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Sad fate of Egyptian temples on the example of Theban buildings of Queen Hatshepsut

Queen Hatshepsut was the one who created a big project of architectural development of Thebes at the beginning of the Egyptian New Kingdom. It happened probably very early in her sole reign and maybe even earlier, after the death of her husband, Tuthmosis II. This big religious and architectural project was planned on a large scale and was still in progress at the time of Hatshepsut's disappearance. By the end of her reign it went through changes such as re-building and expansion of the general plan.

The mysterious disappearance of Queen Hatshepsut obliterated the formation of her vision of the sacred area of Thebes. Although Tuthmosis III finished and decorated most of the monuments initiated during their co-regency, the end of his rule, however, brought a change in his architectural planning of sacred landscape of Thebes. From that moment the big destruction of the work of creation done by Queen Hatshepsut started. However, it did not happen rapidly, but was spread in time. Change of plans with respect to Hatshepsut's project resulted in a big action of removing Hatshepsut's names, cryptogram friezes and images not only in Thebes, but on the area of whole Egypt. Only a few of them evaded this sad fate, probably because they were invisible for some reasons to eyes of workers acting according the royal command. Such damage and chiseling out of Hatshepsut's images was enough to totally destroy the queen's building vision.

During the Amarna period, when the cult in all god's temples in Egypt was banned, divine representations hacked out and the temples deserted. The post-Amarna restoration enabled the temples to work again. The last disaster that happened to Hatshepsut's temples was a complete destruction of the temples that were still in use up to the end of the Ramesside times. After that period we can expect that most of them were abandoned and consequently dismantled.