



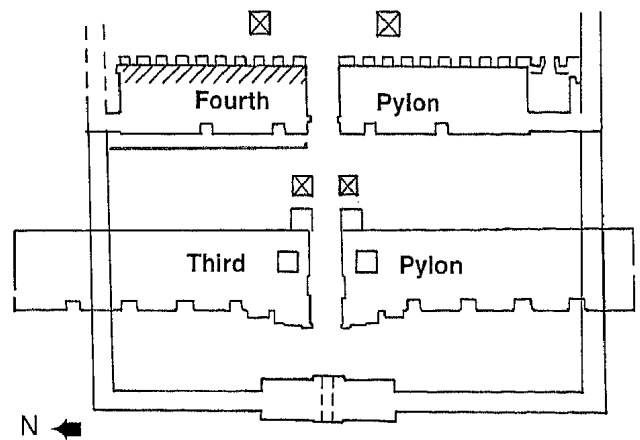
# New statues at Karnak

A surprising discovery was made during recent consolidation work on the fourth pylon of the temple of Amun at Karnak. **François Larché** reports.

The Franco-Egyptian Centre at Karnak has recently been carrying out consolidation work on partially collapsed sandstone blocks making up the core of the fourth pylon of the temple of Amun. A dozen very large disturbed blocks had to be removed so that they could be correctly reinstalled. The work was undertaken in order to allow the reconstruction, against the west face of the fourth pylon, of a wall belonging to a porticoed courtyard of Tuthmosis IV (currently partially reconstructed in the Open Air Museum at Karnak), which had been built against the pylon but was removed in 1970 as it was in danger of collapse.

The consolidation of the pylon itself led to the discovery by Christophe Chini of the remains of four of an original eight niches built of limestone and incorporated into an earlier, previously-undetected pylon façade on the east side of the fourth pylon's north wing. The niches, built at the same time as the core of the pylon and part of the same original construction, still contained the lower portions of seated sandstone Osirid statues. Columns of text inscribed on the thrones of all four of the statues state that they were made in the name of Tuthmosis I by Hatshepsut. Numerous fragments of inscribed limestone in sunk relief came from the door-frames of the niches; one bears a particularly well-preserved cartouche with the name of Tuthmosis I. Another fragment originating from a lintel block, with a winged disc surmounted by a base-line on which a large foot is visible, indicates that above the niches there was a large-scale relief scene which probably covered the east face of the pylon.

Small fragments of a different, very hard, type of limestone recovered from the third niche are from a demolished statue group in the name of Horemheb, which has been recently reassembled in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. These fragments must be intrusive,



**Blue:** constructions of Tuthmosis III-Amenhotep III.

**Red:** constructions of Tuthmosis I-II (the hatched area shows the location of the 'seam' of limestone with the niches and remains of statues).

**Green:** location where the east wall of the columned portico of Tuthmosis IV will be reconstructed.

and were probably imported to the site by the lime-workers who were dismantling the limestone façade of the pylon itself.

Many decorated limestone fragments from the early façade have been recovered, but most of it had been robbed away by the lime-workers, who were forced to mine the 'seam' of the earlier limestone façade from above as it was by then completely hidden by the later sandstone façade of Tuthmosis III.

□ François Larché is co-director of the Franco-Egyptian Centre at Karnak. Christophe Chini is a master stone cutter. Photographs: CNRS-CFEETK, CHÉNÉ. Schematic plan by David Jeffreys, after *Cahiers de Karnak* VIII, pl.I on p.202.



Karnak, fourth pylon. Views of the remains of the sandstone statues and the limestone niches from the south-east (left) and from the north-east (right)