III Temple Project*)

Ricke indicated that in the northern corner of the terrace there was a courtyard dedicated to the solar cult, very similar to that preserved in the temple at Deir el-Bahari (Ricke 1938: 12; Karkowski 2003). He noted the remains of an altar, already mentioned by Weigall (1906: 123), of which there is currently no evidence.

A chapel dedicated to the funeral cult of Thutmose III must have been located to the south of the Amun-Re's Bark Hall. Here, large sandstone blocks were recorded and may have originally formed the vault characteristic of funeral cult chapels. The blocks were decorated with representations of goddesses of the Hours of Day and Night, as well as with inscriptions in yellow on a blue background.⁷ Analysis of the section through the western pavement of the funerary chapel indicates where the great false door stele of Thutmose III—moved in Roman times to Medinet Habu—would have originally been (Plan 5) (Ricke 1938: pl. 8). The false door is decorated with the remains of the feet of the personifications of the Twelfth Hour of the Day (south) and the First Hour of the Night (north). The southernmost

7. See the chapter titled “Report on the Ritual of the Hours from the Temple of Thutmose III” by Kenneth Griffin in this volume.

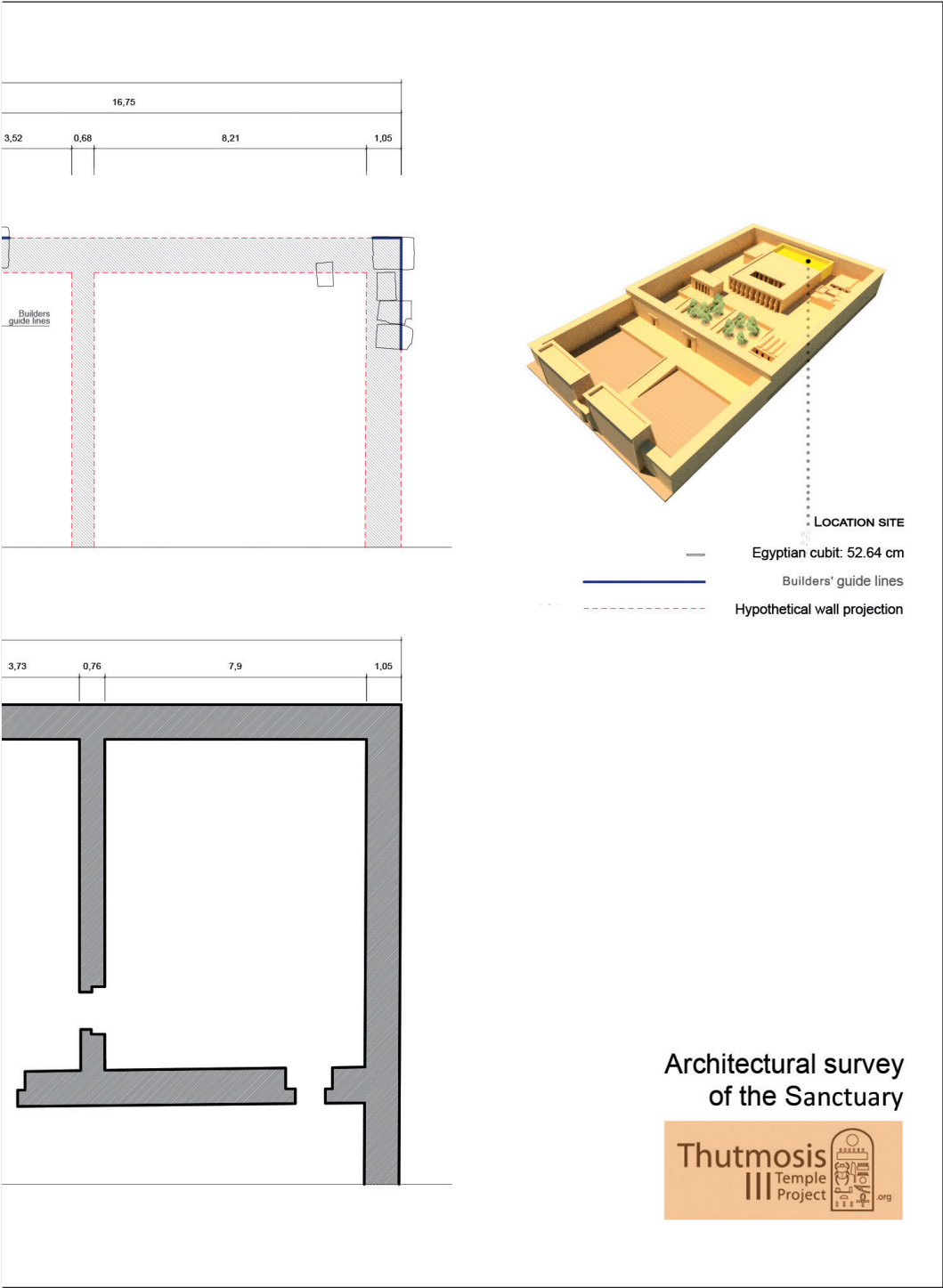
chapel may have housed the cult of the ancestors of Thutmose III, similar as in the Temple of Millions of Years of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari (Ricke 1938: 10-11, 30-32; Chapon 2018b: 57; Naville 1901; Naville 1906; Iwaszczuk 2016a: 112-116; 2016b: 202-221).

A large section of pavement is preserved to the south of the complex of five sanctuaries and the solar court. The negatives of the walls are visible on slabs, probably corresponding to a complex of three chapels with the entrances located to the north. According to Ricke, one could enter them through a long corridor accessed by the portico located in the southern corner of the second courtyard, however, the evidence is too scant to confirm this.

In Ricke's opinion, the changes in the second courtyard took place in the third construction phase; i.e., the opening of an entrance in the southern part of the eastern enclosure wall and the raising of a southern ramp were connected with the construction of a sanctuary dedicated to the goddess Hathor. Ricke's interpretation was based on the southern position of the sanctuary, similar to the placement of the Hathor chapel in Hatshepsut's temple and on the discovery of a Hathoric capital that was published and illustrated, but whose location is currently unknown (Ricke 1938: 28-30, pl. 3; for a more detailed study, see Chapon 2020). This hypothesis is also corroborated by the attestation of a priest named Re (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2015b: 129-135), who held the rank of First Prophet of Hathor in the middle of *Henket-ankh* (*hm ntr tpy n Ht-hr hrt ib Hnkt 'nh*) in an inscription from his tomb (TT 72) (PM I.1: 142-143). According to Ricke, the entrance to this sanctuary was composed of a portico formed by pillars with Hathoric capitals (Ricke 1938: 21, 25, pl. 3c). For further interpretations in this respect, see Chapon 2020.

Currently, the state of preservation of this area does not allow us to reconstruct its detailed plan, although Ricke suggested the existence of at least one niche here (Ricke 1938: pl. 3d; fragment of block published by Ricke as coming from here). Nonetheless, a series of cuts in the bedrock probably mark where the chapel was situated, although it is no longer preserved.

In the southern corner of the upper terrace, stairs attached to the enclosure wall were recorded, giving access to the top of the wall. Excavations were carried out down to the bedrock outside the enclosure wall, allowing the mission to discover where they originally led. A mudbrick building (L 20m; W 13m) was found there consisting of a hall that allowed access to a main room with thick walls and a vaulted ceiling, now collapsed, surrounded on the south and north by a series of rooms. The threshold of the entrance door to the hall consisted of a long, thick piece of wood.



Plan 5. Hypothetical reconstruction of the sanctuary area with the placement of the false door stela (drawing: R. Chávez Pajares © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



Figure 12. Administrative building outside southern enclosure mudbrick wall (Photographer: A. Amin
© *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

Although the vaulted ceiling suggests a storage function, numerous ostraca found indicate that it was an administrative building (Fig. 12).

In the northern sector of the upper terrace, between the northern stone wall of the temple and the northern mudbrick enclosure wall, there is a series of uniform mudbrick buildings. These could be remains of artisan workshops, according to preliminary analysis. This area was excavated by Daressy in 1886, and he had made a first plan of this sector (Daressy 1926: 14-15 (n. 3) & 16 (plan 14-15 [n. 3] & 16 [plan])). It was also excavated by Weigall in 1906 (see Weigall 1907: 286). Nevertheless, Ricke did not use these plans when preparing his hypothetical reconstruction of the temple. Since this area is still under archaeological excavation, it encompasses numerous rooms built with simple walls, some in an irregular zigzag-like manner, with mudbrick and clay floors (Fig. 13). Many of these rooms were directly attached to the enclosure wall.

Stratigraphy allowed the team to determine at least three phases of activity in this area. The first was likely related to the early history of the temple and involved activities related to clay, since a large amount of this material was found there. In the second, the existing floors were changed and filled in with limestone, sandstone, and



Figure 13. Workshop area in the northern part of the upper terrace (Photographer: I. Delage González
© *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

sometimes ceramic chips. This phase is related to increased activity in the temple and the demand for more rooms. Finally, the third phase is characterised by the construction of a larger number of smaller rooms.

Most finds here were pottery with some ostraca and papyri fragments, but also a large quantity of animal coprolites, possibly indicating the presence of cattle. Small plastered structures, some with ash spot, and small ovens also suggest food preparation.⁸

The area of the northern enclosure wall was remodelled in a later phase. In the spot that corresponds to the portico of the temple, an entrance was opened with a short mudbrick ramp. Traces of a sandstone threshold and limestone jambs have also been preserved. Unfortunately, the chronology of this remodelling cannot be determined, although it was observed that at some point this door was walled up again and the inner chamber of the gate was used as a storage room, as demonstrated by the presence of a mudbrick floor and two ceramic containers.

8. This area is currently under excavation and the results of this investigation will be published in the future.

Material from the temple was discarded outside the northern enclosure wall when the temple was in use, creating a dump of 750 square meters reaching almost 3m deep in some parts (Bader & Seco Álvarez 2016: 157-262).⁹ The topmost layers of the dump contain some material discarded during earlier excavations at the site.

At the eastern part of the dump, a double edge palmiform blade of bronze was found, without grooves, which narrows on one side to widen at the end, in which there is a hole in its central part (inv. no. 15667). A part of the blade and the narrow-



Figure 14. Blade of bronze, inv. no. 15667 (Photographer: I. García Martínez © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

est part has a reddish color that may be related to some type of adhesive, perhaps to hold a sleeve. It is probably a knife, whose dimensions are 18.4cm in length and 2.4cm in width (Fig. 14). Similar tool blades have been found in different parts of Egypt (Petrie 1890: 34 and pl. XVII nos. 29-31 y 33). See also (Petrie 1917: 23 and pl. XXX no. 30).

1.5. Finds

The twelve excavation campaigns carried out to date have made it possible to recover numerous objects related to the temple. The following sections present some of the most significant finds. Others, not discussed below, include pottery, votive terracotta figurine fragments, tools of different materials, and other small finds such as scarabs (Franco González 2019).

1.5.1. Sandstone and Limestone Reliefs and Inscriptions

During the first field season in 2008, a large deposit of sandstone and limestone fragments attached to the western enclosure wall of the temple was found. These were objects stored by Weigall. Ricke later used the same space for his finds. The deposit contained hundreds of large limestone blocks with reliefs and inscriptions and

9. Between 2008 and 2014 the pottery was studied by B. Bader and from 2014 by M. Naguib Reda and M. El-Shafai.

thousands of very small fragments. It is significant that most of them relate to the figures of the pharaoh and the god Amun-Re and his bark and offering tables. This observation allowed us to conclude that these blocks were likely part of the walls of Amun-Re's chapel.¹⁰ The figure of the god, attributes and name were thoroughly erased, clearly illustrating the persecution against Amun during Akhenaten's reign (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2015c: 525-536) (Fig. 15a-d).

About 9,000 sandstone fragments of different sizes were found in other parts of the temple (Martínez Babón 2015: 248-263; Chapon 2018b). Most are in a poor state of preservation, but some have extraordinary polychrome decoration that provides information on the decorative design of the temple walls. Along with evidence of a religious nature, interesting fragments of reliefs provide information on the pharaoh's *sed*-festival and *ished*-tree (inv. nos 726, 893, 930, 965, 999, 1049, 1232, and 1758) (Chapon 2016: 47-56; 2018a: 123-143).¹¹

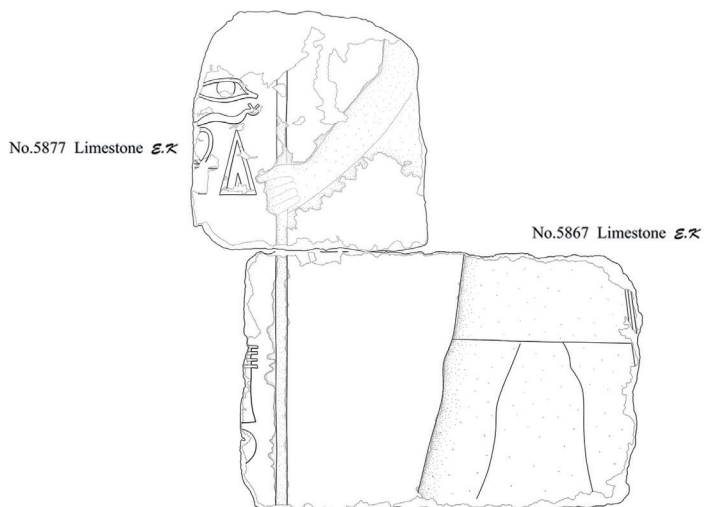
Other sandstone fragments from the vault were decorated with the Ritual of the Hours, first attested in Hatshepsut's Temple of Millions of Years at Deir el-Bahari (Griffin 2017: 97-134). It contains an overview of all the known sources (at the time of writing) related to the subject, including Deir el-Bahari and the discussed Thutmose III temple. Many of these fragments were previously published by Ricke, who noted that they were originally part of the vaulted room just to the south of the temple sanctuary (Ricke 1938: 11-13 and pls. 1, 2).¹² Some preserved inscriptions and representations related to military campaigns, triumphs over foreign territories, military parades, and navigation scenes (Fig. 16a-d) (Martínez Babón 2012: 669-677). For example, part of a chariot and the hind legs of horses (inv. no. 9471); the incomplete image of a rider, which would be one of the oldest Egyptian representations of a man mounting a horse (inv. no. 678); an Asiatic fortress painted in red, of a characteristic form of a *migdol* (inv. no. 1455); and the lower part of a rowing boat and the heads of two horses in the same relief that could be related to an amphibious operation.

One of the most interesting fragments mentions an elephant hunt in the Syrian land of Niya (inv. no. 3251) (Martínez Babón 2015: 253-254; Chapon 2018b: 303). We should keep in mind that the annals of this pharaoh, known from Karnak, are

10. Since 2019, Kenneth Griffin has been working on this material.

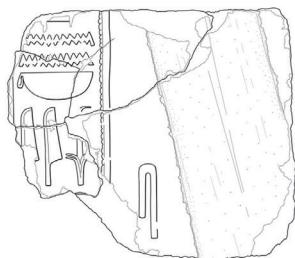
11. See the chapter titled "The study of the sandstone reliefs fragments discovered in the *Henket-ankh*" by Linda Chapon in this volume.

12. See the chapter titled "Report on the Ritual of the Hours from the Temple of Thutmose III" by Kenneth Griffin in this volume.

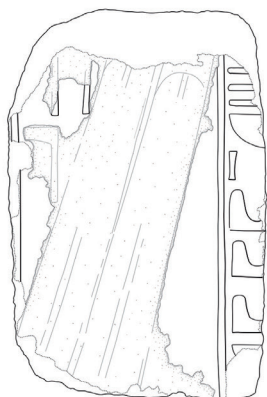


Figures 15 a. Limestone blocks with relief decoration illustrating the persecution against Amun during Akhenaten's reign (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: E. Kamimura © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

No.5887 Limestone ㏏㏐

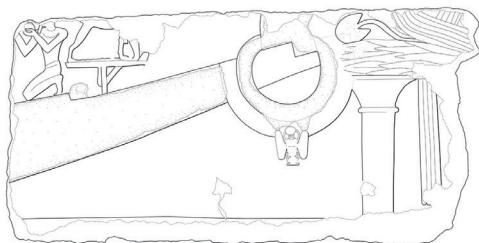
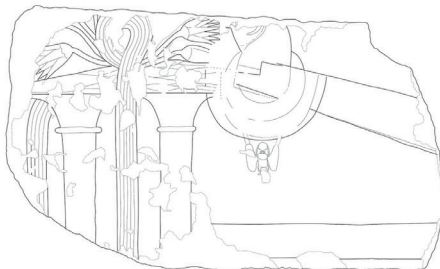


No.5893 Limestone ㏏㏐



0 10 20 cm

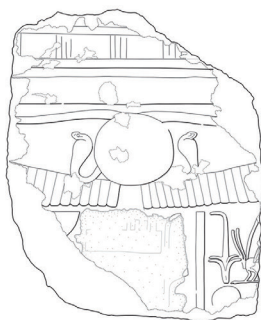
Figures 15 b. Limestone blocks with relief decoration illustrating the persecution against Amun during Akhenaten's reign (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: E. Kamimura © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

No.5874 Limestone $\mathcal{E}\mathcal{K}$ No.5895 Limestone $\mathcal{E}\mathcal{K}$ 

0 10 20 cm

 A horizontal scale bar with markings for 0, 10, and 20 centimeters.

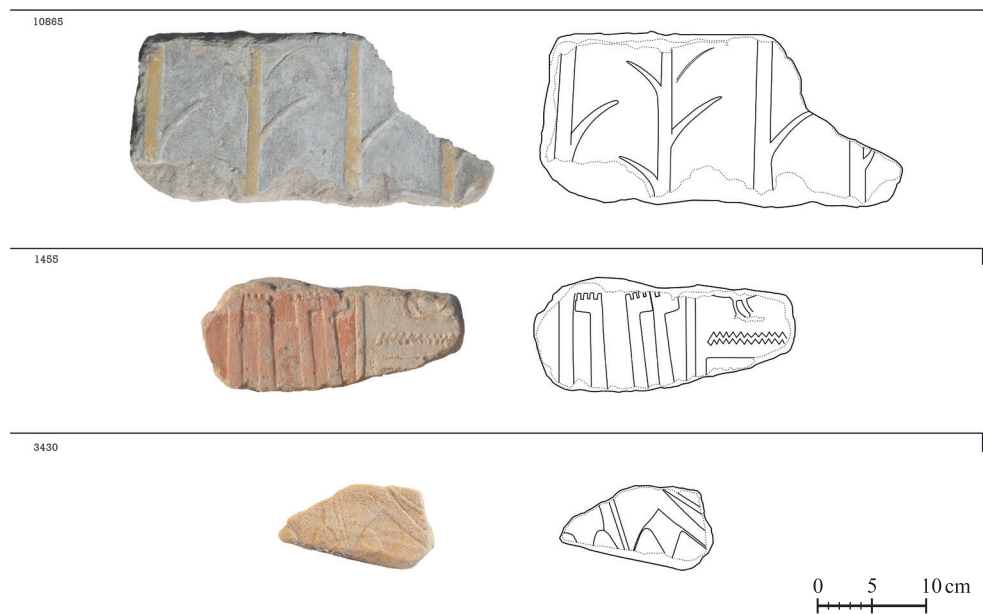
Figures 15 c. Limestone blocks with relief decoration illustrating the persecution against Amun during Akhenaten's reign (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: E. Kamimura © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

No.5021 Limestone $\mathcal{E}\mathcal{K}$ No.5030 Limestone $\mathcal{E}\mathcal{K}$ 

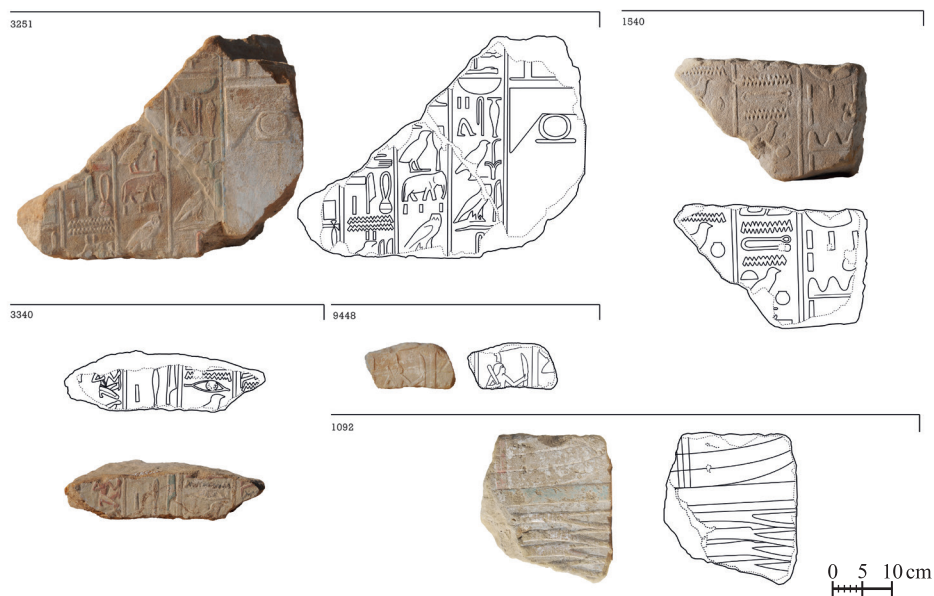
0 10 20 cm

 A scale bar with markings for 0, 10, and 20 cm.

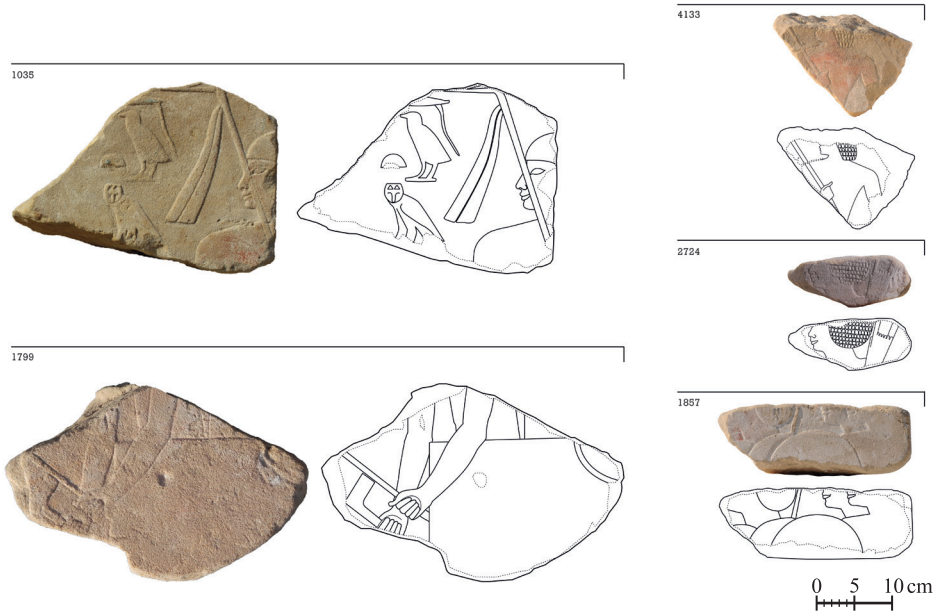
Figures 15 d. Limestone blocks with relief decoration illustrating the persecution against Amun during Akhenaten's reign (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: E. Kamimura © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



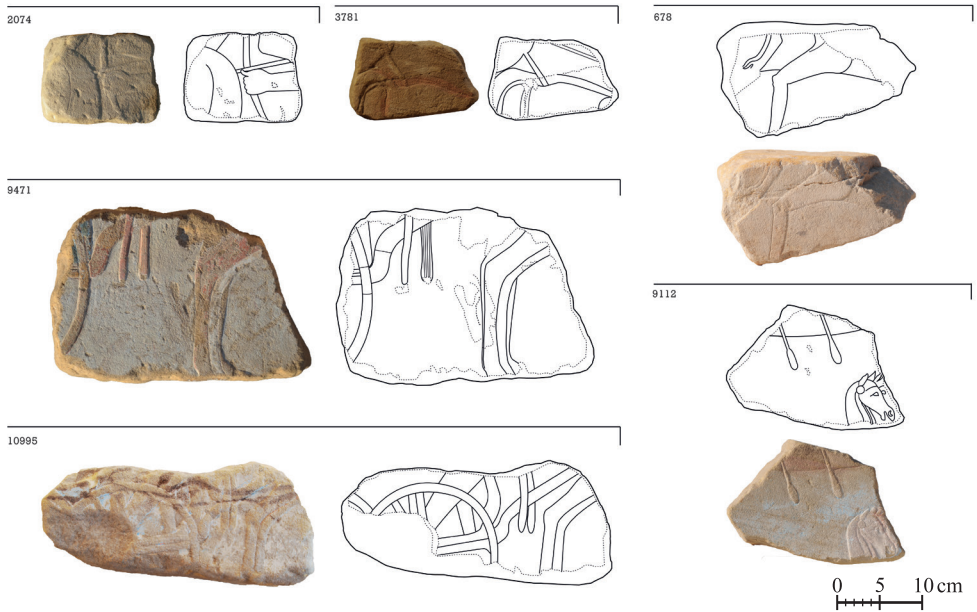
Figures 16 a. Foreign landscape and fortresses (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: J.C. Lara Bellón © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



Figures 16 b. Chronicles (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: J.C. Lara Bellón © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



Figures 16 c. Officers and infantrymen (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: J.C. Lara Bellón © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



Figures 16 d. Horses and chariots (Photographer: A. Amin; Drawing: J.C. Lara Bellón © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

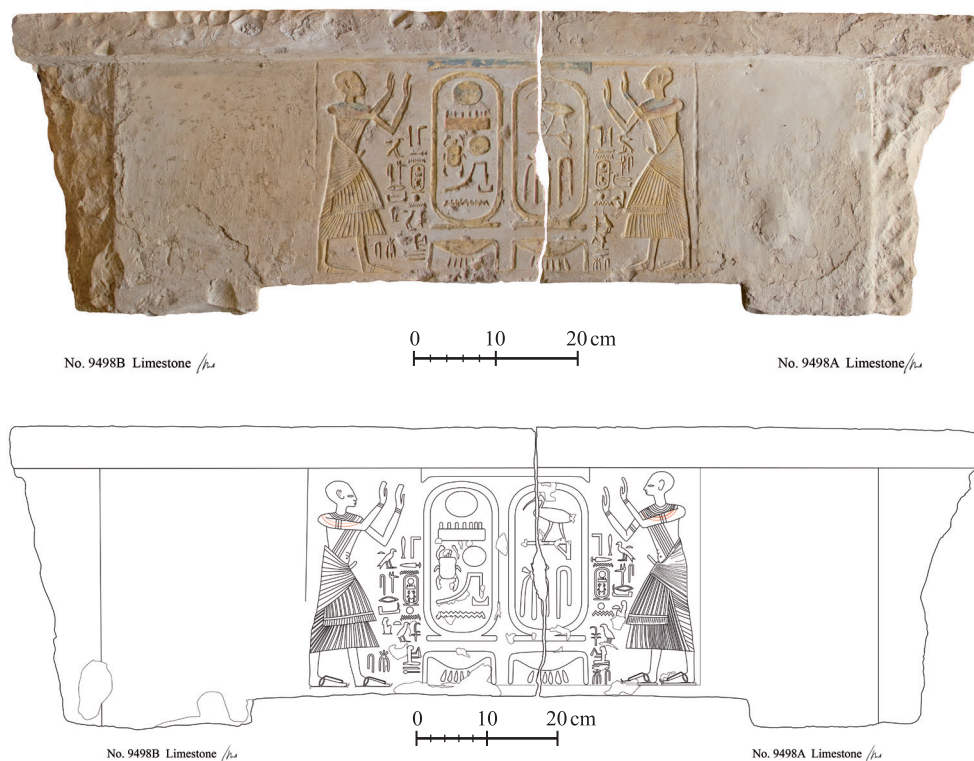
devoid of iconographic elements. Unfortunately, the inscriptions from *Henket-ankh* are very badly preserved.

Some sandstone fragments present the names of different members of the royal family, such as Thutmose I, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut, and Amenhotep II (Martínez Babón 2015: 258-260; Chapon 2018b: 134-146; Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2019: 131-139 & pl. XVII), as well as the queens Mutnefer or Merytre Hatshepsut (Chapon 2018a: 123-143).

1.5.2. Lintels from the Khonsu Complex

Of particular importance are the two lintels from the house of the high priest named Khonsu, nicknamed ‘Tjay,’ who lived during the time of Ramesses II and was buried in TT 31 (PM I.1: 47-49; Davies 1948: 11-26). Khonsu is listed also in al-Ayedi (2006: 356, no. 1197). The first one, made of limestone (inv. no. 9498) is decorated with the two cartouches of Thutmose III in its central part. They were placed vertically, over the *nbw*-sign and crowned by the *pt*-sign (Fig. 17a-b). These cartouches contain the following names: *Djehuty-mes* and *Men-kheper-re-setep-en-re*. This form of the throne name is preserved in sources dated after year 20 of the reign of Thutmose III (Laboury 1998: 64, nos 334 & 68). On either side of the cartouches, there are two practically identical figures of a priest raising his arms in a gesture of worship and represented with a shaved head, attire characteristic of the Ramesside era (Zoffili 1992: 95; Vogelsang-Eastwood 1992: 17-18), and sandals (Zoffili 1992: 217; Gamal-Eldine 1981). Between the cartouches and the figures, there are two similar inscriptions, written in two columns (from left to right): *ḥm-nṯr tpy n (Mn-ḥpr-R) | Ḥnsw m3 ‘-ḥrw ms T3-wsrt*, ‘First god’s servant of (Menkheperre)|, Khonsu, justified, born of Tausret’.

The central part of the second lintel (inv. no. 15064) bears the same cartouches placed vertically over the *nbw*-sign and crowned by a solar disc. The gesture of the priest and the inscription are similar to the previous one with minor differences (Fig. 17 c-d). On the right side, two columns of text (from left to right): *ḥm-nṯr tpy n (Mn-ḥpr-R) | T3y m3 ‘-ḥrw ms T3-wsrt* ‘First god’s servant of (Menkheperre)|, Tjay, justified, born of Tausret’. On the left side, two columns of text (from right to left): *ḥm-nṯr tpy n (Mn-ḥpr-R) | Ḥnsw m3 ‘-ḥrw ms T3-w[s]rt m3 ‘(t)-ḥrw*, ‘First god’s servant of (Menkheperre)|, Khonsu, justified, born of Tausret, justified’. These lintels, currently displayed at the Luxor Museum, are clear evidence that the temple of Thutmose III was still active during the reign of Ramesses II.

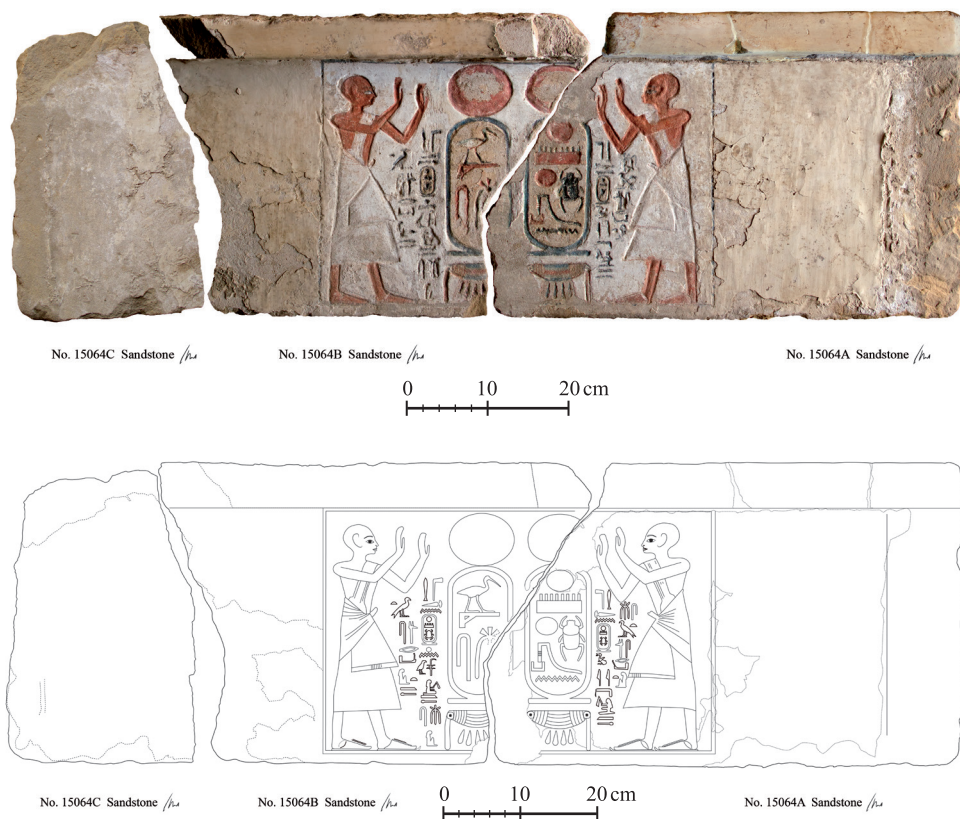


Figures 17 a-b. Limestone lintel of Khonsu, inv. no. 9498 (Photographer and Drawing: M. González Bustos
© *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

1.5.3. Statues and Stelae

Numerous fragments of statues and stelae of different kinds of stone have been found, particularly limestone and sandstone. Although the collection has not yet been studied, it is clear that some of the pieces bear the names and ranks of their owners. Particularly important are the lower parts of the diorite statue of Thutmose III (Fig. 18a-b) and the black granite seated statue of the royal scribe and child of the royal nursery, Ahmose (Fig. 19 a-b). On the sides of the plinth of the Thutmose III statue, figures of two foreigners, an Asiatic and a Nubian, are depicted with their bodies stretched out and their arms bent as a sign of submission. The hands were carved with the palms extended forward, towards the front part of the base. Their faces are now lost.

Two other interesting statue fragments preserve the names of important men in the administration of Thutmose III. The first is part of a seated limestone statue

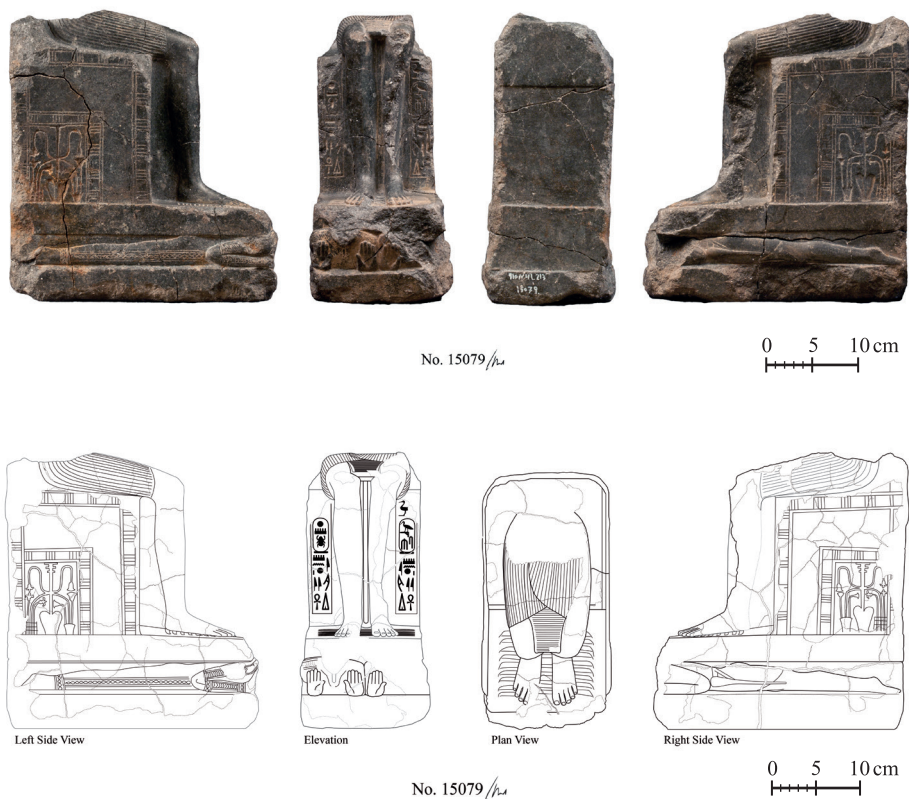


Figures 17 c-d. Sandstone lintel of Khonsu, inv. no. 15064 (Photographer and Drawing: M. González Bustos
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)

containing the following inscription: [/// *rp* 't *h3ty*]- ' *imy-r niwt t3ty* [*W*]*s[r]-Īmn*, '/// the noble, the cou]nt, the overseer of the city [User]amun' (inv. no. 7723). This is one of the viziers of the south who had an important position during the first years of Thutmose III. Useramun had two tombs, TT 61 and TT 131 (Dziobek 1998).

The second is a fragment with part of an inscription that includes the name of the Overseer of the Seal, Senneferi (inv. no. 9068) (Seco Álvarez *et al.* 2012-2013: 143; Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2019: 131), buried in TT 99 (PM I.1: 204-206; Strudwick 2016).

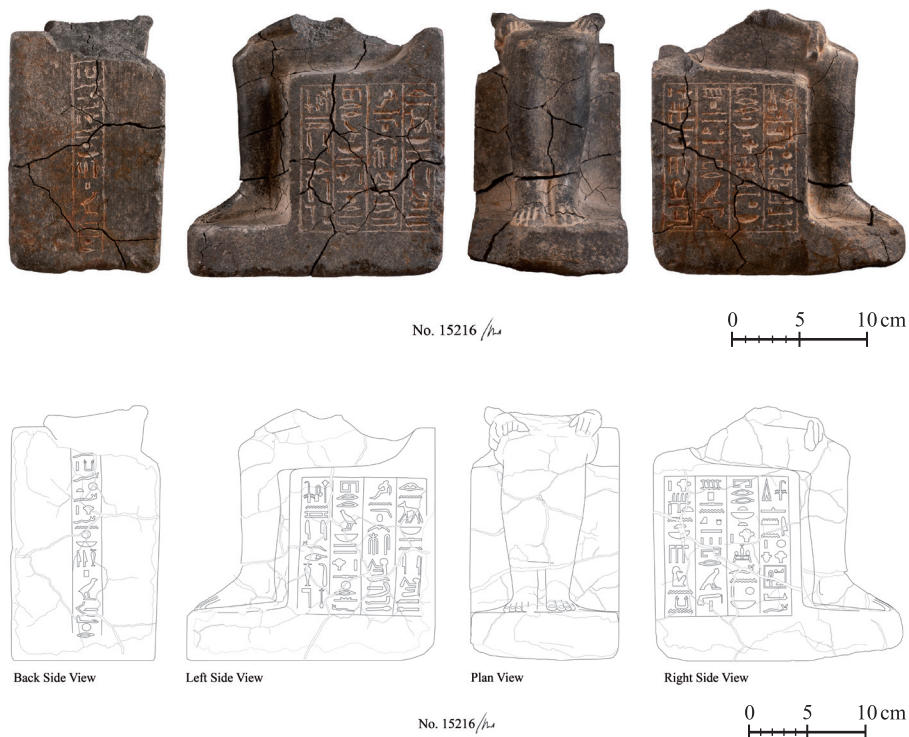
These officials obviously obtained the privilege of exhibiting a statue in this temple, as did the royal herald and architect Yamunedjeh, whose statue is in very good condition on display at the Luxor Museum (inv. no. 3). It was found 200m north-east of the pylon (Hayes 1933: 6-16).



Figures 18 a-b. Statue of Thutmose III, inv. no. 15079 (Photographer and Drawing: M. González Bustos
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)

Two important statue fragments were found in the second courtyard. The first (L 29.6cm; W 24.3cm; D 26.9cm) is part of a head with a tripartite wig, stretch marks, and a delicate face, indicating divinity (inv. no. 15442). It is made of granodiorite, demonstrates a high level of workmanship, and probably belongs to the time of Amenhotep III (Fig. 20).¹³ The second is a head and part of the torso of a statue of the goddess Sekhmet (Fig. 21) found north of the ramp (L 45cm; W 40cm; D 40cm). It was made of black granite and is missing the characteristic solar disc. It is similar to statues found at the temple of Amenhotep III at Kom el-Hettan, a Sekhmet statue

13. Hourig Sourouzian, personal communication. Similar to the one discovered at the peristyle court of Amenhotep III Temple in Kom el Hettan (Sourouzian 2011: 32)



Figures 19 a-b. Statue of the royal scribe Ahmose, inv. no. 15216 (Photographer and Drawing: M. González Bustos © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

from the Ramesseum, as well as other statues from the reign of Amenhotep III found there (Lurson 2007; Lurson 2004; Gutmann & Richter 2014).

Almost 300 fragments of stelae have been found in the *Henket-ankh*, some particularly well preserved.¹⁴ Most are made of limestone, but some are carved of sandstone or red quartzite (Franco González 2019: 110-111). Part of a large royal stela depicting Thutmose III and his mother Iset standing before Amun-Re was found by Weigall (1906: 128-136). Apart from this object, the most important examples of votive stelae show the king as an intermediary between the gods and the bearers of offerings, some of whose names and titles are preserved on fragments. The most represented gods are Hathor and Amun-Re, whose image and name again appear damaged (e.g., inv. no. 15258 and inv. no. 15523) (Franco González 2018: 63-73, Fig. 5).

14. See the chapter titled “Votive Practices and Daily Activities in the *Henket-ankh*” by María Franco González in this volume.

Inv. no. 9234 is one of the most interesting examples representing Hathor and shows the head of the divinity with its characteristic headdress of a sun disc flanked by horns with the inscription *Hwt-Hr nbt Hwt-shm*, ‘mistress of Hut-Sekhem’, a town located in the seventh Nome of Upper Egypt (Franco González 2019: 132).

Animals that symbolised Amun are represented on many stelae. The most common representations are rams, cobras, cows, and geese. Especially significant, in terms of both beauty and meaning, are two almost complete limestone stelae showing rows of geese (Franco González 2019: 138-147, zoomorphic representations). The first (inv. nos. 15501/15491) shows three registers, each with two geese, face to face, while the second has five registers with rows of geese and a lunette with two geese and plant motifs.

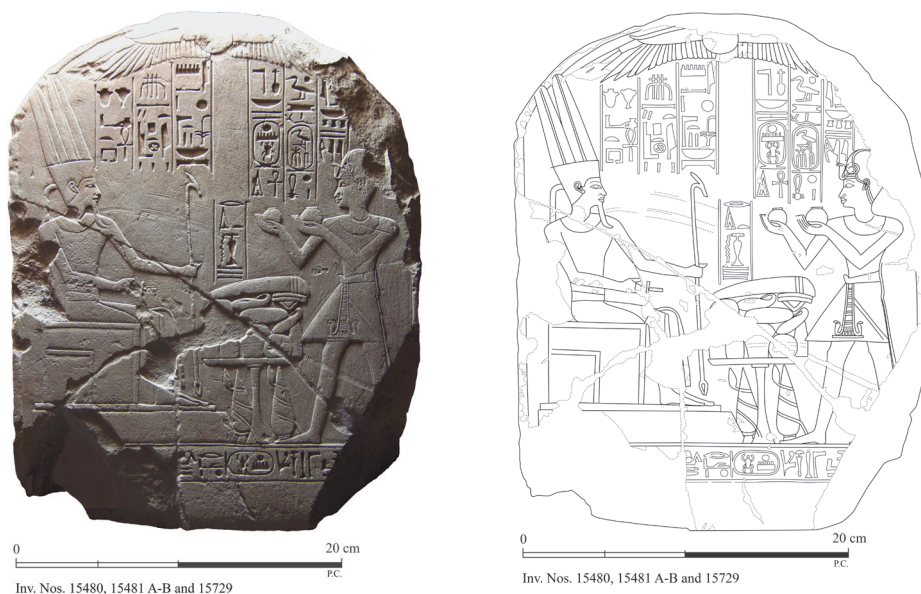
Most of these stelae date from the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty based on epigraphic evidence, found context, or both (Franco González 2019: 111). Of particular importance are also four fragments forming a good portion of a limestone stela belonging to Re, a priest from the reign of Amenhotep II buried in TT 72 (Fig. 22 a-b). Fragment no. 15480, which contains the name of the official, was presented, along with other materials,



Figure 20. Head of a granodiorite statue, inv. no. 15442
(Photographer: A. Amin © Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Figure 21. Head and part of the torso of statue representing goddess Sekhmet, inv. no. 9478
(Photographer: I. García Martínez © Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Figures 22 a-b. Stela of Re, inv. nos. 15480, 15481a-b and 15729 (Photographer: I. García Martínez; Drawing: P. Calassou © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

during the V Iberian Congress of Egyptology, held in Cuenca, in 2015 (Martínez Babón 2017: 608-609; Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2019: 132; Franco González 2019: 115; PM I: 99-100). The stela presents an oval lunette with a winged solar disc, and below, a seated figure of the god Amun-Re, an offering table, the figure of Thutmose III, two inscriptions related to the god and the king, and the following inscription at the base: [...] *hm ntr tp(y) n (Mn-hpr-r)* | *R* ' [...], '[...] the first prophet of (Menkheperre)], Re [...]'.

1.5.4. Foundation Deposit

This deposit, found near the entrance to the second courtyard, includes six inscribed and one uninscribed stones reworked in the form of bricks of various sizes and made from different materials (quartzite, sandstone, and red granite) (Fig. 23 a-b).¹⁵ The

15. With inscription: inv. nos. 9385 (31.5 x 16 x 10.8cm), 9386 (33.8 x 20.5 x 8.4cm), 9387 (45.8 x 16 x 9.8cm), and 9388 (39 x 17.5 x 10.5cm); with cartouche: inv. nos. 9389 (21.5 x 12.3 x 7.4cm) and

four largest are covered by the following inscription: *ntr nfr (Mn-ḥpr-R)| mr[y] Ḳmn* (2) *ḥft pḏ-šs ḥr ḥwt=f*¹⁶ *nt imntt*, ‘The good god (*Menkheperre*)|, beloved of Amun, at the time of the Stretching of the Cord over his Temple of the West’. Two smaller ones bear the throne name of Thutmose III, *Menkheperre*. Some pottery vessels and cow bones were found within the deposit (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2014: 157-167 & pls. LXIII-LXV). Weigall and Ricke also found foundation deposits in various parts of the temple (see Ricke 1938: 32-33; Weigall 1906: 125-126).

1.5.5. Papyri, Ostraca and Graffiti

Almost all the papyri currently inventoried originate from the rubbish dumps to the north of the northern enclosure wall, formed mostly when the temple was in use, but also during earlier archaeological works. Some small fragments of administrative documents were found in the workshop area in the north-western corner of the temple (inv. no. 21021).¹⁷

The papyri fragments from the dumps vary in terms of content. Administrative documents are most numerous and constitute part of the temple archive during the Eighteenth Dynasty. This collection includes dated entries with lists of commodities (different types of bread and cakes, honey, fruit, dates, milk, beer, wine, textiles), often in relatively small quantities. The documents probably represent daily offerings made in the temple, and there are numerous fragments of headings in red ink. Several entries include various types of fowl and cattle, and incense is frequently mentioned.

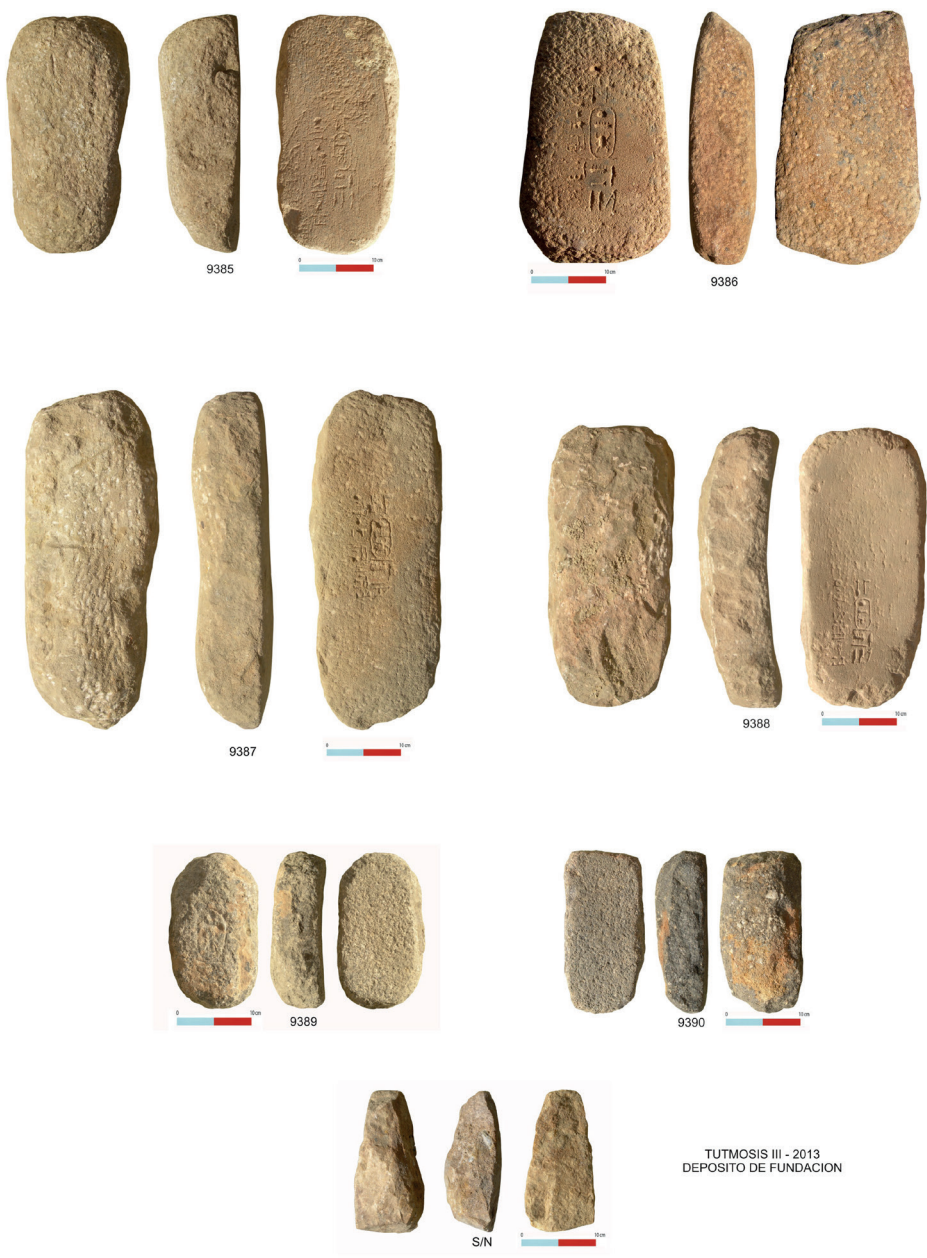
There are also fragments mentioning different festivals, including a coronation festival, the well-known *Nehebkau*-festival (of the last day of the last month of the *Akhet*-season), and an otherwise unattested ‘festival of Amun during Khoiak’. It is known that festivals of victory commemorating Thutmose III’s military campaigns in the Levant were also celebrated in the temple during his reign as mentioned in the *Annals of the King* (*Urk.* IV, 741: 3-5).

Mixed in with these administrative fragments—essentially part of the temple day-book or journal—are some small fragments of other categories of manuscripts. The

9390 (22.5 x 10.8 x 7.6cm).

16. The question of whether the hieroglyph was used here or to write *ḥwt* is difficult to answer given the partially eroded condition of the stone. This applies to all four above-mentioned objects.

17. See the chapter titled “The Hieratic Material from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III: A Preliminary Report” by Fredrik Hagen in this volume.



Figures 23 a. Foundation deposit from the area of entrance to the second courtyard (Photographer: A. Guio
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)



Figures 23 b. Foundation deposit from the area of entrance to the second courtyard (Drawing: A. Guio
© Thutmosis III Temple Project)

largest number of non-administrative fragments come from a papyrus roll with a religious text, written in cursive hieroglyphs in columns and a vignette with a standing ‘stick figure’ of a man. There are some fragments of an illustrated roll with drawings of snakes cut with knives in red ink, often with Hieratic captions (also in red). One mentions *msw bdšt*, ‘children of the Weary One (or The Rebel?)’, enemies of the sun-god, and another mentions Apophis.

Among the ostraca there are both limestone and ceramic examples, but the latter are a clear majority. These are administrative texts (lists of rations, stonemasons, and the letters or messages of *wab*-priests), as well as literary compositions, including several with dates in red ink at the end, a feature that has been associated with scribal training. Less ambiguous are copies of the text known as *Kemit*, well known as part of scribal education, and appearing in both good and bad handwriting.

The limestone ostrakon (inv. no. 15670) is interesting with lists of the names of *wab*-priests (*phyles*) serving in the mortuary temple during the Eighteenth Dynasty. In the middle is a heading reading ‘second phyle’, and there are lines dividing different groups of priests.

There are also some *graffiti*, most of which are on sandstone and come from the temple proper. On these, the ink *graffiti* are invariably laid out not to overlap with the raised relief, respecting the original decoration of the temple. A few names are preserved in their entirety, for example: the *wab*-priest Kay (inv. no. 3257), Wennefer (inv. no. 3247), and the scribe Seth (inv. no. 13605). Another mentions the name of Thutmose III, presumably as part of the name of the temple (inv. no. 3246), while others record the gods, such as ‘Amun-Re, king of the gods’.

1.5.6. Seal Impressions and Stoppers

Some seal impressions on clay have been found at the site. The majority are in a very poor state of preservation due to the great fragility of the pieces, but they have historical value since they record the names of several pharaohs. The throne name of Thutmose III is the most common one (inv. nos. 15489 or 21332). One contains the throne name of Amenhotep II (inv. no. 15631), and another has throne names Thutmose III and Amenhotep III together (inv. nos. 15229 and 15850) (Franco González 2019: 274, 276, 278).

Most of the discussed objects also bear inscriptions. Allusions to wine offerings are plentiful, and there are also occasional allusions to honey. The onomastics are

particularly interesting. Names of kings and queens cover a good portion of the New Kingdom and show that Thutmose III was revered throughout many later generations in his own Temple of Millions of Years or that the temple continued to function and receive assignments from the central authority (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 101-115; Martínez Babón, Seco Álvarez, & Moreno Cifuentes 2019: 169-188).

The first pharaoh attested as delivering offerings is Thutmose IV. A fragment preserves his entire throne name, even though the complete inscription was not preserved: *Mn-hpr(w)-R' m Hwt-[Ĝ]mn(?)* [//], '(Menkheperura)', in the temple of Amun [...] (?)' (inv. no. 15596; Fig. 24a) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno

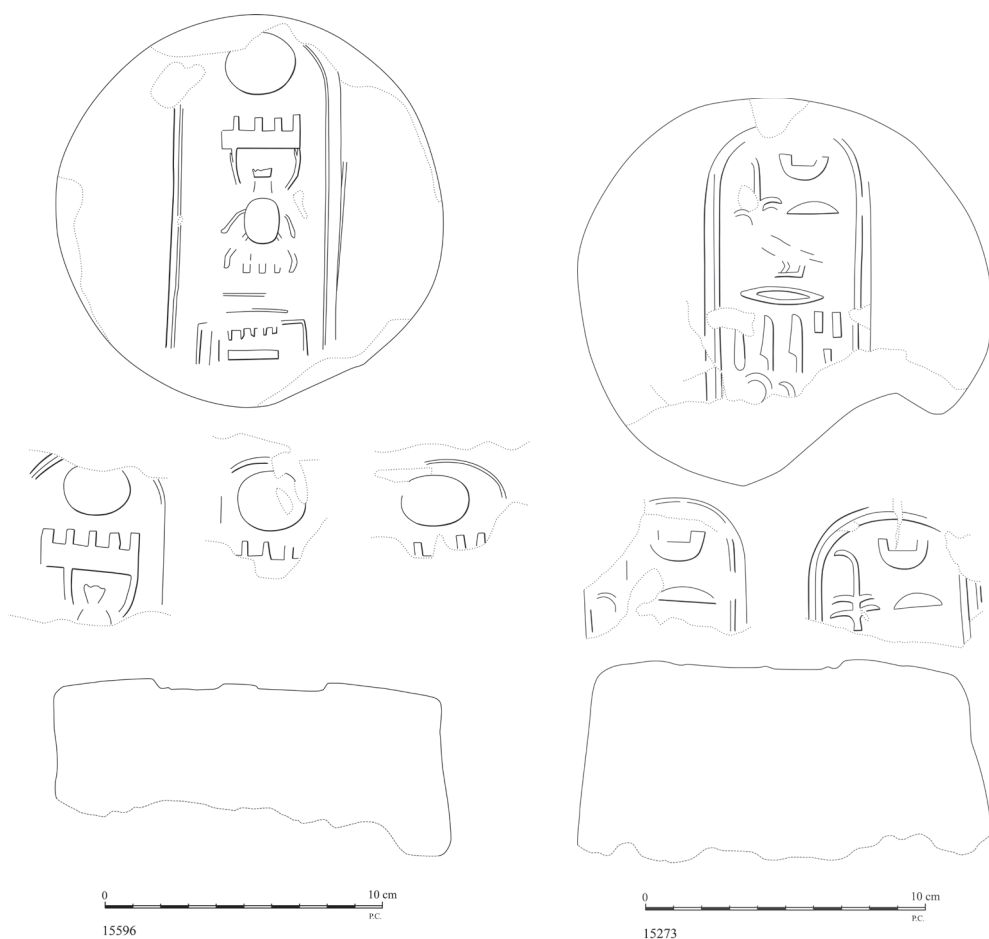


Figure 24 a. Stoppers with the Throne names of Thutmose IV, inv. no.15596; b. Queen Tiye, inv. no. 15273 (Photographer: I. García Martínez; and Drawing: P. Calassou © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

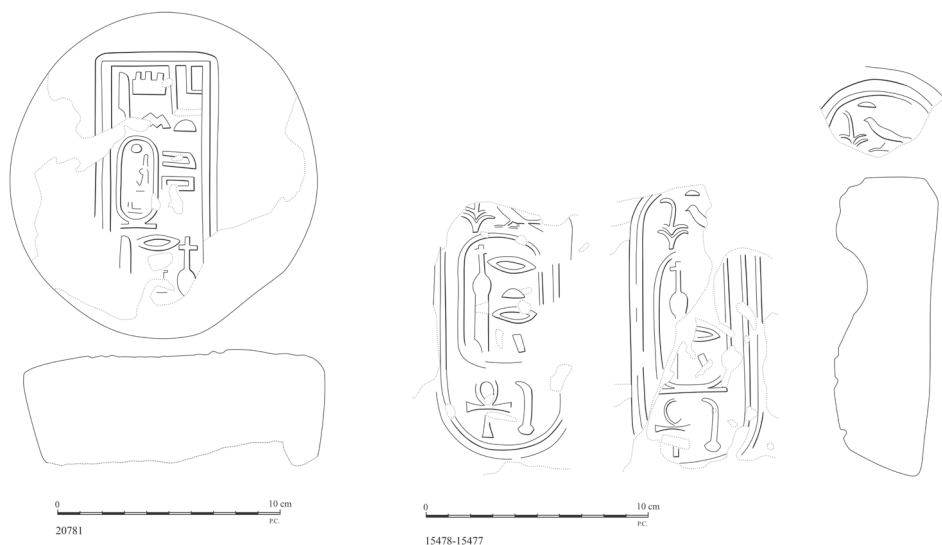


Figure 24 c. Sethi I, inv. no. 20781 and d. Queen Nefertari, inv. no. 15478 (Photographer: I. García Martínez; and Drawing: P. Calassou © *Thutmose III Temple Project*)

Cifuentes 2016: 111). Other incomplete pieces may be attributed to him but with caution. Only the shapes of the *kheperu*-signs in the lower part of the cartouche are preserved, and this generates doubt, since it could be attributed to Amenhotep II. One allows us to read $[[[]hprw \dot{H}wt-\dot{I}mn \text{ } []]]$, ‘*kheperu* $[[[]]$, the temple of Amun’ (inv. no. 9569) and the other $[[[]hprw \text{ } nh \dot{d}d w3s nb, \text{ } []]]$ *kheperu* $[[[]]$, all life, duration and sovereignty’ (inv. no. 15568) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 108, 111).

Amenhotep III and his wife Tiye also paid homage to the image of Thutmose III. The throne name *Nebmaatre* can clearly be distinguished on one fragment, even though most of the remaining part of the inscription has been lost (inv. no. 15097). Other fragments allow for the identification of the name *Nebmaatre Meryamun*, although it appears incomplete, inv. nos. 15048 and 15664 (Fig. 25). This variant of the name can be found in Gauthier (1912: 307 n. 3, 310 n. 1 & 319). For a list of different variants of name with *Nebmaatre*, (see Beckerath 1984: 86). The discussed one is, however, not attested there. As to the queen, an incomplete inscription can be read with some difficulty. However, the words *hmt-nswt wr(t) Tyi* (?), ‘the great king’s wife Tiye’ are preserved (inv. no. 15273; Fig. 24b). This variant of the name can be found in Gauthier (1912: 331-333 & 355-356; Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 109).

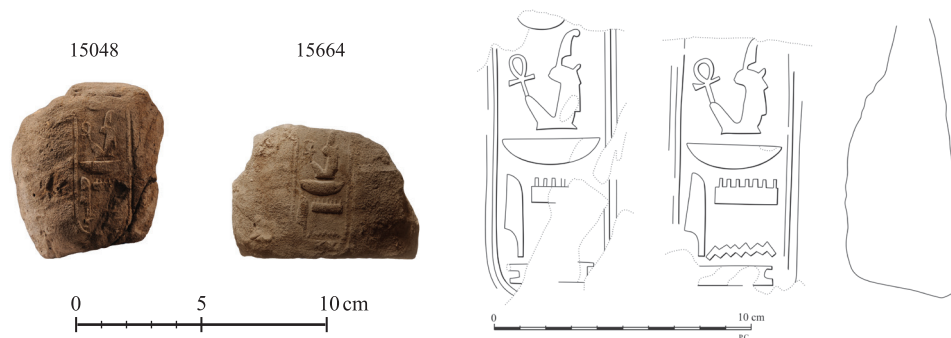
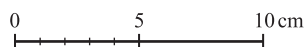


Figure 25. Stoppers with the Throne name of Amenophis III, *Nebmaatremeryamun*, inv. nos. 15048 and 15664, from left to right (Photographer J.C. Lara Bellón © Thutmosis III Temple Project)

On a piece of a clay vessel in a very poor state of preservation, the hieroglyphs [///] *n* (?) *itn*, *Aten* appear in a cartouche. This was found in the workshop area in the north-western corner of the temple (inv. no. 20857) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 115). It cannot be ruled out that this inscription may be related to Akhenaten. His activity in the temple is confirmed by the defacement that was carried out against the figures of Amun in the inscriptions and reliefs (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2015c: 525-53) and by stamped mudbricks in a wall located in the north-eastern sector of the excavation site (Seco Álvarez & Martínez Babón 2015a: 383).

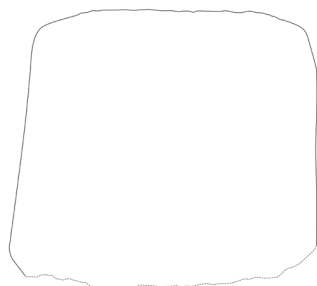
Tutankhamun's throne name is also found in this category of finds (inv. no. 20795). A stopper contains the inscription: *irp n pr (Nb-hprw-R) | grg Imn W3st* [///], 'Wine of the House of (Nebkheperure)|, the Foundation of Amun of Thebes' (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 115) (Fig. 26). There is also evidence that offerings were delivered in the politically unstable time of Horemheb, the last pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. His throne name, though incomplete, can be identified on two fragments (inv. nos. 15610 and 20780) (Fig. 27). It is interesting to find the name written with two scarabs, since the name of this pharaoh was generally written with a single scarab.

The first kings of the Nineteenth Dynasty also left tokens of respect for the figure of Thutmose III. Various stoppers were found that bear labels with the words *Mn-ph-ty-R* ' *irp*, 'Menpehtyre wine' (inv. nos 20784 and 20790) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 114). Despite his brief reign, Ramesses I wanted to leave an offering to the memory of the conqueror pharaoh. The stoppers with his throne name are so far the only ones that have traces of an inscription on their bases.

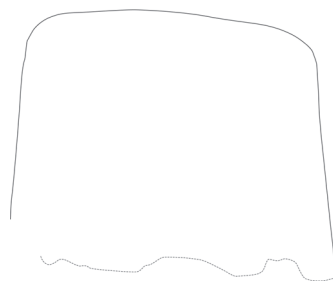
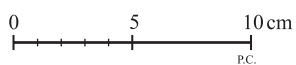


20795

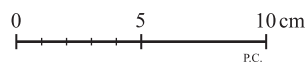
Figure 26. Stopper with the Throne name of Tutankhamon, inv. no. 20795 (Photographer: I. García Martínez; and Drawing: P. Calassou © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)



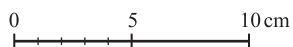
20780



20795



P.C.



20780

Figure 27. Stopper with the Throne name of Horemheb, inv. no. 20780 (Photographer: I. García Martínez; and Drawing: P. Calassou © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

Unfortunately, they are very deteriorated, although, for example on inv. no. 20791, we can distinguish the *nefer*-sign and a cobra over the *neb*-sign.

Although incomplete, one inscription bears the throne name of Seti I: *Hwt-Īmn m pr ([Mn-]m3 't-R)| ĩrp nfr (?)*, ‘good wine of the temple of Amun in the House of ([Men] maatre)| (?)’ (inv. no. 20781; Fig. 24c) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 113). The last important figure, from a chronological point of view, whose name is confirmed on stoppers is that of queen Nefertari. There are two fragments preserved: one, which is in a bad state of preservation, and contains the words: *[hmt]-nswt wrt (Nfirt-iry)| 'nh. ti*, ‘the great king’s wife Nefertari, who lives’ (inv. no. 15478; Fig. 24d) (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 110). On the other (inv. no. 15477), we can distinguish the end of the name of the queen with the corresponding formula: *[hmt]-nswt wrt Nfirt-]iry (?) 'nh.ti*, ‘who lives’ (Seco Álvarez, Martínez Babón & Moreno Cifuentes 2016: 110 and 106).

1.5.7. Mudbricks

The excavation and restoration work conducted by the mission have allowed for the recovery of stamped mudbricks that significantly expand the list published by Ricke (1938: 33-36). Apart from a series related to the throne name of Thutmose III or the name of the temple, the names of other pharaohs could also be identified (Fig. 28a-g). Thus, it is worth mentioning types that include the throne names of Thutmose I and Hatshepsut (together), Thutmose I, Hatshepsut, Amenhotep IV, and Ramesses II. This material is being studied to better understand the construction phases of the complex.

Moreover, on numerous mudbricks, more than twenty different marks were recorded, most likely corresponding to the teams of workers that built the temple (Fig. 29). An ostrakon found on the site (inv. no. 15131) with three columns of hieratic text, largely complete except for a flake missing on the left edge, should be highlighted. It presents three recipes for mudbricks, with varying amounts of clay, straw, sand, and something called *nms*-soil. Water is not mentioned but would have been used to bind the mixture.¹⁸

18. See the chapter titled “The Hieratic Material from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III: A Preliminary Report” by Fredrik Hagen in this volume.

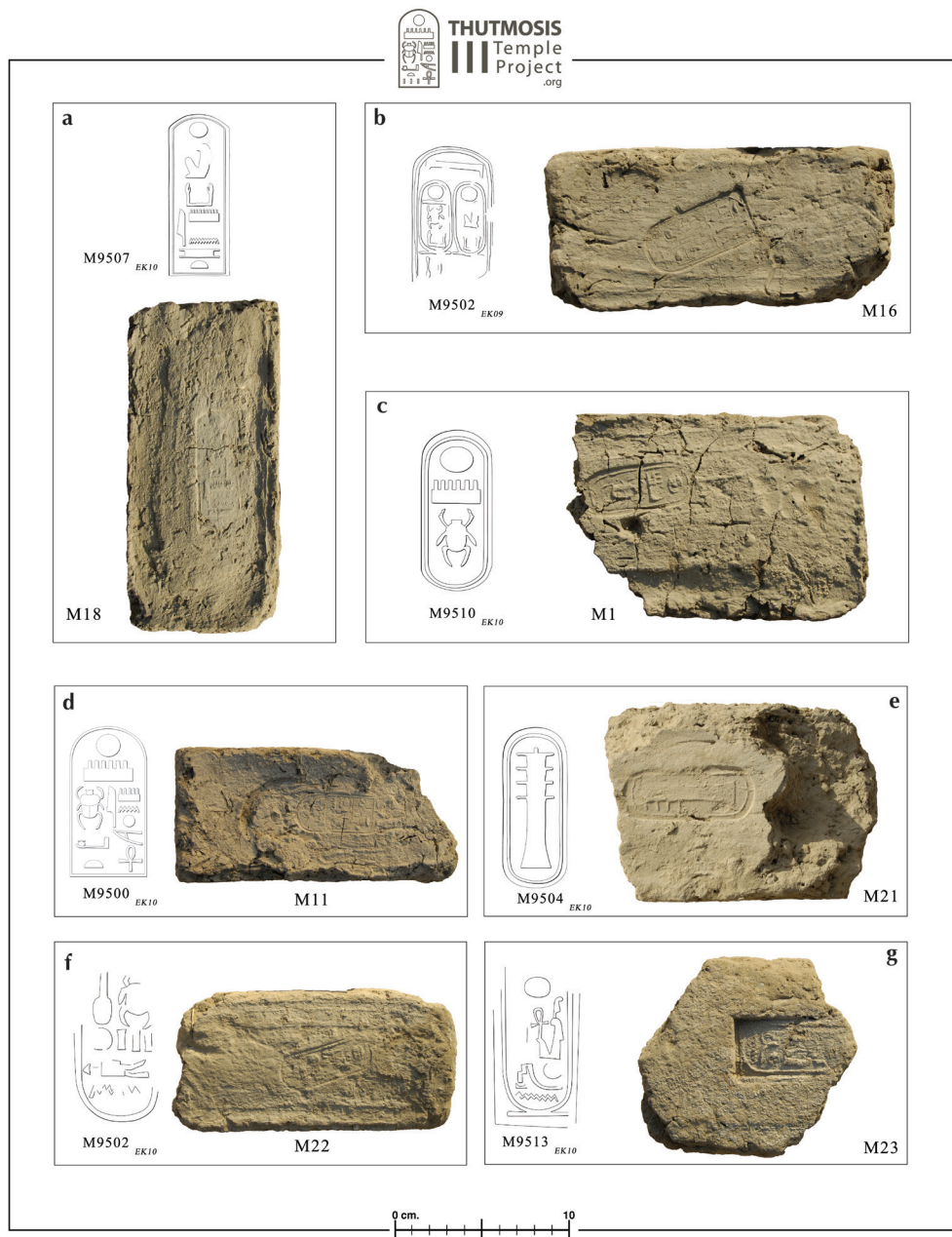


Figure 28 a-g. Mudbricks with stamped names: Throne name of Hatshepsut *m3^ct-k3-R^c mrt Imn* (M18); Throne name of Thutmose I and Hatshepsut *3-hpr-k3-R^c m3^c hrw / m3^ct-k3-R^c* (M16); Throne name of Thutmose III *Mn-hpr-R^c* (M1); The name of the temple *Mn-hpr-R^c mry Imn hnkt nh* (M11); *Djed* Pillar (M21); the Throne name *Nefer-Kheperu- R^c U^c-en- R^c* (Amenophis IV) (M22); and Throne name *User-m^ct- R^c šetep-en- R^c* (Ramesses II) (M23)

(Photographer: I. García Martínez © Thutmosis III Temple Project)

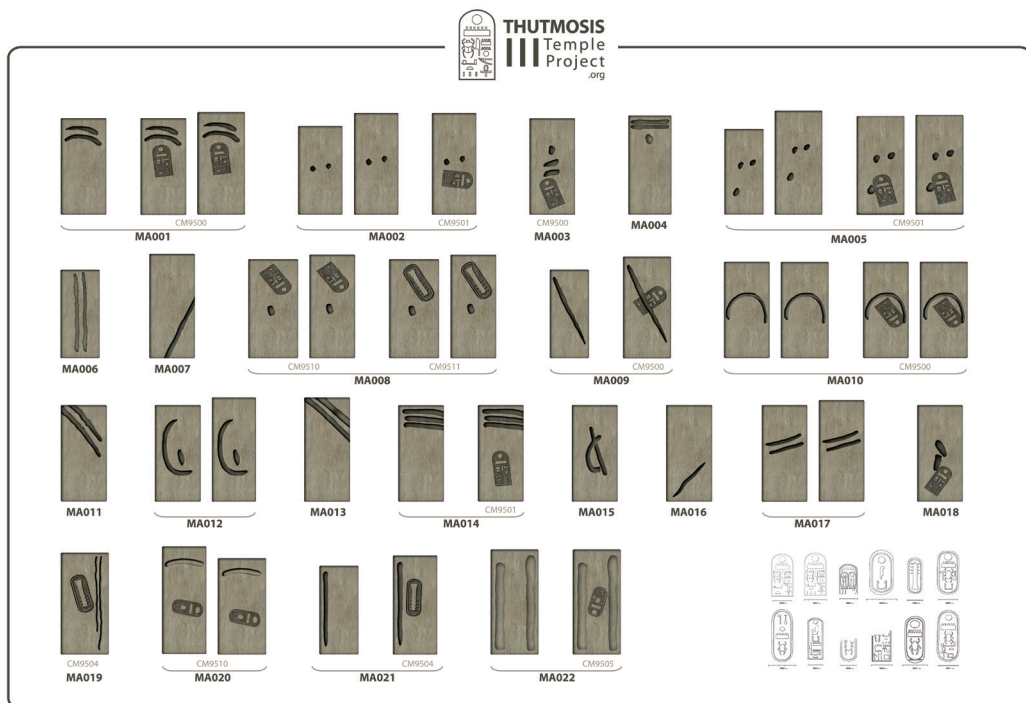


Figure 29. Builders' marks on the mudbricks (Drawing: R. Campos López © *Thutmosis III Temple Project*)

1.6. Conclusions

After twelve field seasons of research at the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmose III, one should highlight the completion of excavations and the reconstruction of the mudbrick enclosure wall among the most important research results, in addition to the restoration of the central ramp and a portion of the pylon. Investigation allowed the mission to expose some thus far unknown complexes: an administrative building outside the southern enclosure wall, foundations of workshops in the north-western part of the upper courtyard, remains of the house of the Ramesside priest Khonsu in the north-eastern part of the second courtyard, and the foundation deposit at the entrance to this courtyard.

The excavation of the large dump located outside the northern enclosure wall has yielded an enormous quantity of vessels, stela fragments, ostraca, and stoppers, providing remarkable information about the temple. Important data was provided by an analysis of the moveable finds. Stamps and marks found on mudbricks allowed

us to better understand the construction phases of the temple. Fragments of reliefs and architectural decoration provided religious and historical data, while stelae and their fragments preserve epigraphic and iconographic information on religious and historical figures who had some relationship with the temple. Most of the hundreds of statue fragments still await study. Ostraca, parts of papyrus, and various objects of daily life helped to understand rituals and other activities. Abundant pottery from different eras and contexts allowed us to establish the chronological and economical background of the temple, while stoppers and earthenware containers that preserve inscriptions indicate that many pharaohs and important figures of the royal house were interested in leaving offerings of wine and honey in the memory of one of the most important pharaohs in the history of Egypt.

There are still sections of the temple to be excavated, which will likely contribute to a better understanding of a temple that was built in the time of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III and remained active until the reign of Ramesses II.

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