



A LATE PERIOD RIVERINE AND MARITIME PORT TOWN AND CULT CENTER AT TELL TEBILLA (*RO-NEFER*)

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ABSTRACT

Tell Tebilla (Ro-nefer) represents one of several riverine and maritime ports in Egypt's delta during Dynasties 21–30 (1069–343 BCE). It displays diverse relations, including with southern Egypt, the East Mediterranean, and Near East. Tebilla apparently flourished, despite periodic political fragmentation, economic decline, civil wars, rebellions, and attacks and invasions by Kushites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians. Growing prosperity is evident through Sheshonq I's construction of a stone temple in Dynasty 22 and its receipt of costly statues and offerings by Late Period officials and priests. The town's importance is emphasized by the presence of high ranking officials, elaborate tombs, fittings, and furnishings, and a probable Dynasty 30 enclosure (235 by 352 m) that ranks amongst medium to large Egyptian temple precincts. Although this enclosure might have doubled as a refuge, its architecture lacks effective military features; Artaxerxes III's 342 BCE campaign breached Egypt's delta defenses and destroyed many temples and towns, including Tebilla.

During the Third Intermediate Period through Late Period,¹ and possibly as early as the New Kingdom,² a settlement formed at Tell Tebilla, near the mouth of a now defunct channel of the Mendesian branch of the Nile and beside a probable coastal embayment in Egypt's northeast delta (Figure 1).³ The coincidence of an outlet for a substantial Nile delta river branch, a natural protected coastal harbor, and the delta's lush marshland vegetation, clarifies both Tebilla's ancient name *Ro-nefer* ("beautiful mouth")⁴ and the site's initial foundation and prosperity as a riverine and maritime port for the inland provincial capital at Mendes (Tell Rub'a), 12 km to the south along the same river branch. The town apparently flourished in the Saite Period (Dynasty 26); it may have been revitalized in Dynasty 29, when Mendes briefly became a national capital,⁵ and its coastal port at *Ro-nefer* (Tebilla) presumably rose in importance. Dynasty 30 marks a peak in the temple's importance, with the construction of a new massive enclosure wall that may have been leveled during the Second Persian occupation in 342 BCE. Although a few Ptolemaic inscriptions elsewhere attest to the continued existence of a temple at *Ro-nefer*,⁶ there is virtually no surviving evidence from Tebilla for occupation during this time. By the early Roman Period the coastal embayment became a closed lagoon (Lake Manzaleh), the Mendesian river soon dried up, and Tebilla became a land-locked and abandoned town beside emerging marshland (Daqhelieh Plain).⁷

Throughout Tell Tebilla's main period of occupation, during the first millennium BCE, Egypt experienced great fluctuations in strength, prosperity, and foreign relations: i.e., socio-political decline and the emergence of multiple polities, including Libyan-derived delta kingdoms, occurred in the early Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties 21–24);⁸ a Kushite invasion reunified Egypt under Dynasty 25 (715–664/656 BCE), but Egypt later faced several Assyrian invasions and short-lived occupations;⁹ Saite rulers briefly renewed Egyptian imperialism in the Levant during Dynasty 26 (664/656–525 BCE) but by the late 7th to mid-6th centuries BCE faced Babylonian attacks across North Sinai;¹⁰ Egypt experienced growing turbulence and isolated stretches of stability involving Persian occupations in Dynasties 27 (525–404 BCE) and 31 (342–332 BCE), which were characterized by Egyptian rebellions, civil war, and intervening transitory to longer periods of independence, especially in Dynasties 28–30 (404–342 BCE).¹¹

The recent and still preliminary investigations at Tell Tebilla¹² have aimed to clarify diverse aspects of life at this maritime and riverine gateway community, which formed one of several interfaces between Egypt and its northeast neighbors in the first millennium BCE.¹³ This has been achieved in part by assessing the scanty remains from both excavated and ex-situ burials, tomb fittings, votive offerings, and the now mostly destroyed Late Period temple complex. This study focuses first upon the town's local, regional, and international relations

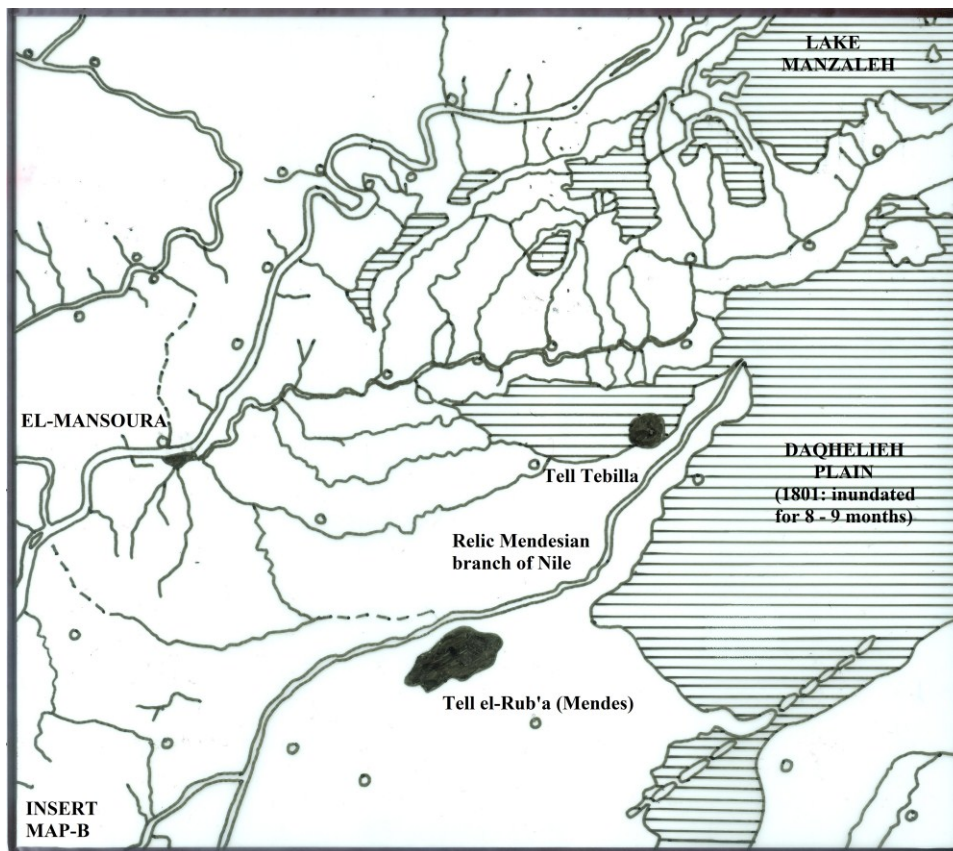
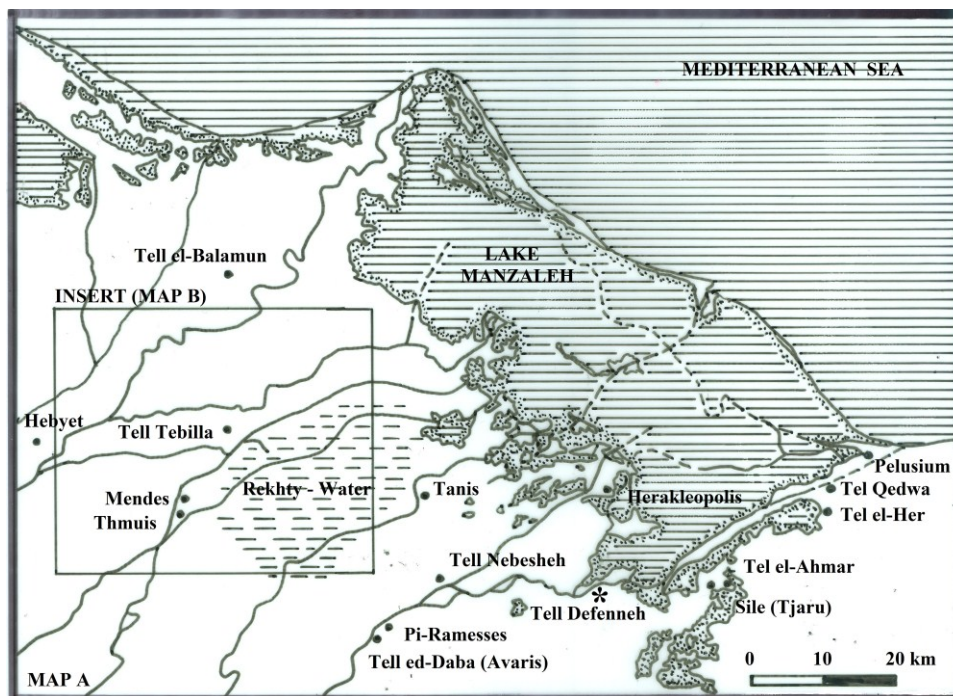


Figure 1: Northeast Delta in Late Period (Map A adapted from Redford 2010, 121 fig. 8.6; Map B adapted from Holz, Stieglitz, Hansen and Ochsenschlager 1980, pl. 9a, 1798–1801 Napoleonic map)

during the Third Intermediate Period through Late Period (Dynasties 21–30: ca. 1069–342 BCE), which are revealed via the presence of diverse materials and products. Tebilla’s growing importance is considered next, beginning with Sheshonq I’s apparent construction or embellishment of a stone temple,¹⁴ the presence of elite Late Period burials,¹⁵ and the substantial enlargement and construction—probably in Dynasty 30—of a huge mud-brick enclosure wall around the temple precinct (Figure 2). One aspect that requires further attention is the classical account regarding Nectanebo I/II fortifying the river mouths of the delta in anticipation of a Persian attack, an invasion that ultimately destroyed *Ro-nefer* (Tebilla) and many other delta communities.¹⁶

LOCAL THROUGH INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thriving trade and cross-cultural relations at Tell Tebilla can be inferred from the presence of a wide range of local through imported materials and finished products at this site. For instance, the adjacent landscape, flora, and fauna provided a wide array of local resources for building structures (e.g., mud brick; reeds; mud plaster; some lumber), making terracotta figurines and pottery containers from local clay (e.g., Bes jars;¹⁷ bowls with crenelated rims),¹⁸ and other manufactured items (e.g., animal by-products such as bone, sinew, and leather) (see Figures 21–22).¹⁹ Regarding regional interactions within Egypt, the site has yielded flint tools,²⁰ copper alloy items,²¹ gold and carnelian jewelry,²² and calcite (“alabaster”),²³ limestone, sandstone, diorite, and granite architectural pieces and fittings for temples and tombs.²⁴ All of these resources could be obtained from the Nile Valley, the adjacent Eastern and Western Deserts,²⁵ or recycled at Tebilla and/or from neighboring delta settlements. The receipt and application at Tebilla of materials from varying external sources are also attested by the presence of Levantine pottery (5%) (Figures 24–26),²⁶ some East Greek pottery (0.5%),²⁷ Red Sea coral and pearls,²⁸ and some jewelry with lapis lazuli.²⁹ The possible presence of foreigners at Tebilla, such as Judean refugees, is implied by the discovery of a locally made, Judean juglet dating to the 7th to 6th centuries BCE (Figure 23).³⁰ Like other local-foreign materials and products, however, this could equally reflect a re-dispersal of non-indigenous commodities and influences within Egypt.³¹ The significance of the 5% Levantine wares and 0.5% East Greek wares at Tebilla can be emphasized in comparison to the occurrence of Levantine wares amounting to 2.6% and 2% of the Ramesside pottery assemblages at Qantir and Memphis, respectively.³²

RISING PROSPERITY AT TELL TEBILLA

Although many ancient Egyptian settlements and tombs have yielded evidence for varying regional through foreign relations, excavations at Tebilla have demonstrated increasing substantial temple construction and embellishment, royal and elite patronage within this temple complex (e.g., votive offerings),

complex social stratification, and differential wealth and mortuary arrangements. For example, a number of limestone blocks from Tebilla display royal names, including Sheshonq I of Dynasty 22,³³ while some probable reused New Kingdom blocks contain other royal names (e.g., Ramesses II).³⁴ Despite the unprovenanced nature of these blocks, in the 1990s the Supreme Council of Antiquity (SCA) uncovered an intact stretch of limestone paving, column bases and a drainage channel from a mostly destroyed temple (presumably dating mainly from Dynasties 22–26),³⁵ while subsequent investigations by the University of Toronto project³⁶ traced a huge mud brick enclosure wall that is best dated to Dynasty 30 by its stratigraphic placement and specific design features (see below; Figure 2). The resources required for such labor-intensive and expensive undertakings were facilitated via state patronage,³⁷ while the occurrence of Dynasty 26 votive statues and other offerings suggest many local elite gifts and some links to officials at the adjacent provincial capital of Mendes (see below).

The excavated and ex-situ graves, tombs, mortuary furnishings, and archaeological and inscriptional evidence indicate that the population at Tebilla included peasant farmers, diverse crafts persons, and low- to high-ranking officials and priests. For example, the burial types consist of simple pit graves, groups of burials placed in mastaba tombs and possibly re-used houses, individual bodies interred in mud casings with plaster and painted decoration, at least one terracotta coffin burial, several ex-situ, limestone, bathtub-style sarcophagi for high officials, and a huge limestone block sarcophagus and a separate diorite sarcophagus-insert for a similar limestone block.³⁸ Peter Sheldrick’s assessment of the bones from the simplest burials reveals a fairly healthy³⁹ and robust working class population.⁴⁰ Regarding the middle through upper classes, they included female musicians, priests, phyle regulators, *sem* priests, and at least two levels of prophets (e.g., a first and second high priest of Sobek), many of whom followed their fathers into this profession (see below), while the secular officials included a royal acquaintance and mayor.⁴¹ The latter high official is likely represented by some canopic jars, implied mummification, and other expensive funerary fittings found at Tebilla by the Supreme Council of Antiquities. Hence, while Tebilla’s strategic maritime and riverine location may account for much of its trade and prosperity,⁴² both the presence of a substantial cult center here (dedicated to Osiris and other deities), and Tebilla’s proximity to Mendes (which became a national capital briefly in Dynasty 29), also seem to have played a significant role behind the town’s rise in fortune. The following sections focus in more detail upon the town’s cultic installations, offerings, and potential military role against Persia.

AN OSIRIS TEMPLE AND OTHER CULTS AT *RO-NEFER* (TEBILLA)

The 2003 satellite remote sensing work by S. Parcak⁴³ and subsequent University of Toronto summer excavation at Tell Tebilla, revealed the remains of a 235 by 280–352(?) m mud-

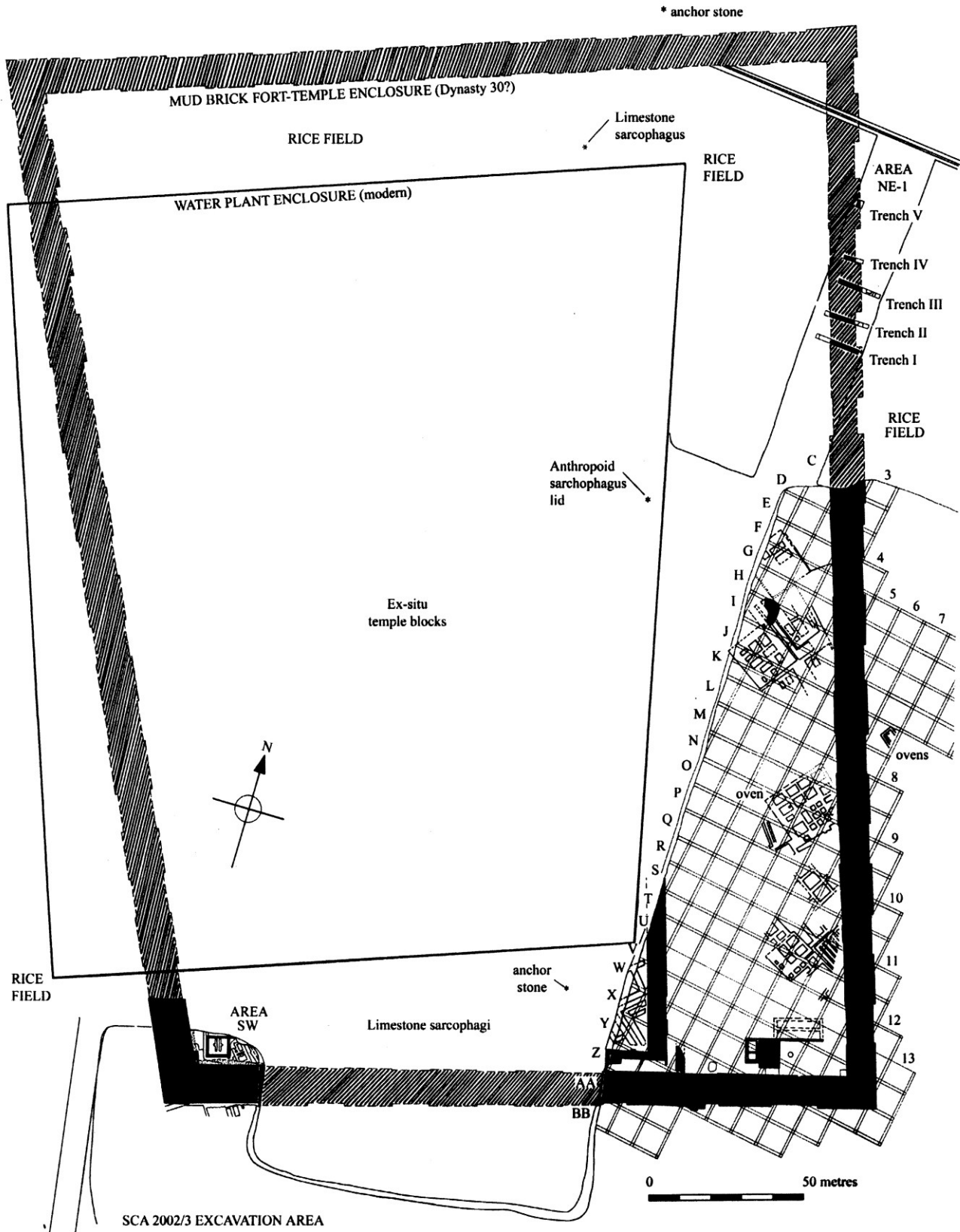


Figure 2: Northwest corner of Tell Tebilla with Dynasty 26 mastabas and probable Dynasty 30 enclosure. Image by G. Mumford.

brick enclosure wall spanning most of the surviving mound and extending into the adjacent fields (Figure 2).⁴⁴ The wall ranges from 10.50 to 11.50 meters in width and is buttressed along both faces of its exposed southern and eastern sides. At some point in antiquity, the enclosure wall had been leveled to, and below, the ancient surface, leaving the foundation trench visible along much of the mound's current surface under a thin layer of topsoil. Based on stratigraphic, artifactual, architectural, and historical factors, the enclosure wall most likely dates to Dynasty 30, from the reigns of either Nectanebo I or II. It is possible, but still only speculative, that this enclosure reflects one of Nectanebo I/II's "fortifications," built near the (ancient) mouth of a delta river branch like Nectanebo I–II's temple enclosures at Tanis and Tell el-Balamun.⁴⁵ Of note, Nectanebo I/II is described as building an outer walling system around a fort at a settlement beside the mouth of the Mendesian branch of the Nile,⁴⁶ a circumstance that is similar to both Tebilla's double enclosure walls and their geographic location at a river mouth in the Late Period.

At Tell Tebilla, a series of Dynasty 25/26 structures have been cut by the enclosure wall's foundation trench, and are oriented differently (Figures 2, 18, and 19). These earlier structures are square and rectilinear in form, contain interior chambers, and appear to be mortuary in function, or at least in reuse. Their exposure along the western edge of the mound and in selected excavations have revealed that most of these buildings—some of which may represent reused housing⁴⁷—served ultimately as mastaba tombs, containing multiple subterranean and surface walls, chambers, numerous human remains, and mostly Dynasty 26 pottery (Figures 22 and 23).⁴⁸ At some point after the initial construction and usage of these structures, the open areas and alleyways between them filled with silt, mud brick debris, potsherds, and later burials. This developed into a higher surface upon which several ovens were placed, following the same alignment as the "mastaba" wall tops (Figure 2).⁴⁹

At some point after the abandonment of both this cemetery and the later construction of an inner smaller enclosure (Figures 2 and 18), in Dynasty 30 a 13.50 m wide foundation trench was cut across the mound to facilitate the installation of a larger, outer enclosure wall. The discovery of Late Period pottery and cultic artifacts within the backfill of the foundation trench further confirms its placement after Dynasty 26, while the scarcity of Persian and Ptolemaic-Roman pottery from the site argues for a decline, or hiatus, in occupation during these periods. In order to obtain a more precise date, foundation deposits have been sought but remain to be located at the enclosure's preserved southwest and southeast corners.

The enclosure wall displays a continuous series of buttresses ranging from 15.45 to 20 m in length, with 15–30 cm deep niches that extend 12.75 to 14.50 m in length (Figures 2 and 15). The presence and dimensions of the buttresses and niches at Tebilla resemble Nectanebo II's temple enclosure wall at Tanis, and in part the Montu Temple enclosure wall at Karnak, while the enclosure's size (235 by 352 m) approximates Nectanebo II's

precinct at Behbeit el-Hagar,⁵⁰ thereby providing further arguments for its introduction during this period. Of interest, one niche along the enclosure wall's southeast exterior face is only 4.50 m wide and is flanked by a 4.50 m wide buttress to its west. This implies the probable presence of a small gateway above, at the now lost ancient surface level. Otherwise, the mostly destroyed enclosure has no obvious entrances along its eastern and southern sides, suggesting the main gate may have lain to the west, or north, or possibly in the lost southern segment of the enclosure wall.

Unfortunately, most of the enclosure's interior surface has been removed, presumably by *sebakhin*.⁵¹ Only portions of the southeast and southwest surfaces remain beside the Dynasty 30 enclosure's interior corners. The foundations of a partly excavated, small building survive along the southeast interior side. It contains two phases of construction in yellow and grey brickwork, has four small rooms, two long side chambers, and a courtyard with an oven (Figures 2 and 17). The evidence to date points to this structure having both storage and domestic functions. The association between the adjacent enclosure wall and this interior southeastern structure—as well as a southwestern furnace (see below)—is quite clear since their walls exhibit the same orientation, they cut through the underlying Dynasty 26 structures, and their foundation trenches appear to be dug from the same ground surface.⁵²

The corner of a smaller, inner enclosure wall lay over 25 m to the west of this building, to the northwest of the postulated small postern entry. This inner enclosure wall had a width of 5.45 m and its foundation trench also cut through the underlying Dynasty 25/26 buildings (Figures 2, 18, and 19). The inner enclosure is partly preserved for 60 m north-south and 20 m east-west. It yielded some buttressing along its eastern exterior face, and lay along the same alignment as the main enclosure wall. The southern end of its east side has traces of a narrow, outer screen(?) wall, which presumably surrounded the original inner enclosure. The southern end of the screen wall and the adjacent inner enclosure appear to have been cut, or modified, by the foundation trench for the outer enclosure wall. This disturbance clarified the relatively earlier placement of the inner structure sometime near the end of the Late Period, probably postdating Dynasty 26 and predating the outer enclosure's construction. This may indicate two phases of building, perhaps spanning the reigns of Nectanebo I–II, in Dynasty 30, and may parallel the two phases present in the southeast structure.⁵³ The inner enclosure could not have extended more than 120 m along its southern side (towards a furnace), while its maximum north-south length remains more speculative (240 m?). Since the ex-situ temple blocks and in-situ paving and column bases lay about 60–90 m to the north and northwest of the surviving inner enclosure,⁵⁴ its function as either the main temple enclosure or another associated interior temple enclosure, remains in question.

The southwest corner of the outer enclosure had already been partly exposed by the 2002–2003 excavations of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. They focused primarily on the

Dynasty 25/26 cemetery, but also exposed a square chamber with a furnace inside the enclosure wall's southwest corner (Figures 2 and 20). The Toronto expedition continued investigations in this area, clarifying the presence and nature of the enclosure wall and its relationship to the furnace (Figure 2). As in the southeast corner, the foundation trenches for both the southwest corner and the furnace complex cut through the Dynasty 25/26 mastaba tombs. A 3.00 m deep excavation unit placed in the southwest corner indicated that the enclosure wall's foundations extended to a depth of 2.20 m. Regarding the furnace complex, its surrounding walls and foundation trenches projected to the north and northeast, but disappeared into the modern depression and low ground composing the mound's northwest corner. The enclosure's discovery leads to the question: Could the outer wall, which enclosed a furnace and domestic building, represent Nectanebo I/II's outer "fortification" of this port town?

Despite the scarcity of interior architecture, strata, and material remains from the enclosure's interior, the recent and emerging evidence suggests that the innermost wall, or its northern environs, may have delineated the original sacred precinct: the presence of much cultic debris from the foundation trench backfill, the remnants of in-situ paving and column bases, a concentration of ex-situ blocks from the center of the inner enclosure, and the equation of Tebilla with a well-attested Late Period temple (i.e., *hwt-khes* at *Ro-nefer*).⁵⁵ It remains quite speculative, however, whether Tebilla's double enclosure can be equated with Nectanebo's "fort" and outer enclosure.⁵⁶ Another possibility is that the mostly missing Late Period strata in the northern 80% of the outer enclosure could easily contain a separate "third" precinct for a small temple, which might have lain immediately to the north of the partly traced inner wall, enclosing the area around the in-situ temple paving. This would allow the southern inner enclosure and its screen wall to function as an adjacent compound (i.e., perhaps a "fort") beside the temple's remains, with both compounds lying inside a larger fortified "settlement" with industrial and domestic structures found along the southern side. However, the presence of an interior "fort" and a "third" compound remain purely speculative.

Before dealing further with the issue of the possible function(s) of Tebilla's enclosure walls, it is appropriate to place them within the context of their time (see Table 1). The outer wall encloses about 82,720 sq. m in area, which approximates the dimensions and area of other Late Period temple enclosures at Behbeit el-Hagar,⁵⁷ Naukratis,⁵⁸ Saqqara (the Anubieion; Bubastieion; Serapeum),⁵⁹ and Dendera.⁶⁰ Its size places Tebilla's enclosure as medium-large in rank. It is smaller than the immense temple precincts at Hermopolis Parva,⁶¹ Tanis (Amun temple),⁶² Tell el-Balamun,⁶³ Mendes,⁶⁴ Tikh el-Quranis,⁶⁵ Karnak (main temple of Amun-Re),⁶⁶ Hermopolis Magna,⁶⁷ and Sais,⁶⁸ but is significantly larger than the temenos walls associated with Mut/"Anta" (Tanis),⁶⁹ Montu (Karnak),⁷⁰ Tell Nebesheh,⁷¹ and Buto.⁷²

Although Tebilla's outer enclosure is certainly a significant state-sponsored construction, can the extant, albeit scanty remains elucidate its function? First, the location of the enclosure at the northwest corner of the mound is certainly a position favoured by other delta temples and elite structures: e.g., Tell Basta,⁷³ Mendes, Tell Nebesheh, and Tanis. Second, this area has yielded a concentration of earlier temple remains: Ramesside blocks, in-situ paving and column bases, ex-situ limestone and granite blocks, Late Period statuettes, and an inscribed block equated with Sheshonq I.⁷⁴ This suggests a succession, or reuse, of earlier temple remains within the enclosure's perimeter. Third, the Kushite-Saite votive figurines, fittings, and other cultic items found in the adjacent foundation trench's backfill (see below) may have originated from either the temple sanctuary, or been re-deposited secondarily from the underlying and disturbed mastaba tombs.⁷⁵

Aside from the Ramesside, Third Intermediate Period, and undated architectural pieces, the primary direct evidence for a Late Period temple at Tebilla comes from six statuettes⁷⁶ found at or equated with this site and its temple. One ex-situ basalt statuette of a royal acquaintance, (Pa)she(n)tihet, mentions Hesis, mistress of *Ro-nefer*; it dates to Dynasty 30 and probably originated from Tell Balala (Tebilla).⁷⁷ The remaining Late Period statuettes date to Dynasty 26: One statuette mentioned a son of Hor-pen-iset, a second prophet of Sobek, and another piece cited a priest of Sobek and Osiris.⁷⁸ A fourth ex-situ statuette, also equated with Balala (Tebilla), belongs to a regulator of a phyle, prophet of Isis, and descendant of Siesi.⁷⁹ The fifth statuette portrays Osiris-nakht, a Mayor of Mendes(?) and Commander of Troops.⁸⁰ This limestone sculpture was found at Tebilla and is dated to ca. 650 BCE, at the advent of Psamtik I's reign. The most recent and sixth statuette was discovered at Tebilla in the 1990s (Figures 13 and 14). It was uncovered during the municipal construction of a water filtration plant that encompasses most of the ancient temple precinct in the low ground to the immediate west of the surviving, northeast upper mound.

This statuette was salvaged by the Supreme Council of Antiquities⁸¹ and is also dated to Dynasty 26. It portrays its owner as a scribe, seated in a less common asymmetrical posture with its left knee raised vertically above the right foot, which is tucked below. Although this type of statue is somewhat rare, examples do appear in the Old Kingdom,⁸² First Intermediate Period,⁸³ Middle Kingdom,⁸⁴ Second Intermediate Period,⁸⁵ New Kingdom,⁸⁶ Third Intermediate Period,⁸⁷ and Late Period.⁸⁸ However, the Tebilla statuette's context and features argue for a Late Period date.⁸⁹ In addition, it has a brief inscription along the front and sides of its base, identifying its owner as a mayor named Ankh-meswti:⁹⁰

Right side: "An offering which the king gives (to) Geb so that he may give an invocation offering of bread and beer, oxen and fowl, bread and cool water, and incense

and oil, to the *ka* of the revered one, the mayor, Ankh-meswti.”

Front: “The revered one before Osiris, lord of Busiris (Djedu), great god, lord of Abydos (Abdju), the mayor, Ankh-meswti.”

Left side: “The revered one before Anubis, the one who is upon his mountain, the hereditary noble and mayor, Ankh-meswti, born of Sat-Hathor, justified.”

Regarding Late Period cultic figurines and artifacts, many appeared in the partly excavated backfill of the Dynasty 30 enclosure wall’s foundation trench, in particular at the southeast interior corner of the precinct. Most of this excavated cluster (“deposit”) originated from a 1.70 by 2.00 m patch of compact, red burnt soil. This patch extended 65 cm in depth and contained many charcoal flecks and ash. It was surrounded by and partly intermingled with grey-brown soil, representing a series of tip lines in the foundation trench. This area contained small to large potsherds, some soot-coated sherds, tiny pieces of gilding, two bits of gilded and modeled gesso,⁹¹ some fish bones, a few shells, many small, burnt human bone fragments, 39 bronze items, six iron hooks and nails, 55 faience beads (from a necklace?), fragments from faience bowls, a faience plaque, an inlay piece, two faience amulets (Wadjet eye; Ptah?), lapis lazuli inlays from two plaques and an eyebrow(?), part of a limestone shawabti(?), and a piece of flint. The balance of the evidence favors their originating at least partly from disturbed burial contexts, given the presence of definite mortuary debris in this deposit.

The bronze items include fittings with tenons that reflect a minimum of seven to eight figurines manufactured from composite materials: three side pieces from atef-crowns (Figure 4),⁹² part of a grooved horn(?), two sets of twin uraei (cobras), a single uraeus, a tail from an uraeus (possibly from a *nemes*- or another headdress type), seven to eight divine beards (Figure 7),⁹³ three crook-scepters, three loops of wire (bent scepters?), parts from the handles of six scepters, and two flails (Figures 5 and 6). These fittings likely came from Osiris figures and royal statuettes of wood or another material that had either disintegrated or been discarded.⁹⁴ The divine beards measure between 2 cm and 4.5 cm in length, suggesting they adorned figurines ranging from 20 to 45 cm in height. In addition to these fittings, one or two small drop-shaped vessels (*situlae*) and an item with double loops may have been associated with the composite figurines. The predominance of Osiris figurines is not surprising since he represents the main deity associated with both Tebilla’s temple and the adjacent cemetery.⁹⁵ Other bronze fittings from similar figurines appear elsewhere in the foundation trench: e.g., a side feather from an atef-crown (Figure 3).

There is also evidence for other types of composite statuettes and solid bronze figurines. One bronze piece is a bovine ear with

a tang (Figure 9), perhaps coming from a wooden(?) Apis figurine. A Late Period solid bronze Apis bull (Figure 10)⁹⁶ was found near the surface to the south of the enclosure wall. Another bronze piece displays a hand holding an incense bowl (Figure 8). The hand’s size would reflect a kneeling or standing figure of about 8–12 cm in height. Egyptian cult temple and mortuary chapel wall scenes frequently portray kings and priests offering such incense vessels before deities and deified kings.⁹⁷ Thus it is likely that this hand came from a similar figure. Elsewhere, the foundation trench also yielded a 12 cm high, solid bronze figurine of Horus-the-Child (Figure 12), which has parallels from Dynasty 26.⁹⁸

What can one conclude concerning the materials and items found in the foundation trench’s backfill? The bronze, iron, and lapis lazuli artifacts represent valuable materials in their own right and include exotic imports, whilst other less costly or perishable substances (i.e., wood) from diverse cultic items, such as broken faience vessels and the Osiris figurines, retained intrinsic, cultic/ritual, and apotropaic value. In contrast, most of the scattered potsherds and other non-cultic debris presumably reflect less desirable, discarded, and non-recyclable refuse incorporated into the backfill. The small burnt human bone fragments appear to reflect a re-depositing of already disturbed and destroyed burial remains into the foundation trench fill; it is unlikely they represent debris from foreign cremation burials, but instead may reflect Assyrian, or early Persian, pillaging of the Dynasty 25/26 cemetery,⁹⁹ which also took place at the neighboring site of Mendes to the south.¹⁰⁰

Much of the foundation trench backfill and its contents probably originated from the spoil heap created by the Dynasty 30 cutting of a foundation trench for the outer buttressed enclosure wall. Its foundation trench displaced about 41,400 cu. m of brickwork, soil, and debris from the underlying Dynasty 25/26 mastaba tombs, burials, and layers of ash and burnt materials,¹⁰¹ of which only a portion (about 5%–10%) could be used as backfill along the narrow space flanking the foundation wall. Both the backfill debris and exposed sections of the tombs and adjacent strata have revealed traces of an earlier destruction and conflagration. Although at least some of the charcoal, ash, and charred debris would seem to reflect a by-product from cultic, industrial, and domestic activities, the remains from a conflagration during Dynasty 25/26 suggest potential turmoil from Assyrian or early Persian attacks, or perhaps from internal strife in the eastern delta during the 7th to 5th centuries BCE.

Even though it is not surprising to have earlier materials re-deposited secondarily in the backfill, could some of the cultic debris have originated from the preceding temple’s votive offerings, whether by purpose or accident? This is possible, if not probable, but cannot be proven conclusively. The concentration of many bronze fittings and the occurrence of highly visible large statuettes, such as the Horus-the-Child figurine, suggest there may have been some purposeful inclusion of sacred artifacts within the foundation trench backfill. It

should be noted that, aside from the excavation of portions of the foundation trench at the southeast and southwest interior corners, more bronze items have emerged at other locations during the surface delineation of the enclosure wall. This preliminary assessment, however, cannot yet determine conclusively whether the bronze pieces reflect (1) the ritual burial of earlier votives within the Dynasty 30 temple precinct's foundations,¹⁰² (2) a secondary re-deposition, within the backfill, of mortuary debris from the underlying Dynasty 25/26 cemetery, (3) a combination of these scenarios, or (4) other possibilities.



Figure 3: Unit V-11: Bronze atef-feather with broken tangs for attachment to composite figure; 5.8 cm in height. Photograph by P. Carstens.

SACRED TEMPLE ENCLOSURE(S) VERSUS FORTIFIED TEMPLE PRECINCT(S)

In Dynasty 30, King Nectanebo I/II is ascribed historically with having built huge fortified enclosures at the mouth of each delta river branch in anticipation of a Persian attack. However, specific Dynasty 30 military installations (i.e., forts) have yet to be found at such locations, which lead



Figure 4: Unit W-11: Bronze atef-feather with tangs for attachment to a figurine. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 5: Unit W-11: Bronze flail with holes for attachment to its handle. Photograph by P. Carstens.

to several questions: Are such classical reports incorrect? Have such fortifications yet to be found? Have these “fortified enclosures” already been located but been misinterpreted? For example, in the historical and archaeological records, both Kings Nectanebo I and II are well-attested building many huge temple enclosures throughout Egypt during Dynasty 30. Might some of the sacred enclosure walls located in strategic border regions have doubled as potential military strongholds, or at least a refuge of sorts if needed?



Figure 6: Unit W-11: Bronze flail with handle for attachment to composite figure. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 7: Unit W-11: Bronze divine beard with a tang for attachment to figurine. Photograph by P. Carstens.

Regarding Tell Tebilla, despite the concentration of temple blocks and some votive offerings inside its recently discovered outer temenos wall, is there any evidence for a military application for this wall—if at all? To consider this question, one can first assess the known Late Period walling systems at the eastern delta military headquarters and settlement at Tell Defenneh (Daphnae), its two frontier forts at Tell el-Maskhuta and Tel Qedwa, and a Saite-Persian fort at Dorginarti in Lower Nubia. At Qedwa, only the foundation walls survive in this 200 by 200 m frontier fort, but they display multiple, regularly spaced, large buttresses along three exterior walls, and a few insubstantial interior structures.¹⁰³ The 203 by 238 m fort at Tell el-Maskhuta is similarly fortified, with several phases of occupation inside its walls and limited evidence for cultic activity.¹⁰⁴ The Saite fort at Dorginarti is shaped irregularly following the landscape upon which it is sited, but also features many exterior buttresses and the remains of a glacis.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the military design in the three Saite frontier forts incorporated a gate flanked by bastions (Dorginarti), large projecting, defensive buttresses (all three), and a glacis (Dorginarti), or some exterior scarping (Qedwa) as an anti-battering-ram feature. All of these military components differ dramatically from the slight buttressing found in the cultic enclosures at Tebilla and elsewhere.



Figure 8: Unit W-11: Bronze hand holding an incense bowl, probably from a single cast, solid figurine. Photograph by P. Carstens.

Concerning the East Delta garrison headquarters and settlement at Defenneh, it also displayed few military defensive features and greater internal and exterior complexity:¹⁰⁶ it combined an inner compound for a fort-“palace” platform (citadel)¹⁰⁷ within a 375 by 630 m outer enclosure wall that contained traces of a probable temple,¹⁰⁸ stelae and statuary,¹⁰⁹ cultic materials,¹¹⁰ iron- and bronze-working furnaces, housing,

and other structures.¹¹¹ Although Tell Defenneh forms a closer Late Period parallel to Tebilla's double enclosure, including industrial and domestic activity along its southern side, Defenneh's walling system is technically not a fortress but rather a fortified settlement, or citadel, with a temple and industrial debris, surrounded by a larger extramural settlement. Hence, Tell Defenneh (Daphnae) appears to have functioned as a much more complex semi-fortified settlement—perhaps more accurately termed a “walled” settlement—enclosing industrial areas, probable housing, a temple complex, an interior compound for a “palace” platform, and a military headquarters, in contrast to its affiliated and more specific military frontier forts at Tel Qedwa and Tell el-Maskhuta.¹¹² Other Late Period “fortified” areas are known from the palace of Apries (Memphis), el-Hibeh, Shurafa, Qus, and elsewhere,¹¹³ but do not replicate the slightly buttressed design features at Tebilla.

Karnak, the main temple at Tanis, and other temples, which have virtually identical shallow buttressing.¹¹⁴ Such shallow buttressing techniques appear in New Kingdom temple enclosures and continue in Third Intermediate Period through Ptolemaic era temple walling systems. The temple brick masons typically built a series of alternating segments of wider and narrower blocks of brickwork with undulating, convex and concave courses (i.e., “pan-bedding”) along the length of the surrounding temple walling systems.¹¹⁵ Such slight buttressing is known from and is specific to many temple enclosures, including ones at Abydos (i.e., the Osiris Temple), Buto, Dendera, Edfu, el-Ashmunein, Elephantine, Elkab, Luxor, Memphis, Mendes, Tanis (the precincts built by Sheshonq III and Nectanebo I/II), and Tell el-Belamun¹¹⁶ (both the Dynasties 26 and 30 temple precincts).¹¹⁷ In contrast, the foundation brickwork in Tebilla's outer enclosure did not display construction in distinct alternating blocks, lacked concave faces on the buttressing, and had horizontal brick courses (at the southwestern corner). However, while Tebilla's outer wall did not match fully the pan-bedding found in many of the aforementioned temple precincts, Tebilla's walling system is even further removed from the specific military features that typify earlier Middle Kingdom through Late Period forts and fortified settlements.



Figure 9: Bronze bovine ear with tang for attachment to a composite wooden(?) body. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 10: Unit BB-6: Bronze Apis bull figurine with a tang for attachment to a base. Photograph by M. Rode.



Figure 11: Unit BB-6: Left side of bronze Apis bull figurine with a tang for attachment to a base. Photograph by P. Carstens.

The closest parallels to Tebilla's enclosure wall are the contemporary temple precincts around the Montu Temple in

Yet, it cannot be ignored that many earlier Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom fortresses also frequently housed shrines and temples within their enclosures. For instance, cultic installations occur in variously sized forts and fortress towns, such as Askut,¹¹⁸ Buhen,¹¹⁹ Kom Firin,¹²⁰ Kumma,¹²¹ Mirgissa,¹²² Semna,¹²³ Uronarti,¹²⁴ and Zawiyet el-Rakham.¹²⁵ A mostly destroyed Third Intermediate Period fort at el-Ahaiwah produced part of a dedicatory vessel, suggesting the presence of a cultic

installation.¹²⁶ Larger fortified settlements, such as Aniba¹²⁷ (Lower Nubia) and Tell Heboua¹²⁸ (northwest Sinai), contained temples within a larger and more complex garrison and associated community.¹²⁹ On the other hand, a few cultic complexes, particularly royal cult/mortuary temples (i.e., “mansions of millions of years”), incorporated a more secure precinct,¹³⁰ presumably in relation to their periodic role in housing and securing the king in a small palace beside the temple forecourt.¹³¹ The most elaborate and innovative example appears at Medinet Habu (Djeme),¹³² which had an outer stone wall, crenelated parapets, sloping plinths (i.e., a glacis), a moat, a mud brick

enclosure wall (founded on bedrock), an interior, mud-brick enclosure with distinct buttresses, and several bastioned gateways, including the main entry tower (perhaps replicating a Canaanite “migdol”).¹³³ Hence, ancient Egyptian forts often did contain shrines and temples, while a few medium to large temples sometimes display a fortification-style enclosure wall.¹³⁴ The main difference for most cultic enclosures is the frequent omission of additional defensive features, such as a moat, glacis, multiple and pronounced buttressing, bastioned entryways, and crenelated parapets.¹³⁵



Figure 12: Unit X-10: Bronze Horus-the-Child figure, with SCA restoration of the finger to its mouth. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 13: Statuette of Ankh-meswti from water filtration plant. Photograph by P. Carstens; courtesy of SCA.

Another possible link between cultic and secular enclosures is the occurrence of square Late Period platforms/podiums that have sometimes been argued as representing “fort” platforms and often occur in or near several temple enclosures and fortified settlements. The function(s) of such raised podiums is both debated and varies according to individual circumstances, ranging from magazines to granaries, forts, fort-palaces, homes, temples, and even mastaba tombs (perhaps reusing homes). However, the frequency of raised platforms in house models and variously sized structures in the archaeological record suggest a common usage for moderate to large sized residences and other building types, especially in areas with high water tables.¹³⁶ Although it remains

unknown whether or not Tebilla's partly excavated enclosure originally contained a raised podium, the Late Period temple enclosures at Naukratis¹³⁷ and Tell el-Balamun¹³⁸ display "fort"-platforms similar to a pair of fortified "palace" podiums at Tell Defenneh.¹³⁹ All three sites also contained interior temples, but Tell Defenneh (Daphnae) yielded more secular elements, including a focus upon a central enclosed palace complex.¹⁴⁰ The stone architectural components in Defenneh's platform complex

consist of doorsills, drain channels, blocks with a kheker-frieze, a cavetto cornice, and a cornice with fluted molding. In conjunction with evidence for a state administration (e.g., royal sealing impressions; signet ring), Tell Defenneh also yielded luxury products (e.g., East Greek pottery; jewelry), weapons, armor, and adjacent storerooms and kitchens, thus arguing for a fortified royal/elite residence associated with its inner enclosure.¹⁴¹ Otherwise, additional Late Period podiums occur elsewhere in Egypt but appear outside temple enclosures. For example, a similar Late Period platform lay outside the temple enclosure wall at Mendes.¹⁴² Another platform appears at Tell Shaganbeh, near Belbeis in the northeast delta; it lay beside an

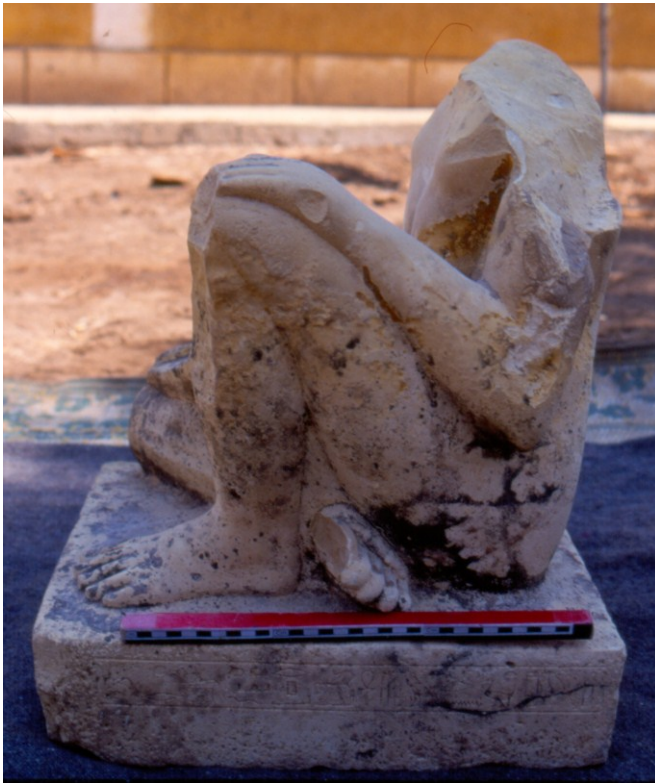


Figure 14: Limestone statuette of Ankh-meswti with inscribed base. Photograph by P. Carstens; courtesy of SCA.



Figure 16: Excavated area of cluster of votives and other debris placed in Southeastern interior corner of Dyn. 30 enclosure foundation. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 15: Looking northwest at the East side of the buttressed outer enclosure wall and water filtration plant in the background. Photograph by G. Mumford.



Figure 17: Looking west at the Southeast structure with an oven in its courtyard in the Southeast corner of outer enclosure. Photograph by G. Mumford.

enclosure wall, contained circular "granaries," but remains poorly dated.¹⁴³ Kom el-Ahmar at East Karnak lay outside Karnak Temple, near an outlying shrine (Temple C), and consisted of a similar square podium dating to the 5th to 4th centuries BCE.¹⁴⁴ A similar rectilinear podium at Qasr Allam in Bahariya Oasis has

been re-dated to the Late Period.¹⁴⁵ In brief, such podiums appear to vary quite widely in their size and the function of the overlying architecture and are not restricted to a military usage, but they often appear to facilitate better drainage in areas with higher water tables and flooding.

Aside from the presence or absence of specific military architectural components and strategic considerations, another way to clarify whether or not the ancient Egyptians considered some temple precincts as having a military function is to examine the terminology for both military and cultic enclosures. Ancient Egyptian fortresses are described by several specific Egyptian and Canaanite-derived terms, including *htm*, *mnnw*, *dmi*, *mkdr/mktr*, *nhtw*, *bhn*, and *sgr*.¹⁴⁶ Morris interprets *htm* (*khetem*) as a fortified military access point, *mnnw* (*mennu*) as a frontier fortress,



Figure 20: SCA excavations of furnace and Dynasty 26 mastabas on either side of southwest corner of enclosure wall. Photograph by G. Mumford.



Figure 18: Looking south at East face of inner enclosure wall with traces of underlying Dynasty 26 mastabas behind it. Photograph by G. Mumford.



Figure 19: Southwest corner of outer enclosure with foundation trench cutting through Dynasty 26 mastabas. Photograph by G. Mumford.



Figure 21: Late Period silt Bes jar (Northeast mound). Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 22: Bowl with a crenelated rim from a Dynasty 26 tomb. Photograph by P. Carstens.

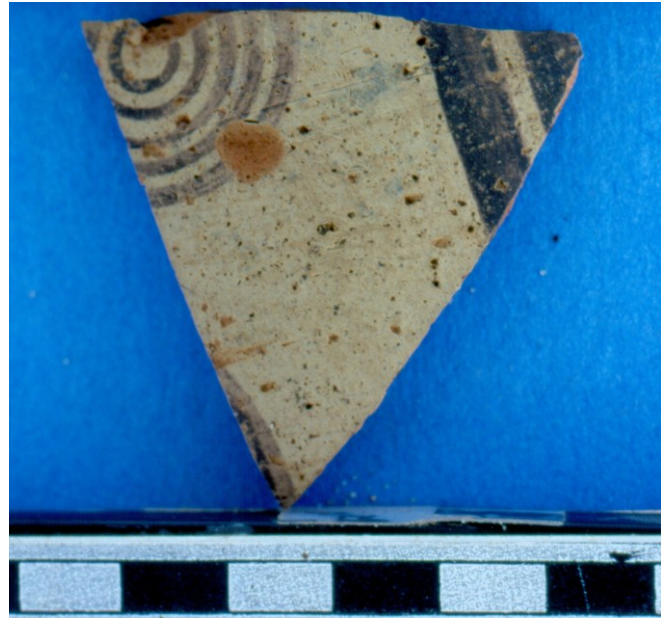


Figure 24: Cypro-Phoenician juglet sherd. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 23: 7th–6th centuries BCE Judean juglet, made from Upper Egyptian marl; from a Dynasty 26 context in a mastaba tomb along the southern edge of the mound. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Fig. 25: Phoenician amphora (Late Period). Photograph by P. Carstens.

dmi (*demi*) as applying in some cases to frontier forts, *mkdr/mktr* (*mekeder/meketer*) as a Semitic word for *migdol* (“tower”; “fort”), *nhtw* (*nekhetw*) as a “stronghold” (along the Way of Horus), *bhn* (*bekhen*) as sometimes being used in fortress names (perhaps applied to an estate), and *sgr* (*seger*) as an “enclosure.”¹⁴⁷

In contrast, Egyptian temples are generally designated by different labels, including primarily *pr* and *hwt* (often an abbreviation of *hwt ntr*), which actually refer to the broader, overall temple “estate.”¹⁴⁸ Regarding the temple complex at Tebilla in particular, Late Period inscriptions refer to it as *hwt-khes*, a temple estate dedicated to the triad of Osiris-khes, Isis, and Horus, the four sons of Horus (Imsety; Hapy; Duamutef; Kebehseneuf), and Anubis and Sobek.¹⁴⁹ The most common Egyptian terms associated with temple walls include *inb* and *sbtj* (including *sbtj n wmtt*), while a few other terms (i.e., *s3t*, *snbt*, *ʕrt*,

and *tsmt*)¹⁵⁰ entail more specific meanings. The word *inb* is quite common from the Early Dynastic to Roman period, and applies to many wall types in both cultic and secular structures.¹⁵¹ The label *snbt/snbwt* spans the Old Kingdom through Ptolemaic period and describes “battlemented ramparts” along the top of temple enclosure walls.¹⁵² In the New Kingdom several new terms appear: the word *sbtj* describes “defensive-walls” surrounding both towns and temples;¹⁵³ *sbtj n wmtt* appears rarely, and refers to thick enclosure walls;¹⁵⁴ the labels *tsmt* and *ʕrt* specify the “turrets and bastions” augmenting fortified temple enclosures.¹⁵⁵ Patricia Spencer concludes that the function of the walling system in temples was twofold: “to separate the sacred area of the god’s estate from the rest of the town, and to protect the temple in times of civil strife or foreign invasion.”¹⁵⁶ Thus, it would seem that fortresses, fortified towns, and temple enclosures each incorporated varying defensive features, incorporating more elaborate and effective military designs in actual military forts, whereas temple complexes typically had far less effective, albeit adequate, walls designed to maintain a separate, inviolate sacred space, sufficient security to repel both mundane intruders and supernatural/symbolic foes (i.e., *isfet*: “chaos”), and possibly enabled adequate refuge from sporadic, less well-equipped real enemies (e.g., civil unrest; marauding Bedouin tribes; foreign incursions). Hence, by such considerations Tebilla’s slightly buttressed enclosure lacked the basic requirements for an effective military fortification and at best offered only a symbolic fortification or brief refuge.¹⁵⁷



Figure 26: Levantine mortarstone, presumably for grinding vegetative materials. Photograph by P. Carstens.



Figure 27: Northwest edge of upper mound with a cross-section of Dyn. 25/26 mastabas to the left of the foundation trench for the Dynasty 30 mud brick enclosure wall. Photograph by G. Mumford.



Figure 28: Detail view of Dyn. 25/26 mastaba wall (left) and the inner enclosure wall foundation (right), with crenelated bowl found at the ground between both walls. Photograph by G. Mumford.

One can also examine the known titles of persons residing at *Ro-nefer* in the Late Period to assess whether any military personnel were also present at the site, whether associated with the temple complex or any adjacent, unexcavated or destroyed military structures. Unfortunately, the extant votive statues and other inscriptions from Tebilla are quite scanty and reveal mostly various ranks of priests at this town.¹⁵⁸ The only specific military

title represents a troop commander from Mendes, who appears to have placed a *ka*-statue in the temple at *Ro-nefer* (see above). Hence, while Tebilla's inner walling system probably enclosed the earlier temple (begun or embellished by Sheshonq I), the outer Dynasty 30 buttressed enclosure may simply reflect the temple's increasing prosperity and need for a larger compound and supporting facilities, such as administrative and storage facilities, priests' housing, ovens, and workshops. The Dynasty 30 shallow buttressed enclosure at Tebilla is found in at least a few Egyptian Late Period temple complexes,¹⁵⁹ while the lack of additional, specific defensive features associated with Tebilla's enclosure wall precludes its likelihood of serving as an effective fortification. If needed, the walling system could have served against minor attacks, but it would not, and did not, hold out against the highly effective siege technology and tactics that the Persian army could bring to bear upon Tebilla and other Egyptian towns.



Figure 29: Wall tops of a Dyn. 25/26 structure along the northeast side of the mound; possibly a house reused for burials. Photograph by P. Carstens.

CONCLUSIONS

Dynasty 30 encompasses the last period of large-scale, indigenous pharaonic construction throughout Egypt prior to the Ptolemaic-Roman period, with most state-sponsored projects focusing mainly upon refurbishing and augmenting existing temple cults, building and decorating many new temples and inner walling systems in freshly quarried hard stone, and adding numerous and greatly expanded mud brick enclosure walls around these temples. Investigations at Tell Tebilla have confirmed the growth in trade and prosperity within this town's cults, priesthood, officials, and populace in general, including the Dynasty 30 national temple building and expansion program promoted by both Nectanebo I and II. In contrast, more secular state-sponsored projects, particularly the later historical reports about Nectanebo I/II adding border fortifications in Dynasty 30, remain unconfirmed, perhaps destroyed by the Persians, or may represent later classical authors' exaggerations or possibly even

misinterpretations. Could these reported coastal "forts" be equated in any way with the only known Dynasty 30 constructions at or near the delta coastline, namely the temple enclosures at Tanis, Tebilla, and Tell el-Balamun?

The secondary role of cultic installations within forts and fortified settlements has already been illustrated by Middle Kingdom through Late Period military installations and citadels (e.g., Buhen; Tell Heboua; Tell Defenneh), in which various deities served as protective patrons for forts and their garrisons (e.g., Horus at Buhen). Conversely, it can also be argued that at least a few temple enclosures may have incorporated a secondary defensive role in relation to their strategic locations and enclosed valuables—be they personages (e.g., the king and his small residence at Medinet Habu), materials (e.g., precious metals, minerals, and grain), or products (e.g., cult statues, ritual equipment, and votive items). In regards to Tell Tebilla, Tell el-Balamun, and Tanis, they definitely lay at strategic points beside or near the mouths of delta river branches during the Late Period; their known temple enclosures had shallow buttressing like other temple precincts; their interiors contained housing, ovens, magazines, metal furnace(s), a fort-podium in one case, interior enclosure(s), and one or more temples, reflecting multiple applications ranging from cultic to domestic and industrial usage. The greatest argument against these and other temple enclosures serving a dual cultic and military purpose is the lack of specific and needed effective military features, such as distinctive buttressing, gateways flanked by bastions, multiple walling systems, a glacis, a dry moat, and other features. Therefore, should Diodorus Siculus's description of a fortification at the Mendesian river mouth—and elsewhere—be accurate, and its equation with Tebilla (*Ro-nefer*) hold true, it seems likely that the already existing and strategically placed small town and temple at Tebilla may have featured a separate and still undiscovered and unexcavated fortification in addition to the only recently located Dynasty 30 temple enclosure (which displays some pan-bedding typical of cultic walling systems).¹⁶⁰

This writer thereby concurs that the Dynasty 30 construction of large enclosure walls at Tebilla, Tell el-Balamun, and Tanis definitely served a cultic role like other temple enclosures built throughout Egypt. However, in light of various factors, including their particular strategic locations at riverine entrances to Egypt's northeast delta, the absence of known, affiliated Late Period forts at these sites (excepting a Dynasty 26 "fort"-podium inside the Dynasty 30 precinct at Tell el-Balamun), and the anticipated Persian invasion during the period of their construction, the introduction of these expanded temple enclosures may have incorporated a secondary defensive role upon need.¹⁶¹ In other words, in addition to a nation-wide expenditure of substantial labor, time, and resources for building and refurbishing dozens of new enclosures and temples throughout Egypt, Kings Nectanebo I–II may also have actually minimized their secular expenditure in potentially less vulnerable coastal access points by enabling their temple enclosures to remain as poorly "fortified" failsafe refuges in areas least expected

to face a Persian invasion.

This seemingly greater focus upon addressing the needs of Egypt's deities at the apparent expense of a more comprehensive and costly border fortification system may reflect a realization of the failed Saite period and later defenses against the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians and a major shift in promoting and enlisting the aid of supernatural protection from Egypt's deities and their earthly cults and offerings. For instance, after the collapse of Egypt's New Kingdom empire, pharaohs were both perceived as and became more fallible and increasingly more dependent upon Egypt's deities.¹⁶² Hence, although building numerous new enclosures and embellishing temples throughout Egypt did represent traditional pious acts, Kings Nectanebo I–II may also have hoped that their huge national temple construction, embellishment, and expansion program might enlist the protective aid of Egypt's deities in contrast to the past several centuries of Kushite, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian attacks, incursions, and occupations of Egypt (ca. 715–404 BCE). It is particularly noteworthy that, at seemingly relatively little extra expenditure, the eighty or more new temple enclosures built throughout Egypt in Dynasty 30 could easily have been made either as better fortified dual military and temple enclosures, or as fewer much more heavily fortified temple-forts at strategic border locations. Taking into consideration the increasing surveys and excavations in the eastern delta and North Sinai, the virtual absence of effective forts and the greater presence of temple enclosures in Dynasty 30 suggests that these enclosures and their cults may have served as an enhanced supernatural protection for Egypt against Persia and would only serve as individual, last-resort refuges under direct divine protection if the Persians managed to breach Egypt's northeast

frontier defenses. The later classical reports concerning King Nectanebo I/II's fortifying the river mouths of the delta against a pending Persian attack may also simply reflect a casual and misconceived external observation about the intentions behind the installation of new larger, stronger, and better "fortified" temple enclosures,¹⁶³ such as the slightly buttressed enclosures built at Tell Tebilla, Tell el-Balamun, and Tanis—structures that could double as a "failsafe" defensive position at need but that would otherwise serve normally as protective enclosure walls for temples and their patron (the king) and Egypt by extension.¹⁶⁴

The anticipated Persian attack materialized ultimately in 343–342 BCE, when Artaxerxes III invaded Egypt, defeating Nectanebo II and destroying and leveling the walls of numerous towns and temples, including Tebilla;¹⁶⁵ neither the few well-designed military fortifications along the eastern frontier nor the temple enclosures under the direct protection of their patron deities kept the Persians out of Egypt. Despite some evidence for minimal later activity at Tebilla, including a possible Ptolemaic Period continuation of the temple, current investigations suggest that Artaxerxes III's harsh retribution essentially ended the prosperity evident within both the Late Period temple and its community at Tell Tebilla. In the succeeding centuries, sand bars gradually formed across the mouths of the various delta coastal embayments, forming closed lagoons (including Lake Manzaleh to the north of Tebilla), while the Mendesian branch of the Nile also silted up, creating marshlands and cutting off both Tebilla's riverine links to the south and its access to the sea. This act of nature carried the final death knell for *Ro-nefer*, destroying the economic base of this settlement and leaving its temple to be quarried for stone during the Roman era and subsequent periods.

SITE	TEMPLE	PERIOD	DIMENSIONS	AREA (SQ. M)
TINY				
Gebel Zeit	Hathor shrine	D.18–20	7.5 x 7.5 m	56 sq.m
Wadi Sannur	Horus-Seth Shrine	D.19 (R.2)	7 x 10 m	70 sq.m
Timna (Negev)	Hathor shrine	D.19–20	9 x 10.3 m	93 sq.m
Gebel Abu Hassa	Shrine (S.1–R.2)	D.19	15 x 15 m	225 sq.m
Abu Yassin	Kem Wer Bulls	D.26	20 x 20 m	400 sq.m
Abydos	Cenotaph (T.3)	D.18	17 x 28 m	476 sq.m
VERY SMALL				
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (T.2)	D.18	28 x 39 m est.	1,092 sq.m
Serabit el-Khadim	Hathor temple (A.3)	D.18	37 x 53 m av.	1,961 sq.m
Elephantine	Khnum Temple (N.2)	D.30	37 x 68 m	2,516 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (R.4)	D.20	42 x 69 m est.	2,898 sq.m
Sesebi (Nubia)	Fort-temple	D.18–20 D.25–30?	51 x 61 m	3,000 sq.m
Saft el-Hinna	Temple	D.19	40 x 75 m	3,000 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (Siptah)	D.18	55 x 55 m est.	3,025 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (A.2)	MK-NK	55 x 55 m est.	3,025 sq.m
Uronarti (Nubia)	Fort-temple	D.30	57 x 120 m av.	3,420 sq.m
Elephantine	Isis temple	D.19	55 x 85 m	4,675 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (Tawosret) Temple	D.30	69 x 69 m est.	4,761 sq.m
Abusir	Kamutef temple (T.3)	D.18	56 x 95 m	5,320 sq.m
Karnak	Fort-temple	MK-NK	63 x 90 m	5,760 sq.m
Faras (Nubia)	Fort-temple	MK-NK D.18–20	75 x 85 m	6,375 sq.m
Kumma (Nubia)	Temple/S.enclosure	MK-NK	70 x 117 m	8,190 sq.m
Gurob	Fort-temple	MK-NK D.21	58 x 150 m	8,700 sq.m
Kubban (Nubia)	Fort-temple	D.18	70 x 125 m	8,750 sq.m
Ikkur (Nubia)	Anta/Mut temple		82 X 110 m	9,020 sq.m
Tanis	Sobek temple (T.3)		80 x 120 m	9,600 sq.m
Gurob			60 x 160 m	9,600 sq.m
SMALL				
Elephantine	Temple area	D.18–20	90 x 120 m av.	10,800 sq.m
Medamud (Luxor)	Temple	D.18–20	102 x 110 m	11,220 sq.m
Siwa Um Ubaydah	Amun temple	D.30	100 x 120 m	12,000 sq.m
Aniba (Nubia)	Fort-temple	MK-NK	87 x 138 m	12,006 sq.m
Deir el-Bahari	Thutmose 3 temple	D.18	85 x 148 m	12,580 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. (Merenptah)	D.19	119 x 119 m est.	14,161 sq.m
Dorginarti (Nubia)	Fort-temple	NK	80 x 194 m	15,520 sq.m
Kharga Oasis	Hibis temple	D.30	127 x 127 m est.	16,129 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (T.3)	D.18	97 x 167 m est.	16,199 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (T.4)	D.18	97 x 167 m est.	16,199 sq.m
Semna (Nubia)	Fort-temple	MK-NK	135 x 135 m	18,225 sq.m
Qurna (Luxor)	Mort. temple (Sety I)	D.19	124 x 162 m	20,088 sq.m
Amarna	Royal Aten temple	D.18	108 x 191 m	20,628 sq.m
Amarna	Maru Aten temple	D.18	110 x 220 m	24,200 sq.m
Karnak	Montu temple	D.30	158 x 158 m	24,964 sq.m
Deir el-Bahari	M.T. (Hatshepsut)	D.18	110 x 250 m est.	27,500 sq.m
SMALL-MEDIUM				
Qurna (Luxor)	M.T. (Ay-Horemheb)	D.18	146 x 258 m	37,668 sq.m
Tell Nebesheh	Uati Temple	D.26	188 x 205 m av.	38,540 sq.m
Tel Qedwa	Fort	D.26	200 x 200 m	40,000 sq.m
Kom el-Sultan	Abydos temple (R.2)	D.19	180 x 250 m	45,000 sq.m

SMALL-MEDIUM	(CONTINUED)			
Deir el-Ballas	Fort-Palace	D.18	156 x 303 m	47,268 sq.m
Tell el-Maskhuta	Fort	D.26	203 x 238 m	48,314 sq.m
Soleb (Nubia)	Temple (A.3)	D.18	210 x 240 m	50,400 sq.m
Buto	Wadjet temple	D.26	204 x 270 m	55,080 sq.m
Mirgissa (Nubia)	Fort-temple	MK-NK	190 x 295 m	56,050 sq.m
Luxor	Luxor temple	D.18–20	210 x 280 m	58,800 sq.m
Abydos	Sety I temple	D.19	220 x 273 m	60,060 sq.m
Koptos	Min temple	D.30-Ptol.	235 x 260 m	61,100 sq.m
Medinet Habu	Mort. temple (R.3)	D.20	205 x 315 m	64,575 sq.m
Ramesseum	Mort. temple (R.2)	D.19	178 x 380 m	67,640 sq.m
Edfu	Horus temple	D.30-Ptol.	219 x 328 m av.	71,832 sq.m
Tanis	Amun temple (S.3)	D.22	230 x 317 m	72,910 sq.m
Tell el-Yahudiyeh	Temple (R.2)	D.19	230 x 333 m av.	76,590 sq.m
MEDIUM				
Naukratis	Great Temenos (N.1 ?)	D.30(?)	260 x 300 m	78,000 sq.m
Aniba (Nubia)	Fort-temple	D.18–20	200 x 400 m	80,000 sq.m
Dendera	Hathor temple	D.30	280 x 280 m	82,720 sq.m
Tell Tebilla	Osiris temple	D.30	235 x 352 m	82,720 sq.m
Tell el-Retaba	Fort-temple	D.19–20	195 x 425 m av.	82,875 sq.m
Behbeit el-Hagar	Isis/Osiris temple (N.2)	D.30	241 x 362 m	87,242 sq.m
Saqqara Anubeion	Anubis temple (N.1)	D.30	250 x 350 m	87,500 sq.m
Saqqara Bubasteion	Bubastis temple (N.1)	D.30	250 x 350 m	87,500 sq.m
Karnak	Mut temple	NK-Ptol.	250 x 350 m	87,500 sq.m
Saqqara Serapeum	Apis temple (N.1)	D.30	300 x 300 m	90,000 sq.m
Buhen (Nubia)	Fort-temple	D.18–20	215 x 460 m	98,900 sq.m
MEDIUM-LARGE				
Tell Basta	Bastet temple	D.21–30	313 x 400 m	125,200 sq.m
Hermopolis Parva	Thoth temple (N.1)	D.30(?)	350 x 384 m	134,400 sq.m
Khor (Nubia)	Fort-temple	MK-NK	250 x 600 m	150,000 sq.m
Tanis	Amun temple (N.2)	D.30	370 x 430 m	171,100 sq.m
Tell Balamun	Amun temple	D.30	410 x 420 m	172,200 sq.m
Mendes	Nesubanebdjed	D.26–30	362 x 531 m av.	191,860 sq.m
LARGE				
Amarna	Great Temple	D.18	270 x 760 m	205,200 sq.m
Tukh el-Qaramus	Temple	D.30/Ptol.	454 x 514 m	233,356 sq.m
Tell Defenneh	Fortified town	D.26	375 x 630 m	236,250 sq.m
Memphis	Apries' fort-palace	D.26	426 x 600 m	241,542 sq.m
Memphis	Ptah temple	Ptolemaic	445 x 605 m av.	269,225 sq.m
VERY LARGE				
El-Kab	Nekhbet temple	D.30	550 x 550 m	302,500 sq.m
Karnak	Amun temple	D.30	515 x 600 m av.	309,000 sq.m
Tell Heboua I	Fort-temple (Tjaru)	D.18–20	400 x 800 m	320,000 sq.m
Hermopolis Magna	Thoth temple (N.1)	D.30	603 x 630 m	379,890 sq.m
Kom el-Hitin	Mort. temple (A.3)	D.18	550 x 700 m	385,000 sq.m
Sais	Neith temple	D.26	600 x 800 m av.	480,000 sq.m
Heliopolis	Temple of Re	D.18–20	875 x 975 m av.	853,125 sq.m
AVG AREA OF ENCLOSURES				85,425 SQ. M

Table 1: Square meter area of mostly New Kingdom to Late Period enclosure walls and major structures in Egypt, Nubia, and Sinai

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NOTES

- ¹ Although inscriptional evidence from elsewhere mentions the district of *Ro-nefer* and its temple during the Ptolemaic period (see below), Tell Tebilla has produced virtually no evidence for occupation after Dynasty 30.
- ² Of note, a search through the disturbed lower mound area inside the construction site for a water filtration plant yielded some apparent Old Kingdom pottery, including carinated Meidum bowls; the project ceramicist, R. Hummel, noted a few early New Kingdom potsherds from the upper mound, which represented debris in Late Period layers.
- ³ See Coutellier and Stanley 1987, 270–271, fig. 1, and Mumford 2004b, 268, regarding Tebilla's location beside the Daqhelieh Plain and south of Lake Manzaleh, both of which originally consisted of a coastal embayment accessing the sea. See also Stanley, Warne, Davis, Bernasconi, and Chen 1992, 42 fig. 16A-B, 48 fig. 19A-F, Stanley and Warne 1993, 632 fig. 5, Stanley, McRea, Jr., and Waldon 1996, 2 fig. 1, and Stanley and Warne 1998, 804, fig. 8; Redford 2004, 141 map 4, illustrates an alternate map of the delta in which Mendes and Tell Tebilla lie along the same branch of the Nile, with the coastline shown further away from Tell Tebilla. In both reconstructed landscapes, Tebilla would seem to serve as a maritime port for Mendes, while the exact point at which the Mendesian branch entered the sea varied over time, shifting northwards gradually with the annual deposition of silts and northward expansion of the coastline.
- ⁴ For Third Intermediate Period through Ptolemaic period references to *Ra-nofir*, *Ra nofir*, and its Osiris temple (*ḥwt-khes*; *ḥʿt Khas*; *ḥʿt khes[ʿ]*), see Gauthier 1975 tome III 121, tome IV 121, 122, 205; see further Mumford 2004b, 269, notes 11–16.
- ⁵ See Redford 2010, 144–178, for a discussion on recent findings from Mendes during Dynasty 29.

- ⁶ *Ro-nefer* is mentioned on an offering table of Nectanebo, in the Pithom Stela of Ptolemy II, in a geographical list of Ptolemy XI at Edfu Temple, and in Ptolemaic period inscriptions at Ombos and Denderah (Mumford 2004b, 269).
- ⁷ Baines and Malek 2000, 18 map of delta topography. By the time of Napoleon's campaign to Egypt in 1798–1801, the plain to the immediate east of Tebilla was inundated for nine months of the year. See Holz, Stieglitz, Hansen, and Ochsenschlager 1980, pl. 9b.
- ⁸ For further details on this period, see Kitchen 1995, 255–361, Manley 1996, 101 map of Dynasty 21, 105 map of Dynasty 22, 107 map of Piye's campaign ca. 728 BCE, Myśliwiec 2000, 27–67, Taylor 2000, 330–352, Ritner 2009, Broekman, Demaree, and Kaper 2009, Naunton 2010, 120–125, and Dodson 2012, 39–138.
- ⁹ See Kitchen 1995, 378–398, Manley 1996, 119 map of Assyrian campaigns, Morkot 2000, 167–304, Myśliwiec 2000, 68–109, Taylor 2000, 352–368, Redford 2004, 72–144, Naunton 2010, 124–127, and Dodson 2012, 139–168, for coverage and discussions on Kushite Egypt, including the Assyrian invasions and occupation.
- ¹⁰ Kitchen 1995, 399–408, Manley 1996, 120–121 (maps of Saite kingdom), 1221–23 (map of Neo-Babylonian empire and Egypt), 125 (map of Saite campaign into Nubia), Lloyd 2000, 369–383, Myśliwiec 2000, 110–134, Smoláriková 2008, Perdu 2010, 140–149, and Dodson 2012, 169–180, provide overviews and more in-depth discussions on the Saite Period.
- ¹¹ Regarding the Persian Period in Egypt, see various summaries and extensive coverage by Manley 1996, 127 (map of Persian empire and campaigns against Egypt), Lloyd 2000, 383–394, Myśliwiec 2000, 134–184, Briant 2002, and Perdu 2010, 150–157.
- ¹² The project is grateful for support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the American Research Center in Egypt, the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto, and project donors M. Yasuda, W. Cahill, and P. Sheldrick. In addition, further thanks go to the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Cairo and el-Mansoura, project team members, the villagers of Ezbet et-Tell (beside Tell Tebilla), and Toronto staff and work-study students.
- ¹³ During the Late Period to Roman Period, the delta is ascribed with having seven or eight river branches providing maritime access to Egypt (Butzer 1976, 24–25, fig. 4), while the other main access route consisted of overland passage across North Sinai and into Egypt via either the frontier fort at Tel Qedwa (to Defenneh) or along the Wadi Tumilat past the fort at Tell el-Maskhuta.
- ¹⁴ Edgar 1914, 275, provides a copy of the cartouche and text from this block.
- ¹⁵ For a summary on the elite Late Period sarcophagi, see Mumford 2004b, 272, fig. 2:1–4.
- ¹⁶ Redford 2010, 184–185, 187, 188–189, summarizes Artaxerxes III's destruction at Mendes. This included the Persian army vandalizing and looting a Saite Period cemetery (east of the main temple), digging up and smashing the royal tomb of Neferites I (Dynasty 29), pulverizing a small shrine of Kings Nectanebo I–II (in the northeast area at Mendes), breaking up a nearby stela of Nectanebo I, burning down a set of storehouses around the inner harbour, and perhaps pillaging the Mansion of the Sacred Rams (which was restored later). However, Redford 2010, 188, also observes that the Persian army appears to have left the main temple and settlement intact, they may not have actually vandalized the Sacred Ram Hypogeum, apparently concentrating their destruction mostly upon royal statuary and monuments of Kings Neferites I and Nectanebo I–II, who had opposed the Persians.
- ¹⁷ Such Bes jars appear in Third Intermediate Period to Late Period contexts (see Wodzińska 2010, 256 no. 90).
- ¹⁸ A former project member, Kei Yamamoto, examined this specific form for parallels and determined that it likely represents a local variant produced at Tell Tebilla (forthcoming study). The regional and foreign pottery from Tell Tebilla is currently being studied by the project ceramicist, Rexine Hummel, for publication in the near future. Additional thanks go to project ceramicists Steven Shubert and Kei Yamamoto, and various assistants.
- ¹⁹ For a summary of the delta's Predynastic through Pharaonic Period resources, see Butzer 1976, 23–25, 36, and 93–96: e.g., alluvial silts (i.e., clays), grazing land for cattle, Nile fish, agricultural land for cereal crops (wheat and barley), orchards (i.e., fruit), and vineyards (i.e., wine), and stretches of wilderness with shrubs, reeds, bulrushes, papyrus, ferns, cattail, tamarisk, and acacia trees, including wild game and marsh birds.
- ²⁰ The University of Toronto excavations at Tell Tebilla have yielded some flint tools, which represent non-indigenous items brought to this site presumably from the Nile Valley or the northeast desert along the boundary of the east delta.
- ²¹ A wide range of copper alloy artifacts have been found at Tell Tebilla, including cultic statuettes, mortuary furnishings and fittings, and various utensils (e.g., weaponry; boxes); see also Mumford 2004b, 270–271 note 20; Chaban 1910, 28–30. The copper might represent materials from sources in the Eastern Desert, South Sinai, the southern Arabah, Wadi Feinan, Cyprus, or a mixture of several sources through the recycling of earlier artifacts.
- ²² Chaban 1910, 28–30, reports carnelian beads, gilded cultic statuettes, and gold pendants from some tombs excavated at Tebilla.
- ²³ The Supreme Council of Antiquities found at least one calcite container from Late Period tombs at Tell Tebilla (personal communication and direct observation and photography of artifacts from the SCA excavations).
- ²⁴ For an approximate tally of the various types of stone found at Tebilla, see Mumford 2004b, 271–274.
- ²⁵ Klemm and Klemm 2008, 36–139 limestone, 147–164 calcite, 167–206, sandstone, 233–314, granite, 323–326 gneissic diorite; Aston, Harrell, and Shaw 2000, 27 cornelian/carnelian sources, 28 chert and flint sources; Ogden 2000, 149–151 copper mines, 161–162 gold mines.
- ²⁶ The Cypro-Phoenician pottery from Tebilla consists mainly of storage jars of various types and sizes (Figure 25), presumably containing olive oil, wine, and other liquids, while other pottery vessels include mortaria of mainly Levantine fabrics (Figure 26), presumably for grinding soft vegetative materials (personal communication from John S.

Holladay, Jr.), and some decorated juglets (probably for perfumes, unguents, or various liquid medications) (Figure 24).

- ²⁷ The recent investigations at Tell Tebilla by this writer have produced only 22 potsherds, handles, and amphora stumps from East Greek pottery amongst the thousands of diagnostic pieces from several excavation areas and broad surface scrape-downs. This proportion is calculated from about 4,400 diagnostic sherds collected from Tebilla to-date but will decrease a little once all the pottery is fully processed (a few hundred sherds await drawing).
- ²⁸ Chaban and Edgar recovered a variety of jewelry from some Late Period tombs at Tebilla, including pearl beads (Chaban 1910, 28–30), which may be Ptolemaic since pearls are rare in pharaonic Egypt. For example, Lucas and Harris 1962, 401–402, mention the discovery of pearls in a necklace for Queen Ahhotep in early Dynasty 18.
- ²⁹ Lapis lazuli is noted amongst the jewelry excavated by Chaban and Edgar (see Chaban 1910, 28–30); the recent SCA excavations have also found a few amulets that may be lapis lazuli. Ancient sources of lapis lazuli occur in Afghanistan (e.g., Badakhshan; the Chagai hills) and in western Iran (e.g., Kuh-i-Alwand) (Moorey 1994, 85–87).
- ³⁰ See Holladay 2004, 407–409, 423–424, fig. 3, who mentions such Judean decanters from Tel Qedwa (T-21), Tell el-Maskhuta, Tell Defenneh (Daphnae), Tell Tebilla, Naukratis, Kafr Ammar, and Lahun.
- ³¹ For example, locally made examples of Judean juglets in Egypt are often made from Upper Egyptian marls, such as the Tebilla example, which means either the clay or the vessel itself came from southern Egypt and copied a specific Judean form (Holladay 2004, 409).
- ³² See Aston 1998, 626, note 330, who notes that imported Levantine pottery typically amounts to 2% or more of the pottery from town sites in Egypt; he published 2,800 sherds from Qantir of 17,260 recorded examples, which in turn represented no more than 0.1% of the over five million potsherds excavated at Qantir (Aston 1998, xxv).
- ³³ Edgar 1914, 275. The prenomen for kings Smendes (1094–1064 BCE), Sheshonq I (1045–924 BCE), Harsiese in Thebes (870–860 BCE), and Takelot II (850–825 BCE) could each be equated with the fragmentary prenomen cartouche (*ḥd-ḥprj-rꜥ stp-[n-rꜥ]*) from Tell Tebilla, but the most likely candidate is Sheshonq I (Dynasty 22) owing to the relative proximity of Tebilla to both Tanis and Bubastis, the home towns for the rulers of Dynasties 21–22, respectively, and the widespread building program by Sheshonq I; Smendes would be the next most likely candidate.
- ³⁴ Mumford 2004b, 268, note 10. This limestone block contained both cartouches of Ramesses II.
- ³⁵ SCA officials pointed out the area in which the paving had been found, planned, and removed from the southern end of the construction site (i.e., within its modern fence line) to facilitate the installation of a water filtration plant. The fragmentary paving was described as measuring as small as 10 by 10 meters and as much as 15 by 15 m, implying that a fairly substantial temple had lain in this area. Since the Dynasty 26 ground level along the western side of the northeast part of the mound lay about 3 m below the

higher ground surface associated with the Dynasty 30 enclosure, the now removed temple paving and other ex-situ blocks may represent a Third Intermediate Period through Dynasty 26 construction (which was found at the approximately the same surface level as the Dynasty 26 mastaba tombs). On the other hand, the earthen ground surfaces in habitation areas tend to rise higher more quickly as refuse accumulates in comparison to stone paved temple areas that are generally kept free of debris accumulation. Hence, if a larger stone temple had been built in the center of the Dynasty 30 enclosure, both the ground surface and blocks associated with it have long since disappeared, presumably being reused in Roman and later constructions elsewhere or being reduced to lime in Roman lime kilns such as ones excavated at Mendes.

- ³⁶ The Tell Tebilla project and its director are currently based at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
- ³⁷ For instance, the state organized and dispatched quarrying expeditions to desert quarries, with an apparent peak occurring in Dynasty 26, which is attested by rock inscriptions along the Wadi Hammamat bearing the cartouches of, or dating to, Psamtik I (Couyat and Montet 1912, 33–34, 52–53, 58, 60–61, 86, and 123, text nos. 2, 51, 59, 68, and 128, pls. 10 and 27; Porter and Moss 1952, 335), Necho II (Couyat and Montet 1912–1913, 70, 71 and 123, text nos. 97, 99, pl. 24; Porter and Moss 1952, 335), Psamtik II (Couyat and Montet 1912–1913, 71 and 123, text no. 100 year 3, pl. 24; Porter and Moss 1952, 335), Apries(?) Goyon 1957, 116–117, 172, text no. 107, pl. 35), and Amasis (Ahmose II) (Couyat and Montet 1912–13, 66–67, 88 and 123, text nos. 88, 137 year 44, pls. 21 and 33; Porter and Moss 1952, 335; Goyon 1957, 116–117, 172, text nos. 107–108, pl. 35; Peden 2001, 283–285). Aside from some rock inscriptions from several Persian rulers in Dynasty 27, Kings Nectanebo I and II are also well-attested quarrying and building many temples, albeit mostly in hard stones (Peden 2001, 283–285; Arnold 1999, 93–94, 105–122, 124–136).
- ³⁸ See Mumford 2004b, and forthcoming comprehensive publication on Tebilla. Further information and illustrations are also available on the project website: www.deltasinai.com.
- ³⁹ The project's osteologist, Peter Sheldrick, summarized the findings from over two dozen Late Period adult bodies buried in the debris layers that accumulated in a street between two "mastabas" (possibly re-used abandoned houses): their teeth display few dental carries, moderate calculus formation, and a diet containing fewer carbohydrates than generally seen in modern populations; the bones suggest a generally healthy population, albeit with some occurrences of anemia, osteoporosis, compression fractures of vertebrae, hypercementosis, dental abscesses, and other maladies (personal communication from Peter Sheldrick).
- ⁴⁰ Amongst the aforementioned burials, the adult males appear to be quite robust and had experienced prolonged, heavy physical labor. One adult female exhibited advanced disc degeneration in her neck and a distinct attachment for the deltoid muscle on her humerus, suggesting she had frequently lifted and carried heavy loads on her head. Some

individuals had clear attachment lines for tendon sheaths on their hands, revealing repetitive or strenuous flexing of fingers that implies some sort of manual labor using their hands (personal communication from Peter Sheldrick).

⁴¹ Mumford 2004b, 270, 280–281.

⁴² Of interest, the low ground to the south of the modern water filtration plant yielded a limestone anchor stone (see Mumford 2004b, fig. 3:6).

⁴³ See Parcak 2007, 61–83.

⁴⁴ For more information and images, see the project website: www.deltasinai.com.

⁴⁵ Diodorus later relates that Nectanebo I built a fort at the mouth of each delta river branch in anticipation of a Persian invasion, which materialized under Artaxerxes III in 343/2 BCE (Lloyd 2000, 389; see also Arnold 1999, 94, fig. 48). Tell el-Balamun is located northeast of Shirban, near the Mediterranean coast (Spencer 1996, 10).

⁴⁶ See Lloyd 2000, 389, who relates that “the town at the Mendesian mouth had both a surrounding wall and a fort inside;” see also Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, Book xv, chapter v.

⁴⁷ For example, the University of Toronto expedition excavated two chambers to a depth of 7 m in one mud brick structure from the northern part of Tebilla (Figure 29). This structure had a subsurface cellar, a main floor with at least one doorway associated with the ancient ground level, a tall narrow niche (or window?) in a possible stairwell, and the lower part of another doorway at the base of the partly preserved second story. This building had been burnt down, exhibiting red-fired and soot-blackened brick wall faces, a carbonized wooden lintel above one doorway, some interior wall face collapse, and some clearance and reuse of the interior chambers and adjacent streets for burials. Investigation also revealed a later Roman period digging into and disturbance of some chambers and burials.

⁴⁸ For instance, the aforementioned Judean juglet, found in the debris layers between two mastaba tombs along the southern edge of the mound, date to the 7th to 6th centuries BCE, namely during Dynasties 25–26.

⁴⁹ A row of circular, baked clay and ash-filled ovens lay near the northwestern corner of the upper mound.

⁵⁰ Arnold 1999, 115.

⁵¹ See A. J. Spencer in James 1982, 40. Many mounds have suffered the removal of mud brick for fertilizer in the 1800s to early 1900s.

⁵² Of interest, N. Spencer 2006, 50, points out that the expansion of temple enclosure walls probably entailed the levelling of previously existing housing and other structures, such as at Tell el-Balamun, to increase the sacred space associated with the temple. Following Spencer, the reviewers of this article have also added that some secular structures may have been retained by the expansion of temple precincts. Regarding Tebilla’s enclosure, it should be noted that the actual ancient ground level from which both the temple enclosure and interior corner structures were dug has been depleted, leaving some doubt as to the exact sequence of construction. However, it seems that Tebilla’s Dynasty 30 enclosure wall came first, while the interior southwestern furnace and southeastern structure seem to have been built shortly afterwards – prior to the

probable destruction of the temple in 342 BCE.

⁵³ Future excavation may clarify whether some of the apparent Dynasty 26 “mastabas” are actually reused Third Intermediate Period houses that had perhaps been destroyed by the Assyrians in the early 7th century BCE, abandoned and reused for burials in Dynasty 26, with a possible early Persian period destruction and looting of these structures (ca. 525 BCE?) prior to the expansion of the outer enclosure in Dynasty 30; the later Persian reconquest of Egypt, by Artaxerxes III in 342 BCE, probably leveled this expanded temple wall.

⁵⁴ This find was reported by municipal and SCA officials, who indicated the position of the paving as lying roughly between 60 and 90 m to the northwest of this area.

⁵⁵ See Mumford 2004a; *idem* 2004b, 269–270, for a summary regarding Tebilla and its temple.

⁵⁶ Spencer 2006, 50, correctly questions my earlier proposed fort-temple function(s) of Tebilla’s enclosure and other walling systems, which I have since reconsidered and now believe played a much lesser role (i.e., a place of refuge).

⁵⁷ Arnold 1999, 115, notes the enclosure wall is 241 by 362 m, with an 18–20 m wide wall.

⁵⁸ See Muhs 1994, 104; Coulson et. al. 1996, 3 fig. 3, 7 fig. 4, 172–173 figs. 67–8; and Arnold 1999, 109.

⁵⁹ See Arnold 1999, 109–111, regarding the construction of temple enclosures for the Anubeion (250 by 350 m), Bubasteion (250 by 350 m), and Serapeum (300 by 300 m).

⁶⁰ See Arnold 1999, 115, for Nectanebo I’s probable construction of the 280 by 280 m enclosure wall.

⁶¹ Arnold 1999, 128, mentions Nectanebo II probably built the 350 by 384 m enclosure wall at this site.

⁶² Goyon 1987, 2, plan of Tanis.

⁶³ Spencer 1996, 32–45, pls. 1, 6, 26–27, and 30; *idem* 1999, 25–27, 45–58, and 93, pls. 1, 105.

⁶⁴ De Meulenaere and MacKay 1976, 173; Wilson 1982, pl. 2; Holz et. al. 1980, pls. 17–18.

⁶⁵ Arnold 1992, 210 no. 112; Naville and Griffith 1890, pl. 9, plan of temple enclosures at Tel Tukh.

⁶⁶ Lauffray 1988, 24–25 aerial photograph, 26–27, fig. 12 plan of Karnak Temple and environs.

⁶⁷ See Arnold 1999, 111: the outer enclosure measured 630 by 603 m with a 15 m wide wall.

⁶⁸ See Habachi 1944, 372–373, fig. 96.

⁶⁹ Goyon 1987, 23, plan of Tanis.

⁷⁰ Lauffray 1988, 24–25 fig. 12 plan of Montu Temple beside Karnak Temple.

⁷¹ Petrie, Murray, and Griffith 1888, pls. 14 and 17.

⁷² Arnold 1999, 84, describes the irregularly shaped, Saite period temple of Wadjet, at Buto, as spanning 174 m, 264 m, 234 m, and 306 m in length, with 20 m wide walls.

⁷³ See el-Sawi 1979, pl. 3 and a fold-out map of the mound.

⁷⁴ See Mumford 2004b, 267–286.

⁷⁵ A preliminary report on this deposit is published in Mumford 2004a, 2–3, figs. 1–5.

⁷⁶ Some of these statuettes have already been discussed in Mumford 2004b, 280–281, notes 51–3.

⁷⁷ This statue appeared for auction in 1998 (Malek et. al., 1999, 914, no. 801–766–437), possibly being found illicitly during the municipal and other disturbances in the 1990s. Its text mentions *Ro-nefer*, which is equated with Tell

Tebilla, which is the most likely findspot, but this does not exclude a secondary deposition and discovery elsewhere.

- ⁷⁸ See Mumford 2004b, 281, notes 54–55, for a discussion of and references to these statuettes.
- ⁷⁹ This statue fragment also appeared for sale in 1993 (Malek et. al., 1999, 795 no. 801–741–300). Its text notes an altar in the temple of (Osiris)-Khesy, and is said to originate probably from Tell Balala (Tebilla). It is dated to the reign of Psamtik I.
- ⁸⁰ Josephson and Eldamaty 1999, 90–93, CG 48638, JE 40041, pl. 38a–d; see Mumford 2004b, 280 note 51.
- ⁸¹ Special thanks to Dr. Zahi Hawass, (former) Secretary General of the SCA, for permission to publish this material.
- ⁸² A similar, albeit variant, posture is displayed by a 70 cm high, painted limestone statuette of the physician Nyankhre (Dynasty 5), found at Giza; Cairo Museum JE 53150 (Russmann 1989, 34–6 no.12). A 10.5 cm high, painted limestone model of a nursing woman is attributed to Giza and Dynasty 5; Metropolitan Museum of Art 26.7.1405 (Do. Arnold 1999, 112, 143, figs. 100–1). The 4.5 cm high, greywacke statuette of Prince Tjau has the left knee raised; it dates to Dynasty 6, originated from Saqqara, and is now in the Cairo Museum: CG 120 (Do. Arnold 1999, 141, 144, fig. 127).
- ⁸³ The royal Intef cemetery at Thebes contained a limonite statuette of a commoner (temp. Dynasty 11), who was placed in a similar posture with a raised left knee (5 ¼ inches high); Metropolitan Museum of Art 30.8.76 (Hayes 1990 vol. 1, 214 fig. 131).
- ⁸⁴ A similar, unprovenanced Middle Kingdom limestone statuette exists of a female suckling a child; it measures 13.3 cm high and is housed in the Petrie collection, UC 16642 (Page 1976, 36 no. 39). A composite painted limestone statuette of two women (2 ¼ inches high) reveals an identical posture for the foremost female, who is also suckling a child. See Metropolitan Museum of Art 22.2.35 (Hayes 1990 vol. 1, 221–222, fig. 138 [top]). The Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin has a 13 cm high, copper statuette (14078) of a nursing woman, dated to Dynasty 12 (G. Wenzel in Schulz and Seidel 1998, 409, fig. 141).
- ⁸⁵ A similar posture occurs on a 9.5 cm high, copper figurine of a princess, Sobeknakht, nursing a child. The figurine is unprovenanced, but may originate from Edfu, where a funerary stela is known for a Dynasty 13 princess with the same name and title; the Brooklyn Museum 43.137 (J. F. Romano in R. Fazzini et. al. 1989, no. 25).
- ⁸⁶ Buhen yielded a 37 cm high diorite statue of the scribe, Amenemhet (temp. Hatshepsut, Dynasty 18), who has a wig; University of Pennsylvania, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology: E 10980 (D. B. Redford in Silverman 1997, 135; Roehrig 2005, 58–59, fig. 28). The Karnak Temple cachette contained a similar, 60 cm high, black granite statue of the Chief Steward, Senenmut, holding princess Neferure (Dynasty 18); Cairo Museum JE 6923, CG 42116 (R. Pirelli in F. Tiradritti 1999, 166–7). A limestone boulder was carved into an asymmetrical seated statuette of Senenmut holding Neferure, above his tomb (TT 252) at Thebes (Roehrig 2005, 113, fig. 50). A 21 cm high “alabaster” (calcite) composite statuette of a scribe and Thoth has an identical pose (Dynasty 18); Louvre E 11153 (Andreu et. al. 1997, 122, fig. 52). The Detroit Institute of Arts has another asymmetrical seated statuette (David and Archbold 2000, 88). The British Museum has a 15.3 cm high pottery vase (EA 24653) in the shape of an asymmetrical seated scribe (Roehrig 2005, 240, fig. 168).
- ⁸⁷ The Karnak Temple cachette produced a 96 cm high, basalt statue of the vizier Hor (Dynasty 22); Cairo Museum, JE 7512 (R. Pirelli in F. Tiradritti 1999, 349). It has a shaved head, but is otherwise like the Tebilla statue.
- ⁸⁸ A 47 cm high, asymmetrical, granite squatting statuette is known for Akhamenru, High Steward of the God’s Wife of Amun. It was found in the Karnak cachette, dates to Dynasty 25, and is now in the Cairo Museum: CG 48603, JE 37346 (Josephson and Eldamaty 1999, 5–7, pl.3). A 43.8 cm high grey granite statuette of Harwa, High Steward of the God’s Wife of Amun, originated from the Karnak cachette and dates to Dynasty 25; Cairo Museum CG 48606, JE 6711 (Josephson and Eldamaty 1999, 10–14, pl. 6). The Karnak cachette also yielded a 27 cm high limestone statuette of the vizier Nespakashuty (temp. Psamtik I, Dynasty 26). Cairo Museum JE 7000 (E. R. Russmann 1989, 176, 178–179 no.82). A 32.2 cm high limestone statuette of an official, Bes, originated from Athribis (temp. Psamtik I). It appears in the Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon (Malek 1999, 365–366, fig. 229; Smith 1937, 7, 17–20 no.10, pls.13–14). A 69.8 cm high, limestone statuette of Pediamunnebsuttawy, a scribe of Mut and Priest of Ptah (temp. Psamtik I), came from the Karnak cachette; CG 48631, JE 36908 (Josephson and Eldamaty 1999, 69–74, pl.31).
- ⁸⁹ This writer is preparing a more detailed article on the inscribed material from Tell Tebilla.
- ⁹⁰ The name *ḥm-mš-wt* is found once elsewhere in a Middle Kingdom monument (Louvre C 194) (Ranke 1935, 61 no. 18; *idem* 1976, 64, *mš*[j], section 64.18); Ranke makes reference to more details in an article in *JEAT* 7, table 8, 9.
- ⁹¹ One fragment bore a fabric impression on one side and may have come from a modelled ear.
- ⁹² Two bronze atef-crown fittings were found at Tell Balamun and dated to the Late Period (Spencer 1996, 81 no.61–62, pl. 75:61–62); Tanis has yielded similar fittings (Brissaud and Zivie-Coche 2000, 280, 299 pl. 15g Ptolemaic period?); this writer saw identical Late Period bronze fittings in the site museum at Tanis and some large wooden Osiris figurines in the British Museum’s Egypt collections.
- ⁹³ A bronze divine beard with a tang was also found at Tell Balamun (Spencer 1996, 81 no. 69, pl. 75:69).
- ⁹⁴ Thebes has produced three painted terracotta, composite Osiris figurines from the Ramesside period. One figurine has attached atef-crown feathers of an unknown composition; the two other figurines are missing their feathers, which were apparently fitted into slots on either side of the central part of the crown. These figurines were believed to be cultic rather than mortuary items (see L. M. Berman 1999, 63 pl. 31–32, 385–387, no. 292). Some unprovenanced Late Period bronze Osiris figurines were cast in one piece (see Berman 1999, 431–434, nos. 326–330). The Louvre has an example of a Late Period, wooden Osiris figure with bronze atef crown fittings (Sewell 1968,

- 54, 141, pl. 8; Dunand and Lichtenberg 2006, 91–92, fig. 136). For Osiris figurines in funerary and temple contexts, see D’Auria et. al. 1988, 237–240, nos. 197–201.
- ⁹⁵ See Mumford 2004b, 267–286.
- ⁹⁶ Many similar examples date to the Late Period: The Museum alter Plastik, in Frankfurt am Main, has a 12.4 cm high, bronze Apis-Soter bull-figurine; IN 1871, X 14.655 (Gessler-Löhr 1981, 41). Unlike the Tebilla example, it is affixed to a rectilinear base. An 18 cm high, bronze Apis bull, and a 12.5 cm high bull, occur in the British Museum (Robins 1997, 243, fig. 291; Shaw and Nicholson 1995, 35–36, EA 22920). An 8.3 cm high, bronze Apis bull is displayed in the Musée de Guéret (Germond 2001, 146, fig. 185). A 7.5 cm high, bronze Apis bull figurine is found in the Michael C. Carlos Museum, 1999.1.42 (Lacovara and Trope 2001, 69, no. 62c).
- ⁹⁷ For example, see the figure of Thutmose III offering incense before Amun-Re, from his painted limestone chapel at Deir el-Bahari: Cairo Museum JE 38574 (R. Pirelli in F. Tiradritti 1999, 168–169).
- ⁹⁸ The Ägyptisch-Orientalische Sammlung in Vienna has a very similar bronze Horus-the-Child (Harpokrates) figurine (no. 4162), which measures 22.1 cm in height (M. Görg in Schulz and Seidel 1998, 48–49, pl. 31).
- ⁹⁹ Cremation burials are known amongst foreign mercenaries serving in Late Period Egyptian garrisons, such as at Tel Qedwa (Oren 1984, 7–44, 30). Unlike foreign cremation burials elsewhere in Egypt, such as at Qedwa, Tebilla’s cache lacks debris from funerary urns or other items normally associated with such burials.
- ¹⁰⁰ Redford 2010, 122, 185, 187.
- ¹⁰¹ The apparent destruction of and debris from the Dynasty 26 cemetery may come from Cambyses’s 525 BCE invasion or later civil strife and other military activity during the Persian period.
- ¹⁰² The Karnak Temple and Luxor Temple votive caches form an illustration, amongst many others, for various cults’ need to make room for contemporary votive offerings in the face of continuous and accumulating offerings.
- ¹⁰³ This writer participated in D. B. Redford’s 1993 investigations at Tel Qedwa (Redford 1998, 45–60), excavating the northern outer part of the foundation trench cutting through earlier phases of occupation. Later work confirmed that the fort post-dated the earlier interior Saite occupation remains, which appear adjacent to the fort wall (Oren 1984, 10 fig. 3; Smoláriková 2008, 48–51, fig. 5).
- ¹⁰⁴ Aside from the housing and domestic activities evident in the fort (Holladay 1982, 21–26), the discovery of a bronze statuette of Isis suckling Horus indicates some cultic activity within the garrison. The figurine, however, was found under a stone slab in the northwest corner of kitchen 2122 (House 2103–6), beside the enclosure wall and a stone basin (Holladay 1982, 25–6, figs. 28–30). Its context is dated to ca. 525 BCE.
- ¹⁰⁵ Heidorn 1991, 205, 206, fig. 1; Smoláriková 2008, 53–54, fig. 6.
- ¹⁰⁶ See Leclère 2007, 14–17, for recent satellite imagery of the enclosure at Tell Defenneh, with visible details of interior architecture, including many interior walls, courtyards, a temple, magazines, and probable housing areas.
- ¹⁰⁷ The inner wall and its northern gateway appear to be around 7 m in width and lay about 58–81 m north of the palace and outlying platform (Petrie et. al., 1888, 58–59, pl. 43). It is presumed that this wall surrounded the palace complex. For more details, see Mumford 1998, 803–888.
- ¹⁰⁸ A concentration of chips of basalt, sandstone, granite, and limestone near the northern gateway of the outer compound, and stone chips filling buildings along the western side, may originate from a temple(?) structure in addition to stone gate installations to the north and south (Petrie et. al., 1888, 58–59, pl. 43).
- ¹⁰⁹ Tell Defenneh yielded a stela of Psamtik I (Petrie et. al., 1888, 59, 108, pl. 42; Kitchen 1993, 602) and the upper part of a New Kingdom statue of an Asiatic prisoner (Borchardt 1930, 73 no. 749, pl. 749, Cairo Museum JE 27393; CG 711).
- ¹¹⁰ The cultic materials included many amulets, a gold statuette of Re-Horakhty, a gold handle, a silver ram’s head, two silver uraei, and a bronze Apis bull figurine (Petrie et. al., 1888, 73, 75–76, pl. 41:9–11).
- ¹¹¹ See Petrie et. al., 1888, 58–59, 75–79, pl. 43. The furnaces appear to concentrate to the south, probably allowing the northern winds to blow fumes away from the palace complex and housing to the north.
- ¹¹² The Dynasty 26 square fortification at Tell el-Maskhuta also contained a temple, like other forts, but Leclère notes it has a pan-bedded walling system (i.e., blocks of brickwork with alternating courses of horizontal bricks and courses with slightly concave-bedded bricks) that is otherwise applied normally to temple precincts; Leclère 2008, 555, n. 76 (many thanks to Richard Wilkinson and the reviewers of *JAEI* for this reference).
- ¹¹³ See Spencer 1979, 106–109; he rejects the Late Period/Ptolemaic(?) complex at Abu Roash as being a fort.
- ¹¹⁴ Brissaud and Zivie-Coche 1998, 16 pl. 2, 102, pl. 1; *idem* 2000, 352 fig. 2; Kemp 2006, 357 fig. 125, illustrates a plan and side view of a slightly buttressed Dynasty 30 enclosure wall at Karnak Temple; more temple enclosures contained these series of slight niches and buttresses.
- ¹¹⁵ See Spencer 1979, 114–6, pls. 48A-B, 50B, 51A-B; Kemp 2000, 91, 99 fig. 3.13 (c) and (e), and 100 fig. 3.15.
- ¹¹⁶ Tomasz Herbich completed a magnetic map of the Late Period temple complex at Tell el-Balamun, revealing a series of alternating segments of convex and concave wall faces along the interior and exterior sides of an outer Dynasty 30 enclosure (Herbich 2012, 13); see the survey report by Herbich and Spencer in Spencer 2009, 105, fig. 11-1, 107, fig. 11-4, and 108, fig. 11-6 (www.britishmuseum.org/research/projects/excavation_in_egypt/reports_in_detail.aspx).
- ¹¹⁷ Special thanks to Richard Wilkinson, and the reviewers for *JAEI*, for this listing of and some additional references to post New Kingdom walling systems with shallow buttressing (personal communication).
- ¹¹⁸ For the exterior temple at Askut, see Smith 1995, 140 fig. 6.2, pls. 8–10.
- ¹¹⁹ Regarding Buhen’s temple, see Caminos 1974, and Emery

- et. al. 1979, 11, 16–17, 84–86, pls. 2–4, 14–15, 34–36.
- ¹²⁰ Spencer 2008, 22–23, pl. 253, notes that a magnetometer survey at Kom Firin, which is located near the edge of the western delta, has revealed that the Ramesside temple complex lay within a 199 by 225 m rectilinear enclosure with distinct large bastions at the entry and towers at its corners. Spencer 2008, 23, 36–37, 54–55, figs. 1–2, suggests that the fortified complex may represent an Ancient Egyptian *nht* (“stronghold”), with a moderately sized temple complex inside and references to the main New Kingdom state deities: Ptah, Ra-Horakhty, and Amun.
- ¹²¹ For Kumma, see Dunham and Janssen 1960, 116–122, pls. 47–80, fold-out sheets xvi–xxi.
- ¹²² Dunham 1967, 153–154, pl. 16, discussed the fortified settlement at Mirgissa.
- ¹²³ For the temple at Semna, see Dunham and Janssen 1960, 7–11, pls. 9–34, fold-out sheets iii and xiii–xv.
- ¹²⁴ Dunham 1967, 13–19, pls. 8–11, provides a summary of the fortress at Uronarti.
- ¹²⁵ Snape and Wilson 2007, 1–6, 4 fig. 1.2, and 7 fig. 1.3, discuss the past and recent excavations of the temples and chapels in a Ramesside fortress along the coast, near Mersa Matruh, to the west of the delta. The fort dates to Ramesses II and later.
- ¹²⁶ Lacovara et. al. 1989, 62–68, discuss a sherd from a dedicatory vessel that would typically appear in a chapel or shrine of Amun-Ra.
- ¹²⁷ See Badawy 1968, 457, figs. 243–244, for the fortress of Aniba and its temple.
- ¹²⁸ Abd el-Maksoud has published the more recent excavations at a New Kingdom fortified settlement at Tell Heboua (ancient Tjaru), which has recently yielded two large temples: see Abd el-Maksoud 1998.
- ¹²⁹ See Lacovara 1997, figs. 1–89, about New Kingdom royal cities and a discussion and illustration of many fortified components, especially palaces, within settlements of varying functions.
- ¹³⁰ Although few post New Kingdom temple enclosures exhibit distinct buttressing, a few exceptions are known, including the Mut Temple at Karnak and Psusennes’s precinct for the Amun Temple at Tanis (see Leclère 2008, 405).
- ¹³¹ See Arnold 2003, 91–93, for a discussion of fortresses and fortified residences.
- ¹³² Although the interior walling system is indeed a “mock” fortification (Kemp 2006, 351–355, fig. 122), the complex of exterior and interior walls emphasized its military aspirations and, in the case of the exterior wall, its military function; the latter aspect continued to safeguard the settlement into the Late Period (see Murnane 1980, 5, fig. 3). Another example of buttressing appears in part of the New Kingdom enclosure wall at Karnak Temple (Kemp 2006, 356 fig. 124 lower right).
- ¹³³ Murnane 1980, 6–7, 5 fig. 3, describes the defensive features at Medinet Habu, noting the brick enclosure was 35 feet thick and originally rose 60 feet. He adds that the Migdol’s upper windows could easily be closed during a siege; O’Connor compared Medinet Habu to other New Kingdom royal mortuary temples and asserted the innovative nature of its fortifications and other aspects (O’Connor 2012, 232–233).
- ¹³⁴ The New Kingdom “temple towns” at Sesebi and Amara West in Nubia, the New Kingdom military settlement and its major temple complexes at Tell Heboua (i.e., Tjaru) in northwest Sinai, and Ramesses III’s mortuary temple at Medinet Habu each furnish examples of communities dominated by cultic structures but lack typical temple walls. Instead, they have enclosure walls with large defensive buttresses and construction using more secular, horizontally laid courses of bricks, while horizontal brick courses were also applied to the enclosure walls for Theban mortuary temples (many thanks to the *JAEG* reviewers and Richard Wilkinson for these various construction details).
- ¹³⁵ Of note, there is evidence for temple enclosures containing crenelated parapets from models and depictions of such features (e.g., Ptah Temple model; a depiction of Karnak Temple’s gateway and wall), and from a few preserved temple walls, including the Ptolemaic temple enclosure at Deir el-Medineh (Kemp 2006, 253 fig. 92, 357 fig. 125).
- ¹³⁶ See Kemp 2006, 354 fig. 123, 355–356, who notes that this design feature is found in various types of structures, including storage buildings, administrative centers, fortresses, houses, and temples.
- ¹³⁷ Smoláriková 2008, 70–77, fig. 11, 93 fig. 14.
- ¹³⁸ See Spencer 1996, 36–62; Smoláriková 2008, 65–70, figs. 9–10, 93 fig. 14.
- ¹³⁹ Smoláriková 2008, 77–82, fig. 12.
- ¹⁴⁰ It should be emphasized that fortified settlements and temple precincts frequently contain similar “secular” components, such as the metallurgical furnaces, workshops, pottery kilns, and housing found in the Amun precinct at Tanis (Brissaud and Zivie-Coche 1998, 16 pl. 2; *idem* 2000, 352 fig. 2); the enclosure at el-Balamun did yield Persian Period pottery kilns, but these were leveled for the Dynasty 30 construction (see Spencer 1999, 25).
- ¹⁴¹ See Mumford 1998, 803–50, and Petrie et. al. 1888, 52–60, pls. 25–32, 43–44.
- ¹⁴² See Wilson 1982, 7–9, 41–42, pls. 2–3, for a discussion of Building D in Level I; Smoláriková 2008, 115 fig. 23, 116–118, fig. 24, draws closer parallels between the Mendes platform structure and Saite period housing at Buto.
- ¹⁴³ See J. G. Duncan in Petrie 1906, 52–54, pl. 39m.
- ¹⁴⁴ See Redford 1994, 1–10, 28–29, pls. 115–116, and R. Hummel and S. B. Shubert in Redford 1994, 30–82.
- ¹⁴⁵ Smoláriková 2008, 120–122, fig. 26, noted that this structure had originally been interpreted as a Roman fort.
- ¹⁴⁶ See Morris 2005, 803–827.
- ¹⁴⁷ Morris 2005, 803–827.
- ¹⁴⁸ See P. Spencer 1984, 4–13 *wb3*, 14–20 *pr*, 21–27 *hwt*, 27, who adds that *wb3* can also be used in a similar sense beyond its usual translation of “forecourt.” She distinguishes between (1) *wb3* as referring to a temple’s temenos and also often including “all the land sacred to the god,” (2) *pr* as “the administrative body of a temple,” and (3) *hwt* as designating “a productive foundation, supplying offerings for funerary cults” (i.e., in its fuller writing as *hwt-nt*); the latter two terms (*hwt* and *pr*) could sometimes also indicate only the temple structure itself.

- ¹⁴⁹ See Mumford 2004b, 269, for a discussion of the evidence linking these deities with *Ro-nefer* (i.e., Tell Tebilla), including epithets noting Osiris as “Lord of *Ro-nefer*,” Isis as “Mistress of *Ro-nefer*,” Sobek as “Lord of *Ro-nefer*,” and the others as “Deities of *hwt khes*,” which encompasses the temple estate of Osiris-Khes at *Ro-nefer*.
- ¹⁵⁰ P. Spencer 1984, 260, 283–284, summarizes that the term *s3t* came to indicate “an (inscribed) stone wall,” while the New Kingdom and later word *sbtj* described “defensive-walls around temples and towns.”
- ¹⁵¹ Spencer 1984, 284.
- ¹⁵² Spencer 1984, 278–281, 284 *snbt/snbwt*; Kemp 2006, 253 fig. 92, 357 fig. 125, discusses some New Kingdom and later depictions, models, and preserved examples of crenelated battlements in temple enclosures.
- ¹⁵³ Spencer 1984, 270–278, 284 *sbtj*.
- ¹⁵⁴ Spencer 1984, 271–278, 284 *sbtj n wmtt*.
- ¹⁵⁵ Spencer 1984, 264–266 *rt*, and 281–283 *tsmt*, 284.
- ¹⁵⁶ Spencer 1984, 283.
- ¹⁵⁷ The especially turbulent 1st millennium BCE, and other periods in pharaonic and post-pharaonic Egypt, necessitated the securement of cultic and state complexes housing important and valuable personages, materials, and furnishings. This is especially well attested by the substantial width and height of most temple walls, which sometimes had additional fortifications such as in Ramesses III’s mortuary temple and transitory residence at Medinet Habu. Some later peripheral, religious centers, such as the monastery of St. Catherine in South Sinai, needed especially strong, wide, and high walls, and a small garrison, to repel Bedouin attacks.
- ¹⁵⁸ For a preliminary discussion, see Mumford 2004, and forthcoming manuscripts on Tell Tebilla.
- ¹⁵⁹ Many Late Period temple enclosures contain slight buttressing, including such examples as Tebilla, the main temple at Tanis, and the Montu Temple enclosure at Karnak. A few earlier temple enclosures, including a New Kingdom example below the main temple at Karnak, display distinct buttresses (Kemp 2006, 228–229, figs. 83–84).
- ¹⁶⁰ Such slight buttressing is fairly common in other Egyptian temples elsewhere (see above).
- ¹⁶¹ Further clarification may await future excavation at Tebilla, including tracing the foundations of the interior enclosure.
- ¹⁶² For continuity and changes in Late Period kingship, see Lloyd 1983, 288–299.
- ¹⁶³ Many Greek mercenaries, merchants, emissaries, or other travelers entering Egypt, or serving in Egypt’s frontier forces, could not help but notice the highly visible, major temple enclosure building campaign initiated by Kings Nectanebo I–II, and may have interpreted such construction—rightly or wrongly—as a fortification program at the mouth of each delta river.
- ¹⁶⁴ Naturally, should separate Dynasty 30 military installations be found at such delta river mouths, this suggestion would either be nullified, or the later classical accounts might simply reflect a misinterpretation of the construction of such massive temple enclosures. Any travelers entering Egypt via the various delta river branches could not help but notice such massive construction projects and may have misconstrued their intent as defensive works against the anticipated Persian invasion.
- ¹⁶⁵ See Arnold 1999, 137.