

CHAPTER FIVE

THE HISTORY OF THE CONSTRUCTION

A. BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION

The history of our funerary monument can be reconstructed in part from many small observations.

Traces of older constructions were not found in our excavation site. We only encountered one shard of a thin-walled diorite bowl with the name of Send (IIIrd Dynasty). [*Note: Send/Senda, the Seneth_s of Manetho, was the fifth king of the Second Dynasty, not a king of the Third Dynasty.*] It may stem from a funerary monument in the vicinity¹ and annexed by the priesthood of Chephren.²

The whole monumental enclosure of Chephren seems to have been constructed according to a unified plan. Only at the terrace before the Valley Temple and at the Pyramid itself signs of an alteration in the building project were found (pages 31 and 37).

Our temple may have stood undamaged throughout several millennia. The funerary cult appears to have been cultivated regularly throughout the whole of the Old Kingdom, even if with steadily diminishing splendour. Several signs of this could be found.

The semicircular capstones of the temple (Figure 40) are on their outsides rather badly eroded, however they are uneroded on the upright joints and the horizontal course joints. That means they must have been lying in situ for centuries, being exposed to the influences of wind and weather before they were toppled down. Since these capstones had been exposed to the assault of the destroyers, one can assume that other parts of the temple had not been destroyed any earlier either.

South of the temple, next to the brick ramp, a monument from the Sixth Dynasty was found, in which the Superintendent [*Vorsteher*] of the City beside the Pyramid of Chephren is mentioned.³ In the Temple court lies a limestone post which evidently had not belonged to the original temple, but must be assigned to the time of the Sixth Dynasty. On it stands a vertically inscribed king's title: in this time, therefore, the priesthood must still have had the means for such type of, even if humble, building activities. The stone may well be a doorpost of a brick placement of a later period, of the kind found better preserved at the side entrance of the Sahu-Re Temple.⁴

From all these signs, it seems to emerge that the destruction of the temple cannot have happened before the end of the Old Kingdom.

¹ It might perhaps be the brick mastaba which was discovered by Covington at Giza, which according to its style stems from the IIIrd Dynasty. See *Annales du Service*, Volume VI, p. 193 ff.

² Several stone vessels with the name of Chephren, which evidently stem from our temple, were found by Reisner in the Mycerinus Temple (see Section VI).

³ See Section VI.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 98 f.