

**Volume 20, Number 1,
June 2014**

Published twice per year since
1993

Copyright 2014, The Amarna
Research Foundation

Table of Contents

Article -- Author	Page
Amarna Art -- Floyd Chapman	2
Getting to the bottom of the Great Aten Temple -- Barry Kemp	12
Part of a new statue of Nefertiti from the Great Aten Temple -- Marsha Hill	20

Officers and Directors

President – Floyd Chapman
 Vice President – David Pepper
 Secretary – Anita McHugh
 Treasurer – Evan Mitchell
 Membership – Jill Taylor Pepper
 Publications – David Pepper
 Website – Merrie P. Wycoff

Founder – Robert Hanawalt

The President's Papyrus

Greeting fellow Amarnaphiles,

Summer is now in full force here in Denver. I hope that each and every one of you is having a great summer and that all is well with you and yours. The political situation in Egypt continues to evolve and one can only hope for the best concerning the well being of all our friends in Egypt.

As far as Egyptology goes, progress and new discoveries continue to be made. This is especially true for research that has bearing on the Amarna period. Certain of my contacts who keep me informed of their work have reported intriguing finds that have the potential of shedding greater insight in the events that took place during the reign of Akhenaten. These contacts have assured me that once the appropriate analysis and study is completed, this newsletter will be the beneficiary with exciting new articles reporting the conclusions of such research. Your continued support will ensure that you will continue to receive the latest information being generated by that research.

The Amarna Research Foundation has been in the forefront of following and reporting on Amarna research now for almost 20 years. We could not have done it without your interest as reflected by your financial support.

Please enjoy this latest edition of the Sun.

Wishing you all the best,

Floyd Chapman

Amarna and the Art of Heresy

By Floyd Chapman

The Setting:

At the time of the Amarna revolution, Egypt was already an ancient civilization. Seventeen dynasties had already come and gone and the eighteenth was in its glory. The reign of Amenhotep III (1390 - 1352 BCE) stood at the apex of its international power and influence among its neighboring nations, and Amenhotep III presided over a renaissance of the arts throughout his kingdom. Heir to the conquests of Tuthmosis III, Egypt was the richest and most powerful nation it would ever be.

Akhenaten and the Orthodox Canon:

Egyptian art has often been characterized as being static and lacking originality. However, it is this sameness in style which makes it universally recognizable and appreciated. The ancient scribes were expected to copy what they were given to create and did not enjoy working freely. Artistic production was an extension of the writing system, and was believed to have been created by the gods. Established at the beginning of Egyptian civilization, it was governed by a strict canon, that everyone was expected to follow. However, all artistic traditions do evolve over time and Egypt's was no exception.

At the time Amenhotep III ascended the throne, the Egyptian religion had already acquired a huge pantheon of gods and goddesses, along with their complex iconography. Such deities like Osiris, Isis and Horus, pictured at right (Fig. 1) in this marvelous example of the goldsmith craft, on exhibit in the Louvre museum, along with all the other gods and goddesses--with the exception of Ra--had no place in Akhenaten's religion of the Aten - the religion of light.



Figure 1: Osiris, Isis, and Horus

Akhenaten simply discarded a belief system and world view that had formed the core principles upon which the Egyptian civilization was founded. Such a radical change must have sent shockwaves throughout the national consciousness.

In volume one of *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*, Davies states, “If Akhenaten had abolished all gods but one, he had not surrendered the claim of Egyptian kings to what was almost or quite a secondary worship. He is still the ‘Son of Ra’, and, by synonym, ‘the offspring of Aten’ is hailed as ‘the good god’, saluted along with the deity and so associated with him in the ascription of praise and reception of prayer that is often difficult to assign what belongs to each. This prominence of the king is not undue arrogation, but is the outcome of the changed condition of the pantheon.” Furthermore, Akhenaten continually refers to the Aten as his father. This should not come as a surprise, when his real father, Amenhotep III had in fact been so deified and claimed that he was the “Dazzling Sun-Disk”. In other words the Aten.

The illustration below (Fig. 2), is a full color reconstruction by the author of a carved wall scene from the tomb of Khaemhat, depicting the enthroned Amenhotep III in the full glory of the classical Memphite style of representation. It shows him wearing the more elaborate clothing that proclaimed his elevated divine status.



Figure 2: Amenhotep III

Another aspect of the classical canon had to do with the way human figures were to be drawn. They used a grid known as the Canon of Proportion which specified that each square matched the clenched fist of the person and dictated that 18 of these squares would form the height of an individual measured from the bottom of the feet all the way up to the hairline. Furthermore, the canon prescribed the specific positions of a person's features within the grid. The illustration above is a perfect example of how the canon was so beautifully applied. However, this too was changed by Akhenaten sometime in his fourth year. He instructed his royal artists Hor and Suti to increase the span of the grid from 18 to 21. This change is probably one of the chief reasons for the curious distortion that seems to be the hallmark of the Amarna style. See illustration (Fig. 3) from the tomb of Apy drawn by Davies.

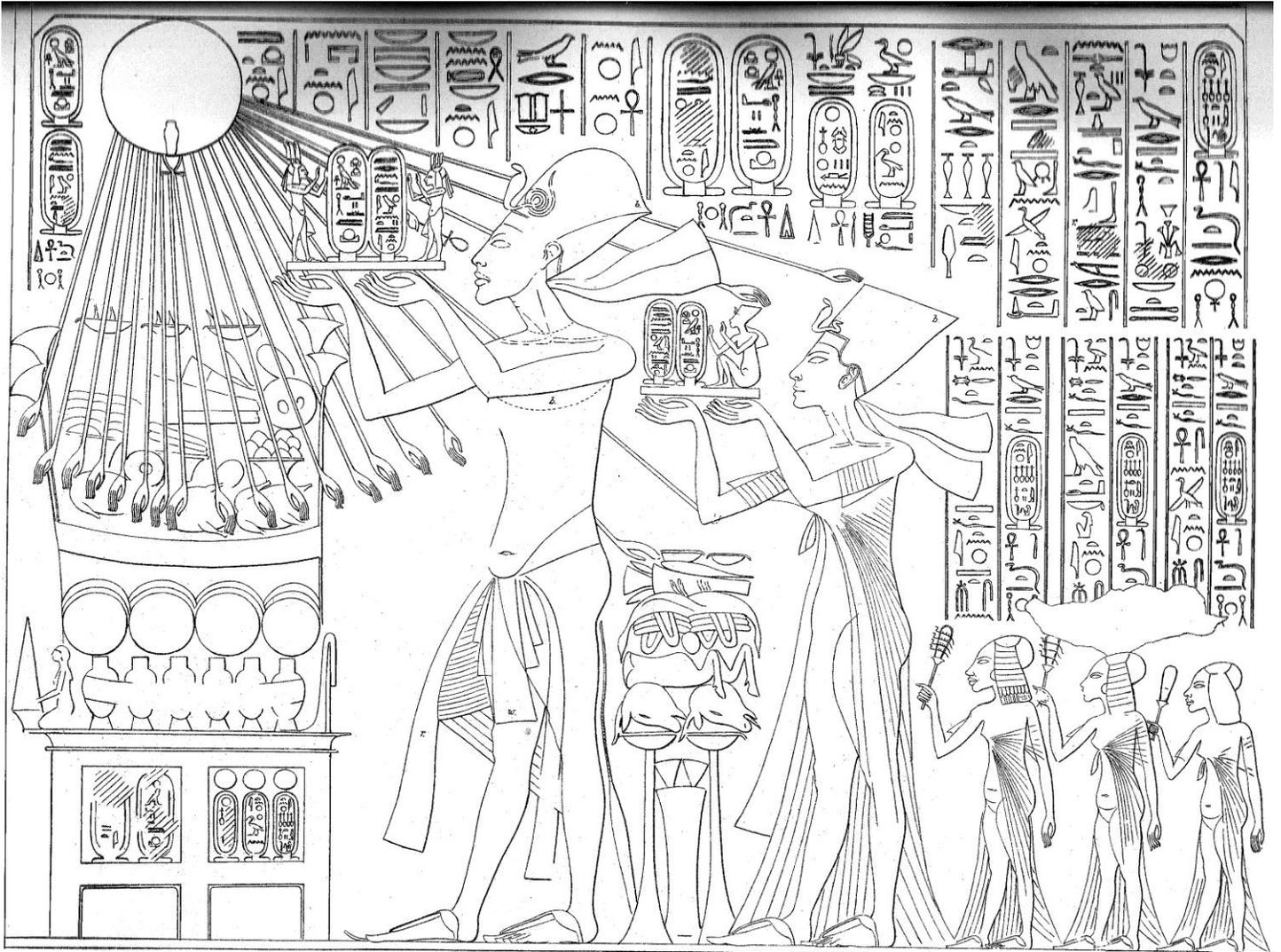


Figure 3: The Royal Family make votive offerings to the Sun

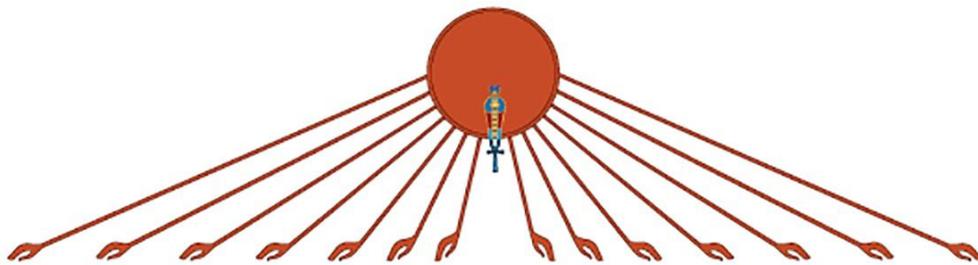


Figure 4: The Aten

Since Akhenaten had banished the pantheon of the gods and goddesses along with their iconography to the trash bin of history; with what subject matter did he replace them? The answer becomes simple and logical. If his father Amenhotep III, had merged with Ra and become the “Dazzling Sun-Disk,” the Aten; then he had become god. That being the case, as his son, Akhenaten was the son of god and his family was therefore the divine family of god.

Hence, there is only one supreme god, the Aten; and his iconography, which Akhenaten himself had designed, is all pervasive and ubiquitous. The worship of the Aten becomes the supreme act of piety by Akhenaten, the divine son (Son of Ra). And, this was necessary for the maintenance of cosmic order. Therefore, it is logical that the subject matter of Amarna art became primarily the Aten and his worship by his divine son and family. And, the daily life activities of Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their children, and depictions of officials and all classes of underlings, were required to ensure that this cosmic order was maintained.

Obviously, the subject of this article could and does fill volumes, but that is not my objective here. Rather, I want to focus on Amarna art as a tool of propaganda by Akhenaten to promote his new world order, and to also look at the quality of production.

Remember, I said at the beginning how Egypt was the most prosperous and powerful nation in its history when Akhenaten became pharaoh. Egypt had experienced a renaissance in all of the arts under his father and Akhenaten inherited all of those resources.

For the balance of this article, I will show some beautiful examples of the art that was produced during this unique and fascinating period and comment on it. All the photographs that I use in this article are my property and were taken in visits to the museums taken over the course of several European vacations. The exceptions being the black and white line drawings that I have scanned from various volumes of “The Rock Tombs of El Amarna” by Norman Davies; all of which are now in the public domain.

Egyptian Polychromy:

From the very beginning of their civilization, the Egyptians cultivated and perfected the fine art of painting their monuments and sculpture in color. A tradition later emulated by the Greeks and Romans. The most famous piece of Amarna art is, of course, the famous bust of Queen Nefertiti (not shown). It is a masterpiece of painted limestone.

My first two examples are less well known pieces (Fig. 5 & Fig. 6), now in the Louvre, showing the royal couple themselves and a famous painted bust of one of their daughters. I did some enhancements to the first picture in Photoshop for presentation purposes without compromising its legitimacy as example of a fully painted piece of limestone.

Notice that the skin color on all of the figures is painted a reddish brown. This is the very same color used for the Aten. This clearly is intentional and identifies them with the Aten and, once again, is a break from orthodox tradition which dictated that a women’s skin color should be painted yellow.

The next two examples of Amarna sculpture are made out of very fine stone which the Egyptian usually did not paint. The first is a headless statue of Nefertiti (Fig. 7), in the Louvre, though damaged, is still a masterpiece of the sculptor’s craft, showing the very fine articulation of the sheer linen garment, and the second, is of Akhenaten (Fig. 8). This statue is in a remarkable state of preservation, considering that it was originally a dyad because Nefertiti was originally seated beside him. You can still see what is left of her hand which is on his back. The reliefs in the Amarna tombs and the evidence of archeological excavation prove that the great monuments of Akhetaten were filled to overflowing with statues of Akhenaten and Nefertiti.

Unfortunately, all of them were later subjected to deliberate, systematic and brutal destruction.



Figure 5: The Royal Couple, Akhenaten and Nefertiti



Figure 6: Painted limestone head of a Princess

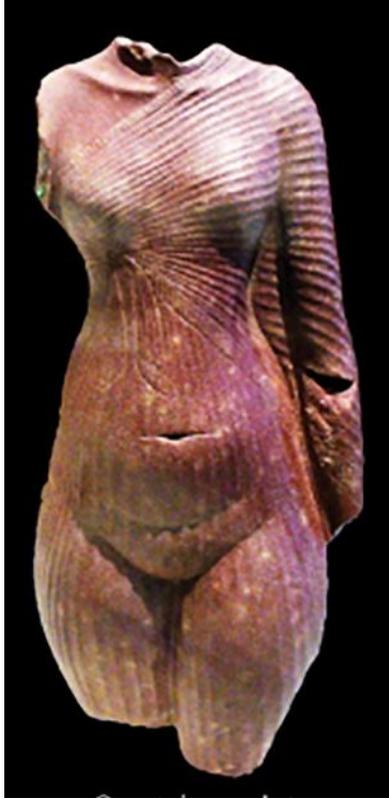


Figure 7: Quartzite sculpture, Possibly Queen Nefertiti



Figure 8: Yellow stone sculpture, Akhenaten

The next three examples consist of a broken limestone relief (Fig. 9), a beautiful faience tile (Fig. 10) and solid gold ring (Fig. 11). The relief carving shows Nefertiti seated upon Akhenaten's lap along with two of his daughters. Amarna art is full of scenes showing them in their everyday activities and intimacies that are totally unprecedented in Egyptian art. Once again, take note of the trace of paint on Akhenaten's leg. This shows that the whole relief was once painted or was in the process of being painted.



Figure 9: Nefertiti and daughters on Akhenaten's lap



Figure 10: Faience Tile from Amarna



Figure 11: Gold Ring

The tile on bottom left (Fig. 10) is an example of the beautiful faience tiles that decorated the Amarna palaces. Scenes of nature are the predominate subjects of palace decoration.

The picture on bottom right (Fig. 11) is of a solid gold ring inscribed with the name of Queen Nefertiti. One is prompted to ask how did such a valuable object survive to the present? Did this actually belong to the Queen and was it a part of the treasures placed in her tomb? Or, was it a gift that she had given to a palace favorite? These are questions we will probably never know the answers to. But they are intriguing to ask.

Art in the Amarna Tombs:

Between 1903 and 1908, Norman Davies recorded and published all of the relief carvings in the rock tombs of Amarna. This body of work continues to be an invaluable resource for both Egyptologists and laymen alike. It was published in six volumes. Apart from the Talatat blocks that have been recovered from the temples Akhenaten first built at Karnak, the relief carvings in the Amarna tombs are the most important body of Amarna art to survive to our time.

In *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna: Part 1. - The Tomb of Meryra*, Davies writes, “King Akhenaten seems to have been a revolutionary by nature and to have inaugurated or prompted new departures in many directions. It is possible, no doubt, to find some obscure precedent for most of these. But the impression of novelty is, nevertheless, a just one. No one can deny the peculiar character of the art produced during the reign, or local to Akhetaten. This is especially noticeable in the sculpture of the period, alike in technique, style, and subject.” Davies assessment of the uniqueness of Amarna is undeniable.

It is understandable, that the decoration of all of the major monuments Akhenaten built should be concerned with his cultic program, but historically an individual’s tomb was the place where the tomb owner could record his achievements and blow his horn, so to speak. But in the Amarna tombs, the tomb owner is hardly mentioned. Instead, here to, as everywhere else, the tomb walls were emblazoned with scenes of Akhenaten and family doing their daily worship and life activities, as exemplified by the four scenes shown on the last two pages.

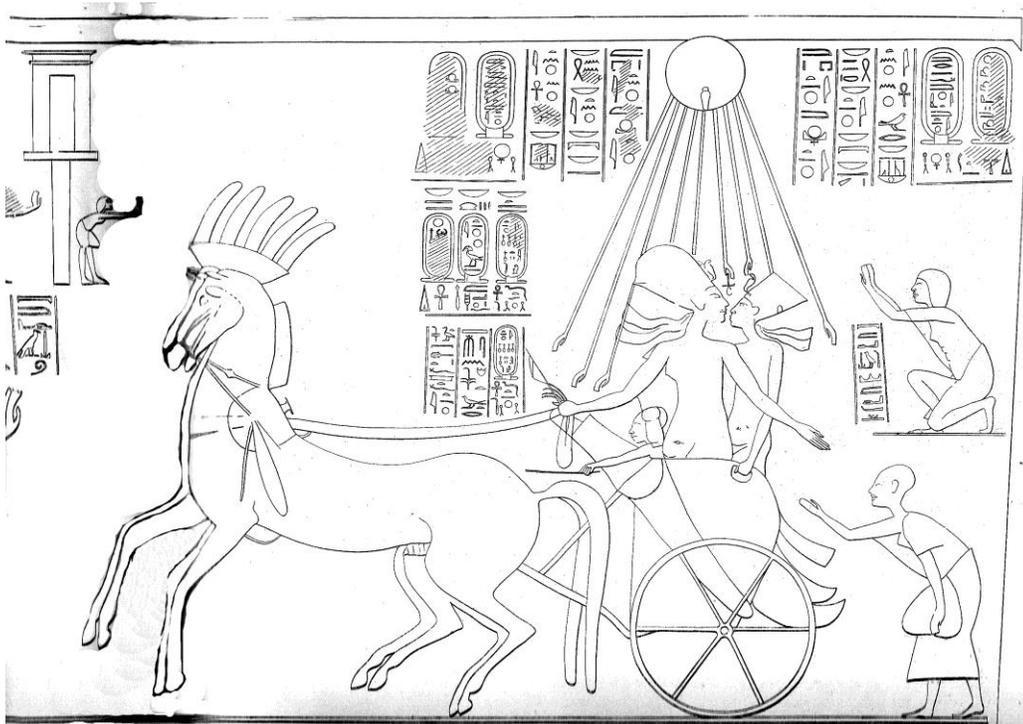


Figure 12: Akhenaten and Nefertiti in their Chariot

In addition to the continual worship scenes, another popular theme is the chariot processional scenes of Akhenaten and Nefertiti going to and from the Aten temples (Fig. 12). In the picture, which is one of many similar scenes, we see the royal couple proceeding to the temple while displaying quite publicly their affection for one another.



Figure 13: The Royal Family entertaining Queen Tiye

Another popular subject is scenes of the royal family feasting together (Fig. 13). The picture at the left from the tomb of Huya, shows the royal family entertaining Akhenaten's mother, Queen Tiye and his young sister, Beketaten.

Another popular theme in the Amarna tomb repertoire, are the window of appearance scenes, where Akhenaten along with Nefertiti and some of their daughters are depicted showering precious gifts upon the Pharaoh's favorite retainers (Fig. 14). If these pictures are to be taken literally, then it would appear that Akhenaten was quite generous with those officials with who's service he was very pleased with.

One thing the tomb scenes reveal is how lucrative it could be while in the service of the heretical king. No doubt there were some who served him out of a genuine belief in the new faith, and most certainly there were those who did so disingenuously only out of a desire for selfish gain.

Everywhere the royal family is portrayed, the servants who are shown carrying out their responsibilities are always shown bowing and humbling themselves. Such scenes are unprecedented in Egyptian art. These scenes prove that Akhenaten and family really did consider themselves to be divine and demanded complete and abject obeisance when in their presence (Fig. 15).

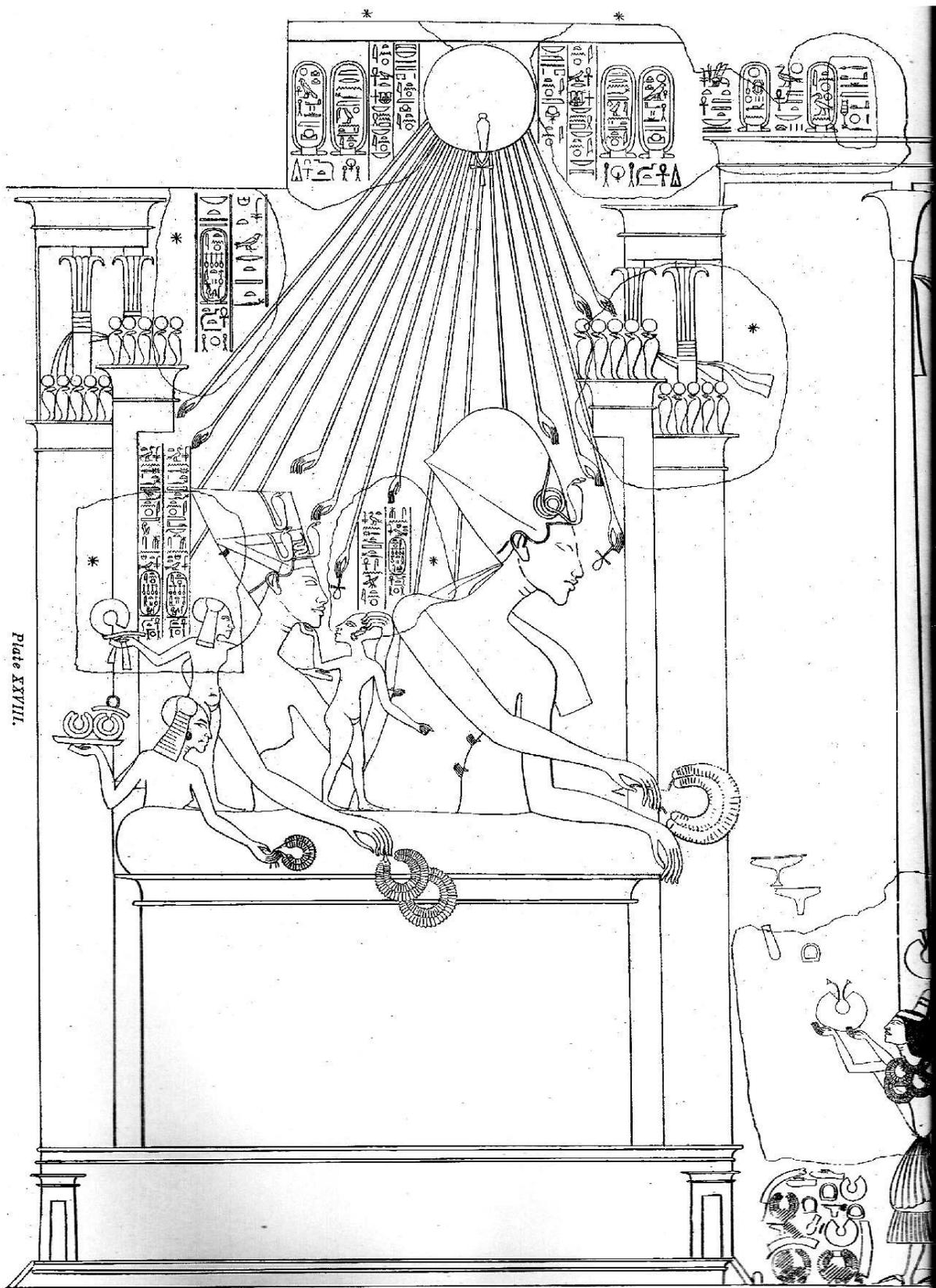


Figure 14: The Royal Family at the Window of Appearance
From the Tomb of Ay

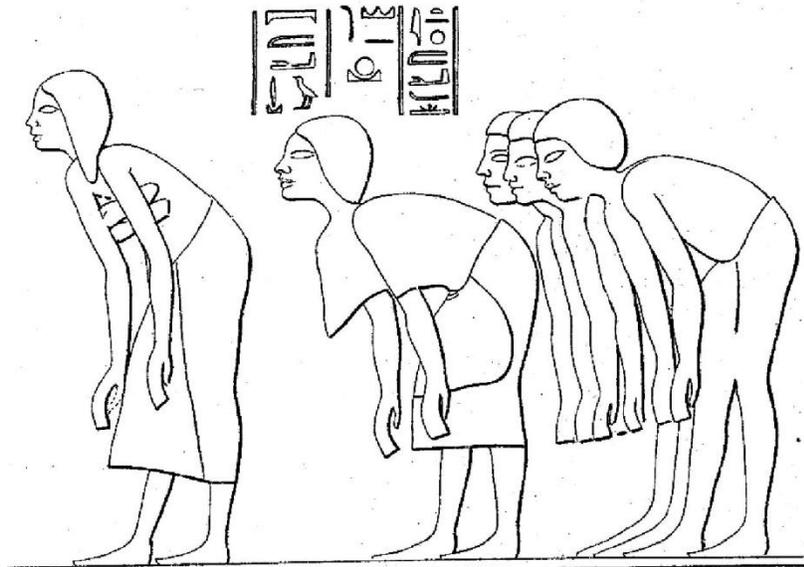


Figure 15: Royal Servants



Remains of the studio of the artist Thutmose, Central City, Akhetaten (Amarna)
Photograph by David Pepper, 2010

Getting to the bottom of the Great Aten Temple

By *Barry Kemp*

(drawing upon the field records of Miriam Bertram, Delphine Driaux, Anna Hodgkinson and Sue Kelly)

In the spring of 2012 the expedition began an ambitious scheme to clean and to re-examine the neglected site of the Great Aten Temple and to mark the outlines of the building with new stone blocks.

Most of the material we have so far removed has consisted of loose sand, dust and rubble piled up by the Pendlebury expedition of the Egypt Exploration Society in 1932 when, in the course of 30 days, they stripped bare and planned the entire stone building which they called the Gem-Aten or Gem-pa-Aten ('The Aten is found'), using a name found on some of the stone fragments. One of the discoveries made at the time was that the temple had a history of change and enlargement. In his final report in *The City of Akhenaten*, volume III, Pendlebury presented his results as if the temple (which included the Sanctuary and other lesser structures at the back of the huge enclosure or temenos) had passed through three successive phases. As our own re-examination moves forwards, it is beginning to look as though, in place of a single narrative of development that covers the whole site, we have a record of two intersecting processes which affected particular areas of the site but not necessarily as part of a synchronous and uniform scheme.

The process that is easier to understand was the drive to create a monumental stone temple built symmetrically about an axis which ran for 207 m (679 feet) back from an entrance which combined huge columns with a façade that resembled a traditional pylon. Its foundation platforms of gypsum concrete dominate the site, and it is the outlines of this building that we are aiming to make permanently visible. To judge from a dated jar label discovered in foundation material last year, it was not started until at least Akhenaten's 12th regnal year. Of great value to us is that the builders raised the ground level slightly at this time, to even out a gentle downward slope of the desert from north to south. Outside the stone temple they used mud-brick rubble and dark soil as the fill material; inside they used clean sand mixed with fragments of broken stone carving from an earlier building. The rubble layer outside buried the surface of the ground as it was during the years of the first half of the Amarna Period.

Pendlebury's excavations included the cutting of wide trenches into this layer in the area between the front of the stone temple and the mud-brick pylon and enclosure wall which lie 32 m (105 feet) to the west. Our own re-examination has so far mainly involved cleaning out Pendlebury's workings, thus exposing parts of his trenches and islands of the ancient fill layer in between. Only in one area, in our square L36, have we excavated a significant part of this layer, and then only in a patch measuring about 3 x 4 m. One result was the discovery of the large statue fragment which Marsha Hill writes about separately (pp. 20, below).

One of the most arresting, indeed startling, features of the main temple was its multiplicity of offering-tables. The interior of the stone temple was largely filled with them, to a total of around 750, each made from stone blocks. A further set, built from mud bricks, covered an extensive area of open ground to the south. Pendlebury's architect, Ralph Lavers, produced a reconstruction drawing showing the stone temple and the field of mud-brick offering-tables standing side by side, with an equivalent field on the north (Figure 1). The southern field had been discovered by Petrie in 1891. Realising that they were set equidistantly, he investigated them by digging pits at predicted intervals. He recorded in a notebook, in the form of a sketch plan and dimensions, enough information to allow him subsequently to reconstruct a full plan of what he had found. In the published version the offering-tables, if completed to the edges of a rectangular border, would have numbered 1,215. Pendlebury did some work on them, particularly along the southern edge, but it is not clear how extensive it was and how far Lavers, in making his plan, relied upon what was still visible from Petrie's excavations. Now, the number of offering-tables was calculated to be 920.

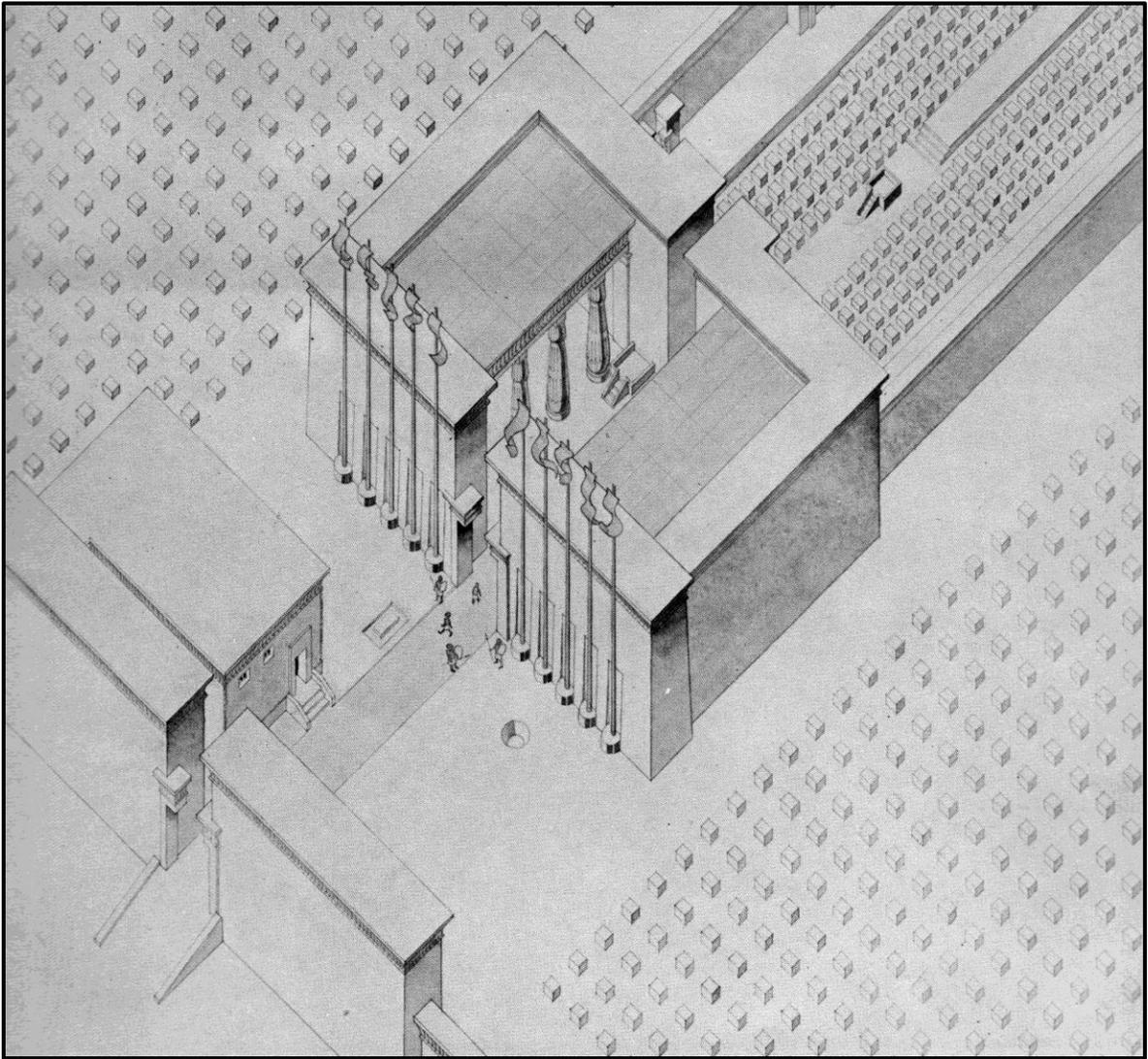


Figure 1: A portion of the reconstruction drawing of Ralph Lavers, printed in *The City of Akhenaten III*, Plate VIA, and based on his own survey and notes.

We have not yet exposed any of this southern set of offering-tables, although they must run close to the southern edge of this spring's excavation in square L26. But it is already clear from the available evidence, including the present appearance of the site, that the layer of rubble laid down by the builders of the later stone temple entirely buried them. Pendlebury had argued that the rubble layer had been tapered so as to leave the offering-tables exposed. There is no sign of this. Furthermore, a circular gypsum-lined water reservoir of the final period had been sunk into its surface close to where the outermost line of offering-tables must commence (Figure 2). The southern field of offering-tables belongs only to an earlier phase and was no longer visible when the stone temple was built.

We are accustomed to expect Egyptian temples to be symmetrical. The Lavers reconstruction matches the field of offering-tables on the south with one on the north, basing this on evidence which is not properly presented in the final report. This year, we extended the clearance across the north-western corner of the later stone temple. Here we duly found the evidence that had given Lavers support for his reconstruction on this side. The much damaged remains of a few of the northern set of offering-tables were found, along with patches of an original white plastering of the mud floor surrounding them (Figure 3). In coming closer to the north wall of the later temple than the southern group they do not, however, occupy quite the matching position one expects. But it should be remembered that, as yet, we know virtually nothing of the shape and size of the earlier stone temple.



Figure 2: Gypsum-lined water reservoir dug into the layer of rubble that had buried the earlier field of mud-brick offering-tables.



Figure 3: The remains of a rectangular mud-brick offering-table on the north side of the temple, alongside an area of the original white-plastered surface of the ground. To the left the offering-table has been cut into by a grave pit, belonging to the modern cemetery. At the top of the picture runs the single course of mud bricks which is all that remains here of the construction ramp. View to the east. Photo by Delphine Driaux.

The northern set of offering-tables had not only been buried beneath a layer of rubble. A mass of brickwork had been built against the north-west corner of the second temple, laid on the same earlier mud floor and destroying any offering-tables that lay in its path (Figure 4). It joins and has the same method of construction as a thick brick wall which ran around the north, south and west sides of the foundations for the huge sets of columns which were to stand in front of the pylon. At intervals of roughly 1 m, thick wooden beams were laid transversely under the brickwork on the ground, their ends projecting a short distance in front of the brickwork. From the way the patch of ground beneath the projecting ends was slightly compressed, one can judge that the projecting ends acted as anchors to tall vertical poles that must have supported a form of scaffolding or railings. The whole construction, which was demolished before the stone temple was finished, makes sense if we see it as an aid to the erection of the huge columns themselves. The projecting spur of brickwork at the north-west corner becomes the base of a long inclined ramp, presumably beginning at the river bank. The surrounding walls become, with the stone pylon, the sides of a box which, when filled with sand in stages which coincided with increases in the height of the walls and the ramp, allowed the large column drums to be dragged into place.



Figure 4: The remains of the mud-brick construction ramp running north from the foundation platform for the colonnades built in front of the final temple. The blue upturned plastic trays are temporarily protecting the remains of wooden beams set into the lowest course of the brickwork. Note the modern graves that have been dug through the site. View to the south.

In Figure 5, I have used the clues contained in the foundations to build up a picture of how the process of building the huge colonnade might have looked. Much of it follows logically as an upward extension of the foundations, but some aspects are beyond explicit visualisation. One is the purpose of the vertical wooden supports along the outside face of the temporary brick surrounding wall, traces of which have been found on the north as well as the west side (we have not yet re-examined the south side) and also against the ramp. Another concerns the rectangular areas at the outer corners of the concrete platforms that were to support the columns and which had been filled solidly with limestone blocks to create particularly sturdy foundations. What could they have supported? It could have been a pair of colossal statues. A pair of obelisks is another possibility, remembering that one of the names of the ‘House of the Aten’ was the ‘House of the Benben’, a common term for an obelisk. The ancient representations of the temple show neither. Whatever they were, they were removed intact, since no fragments from the destruction of large masses of hard stone remain.

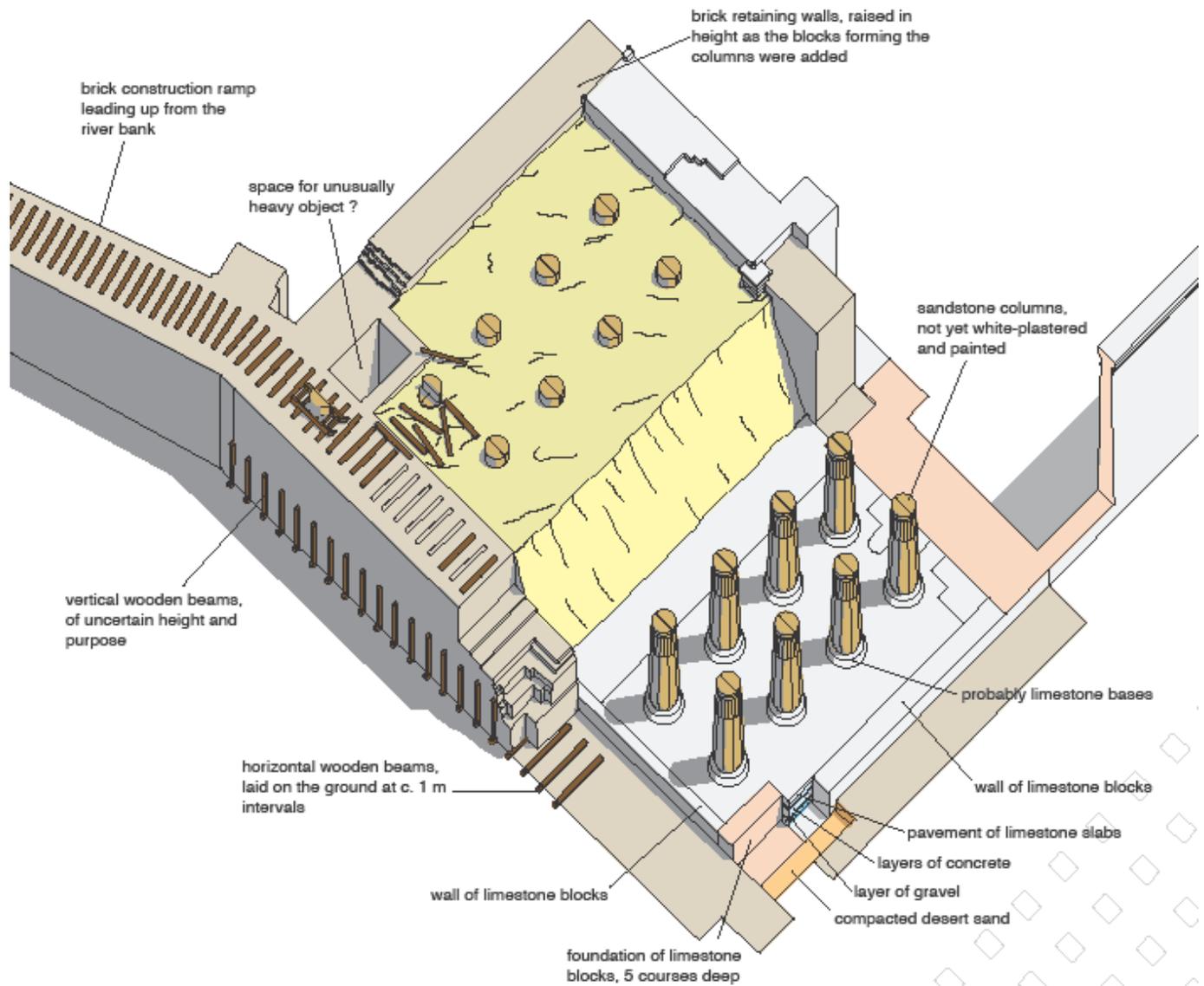


Figure 5: An attempt at visualising how the mud-brick ramp and associated temporary mud-brick walls could have served as the principal means of raising the columns and perhaps other large stone elements that stood in front of the temple in its final building phase.

Once the colonnades were finished, the sand was removed and the brick walls and ramp demolished to the level of the new ground, a circumstance which left several courses of the bricks in place. On the north and south (and, by logical extension, the west as well) the remains of the walls were covered with a thick layer of white gypsum concrete of the kind which, elsewhere on the temple site, was used as a foundation for stone pavements. Hence, in Figure 6, I have suggested that a stone pavement ran outside the edges of the colonnades.

Conventional temples of the New Kingdom and later used the ground in front for anticipating the grandness of the architecture that lay behind, sometimes with a processional way lined with sculpture. By contrast, the ground immediately in front of the House of the Aten was occupied by an area of activity very modest in scale, materials and mode of use. It centred on basins or troughs, cut into the ground in front of the temple at both the lower and higher ground levels, and coated with gypsum plaster; several times, in fact, perhaps on an annual basis. We studied a group of them last year (*Akhetaten Sun* 19/1, June 2013). This year we have added three more sets, all cut into the upper floor, one to the north of last year's, and two to the south of the temple axis. All five of this upper row more or less line up, yet each was laid out separately and not necessarily at the same time. Each one also has its own little history.

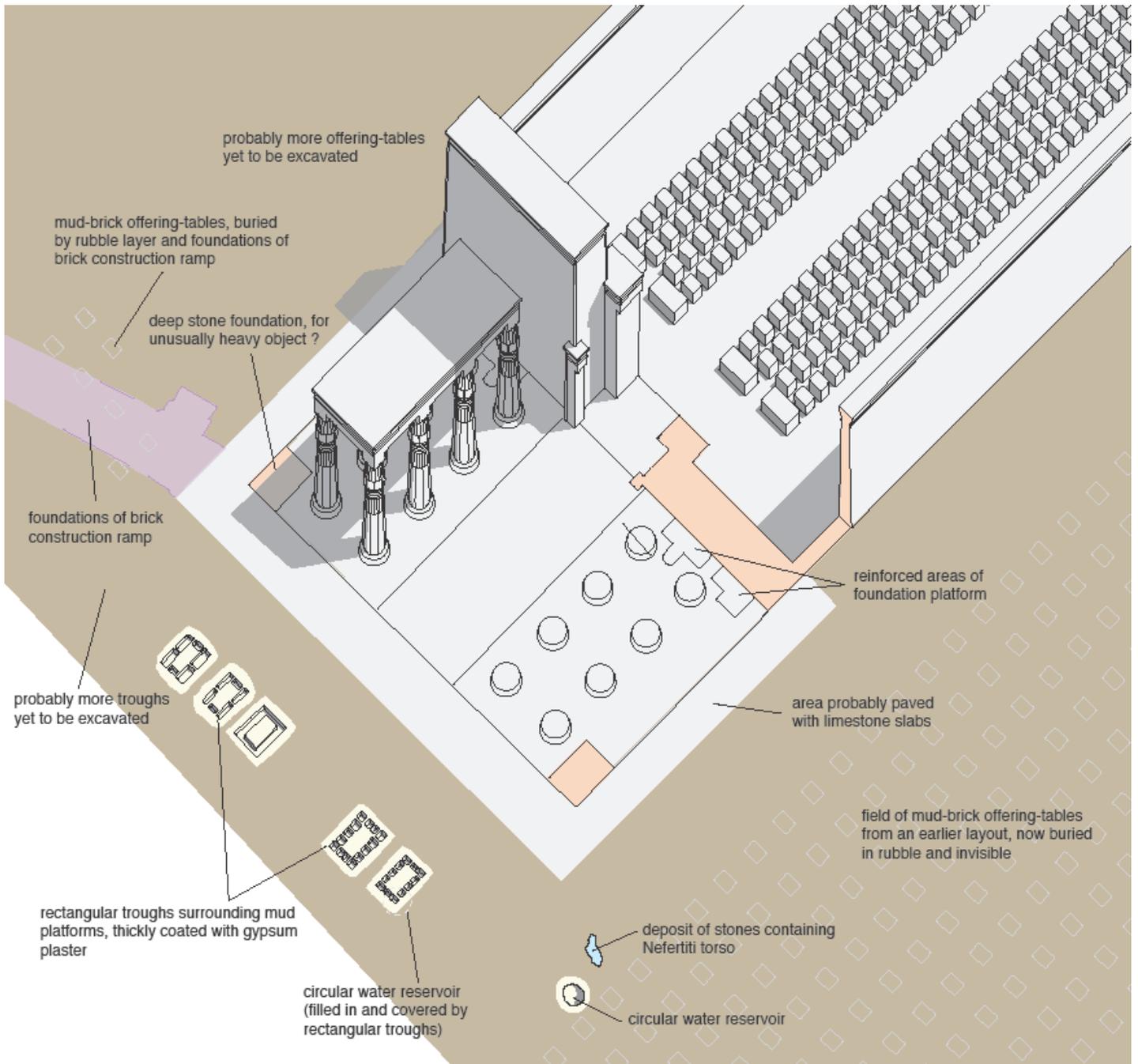


Figure 6: A partial reconstruction of the front of the temple based on the current re-examination. Some things are omitted, particularly sets of flagpoles in front of the stone pylon which are shown in the tomb pictures, and any attempt at explaining the areas of reinforced foundations also in front of the pylon. The size of the sandstone columns is still estimated. If they matched the columns at the Small Aten Temple they would have been somewhat larger.

The northernmost, discovered in good condition this year, was in the process of significant modification when the site was abandoned (Figure 7). The outer edge and the little dividing walls had been removed and a new and wider set of troughs was being laid out when work stopped, before some of the surfaces had been given their coat of gypsum. Some way to the south, a deep, circular reservoir, also lined with gypsum, had been dug into the ground, presumably to supply the individual troughs with water (it had been exposed in 1932 and appears in Lavers' reconstruction, Figure 1). The line of troughs was then extended further and, to make

sufficient space, the circular basin was filled in and the new set of troughs created over the top. Presumably as a replacement, a second circular reservoir, lined with gypsum, was created 10 m to the south, dug into the layer of rubble which buried the earlier mud-brick offering-tables (Figure 2). Where was the source of water? There are no signs of a well on the surface within the entire temple enclosure. If one existed, its position now covered with rubble, a likely location is further to the south, towards the south-western corner of the enclosure.



Figure 7: A set of troughs surrounding a central platform uncovered during the spring season of 2014. This set was in the process of being modified when the temple was abandoned. The troughs were being made wider and the number of basins reduced. The newly made dividers between the basins had been plastered with mud but not yet coated with gypsum. View to the west. Photo by Sue Kelly.

We still do not understand the purpose of the troughs. Kristin Thompson made the suggestion in last year's issue of the *Sun* that they could have served for keeping fresh the bouquets of flowers which appear as a regular component of the offerings in scenes of temple activity. The idea worked well with the troughs then visible. The tiny size of the new ones on the south fits this explanation less well. We have discussed other ideas, but without supplementary evidence there is little to grasp at. There are, happily, signs on the ground that further sets of basins lie further to the north and these should be excavated next year.

Whatever purpose they served, the materials of their construction, their episodic history and the fact that each set seems to have been laid out and managed separately suggest that they had a role that was governed independently of the formal stone temple. In the account of the temple created by the Pendlebury expedition and visualised in the reconstruction drawing of Lavers the stone temple stood flanked by dense fields of brick offering-tables which gave a purpose to the huge open spaces on either side. Now that the offering-tables are removed from the picture, having served an earlier ritual layout, we see the stone temple rising suddenly from a wide expanse of trampled mud-brick rubble, so far featureless apart from the solitary circular reservoir, although this seems linked to the line of basins and troughs through the earlier reservoir that was built over by the southernmost set of troughs. Although the flat ground to the south and east was dug into by Petrie and then

by Pendlebury, as they tried to plot the positions of the offering-tables, they left no account of the nature of the ground itself. This is something else that we plan to take up in future seasons, in the hope of understanding better why so much open space was created around the temple.



Figure 8: Another of the newly discovered sets of troughs, south of the temple axis. They are smaller than those previously found. View to the south.

The detailed pictures of the House of the Aten given in some of the Amarna tombs (notably those of Meryra and Panehsy, both priests in the temple) are seductive in their detail and seeming comprehensiveness. They do not, however, have the purpose of a modern guide book. They present the temple and its cult from the point of view of the king and his priests. One of the purposes of re-examining the temple foundations is to provide a commentary on the main building, its shape, its decoration and the history of its building which turns out to be more complicated than one might have expected.

But the tomb pictures also probably exclude a more shadowy ritual life that went on outside the stone building and in which the king and perhaps the priests did not participate. This can be defined only by archaeology. The emerging picture is that the basins and troughs could have been an extension into the more prestigious ground in front of the temple of a zone of activity to the south (and perhaps to the north as well) that could be utilized by the people of the city. This would represent a process of engagement with the House of the Aten rather different from the drive to create and run the monumental stone temple.

Part of a new statue of Nefertiti from the Great Aten Temple

By Marsha Hill

Discovered on March 22, 2014, fragment S-8264 represents the stomach, buttocks, and hips of, presumably, a statue of Nefertiti in a pleated garment with a sash.

It is carved in a fine-grained slightly soapy textured white limestone, identified by James Harrell as recrystallized siliceous limestone, with dense pale grey or brown inclusions. The stone is familiar from other statuary from or at the site, generally of very good quality (e.g. MMA 21.9.483, hips of small princess statue, from the Great Aten Temple, and site magazine S-5983, lower leg with drapery, from Kom el Nana).

Viewed from the front the fully preserved proper right contour of the fragment begins in the area of a wide waist, rises above only slightly indicated hipbones and continues down the side of the body to a slight depression in the area alongside the swell of the buttocks, to swell again in the area of the bulge in the thighs. On the front a shallow round navel appears toward the top of the fragment within the very slight arch of the hipbones. The stomach tilts slightly outward below the navel and passes down and inward in a long trajectory to the vulva, which is indicated as a subtle mounding, set off by shallow troughs from the bulges of the thighs. The proper left thigh bulge appears slightly in advance of the right thigh, suggesting the original statue showed Nefertiti with the left foot just slightly forward.



Figure 1: Front view

Viewed from the rear, the lower back area is long and square to slightly trapezoidal in contour. There is a slight rise over a spinal bone some distance above the buttocks, then the rise of the low, rather tight buttocks. The pleats converge at the center of the back in a v-shape, which seems surprising, but, in fact, expanses of back surface uninterrupted by back pillars are quite rare. Toward the lower edge, the pleats disappear over a horizontal distance, and at the very edge a shorter horizontal distance shows a slight rise: this is almost certainly the rise out to a low back pillar that came just up to the lower edge of Nefertiti's buttocks.



Figure 2: Rear view

There are no traces of an arm break on the proper right side of the figure. On the proper left side, the fringe of Nefertiti's garment has been carved on a triangular vertical projection that runs from top to bottom on the axis where an arm held alongside the body would lie, but there is no indication the arm hung so low as to lie alongside this part of the body. The thickening of the fringe projection toward its upper end presumably indicates it is approaching a wider element like an elbow.

Two wide fairly deep channels run top to bottom of the fragment, diverging as they descend, representing Nefertiti's sash, which probably ran nearly to her ankles. The proper right channel retains an area of thick red pigment, which should be red ochre or hematite (the latter used perhaps preferentially at Amarna, cf. Weatherhead and Buckley *Amarna Reports* IV, pp. 208–9, and other instances noted by Heywood, *BES* 19, forthcoming), which was adhered with the assistance of an under-layer of white material, either gesso or gypsum. One area of the pigment retains its smooth final surface where two of the horizontal ridges characteristic of the red sash have been modeled in the pigment.

The statue must have held arms forward in such a way that there is no trace of connective stone on the lower part of the body preserved here. The likelihood is that both arms were held up in the same manner, so they may have held a small tablet like the similarly sized statue of Nefertiti from house L50.12 (British Museum EA 935, Freed, *Pharaohs of the Sun*, cat. no. 88) or Egyptian Museum JE 44867 (Borchardt excavations, from P48.2); the latter certainly also has the left foot slightly forward. If the item held did not terminate too far from the body, the support stone that interrupts the figure could be minimized, as was desirable and as was done on both of these examples.

The figural type is ‘relatively late’ at Amarna. It may be seen on the similar sized statue of Nefertiti from house L50.12 mentioned above, which has the late name of the Aten and other marks of the relatively late style, such as the broad collar extending over the shoulders. The figure is there similarly rectilinear in form rather than drop-shaped like the relatively early style which emphasizes swollen belly, vulva and thighs. Again, there are not satisfactory large figures of Nefertiti to fully illustrate the contrast, but compare princesses in the two styles, Freed, cat. 49 and Freed, cat. 50.

The back pillar that rises only so far as the area of the buttocks, like the frequently seen short crown support pillars, is an expression of the often-noted desire in Amarna art to free the figure insofar as possible from support stone. Again, preservation means that such back pillars from Amarna are rarely attested, but, for example, the small figure of Akhenaten (Berlin 21221) has a back pillar that rises only to the lower edge of the buttocks – unfinished, so likely to be late.



Figure 3: Side view



Figure 4: Fringe detail

The red sash appears to be Nefertiti's usual ridged sash, which is red when coloration is shown, as in the Ashmolean painting of the princesses where her red sash can be seen hanging down next to the princesses seated on the ground. The same technique has been observed at Amarna for the red sash on a fragment of relief in the same stone as the statue under discussion, also from the Great Aten Temple (S-7868 - GAT 13 #18, K31 (14813), Trench 1/NE corner, 10/2/13). Inlay of thick pigment as though it were stone is, of course, famously used in the mastaba of Nefermaat and Itet and on the base of the statue of Hemiunu, but its use since Dynasty 4 is certainly not frequent. The Amarna instances exist in parallel with extensive use of stone and faience inlay at the Great Aten Temple, and might conceivably have to do with the desire to obtain satisfactory rich red inlay not adequately available otherwise. The whole question needs further examination. It seems unlikely this was the only use of pigment for inlay on this statue, the collar may have been inlaid, the surface of any tablet that the figure held, or the crown. There are other fragments from Amarna that suggest fairly thick caked pigment, now missing, might have been used for inlay: e.g. Egyptian Museum JE 59298 (EES Field no. 32/7, negative TA_32-33_0_Film_0006), found outside the western end of the temenos of the Great Aten Temple; Petrie UC 191.

Comment on the context (Barry Kemp)

The statue lay within an irregularly placed collection of pieces of limestone and sandstone that occupied a pocket within the layer of mainly mud-brick rubble and sand that had been put down during the Amarna Period to raise the level of the ground both outside and inside the main stone temple. Within grid square L26, this layer has the excavation unit number (15374). The supervising archaeologist in this sector was Anna Hodgkinson.

The stones were mixed with pieces of brick rubble and loose dust and sand. The statue piece lay at a descending angle, reaching down almost as far as the lower ground level, with other pieces of stone touching it. At the time of excavation there was general acceptance that the deposit was an integral part of the rubble layer, thus that the statue had been broken and dumped during the preparation of the new ground level which belonged to the later stone temple. Last year's discovery of a wine-jar label dated to Akhenaten's 12th regnal year helps to date the disposal of the statue piece to around this time. Because of the importance of the find, it is worth examining the context again, asking the question: could the stones have been deposited later, after the end of the Amarna Period, within a pit?

The stone deposit ran to the edge of an irregular cut which was the weathered side of a wide Pendlebury trench. When cleaned, the cut was, in effect, a section that ran across the edge of the stone deposit. Photographs show a layer of stones lying on rubble and sand, some of which follows sloping tip lines. The material is unbroken, without sign of a pit edge. The stones did not form a compact group, being mixed with pieces of brick. At no time during the excavation did a pit edge suggest itself although the looseness of some of the material made observation of fine structure difficult. By the end, a rectangular area of rubble had been excavated. What seems to have been an outlier amongst the stones, a rectangular limestone block, remained unexcavated, lodged in the section face. The section face again shows no signs of vertical dislocation that would suggest that a pit had been dug and the stone placed within it.

In the end, it is impossible to exclude that, in a way that left no visible trace, the deposit is the result of later disturbance. But the balance of probability is that the stone deposit, and with it the statue piece, is an integral part of the layer of rubble fill and thus that the statue had been removed and broken before the second temple was completed.

Note: S-8264: Stomach and buttocks of a statue of Nefertiti from Find spot: GAT 14 #18 L26 (15374); date of discovery: March 22, 2014; Max. Height and Width are 30.1 cm, maximum Depth. is 25.8 cm.

Honorary Trustees of the Amarna Research Foundation

Bob Brier, PhD

Senior Research Fellow
C.W. Post Campus
Long Island University, Brookville, NY

Rita E. Freed, PhD

Norma-Jean Calderwood Curator
Egyptian, Nubian & Near Eastern Art
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

W. Raymond Johnson, PhD

Director Epigraphic Survey
Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

Barry J. Kemp, CBE

Field Director Amarna Expedition
Egypt Exploration Society (EES) &
Professor of Egyptology, Retired
Cambridge University

Geoffrey Martin, PhD, LittD, FSA

Field Director
Cambridge Expedition to the Valley of the Kings
Christ's College, Cambridge University

Dietrich Wildung, PhD

Director, Retired
Egyptian Museum, Berlin

Richard Wilkinson, PhD

Director Egyptian Expedition, Retired
University of Arizona

The Amarna Research Foundation, Inc.

3886 South Dawson Street

Aurora, CO 80014

e-mail: RTomb10@comcast.net

website: www.TheAmarnaResearchFoundation.org