

The QSAP Programme on the Temple of Queen Tiye in Sedeinga¹

Claude Rilly

Sedeinga is located in Middle Nubia, on the west bank of the Nile, 200km south of the border between Sudan and Egypt and 14km north of Soleb. The archaeological site lies between the two villages of Qubbat Selim in the north and Nilwa in the south. The site encompasses almost the entire history of Sudan: in the west, Neolithic and Protohistoric remains, including a late Neolithic cemetery (*c.* 3900 BC), located directly under the largest pyramid of the Napatan-Meroitic necropolis (WT1), in Sector West; in the east, 200m from the Nile, the temple of Queen Tiye, built around 1360 BC, during the Egyptian colonization of Nubia; in the plain between the high and the low tracks, the four sectors of the great Kushite necropolis, active from 700 BC to AD 300; in the south finally, the remains of the church of Nilwa, built in the 6th/7th centuries AD and the ruins of buildings dated to the Christian times or the Ottoman period, all of which have not yet been excavated.

Archaeological excavations started under the direction of Michela Schiff Giorgini. She had obtained the excavation license for the temple of Soleb in 1957 and began in parallel the excavations in Sedeinga in 1963, once the first publications on Soleb were ready for printing. In 1976, as the work on the temple of Soleb was coming to an end, Sedeinga became an independent mission and was assigned to the French, who had been assisting Mrs Schiff Giorgini since the beginning. She wanted to take advantage of her retirement from the field to carry on the publication of the next volumes of Soleb but this work was interrupted two years later by her untimely death. Professor Jean Leclant undertook the direction of Sedeinga, which he passed on to Mr Audran Labrousse in 1991, and to Mrs Catherine Berger-El Naggar in 1994. In 2008, I succeeded her at the head of the French mission and, together with Vincent Francigny, we have carried on the excavations of the necropolis until the present.

After the first season of the mission, in 1963, the work on the temple, which had barely begun (see Schiff Giorgini 1965, 114-115), was abandoned. Only a first attempt at a topographic survey, the restoration of the column and the registration of the blocks had been undertaken. The state of ruin of the temple was disheartening. Nothing was possible without a crane and at that time there were no tarmac roads in Sudan outside the urban centres. The excavations consequently focused on the necropolis, where the large pyramids of Sector West yielded significant Meroitic material (Leclant

1970; Rilly 2013). For the following 50 years, only small-scale operations were conducted on the temple: two sondages on the south side of the building and an assessment of the state of preservation of the blocks.² Until the beginning of a specific program backed by the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, in 2015, the appearance of the temple, a large heap of ruined blocks surrounding a single standing column and a fragment of wall still in place, was the same as in the drawings of early travellers who discovered Sedeinga in the 19th century (Plates 1 and 2).



Plate 1. The temple in 1844.
(Lepsius, *Denkmäler I. 114*; drawing by Weidenbach).



Plate 2. The temple in 2012 (© B.-N.Chagny/SFDAS/SEDAU).

The temple of Sedeinga was built for Queen Tiye, the great royal wife of Pharaoh Amenhotep III. This shrine was the female counterpart of the great temple he built in Soleb, 14km south, for his own divine image and for Amun. The two temples were built north and south of Jebel Dosha, where a *speos*, overlooking a large bend of the Nile, was cre-

² The first sondage was made in 2005 and did not result in any discoveries. For the second sondage, conducted by S. Marchi in 2007, see Grimal *et al.* 2009, 263. A small basin (approximately 2 x 1m), probably connected to the temple, was discovered. For the assessment conducted by Michel Wuttman in 1993, see Leclant and Clerc 1995, 326. The base and legs of an over-life-sized statue of Queen Tiye in gabbro was found by chance during this operation.

¹ The investigation of this temple, and the excavations in the Kushite cemetery, formed the subject of the 2018 Kirwan Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr Claude Rilly on 27th September.



ated a century earlier under Thutmose III.³ This rocky hill also included, north of the chapel, in the vicinity of the Nile, a sandstone quarry from where the blocks of both temples were extracted and ferried south to Soleb and north to Sedeinga. In addition, Jebel Dosha, a small range of hills oriented west-east and blocking the route that runs along the Nile, is nowadays a traditional border between two regions of Middle Nubia, Sukkot in the north and Mahas in the south. Given its geographical particularities, this place might already have been a strategic border in antiquity and for that reason was chosen as the site of the *speos*. The location of the temple of Tiye in Sedeinga resulted, therefore, from the presence of two earlier temples in the region, the Jebel Dosha *speos* and the Soleb temple. However, several scholars in the past, including distinguished Egyptologists,⁴ have explained the location of her temple in Nubia by her alleged Nubian origins. Among the many representations of Queen Tiye that have survived, the most famous, a small wooden head found in Medinet el-Gurob and kept in Berlin Ägyptisches Museum, was used as the main piece of evidence for this theory. Actually, the black hue of the face is due to the disappearance of original pigments, leaving the dark ivy wood bare. Her mummy, found in 1898 by Victor Loret in Tomb KV 35 of the Valley of the Kings and previously known as the 'Elder Lady', was identified in the last decades by several specialists (see Gabolde 2013, 181,183). She was, like her grandson, king Tutankhamun, of Caucasian complexion. Her parents, Yuya and Tuya, are well known and their mummies were found in 1907 in the Valley of the Kings. They were high officials from the city of Akhmim (Panopolis), in Upper Egypt. This clan of Akhmim was, at the end of the 18th Dynasty, a component of the royal family: Queen Mutemwiya, Amenhotep III's mother, was probably Yuya's sister, according to recent analyses of the genetic data found on royal mummies (Gabolde 2013, 192-193). To conclude on this point, there was no particular connection between Tiye's family and Nubia.

The temple of Soleb is the largest Egyptian sanctuary in Sudan. It was erected under Amenhotep III for two main gods, Amun and Nebmaatre, who is no other than the divine image of the king and bears his coronation name.⁵ The excavations in Soleb have shown that the construction of the great temple spanned a period of over 32 years, with a first phase ending after the king's 12th regnal year, some minor changes around the 17th year and renewed activity in the 28th year, doubtlessly connected to the engraving of the famous scenes of the Sed festival in the first courtyard.⁶ Despite the common qualification 'Jubilee Temple', Soleb was originally planned as a temple to Amun and Nebmaatre.

³ See the preliminary report of the recent excavations conducted in Jebel Dosha (Davies and Welsby Sjöström 2016).

⁴ For instance Desroches-Noblecourt 1986, 54.

⁵ The god Nebmaatre was rather a divinisation of the royal power than of the person of Amenhotep III. See Beaux 2013; Bickel 2013.

⁶ See Schiff Giorgini *et al.* 1998. According to C. Robichon's analysis, the different years could be distinguished from regular white traces ('*sols blanchis*') successively left in the foundations by each annual flood.

Only when the Pharaoh reached the 30th year of his reign was an iconographic programme focused on the Jubilee added to the décor of the western side of the great pylon. If the construction was launched in regnal year 5, after the Nubian campaign conducted by Amenhotep III was finished, the temple would have been completed around regnal year 17 and the Sed festival décor would have been added in year 33 to commemorate the first jubilee of the king. The building would have been ready for the celebration of the second Sed festival in year 34. Some final modifications would date from year 37, the last of the reign.

Located 14km to the north, the small temple of Sedeinga is the female counterpart of Soleb. Queen Tiye is not divinized here as a specific goddess, like Nebmaatre in Soleb, but she is equated with the goddess Hathor.⁷ This equivalence appears elsewhere, for example in the tomb of her steward Kheruef in Thebes (TT 192). In one of the scenes adorning his grave (Nims *et al.* 1980, pls 25 and 26), Tiye and Hathor have exchanged places. The queen is standing behind two thrones, the first being occupied by the king, the second by Hathor, who thus appears as the actual king's wife. In Sedeinga, the columns of the main hall are Hathoric, their capitals feature a sistrum bearing the image of the goddess Hathor, with her characteristic cow ears (Plate 3), but the face of Hathor is



Plate 3. Hathoric capital (Block No. 165) and abacus with a cartouche of Tiye (Block No. 76). (© C. Rilly/SEDAU).

actually young Tiye's, with the same facial features as in her statues flanking the giant effigies of her husband, the famous 'Colossi of Memnon' in the temple of Kom el-Hettan.

Sedeinga was built after Soleb was completed, as evidenced by the lower quality of the sandstone used in this temple. It was extracted from the same quarry, but at a time when the best strata were exhausted. It is plausible to suggest that

⁷ See Gautron 2003, 185-186. Sedeinga has a double connection with Hathor. On the one hand, she is the goddess of beauty, femininity and maternity, all notions naturally linked to a royal wife such as Tiye. On the other, Hathor is also the 'Distant Goddess', who in the myth of the Eye of Re, fled to Nubia in the form of a lioness until Thoth and Shu were sent to bring her back to Egypt. The famous figure of Tiye as a female sphinx on the tympanon of the door between the hypostyle hall and the sanctuaries is probably linked to this aspect of Hathor.

the offering of this temple to Tiye was one of the favours enjoyed by the queen in year 11 of the reign, which was also marked by the construction for her of an impressive agricultural complex in Djarukha, near her hometown. Perhaps these lavish presents have to do with the long awaited birth of Prince Thutmosis, the first male heir. This birth certainly strengthened the status of the royal great wife and earned her new honors.⁸

Even if Tiye was probably not worshipped in Sedeinga as a specific goddess, the temple was dedicated to her. This dedication was engraved on the shafts of the Hathoric columns and in several places on the walls of the building. It is, for example, found on two blocks fitting together, originally belonging to the rear wall of the hypostyle hall, and engraved with the image of the queen (blocks 116/122, see Plate 4). The text reads:

‘The king of [Upper] and Lower Egypt, Lord of Two-Lands, lord of performing rituals, Nebmaatre, [son of Re, beloved of him, Amenhotep, governor of Thebes,] he [made this] as his monu[ment] for the noble Lady, the Great [of Praises (...)] the Great Royal Wife Tiye, living’.⁹



Plate 4. *Queen Tiye and dedication of the temple* (Blocks Nos 116/122). (© C. Rilly/SEDAU).

⁸ See Cabrol 2000, 97-98; Duhard 2016, 312-315, commenting on Rilly 2015, 44-45. This prince died when he was still a child or a teenager, leaving the status of heir to the throne to his younger brother Amenhotep, the future Akhenaton.

⁹ The text has been completed on the evidence from several other blocks. However, from the (almost) full list of titles given by Lepsius (LD III, 82g), we could not find the phrases *ʕ.t nrw.t*, *ḥmw.t t3.w nb.w* ‘great of terror, mistress of all lands’. Lepsius’ notebook includes only a hand copy in two parts of the dedication, where ‘[great of] praises’ is immediately followed by ‘the Great Royal Wife’ (LD VI, 228). The long text in LD III was apparently copied from a single column, which cannot be the standing one, where the inscriptions are hardly preserved, but probably another lying on the ground which has disappeared since Lepsius’ visit in 1844. The use of the epithet *ʕ.t nrw.t* ‘great of terror’ for queens was limited to this example until the discovery of a statue of a queen (presumably Tiye, later usurped by Henuttawy, wife of Pinedjem I) in 2006, in the Mut temple at Karnak. The same epithet can be read among the titles of the queen engraved on the dorsal pillar (Bryan 2008, 39 and 41, fig. 4).

The ancient name of Sedeinga, *Ḥmw.t Tjy* ‘the Temple of Tiye’ also emphasizes the pre-eminence of the queen in the site. It first appears on a colossal statue of Queen Tiye in gabbro, of which only the legs and the base were found, the former 30 years ago, during a survey in the ruins of the temple, and the latter *in situ*, on the southern side of the door between the hypostyle hall and the middle chapel, during our excavations in 2016 (see Plates 5 and 6). On the dorsal pillar, an inscription describes Tiye as ‘beloved of Amun-Re who resides in the “Temple of Tiye”, i.e. in Sedeinga. The name of Amun was hammered away during the reign of Akhenaton and was not restored under Tutankhamun. The phrase “Temple of Tiye”, *Ḥmw.t Tjy*, was pronounced [ḥateje] at the end of the 18th Dynasty. It became *Atiye* in Meroitic, since this language has no pharyngeals, voiceless /h/ or voiced /fi/. Subsequently, this place-name was borrowed from Meroitic



Plate 5. *Statue of Queen Tiye found in the temple* (© J.-F. Gout/SEDAU).

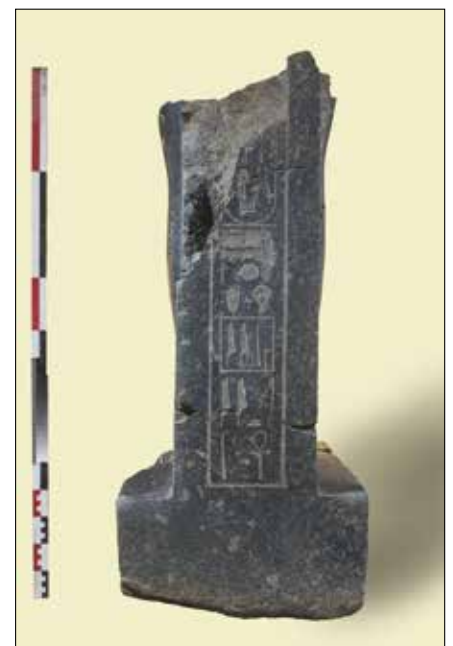


Plate 6. *Statue of Queen Tiye found in the temple* (© J.-F. Gout/SEDAU).



into Nubian in the form *Adday* or *Adday far* ‘Old Adday’ which is still known today by the elders, although the name of ‘Sedeinga’ is generally preferred.

If the name of Tiye has been preserved for millennia, her temple has been almost destroyed by time and men. The reports of the first Western visitors, starting with Cailliaud (Plate 7), describe the monument as a ‘romantic ruin’, a heap



Plate 7. *The temple in 1821*
(Cailliaud 1826, pl. XV, fig. 4, drawing by P. Letorżec).

of blocks from which a single standing column sticks out. The first photograph, taken in 1907 by Breasted, shows exactly the same aspect, except that some blocks have disappeared from the north eastern side. Fifty-six years later, when the first excavations started in Sedeinga, nothing had changed since Breasted’s shot. Only in 2015 were the major works launched in the temple. For 50 years, it had not been possible to undertake them. The team needed a crane and an asphalt road to convey it from Khartoum. In addition, much more money was needed for these operations than for the excavations of the necropolis. Finally, the previous teams lacked specialists in the architectural restoration of Egyptian temples.

Unexpectedly, all these problems were miraculously solved between 2012 and 2014. A paved road was built between Dongola and the Egyptian border, passing 1km west of the site. In 2013, after several false starts, a generous sponsorship by the Qatar Museum Authority was launched for many archaeological projects in Sudan, including Sedeinga. Finally, in 2014, the Egyptology team of Paris IV-Sorbonne/UMR 8167, directed by Prof. Pierre Tallet, agreed to take part in this project, involving specialists in Egyptian architecture such as Emmanuel Laroze, in restoration of monuments such as Franck Burgos, in the archaeology of temples such as Nadia Licitra and several others, many of whom had been working a long time in the Egyptian temples in Karnak.¹⁰ The project,

¹⁰ In addition to these three specialists, the mission was composed of Claude Rilly (director), Pierre Tallet (co-director, Paris IV), Claire Somaglino (epigraphist, Paris IV), Romain David (ceramic specialist), Damien Laisney (surveyor), Vincent Cabrol (stone specialist), Jean-Pierre Peulvast (geomorphologist, Paris IV), Hassan Mohammed (restorer, IFAO), Jean-François Gout (photographer), Vincent Colard (surveyor and project supervisor), Giorgio Nogara (site registration) and Yassin Mohamed (site registration, NCAM), Robert Ryndziewicz

termed RESSED (Restoration of Sedeinga), aimed at disengaging all the decorated or inscribed blocks of the ruins and moving them onto five long masonry benches built behind the temple, where visitors could see them in a proper position and light. Simultaneously, the excavations of the site could be conducted by archaeologists. Finally, the remains still *in situ* would be reinforced by stone and brick buttresses. Information panels would be installed in front of the temple and in the other sites of Sedeinga. A less ambitious component of the project was to restore and extend the excavation house built by the French team in 1980.

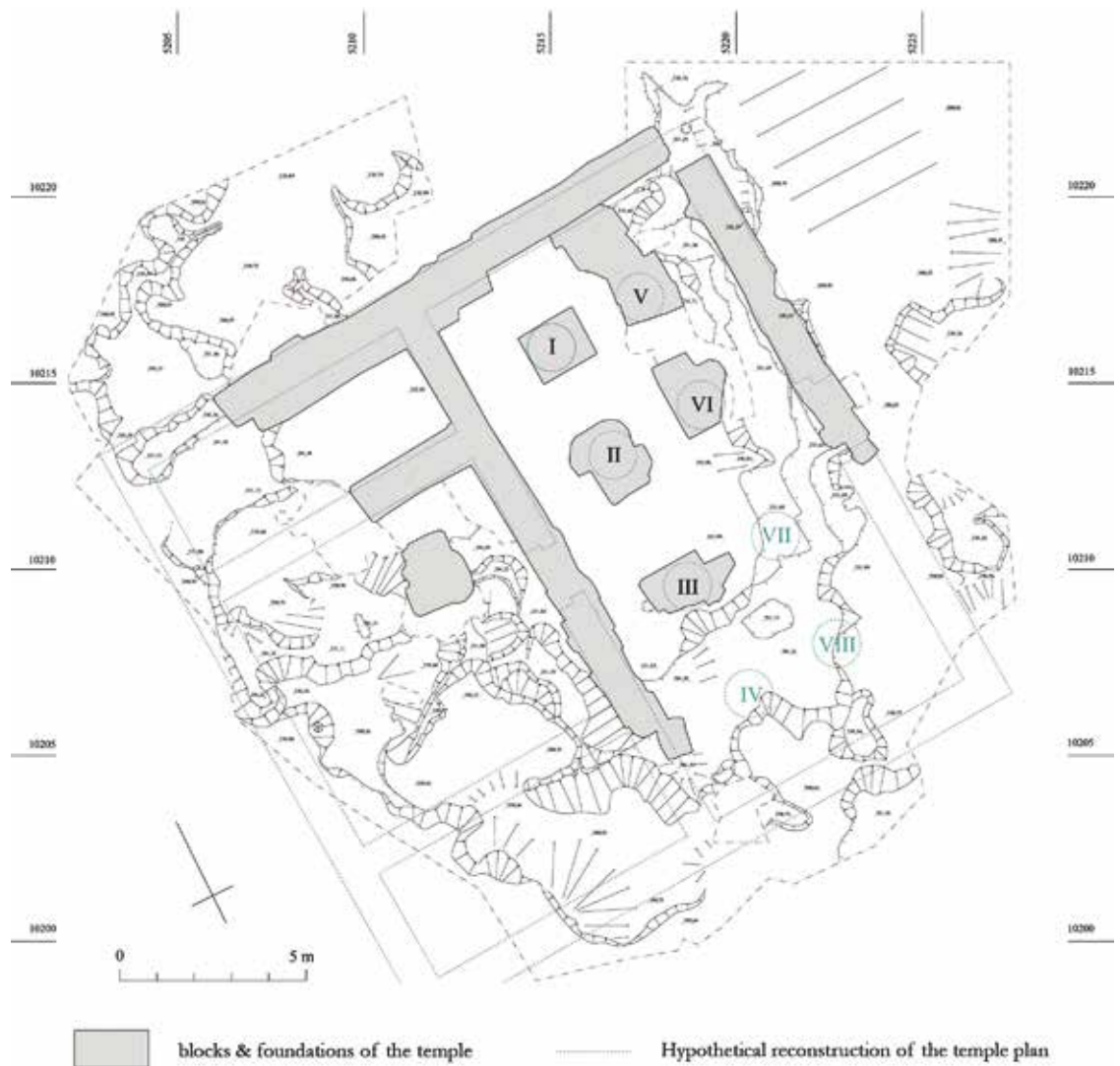
The first season, in January-February 2015, was devoted to various surveys, copying of inscriptions, aerial photography, topographic mapping and creating 3-D images of the ruin preserving its memory before it was definitively transformed. Finally, the masonry benches were built to support the decorated blocks in 2016: it was impossible to reconstruct the temple, even partially, as most of the blocks have disappeared. We also strove to establish the plan of the original temple, a difficult task because the major part of the walls has been destroyed to their foundations by quarrymen in Napatan and Christian times. Lepsius, who tried it first (*LD*, I. 115), suggested a small columned hall to the east, followed by the main hypostyle hall with eight Hathoric columns and to the west a large columned hall. As it happens, the eastern columned hall is not original and the large western hall never existed. The archaeological plan established by Nadia Licitra after the excavations of 2016 (see Figure 1) shows a hypostyle hall with five bases of Hathoric columns preserved from the eight originally, opening on to the sanctuaries that were probably composed of three chapels, of which only the northern one still remains. To the west and east, everything has disappeared. The blocks were broken up and removed by the Napatan and medieval quarrymen and later, the *sabbakhin* removed parts of the earthen platform to fertilise their fields. The plan suggested by our architect Emmanuel Laroze (Figure 2) postulates three chapels in the west, followed by three stores whose presence is indicated by the discovery of two blocks connecting four walls. The original temple was presumably 17.65 x 26.47m in size with a height of approximately 7.8m, the columns measuring 6.61m.¹¹ It is noteworthy that the hypostyle hall, with its eight Hathoric columns, had 14 architraves bearing the cartouches of the king,¹² but the central chapel, for which four columns are hypothesized, had architraves bearing

and Tomasz Herbich (magnetometry specialists), Karen Henderson and Antoine Langanay (PhD students in Paris IV-Sorbonne), Dany Joly (nurse). The NCAM was represented by Ayman Eltaieb in 2015 and Huyam Khalid in 2016-2018.

¹¹ A detailed architectural study of the temple by Emmanuel Laroze is presently in press; see references in the Bibliography.

¹² In all these architraves, the son-of-Re name of the king, Amenhotep, was hammered out during Akhenaten’s reign and replaced by the praenomen Nebmaatre, which is, therefore, repeated in each inscription. Unlike in Soleb, no restoration programme was conducted in Sedeinga during Tutankhamun’s reign.

Figure 1. Archaeological ground plan of the temple, scale 1:200
(© N. Licitra/SEDAU/UMR 8167).



the name and titles of the queen, which is unparalleled in Egyptian sacred architecture.

In January 2016, the major works began. A 20m crane was conveyed from Khartoum to Sedeinga, 700km to the north. Decorated and inscribed blocks, or architecturally significant elements such as column drums, were removed from the ruin and placed on the five masonry benches. Reliefs that had never been seen since the collapse of the temple, and others that were half-buried or lying on their decorated face, were suddenly visible, for instance a well-preserved Hathoric capital (Plate 8). Several damaged blocks had to be restored on site. The comparison between the two aerial orthophotos in 2015 and 2018



Plate 8. Hathoric capital (block no. 165) being removed by the crane in January 2016
(© C. Rilly/SEDAU).



Figure 2. Suggested plan of the original temple. In white: elements reconstructed with certainty; in grey: hypothetical elements; in black: elements in situ (© E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).

gives a sense of the work that was done (Plates 9 and 10). The excavation of the temple followed the progress of the crane, taking place on the freshly cleared areas. It was almost completed during the 2016 season. Much to our regret, the results of these excavations were very meager and that was our sole disappointment. The temple was so badly looted and destroyed by quarrymen that almost nothing was left. A secondary foundation deposit at the foot of a column provided miniature ceramics (Plate 11). The remains of the dorsal pillar of a statuette of the queen include in very elegant hieroglyphs the lower part of her cartouche followed by the phrase 'living forever' (Plate 12). Fragments of sandstone statues of a cobra and a hawk, and the front part of the base of the monumental statue of the queen mentioned above end the list. The numerous potsherds found in the excavations were studied by Romain David. These are mainly connected with the destruction phases, in Napatan times and at the beginning of Christianity, in the 6th-7th centuries, which provide an early date for the first building of the church in Nilwa.

In 2017, the excavations of the temple were finished. A full photographic documentation of all the blocks was made by Jean-François Gout for the final publication. We took advantage of this operation to position with the crane the most significant blocks in the best possible light for the visitors to



Plate 9. Orthophoto of the temple in 2015, before clearing of the blocks (© E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).



Plate 10. Orthophoto of the temple in 2018 (© E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).



Plate 11. Foundation deposit from Column III of the hypostyle hall.
(© R. David/SEDAU).



Plate 12. Dorsal pillar of a fragmentary statuette of Queen Tiy
SED-174. (© K. Henderson/SEDAU/UMR 8167).

the site during the winter months, by orienting them to the south. Finally, the spoil heaps from the excavations, which had been placed around the site as protective barriers, were aesthetically arranged. During the last mission in January-February 2018, we reinforced the upstanding structures that had been weakened by the removing of so many decorated blocks. Two courses of blocks were built and cemented with traditional mortar in the north face, and one in the east face (Plate 13). To the south and west, the earthen platform, on which the temple was built, was consolidated by mud-brick walls. We still have to coat the walls with a local *mouma* in order to integrate them better into the landscape. Five information panels in Arabic and English and three road-signs, all of them specially designed for the extreme weather conditions of Nubia, were made in France and transported to Sedeinga. They were installed in front of the temple (Plate 14), beside the benches where the blocks are showcased, beside



Plate 13. Eastern side of the temple after reinforcement
in January 2018. (© C. Rilly/SEDAU).



Plate 14. Information panel in Arabic and English in front of the
temple; January 2018. (© C. Rilly/SEDAU).

the church of Nilwa and at the entrance to Sector West and Sector II of the Napatan-Meroitic necropolis. Finally, we took protective measures by installing boundary posts around the archaeological perimeter and by registering the site at the Survey Department in Dongola.

As no important artefact was found in the excavations, the new reliefs uncovered in the temple of Sedeinga are the main scientific contribution of this programme. Some 120 blocks are now displayed on the benches, whereas it was difficult to distinguish more than a dozen scenes before the ruin was cleared. Most of them come from the walls around the great door that separates the hypostyle hall from the sanctuaries (Figures 3 and 4). The making of facsimiles will still require more than a year. The task is not easy because the reliefs are very shallow and most of them are poorly preserved. A good example is the lintel of the great door (blocks No. 161/151), which could barely be seen for half an hour a day before 2016 and is now visible all day long. On the western face, the king is performing the race with the vase and the oar, an archaic rite of propitiation of the flood of the Nile, exceptionally

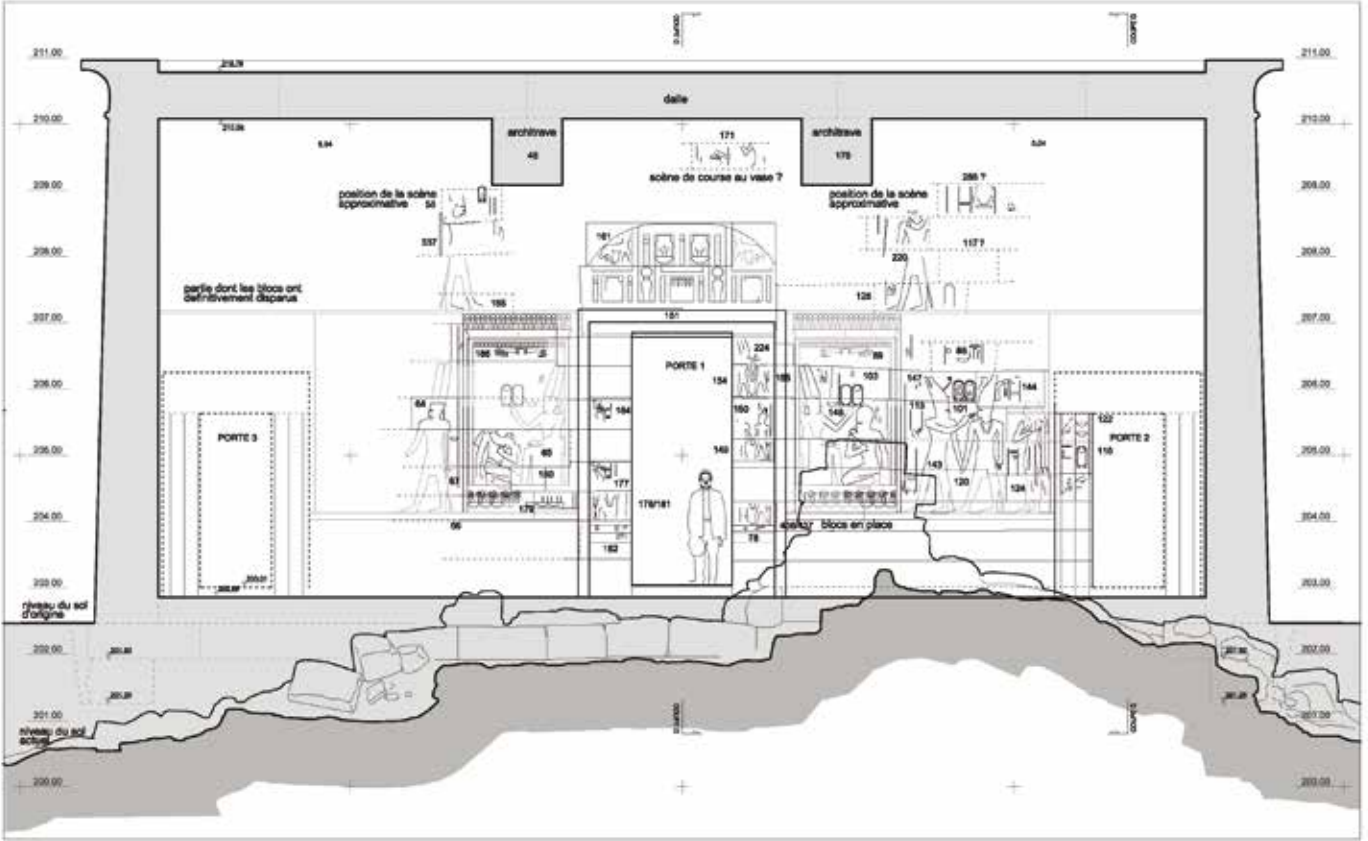


Figure 3. Eastern side of the rear wall of the hypostyle hall reconstructed. (© E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).

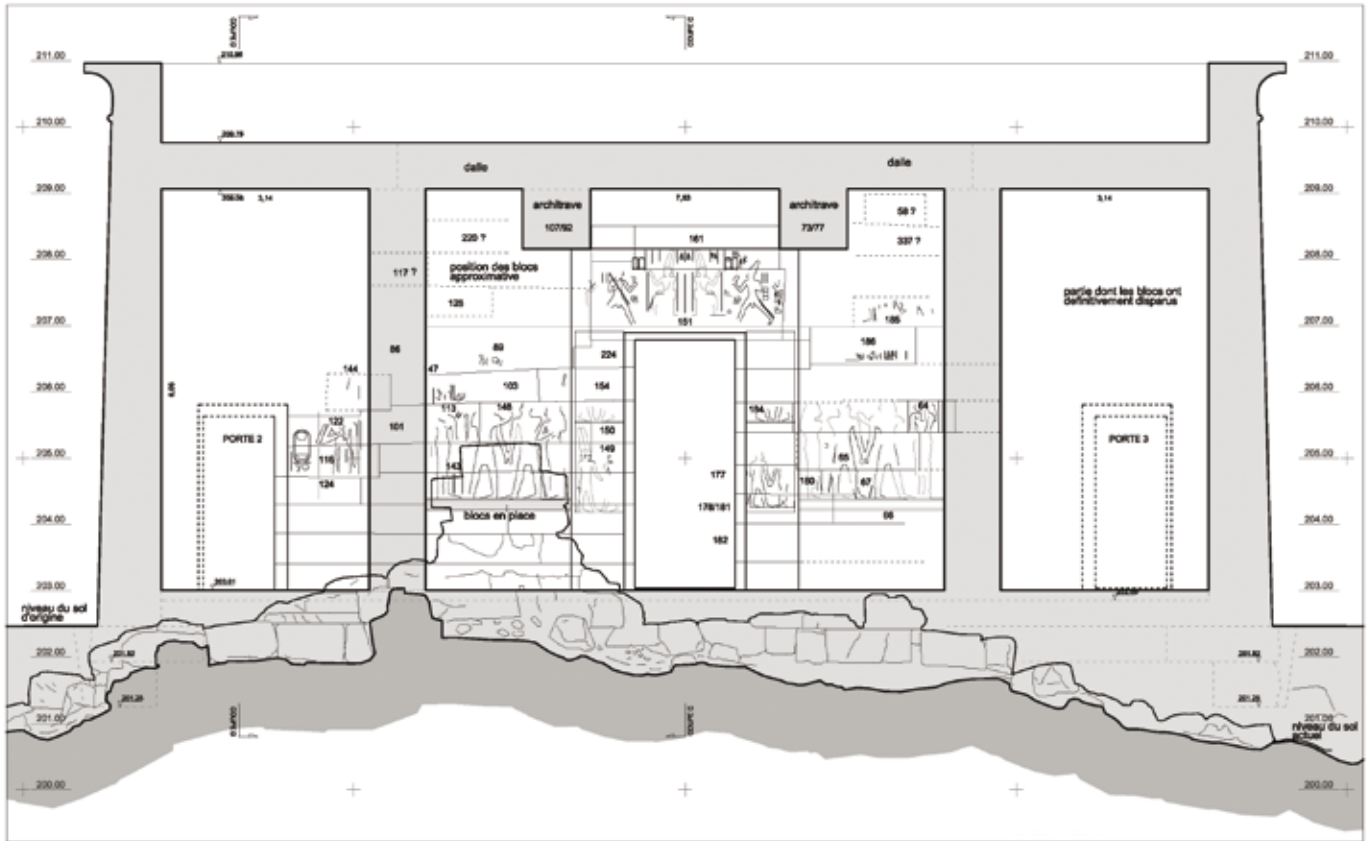


Figure 4. Western side of the rear wall of the hypostyle hall reconstructed. (© E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).

followed by Queen Tiye (Figure 5).¹³ Few representations of the queen have survived and none is complete. On the block No. 119, the upper part of her face, from the forehead to the nose, can be seen under a composite crown that includes two uraei wearing the white crown (Plate 15). On the other side of her cartouche she is holding a sistrum with the hand missing. Finally, on three blocks replaced together (Nos 101, 113, 147),

one of the two columns of the church of Nilwa (Leclant and Soukiassian 1980). Finally, in February 2015, during a first clearing of the east side of the temple, we found a block in a poor state of preservation, still bearing the top of the cartouche of Taharqo's coronation name, Re-Nefertem-khou. This block proved that the drums of unfluted columns scattered in front of the hypostyle hall came from a colonnade that Taharqo had

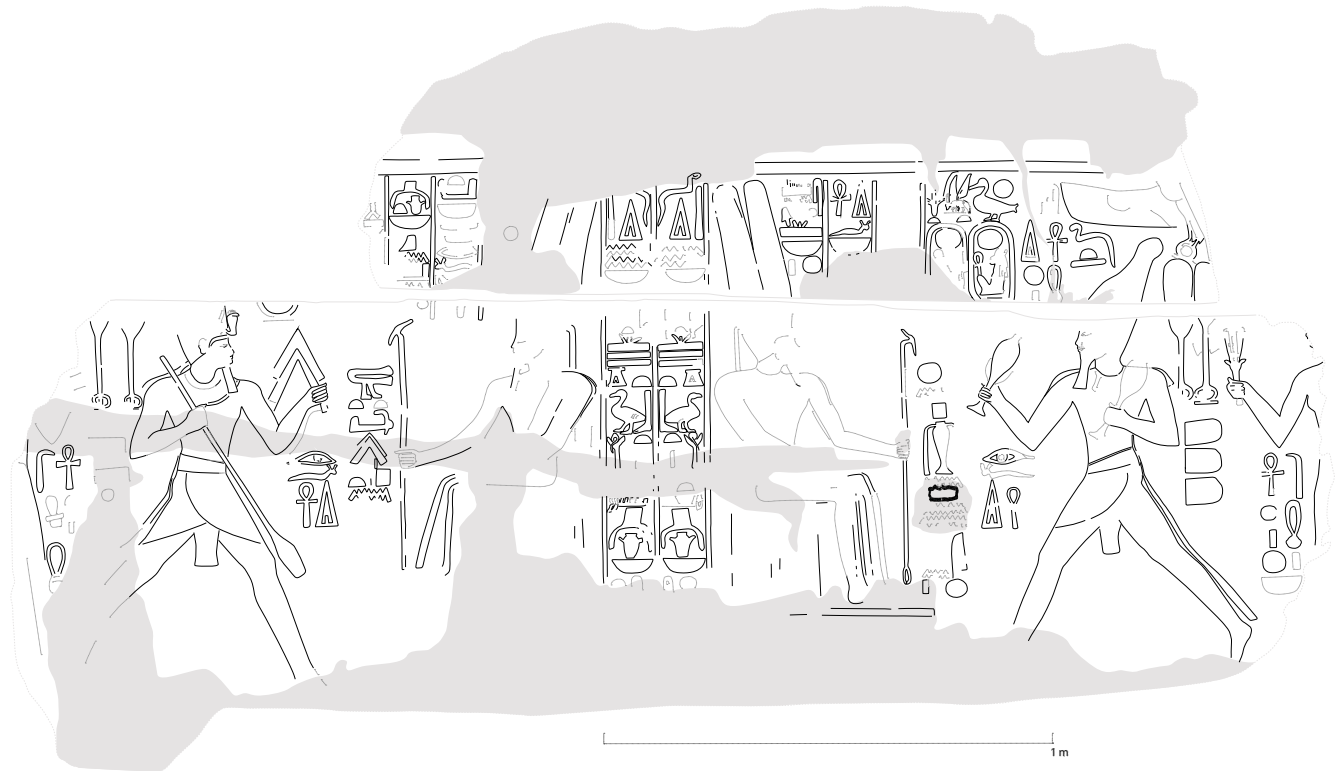


Figure 5. Facsimile (provisional) of the lintel (blocks nos 161/151). The king performing the race with the vase and the oar/rudder in front of Amun. (© L. Gallet/SEDAU).



Plate 15. Block no. 119. Head of Queen Tiye who holds a sistrum. (© C. Rilly/SEDAU).

Amenhotep is led into the temple by Atum, who turns his face to the king and gives him the breath of life (Figure 6).

Unlike Soleb, which was abandoned at the end of the 20th Dynasty, the temple of Sedeinga had a second life after the departure of the Egyptians. In 1963, a massive sandstone door bearing the image and cartouches of the Kushite king Taharqo was found reused in W T 1, the largest pyramid of the Napatan necropolis. Some years later, traces of a cartouche of Taharqo, not completely erased by the Christians, were discovered on

built at the entrance of the temple, as he had done in front of no less than five temples in Karnak. The gate found in the necropolis and the two columns of the church obviously belonged to the same monument, which was completely destroyed in Napatan and Christian times.

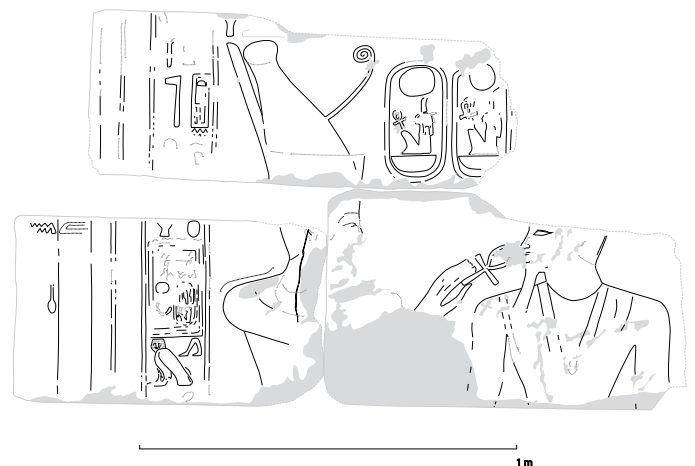


Figure 6. Facsimile (provisional) of the blocks nos 101/113/147. The king and Atum (© L. Gallet/SEDAU).

¹³ See Rilly 2015, 52-53 with further references; Duhard 2016, 444.



Shortly after this Kushite restoration, the temple collapsed. For a long time, we thought that this catastrophe was due to heavy rains that would have swollen the *wadis* coming from the nearby mountain, following the scenario of the 'great flood' proposed by the team at Soleb. One of the three *wadis* passing across the site is indeed close to the temple and could have caused its destruction. However, a deep sondage conducted in 2015 immediately south of the temple under the direction of the geomorphologist Jean-Pierre Peulvast showed that no devastating flood had occurred there since the Neolithic period. The collapse of the temple of Sedeinga resulted from its weak foundations. Sedeinga was erected with shallow foundations upon an earthen platform, probably an ancient island of the huge Holocene 'wild Nile'. A simple earthquake was probably enough to cause its collapse. This event occurred between the end of the reign of Taharqo and the mid-Napatan period, because fragments of the monument were reused in the necropolis in Napatan graves dating back to the late 6th /early 5th centuries BC (Rilly and Francigny 2013, 61-65 and Plate 6).

During the Meroitic period, in the 3rd century BC, the memory of Queen Tiye was lost in Nubia. In the hieroglyphic list of Nubian nomes inscribed in the temple of Philae under Ptolemy II, the name of Sedeinga reads *jty*, which is only a phonetic transcription of Meroitic *Atiye*. It omits the initial *h* of the Egyptian phrase *Hwt Tjy* and the cartouche of the queen. However, the Meroites thought that the ruins of the Egyptian temple in Sedeinga commemorated a goddess. The city had become an important centre for the cult of Isis, with whom Hathor was now confused. A new temple was built for the goddess, as evidenced by the many mentions of the clergy of Isis in the Meroitic funerary texts.

After the conversion of the region to Christianity, around 542, the ruined temple was used as a stone quarry, especially for the construction of the church. The drawing by Emmanuel Laroze (Figure 7) shows the last state of the temple in early medieval times, before it was deserted by the quarrymen. Shortly afterwards, what was left of the roof collapsed and the temple, with its only standing column, took on the appearance of the ruin that the French explorer Caillaud



Figure 7. The temple used as a stone quarry.
(Drawing by E. Laroze/SEDAU/UMR 8167).

would rediscover. Some people will probably regret the loss of this 'romantic ruin', where visitors hopped from block to block, in search of a piece of preserved relief. But for the knowledge of the past, for the comprehension of the site, for the preservation of the remains of the temple and its decorated blocks, for the pleasure of contemplating reliefs from the heyday of Egyptian art, now rendered fully visible, the next visitors of Sedeinga will appreciate this work, which has been awaited for 50 years and finally achieved thanks to the cooperation between Sudan, Qatar and France.

Bibliography

- Beaux, N. 2013. 'Le lion et le bœuf Nebmaâtrê roi et dieu à Soleb', in N. Beaux and N. Grimal, *Soleb VI. Hommages à Michela Schiff Giorgini*. Cairo, 9-36.
- Bickel, S. 2013. 'Le dieu Nebmaâtrê de Soleb', in N. Beaux and N. Grimal, *Soleb VI. Hommages à Michela Schiff Giorgini*. Cairo, 59-85.
- Bryan, B. M. 2008. 'A Newly Discovered Statue of a Queen from the reign of Amenhotep III', in S. H. D'Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut. Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*. Leiden – Boston, 32-43.
- Cabrol, A. 2000. *Amenhotep III le Magnifique*. Paris.
- Caillaud, F. 1826. *Voyage à Meroé, au fleuve blanc, au-delà de Fâzoql, dans le Midi du Royaume de Sennâr, à Syouah et dans cinq autres oasis fait dans les années 1819, 1820, 1821 et 1822*. Paris.
- Davies, W. V. and I. Welsby-Sjöström 2016. 'Recording Jebel Doshâ: the Chapel of Thoutmose III', *Sudan & Nubia* 20, 18-27.
- Desroches-Noblecourt, C. 1986. *La femme au temps des pharaons*. Paris.
- Duhard, A. 2016. *La reine Tiye de la XVIII^{ème} dynastie : catalogue des documents – commentaires et étude critique*. PhD. Montpellier III.
- Gabolde, M. 2013. 'L'ADN de la famille royale amarnienne et les sources égyptiennes', *Égypte Nilotique et méditerranéenne* 6, 177-203.
- Gautron, C. 2003. *Position et influence des mères, épouses et filles royales de l'avènement d'Amenhotep III au règne d'Horemheb*. PhD. Lyon 3.
- Grimal, N., E. Adly, and A. Arnaudis 2009. 'Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 2006-2008', *Orientalia* 79, 264-265.
- Laroze, E. forthcoming. 'Dégagements et essais de restitution du temple de Tiye à Sedeinga', in R. Legros (ed.), *Hommages à Audran Labrousse*. Paris.
- Leclant, J. 1970. 'La nécropole de l'ouest à Sedeinga en Nubie soudanaise', *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, Avril-Juin 1970, 246-276.
- Leclant, J. and G. Clerc 1995. 'Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan, 1993-1994', *Orientalia* 64, 326, Fig. 56-57.
- Leclant, J. and G. Soukiassan 1982. 'L'église de Nilwa à Sedeinga', in M. Plumley (ed.), *Proceedings of the Symposium for Nubian Studies. Selwyn College*. Cambridge, 155-161.
- LD = Lepsius, C. R. 1849-1859. *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*. Berlin.
- Nims, C. F., C. E. DeVries, et al. 1980. *The Tomb of Kheruef. Theban Tomb 192*. University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications 102. Chicago.
- Rilly, C. 2013. 'Sur les traces de Jean Leclant à Sedeinga: les textes méroïtiques du prince Natemakhora', *ArchéoNil* 23, 91-110.
- Rilly, C. 2015. 'Le miroir brisé de la reine Tiye. Première saison du projet QSA sur le temple de Sedeinga (Soudan)', *Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie* 191-192, 39-59.
- Rilly, C. and V. Francigny 2013. 'Sedeinga 2012: A Season of Unexpected Discoveries', *Sudan & Nubia* 17, 61-65.
- Schiff Giorgini, M. 1965. 'Première campagne de fouilles à Sedeinga, 1963-1964', *Kush* 13, 112-130.
- Schiff Giorgini, M., C. Robichon, J. Leclant and N. Beaux 1998. *Soleb. III. Le temple. Description*. Cairo.