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**The President's Papyrus**

Greetings Amarnaphiles,

It is my sincere hope that you are all well and that your lives are getting back to normal.

This edition of the Sun has another fascinating article by Berry Kemp. We are so blessed to have the world's leading authority on Amarna as a regular contributor to this newsletter. Make no mistake about it, this newsletter provides you with the most authoritative information available.

In previous newsletters I have mentioned my plans to return to Egypt again. Covid delayed it twice, but I am very pleased to tell you that I finally was able to go for two weeks in March. It was a fabulous experience. I want to urge all of you who want to go to Egypt, you need to go by way of Museum Tours. I planned out my trip and they made it happen.

With this issue of the Sun David Pepper is providing us with the final installment of an abridged version of his wonderful book about the Amarna Court. For those of you who would like a copy of this remarkable work, it is now available through Amazon books. Furthermore, I think that many of you know that I am an archeological illustrator specializing in Egyptian art. I mention this because I had the privilege of designing the book cover for David's book. So please go the Amazon and check it out.

Remember that your continued support and membership in this organization has been and continues to be one of the most important financial resources supporting Berry's work at Amarna. Thanks!! Take care and be safe.

With best wishes always,

Floyd

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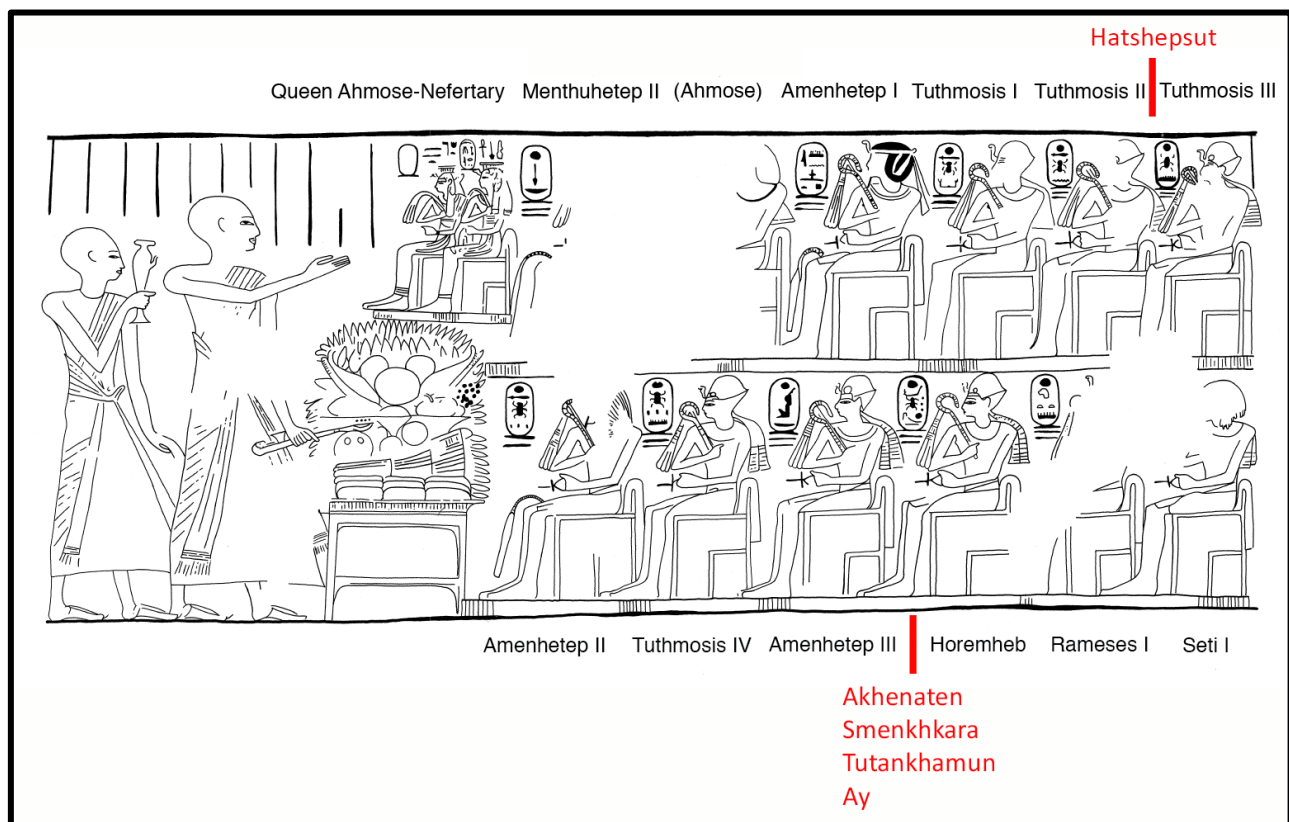
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## After the Founder: the Post-Amarna Period at Amarna

Barry Kemp

As is common in the study of history and archaeology it is easier to define when something began than when it ended. The Amarna Period began early in Akhenaten's reign, its characteristics obviously present in abundance at Thebes. Akhetaten the place was created by a royal decree dated to the king's year five. It seems to remain without challenge that Akhenaten died during the seventeenth year of his reign. There followed a period in which even the name of his successor (or successors) is far from being agreed although it seems to be generally accepted that this was a short interval (perhaps of three years). In all respects, other than the absence of Akhenaten, the Amarna Period can be said to have continued for a while. An abundance of faience rings inscribed with the prenomen of Tutankhaten/Tutankhamun (that is, Nebkheperura) carries one over into his reign.



**Figure 1** The official Amenmes makes an offering to royal ancestors, their images arranged in correct chronological order. Several rulers (names in red) have been omitted, presumably on account of decrees which prohibited the use of their names. Amenmes lived evidently in the reign of Seti I. From his tomb at Western Thebes (no. 19), after G. Foucart, *Le tombeau d'Amonmos*, Cairo, IFAO, 1935, Pl. XIIB, itself a copy made in the nineteenth century AD by Thomas Hay.



The Egyptian ruling elite of subsequent generations created a tradition which denied legitimacy of rule not only to Akhenaten but to all his successors, including Tutankhamun. The sequence of honoured kings then ran directly from Amenhetep III to Horemheb, and then to Rameses I, Sety I and so on (Figure 1). What the deleted kings had in common was that they were members of the old Theban family which had ruled Egypt for a long time (and now no more), back to the beginning of the Middle Kingdom; but also something else: something that Akhenaten himself had generated and which caused offence in the minds of many and tainted his heirs. A conventional modern answer is that the offence was the insult to the god Amun of Thebes and to the priests of his temples by Akhenaten's exclusive promotion of the god Aten.



**Figure 2:** Limestone block decorated on two faces, one of them bearing part of the prenominal cartouche of Horemheb. From the excavations of W.M.F. Petrie at the Great Aten Temple. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, accession number AN1893.1-41. (132). Length 22 cm; height 17.5 cm; thickness 12 cm. By courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

From this point of view (the point of view of the military leaders who henceforth ruled Egypt) the answer to the question – when did the Amarna Period end? – is with the accession of Horemheb and the invention of a new legitimacy.<sup>1</sup> The knowledge that we have, from the written and archaeological sources that have survived, is of a more complex reality, however. On the one hand, the texts from the reign of Tutankhamun (especially his 'Restoration Decree' found at Karnak but issued from Memphis), claim

<sup>1</sup> Phillips 1977

a large-scale restoration of traditional cults including that of Amun.<sup>2</sup> The Aten receives no mention. Yet Tutankhamun's pious deeds did not save him in the end from the taint of being a member of Akhenaten's family. Dynastic politics outweighed his having done the right thing (as judged by those who later succeeded).

What was actually done in the name of Horemheb, however, is hard to equate with the idea that normality was restored in a straightforward way by reversing the promotion to supreme being of the Aten in favour of the god Amun (and other gods). An obvious sign that the Amarna Period was ending was the start of the demolition of the stone buildings at Amarna and the transport of the building blocks (of the standard kind called *talatat*-blocks) to other sites for re-use, especially to the nearby city of El-Ashmunein (Hermopolis). Here, the excavations of the British Museum in the 1980s produced evidence that the re-use of *talatat*-blocks began under Horemheb, whose orders had evidently included the building of a new temple there in his name.<sup>3</sup> What we cannot judge from re-used *talatat*-blocks (unless they bear identifying inscriptions) is from what building or buildings at Amarna they had come.

Horemheb's orders also included work to be done on the two main Aten temples at



**Figure 3:** Piece from the base of a limestone sphinx bearing the titulary of Horemheb. Length 55 cm. From the excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society in 1926–27 in the Sanctuary of the Great Aten Temple. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.26–27.0086. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society. The piece, with others, is in the British Museum. See [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y\\_EA58468](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA58468), also 58468\_1–58468\_4, 58469.

Amarna. The first archaeological excavations at Amarna were undertaken in 1891–2 by Flinders Petrie, who found himself accompanied by Howard Carter acting as the representative of a second permit holder, Lord Amherst.<sup>4</sup> Petrie gave himself and Carter separate areas to investigate. Petrie took the front part of the Great Aten Temple enclosure; Carter was given the rear (and both also worked in other parts of the city). Amongst Petrie's discoveries 'in the west end of the great temenos' was a limestone corner block which combined a scene of figures in pleated garments on the

<sup>2</sup> Murnane 1995, 212–214

<sup>3</sup> Spencer 1989, 47–48, Pls. 65–70

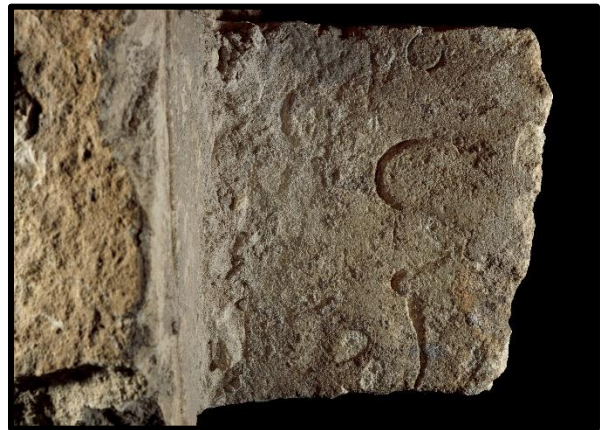
<sup>4</sup> Pepper, 2011; Hill 2011



main face with the prenomen of Horemheb on a face at right angles (Figure 2).<sup>5</sup> The absence of the rounded moulding which one normally finds on the corners of Egyptian temples can be explained by seeing the block as coming not from a building corner but from the side of a broken-lintel doorway. This could have been from within a wall or from between a pair of columns (e.g. Davies 1908b, Pls. XII, XIV). This is not the only evidence for Horemheb's patronage of the Great Aten Temple. The excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society at the site of the separate stone building within the temple grand enclosure in 1926 (and named the Sanctuary) brought to light fragments from a small sphinx and other pieces of sculpture bearing the king's name and titles (Figure 3).<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 4:** *Left side of limestone block S-16545 from the rear of the Great Aten Temple. A single near-vertical sunray descends which had ended in a hand, of which only the top part remains. The original left edge of the block survives and preserves a narrow strip of a second sunray, marked by a very narrow band of red paint. Photo by Andreas Mesli.*



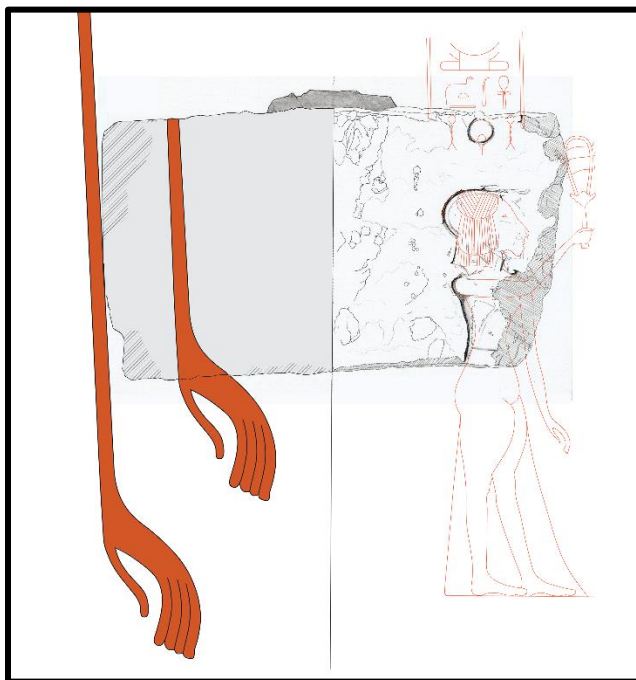
**Figure 5:** *Right side of limestone block S-16545 from the rear of the Great Aten Temple. It preserves the back of the outline of a princess, facing to the right, which has been partly erased and partly covered with plaster. She stands beneath a vertical column of hieroglyphs, containing traces of blue paint, which has been treated in the same way as the figure of the princess. Photo by Andreas Mesli.*

Recent excavations at the rear of the Great Aten Temple (spring 2022) offer a possible explanation of what this continuing recognition of the temple as a sacred space entailed. The actual place of the excavation was an area of Pendlebury spoil heaps not far from where the temple foundations mark the position of a group of small chambers. It is likely that Pendlebury's workmen had not carried the spoil far. Within it lay two limestone blocks that were almost complete (an unusual circumstance in itself). One (S-16545) was L-shaped from having been carved to fit into a corner in one of the chambers. The two faces had been carved in sunk relief. On the left side the subject was a near-vertical ray of the sun ending in the upper part of a hand, the

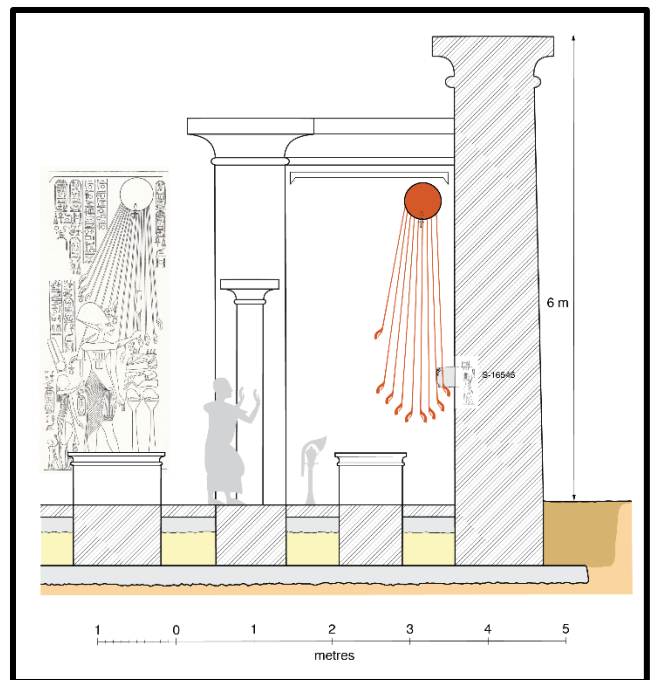
<sup>5</sup> Petrie 1893, 9, 43, 44, Pl. XI.5; Murnane 1995, 234; Figure 2

<sup>6</sup> Pendlebury 1951, 12, S.24, etc., Pl. LX.3; Murnane 1995, 234; all in the British Museum

whole design having been originally painted red (Figure 4). The left edge of the block almost coincided with the narrow remnant of a second parallel sun ray. The whole surface was in a fair condition, showing no signs of deliberate damage. This was in contrast to the right-hand surface, where only traces of the original design survived (Figures 5–7). Towards the right-hand edge had stood a figure of a princess holding a sistrum. She had been identified by a vertical column of hieroglyphs of which only the bottom part had been present on this block. The surface of both princess and hieroglyphs had been scraped down, leaving only the deepest parts of the incisions. These had then been filled with a paste which looks exactly like the surface of the limestone. It is only because some of it has fallen out that the design is visible. The purpose must have been to obliterate part of a scene showing the Amarna royal family.



**Figure 6:** Reconstruction of the design on block S-16545. Pencil copy by Juan Friedrichs.



**Figure 7:** Reconstruction of the likely placement of block S-16545. The scene from the Hermopolis balustrade on the left is after Roeder 1969, Taf. 1.

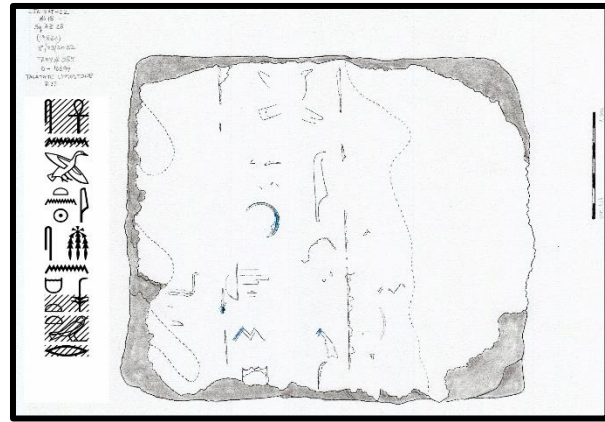
On the second block (S-16694) the same treatment had been given to another part of a scene of the royal family (Figures 8, 9). It had comprised parts of two vertical columns of hieroglyphs which had been filled with blue pigment. The column to the right had originally given the name of princess '[Ankhsen]pa-aten, born to the [great] royal wife [Nefertiti]...' but the surface had been scraped down, clearly with the intent to obliterate it.

On many Amarna monuments (both the walls of rock tombs and individual *talatat*-blocks from El-Ashmunein and elsewhere) royal-family names and figures have been damaged by crude attacks, the damage left visible. By contrast, on these two blocks

from the temple care has been taken to make names and figures indistinguishable from the limestone background leaving in their place a relatively smooth surface. The result would have been large, bold painted images of the Aten disc and rays of the sun accompanied by large smooth blank areas from which Akhenaten and his family would have been removed and not replaced by images of another king or his family. Examples from El-Ashmunein of similarly treated blocks are to be seen in Roeder.<sup>7</sup> Other smaller fragments of painted limestone relief from towards the back of the temple belong to scenes showing chariots, papyrus marsh and human figures of which one was a squatting man with his hands placed on his own shoulders.<sup>8</sup> The fragments had broken off *talatat*-blocks, presumably as the temple was demolished, but had not suffered deliberate damage.



**Figure 8:** Limestone block S-16694 from the rear of the Great Aten Temple. Two vertical columns of hieroglyphs have been scraped down with the intention of removing them, probably helped by the application of some plaster. Traces remain of blue pigment in the signs. Photo by Andreas Mesli.



**Figure 9:** Drawing of limestone block S-16694, showing the traces of two vertical columns of hieroglyphs. The hieroglyphic reconstruction of the text, by Marc Gabolde, gives the name of Ankhsepenaten, born to the Great Royal Wife (Nefertiti). Drawing by Juan Friedrichs.

We cannot tell when the editing of the temple walls took place, and in particular, if it had been in the time of Tutankhamun. We can, however, be fairly sure that these pieces of wall decoration show what the interior of the temple looked like in the time of Horemheb's architectural additions. Far from having been demoted, the Aten would have been, as in Akhenaten's reign, the only symbol of divinity on the walls. But Akhenaten and his family were gone although scenes of the world over which they had presided were still in place.

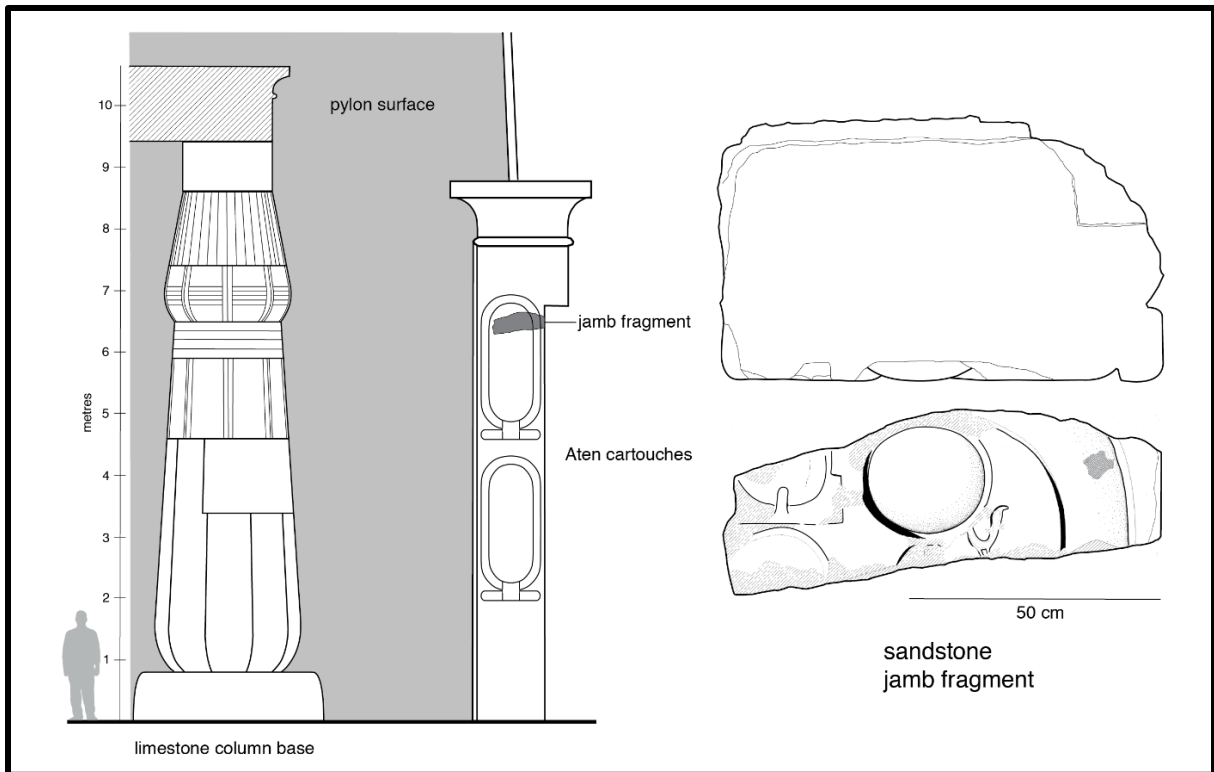
A few sandstone blocks from the front of the Sanctuary of the Small Aten Temple can be understood in the same light. Most striking is a corner piece from near the top of a door jamb on a colossal scale, its estimated height 8.5 m (28 ft; Figure 10).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Roeder 1969, Taf. 17, 500-VIIIC; Taf. 163, 1092-VIII

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.amarnaproject.com/documents/pdf/Great-Aten-Temple-Spring-2021-HI.pdf> page 30

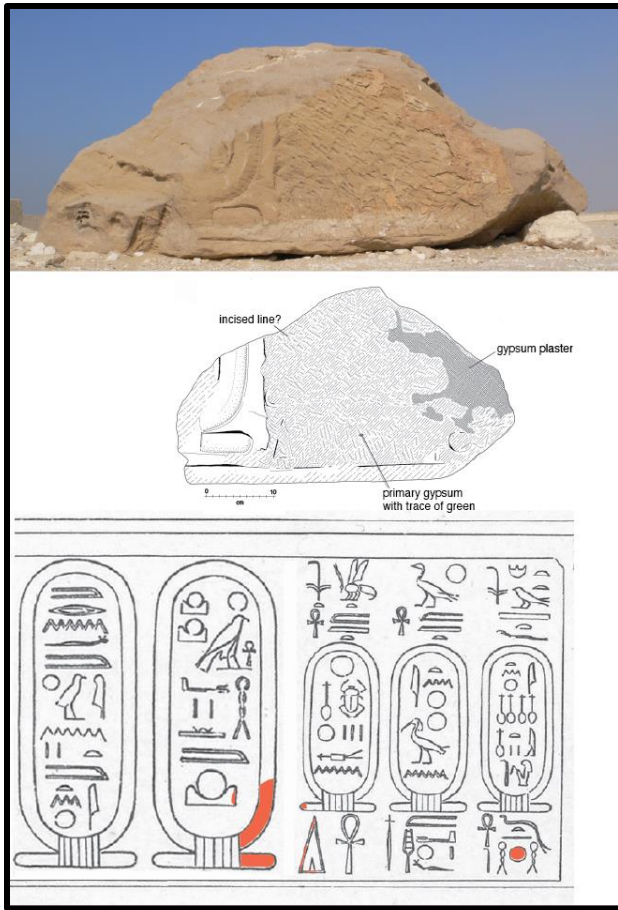
<sup>9</sup> Kemp 2012, 85–86, Figures 3.7, 3.8



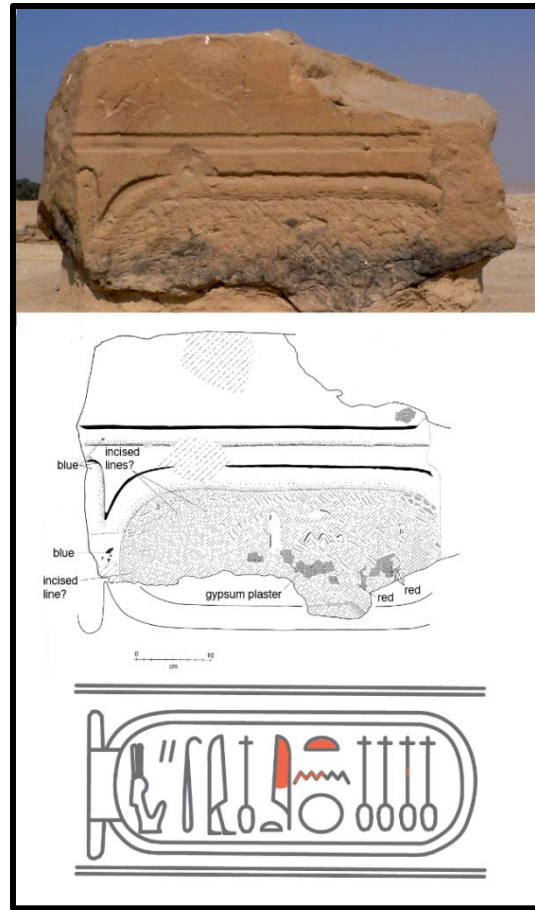


**Figure 10:** *Small Aten Temple: reconstruction of part of the façade of the Sanctuary. It incorporates a sandstone block from a door jamb decorated with large cartouches of the Aten. The preserved cartouche shows no trace of ancient damage.*

On two faces at right-angles are preserved part of the top of a deeply cut cartouche containing the early form of the first name of the Aten. There is no sign of deliberate damage on either face. A second block is probably part of an architrave which perhaps linked two of the columns (Figure 11). The general design had been a common one: facing the cartouches of the Aten had been (on a smaller scale) the three cartouches of Akhenaten and Nefertiti with a short hieroglyphic formula underneath. Although only a small part of the Aten cartouches (early form) survives, it shows no damage. Where the cartouches of the royal family had been, however, the surface has been carefully cut back with a chisel and then covered with a layer of gypsum plaster. The effect would have been the same as that conveyed by the two blocks from the Great Aten Temple. On a third block, also from an architrave, the horizontal cartouche of Nefertiti has been chiseled out from within the cartouche border which has been carefully left alone (Figure 12). Traces of a gypsum-plaster layer within the cartouche still remain. The group of altered stones is completed by a horizontal slice of one of the columns (not illustrated here) which had been carved to include a large raised panel. The surface has been cut back slightly and pecked with a metal instrument to help affix a layer of gypsum plaster which had covered the damaged surface. Just enough of the original design remains visible, to show that it had been a scene of Akhenaten, with arms raised horizontally, facing a smaller-scale Nefertiti part of whose double-feather crown can still be made out.



**Figure 11:** Sandstone architrave block from the Sanctuary of the Small Aten Temple. In the completed hieroglyphic version the areas marked in red are those which are still visible on the original block. The reconstructed version is based on Davies 1905, Pl. V.



**Figure 12:** Sandstone architrave block from the Sanctuary of the Small Aten Temple. In the completed hieroglyphic version the areas marked in red are those which are still visible on the original block. The reconstruction of the cartouche of Nefertiti is based on Davies 1908b, Pl. XXXII, architrave inscription (reversed).

If we compare the treatment given to these blocks from the Small Aten Temple with the two new blocks from the Great Aten Temple, we can see the same policy at work. The names of the Aten could remain, even when present on a giant scale, whereas scenes and names of Akhenaten and his family were carefully erased and the places where they had been were plastered over and left blank. Whichever king allowed this to happen (Tutankhamun perhaps?) did not order his name and image to be inserted into the blank spaces, however. This remained the situation into the reign of Horemheb and to the time when the temple was destroyed.

In the wider world, the delegitimisation of Akhenaten extended to routine legal documents. We know this particularly from the long record of a dispute over land-ownership spanning many reigns recorded on the stone walls of a tomb of a high official, Mose or Mes, at Saqqara and dating to the reign of Rameses II. As a way of bringing the dispute to an end, archive documents are consulted. One of them is from

the reign of Horemheb and makes reference to 'the time of the enemy of Akhetaten' (i.e. Akhenaten). The document is said to have been dated to the impossibly high year 59 of Horemheb, which is sometimes taken to be a sign that, to avoid recognising the legitimacy of the Amarna kings, their reigns were absorbed into an inflated reign for Horemheb. The arithmetic does not work well but, be that as it may (and assuming that the document is not a complete fabrication), it illustrates the effectiveness of the delegitimisation of Akhenaten and his family. He could be referred to but not by his name and was not credited with a reign.<sup>10</sup>

Names (and records of property ownership and of entitlements to benefices) helped to hold Egypt's social fabric together. For those who threatened the established order, punishment began with the name. One who met this fate (his 'accursed' name being Teti son of Minhotep from just before the Eighteenth Dynasty) is the subject of a royal decree issued to the authorities of the city of Coptos. His crime was probably plotting against the king. The punishment ordered was not physical but expulsion from his position in the local temple with consequent loss of income, the punishment passing down to his heirs. In summary, 'His name shall not be remembered in this temple'.<sup>11</sup> (The punishment appears to have been in a category favoured by past societies, such as 'proscription' in ancient Rome and 'attainder' in mediaeval England). It could be that Akhenaten, at some time after his death, was made the subject of a royal decree, of which many copies would have been written and sent throughout Egypt (and Nubia), ordering people not to write or to pronounce his name but allowing, as a guarded way of labelling him, the term 'the enemy of Akhetaten'.

Such things were done with bureaucratic thoroughness. The scribal procedure, in the case of announcing the names of a new king, is known from two copies on stone of a decree announcing the coronation of king Tuthmosis I and specifying the king's full set of names and that they were to be used in the taking of oaths.<sup>12</sup> Copies of the decree were evidently sent throughout Egypt and Nubia so that there was no excuse for officials not to follow the current procedures for administering oaths. The semi-fictional history of Hatshepsut's origins as monarch (recorded in her temple at Deir el-Bahari) made much of the promulgation of her official names and the aura of authority which was attached to them. 'They (the people of Egypt) went forth, their mouths rejoiced. They published his (the king's) proclamation [to] them... They [proclaimed] the name of her majesty as king... As for any man who shall love her in his heart, and shall do her homage every day, he shall shine, and he shall flourish exceedingly. As for any man who shall speak against the name of her majesty, the god shall determine his death immediately...'.<sup>13</sup> This raises for us the question, how consistent were the

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<sup>10</sup> Gardiner 1905; Gaballa 1977; Allam 1989; Murnane 1995, 240–241. See Gardiner 1938 for Akhetaten as 'rebel' and with a year 9

<sup>11</sup> Breasted 1906, I, 339–341, Goebis 2003

<sup>12</sup> Breasted 1906, II, 24–25

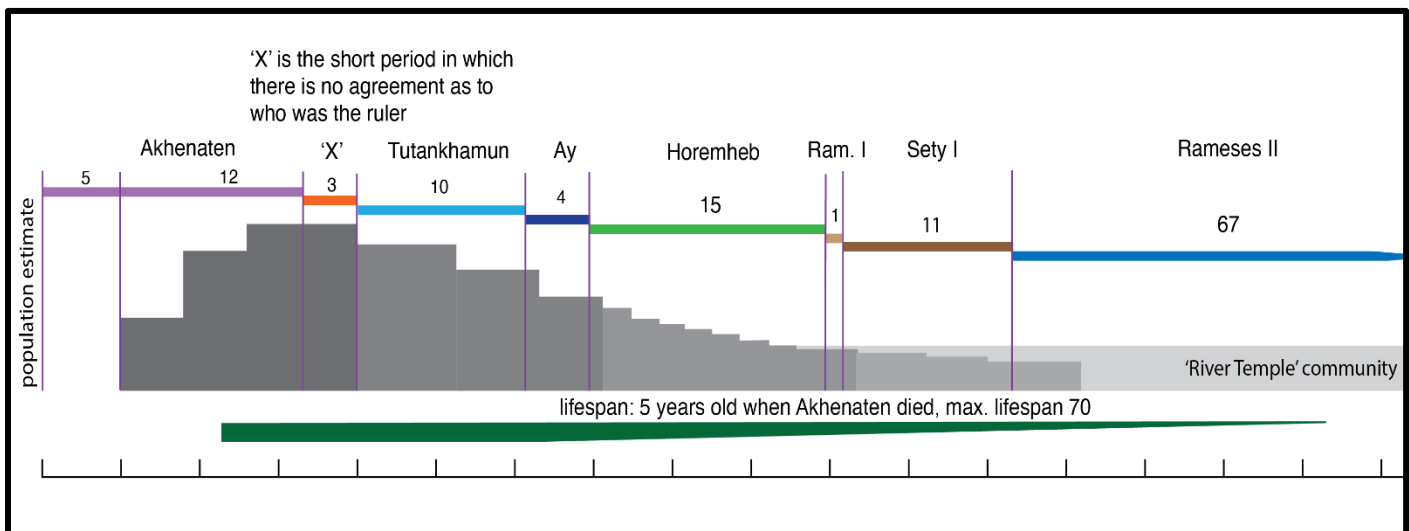
<sup>13</sup> Breasted 1906, II, 98



Egyptians in matters such as this? After Hatshepsut's death, did she become the object of a proscription decree herself? As for Akhenaten, the obvious moment for the proscription of his name by decree was early in the reign of Tutankhamun, perhaps coinciding with the issuing of the 'Restoration Decree' in his name. After that moment, writing or speaking his name might have been a dangerous act. But then, the question of consistency of policy arises again. Was it applied to Tutankhamun and to Ay by Horemheb or was the danger of their posthumous authority too slight to justify it?

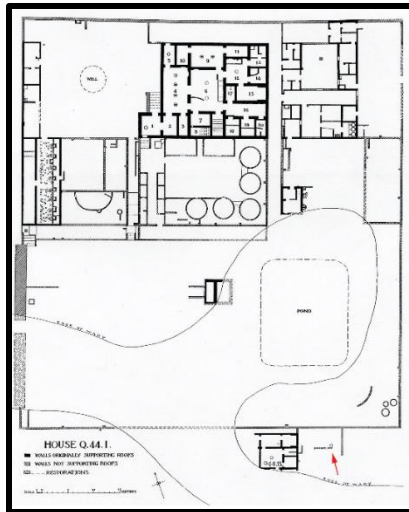
For the people who had moved to Amarna or who were born there the experience must have marked their memories. In Figure 13, the chronological guide, the dark green line near the bottom represents the lifespans of people who were five years old when Akhenaten died and who lived until they were 20 and then, in declining numbers, until they were 70. One result of this simple visualisation is to highlight that a proportion of the people who were either born at Amarna or moved there would have been alive in the reign of Rameses II and could well have experienced life and heard the gossip during Akhenaten's lifetime. Many would have had to make their own adjustment to declarations that Akhenaten's name was proscribed and that henceforth he was to be known as a nameless criminal. On the other hand, if they had developed an interest in, even an affection for, the Aten, that was acceptable.

The symbol of the Aten, the sun-disc at the heart of an outpouring of sunrays, is central to our appreciation of the Amarna Period. In the art that we have it is an almost invariable accompaniment to pictures of Akhenaten and his family.



**Figure 13:** *Speculative diagram of the changing size of the population of Amarna through the reigns of the Amarna kings and later. Years of reign are placed above the coloured bars. Since the death of one king in his last regnal year was followed immediately by the beginning of what would be a complete first regnal year of the next king, the time intervals for each king are bound to be slightly exaggerated. The scale at the bottom marks intervals of five years.*

Tutankhamun and his wife Ankhesenamun, who were members of his family as well, are also appropriately shown beneath the Aten and his rays in some of their representations though not all. If we continue to maintain that the Aten disc and rays is a major criterion for defining the Amarna Period and its culture, does this mean that the term 'Amarna Period' extends into and even through the reign of Horemheb? Where does this leave the popular modern view that the downfall of Akhenaten, his family and his ideas was brought about by scheming priests of Amun at Thebes whose aim was to restore things as they had been before, which meant proscribing the Aten as well as Akhenaten and his family? Perhaps they did exist but worked more slowly, or at least more inconsistently, than we imagine.



**Figure 14:** Plan of houses Q44.1 and Q44.13 by F.G. Newton. The red arrow marks the place where the cartouche pot was found. After Newton 1924, Pl. XXV.



**Figure 15:** View of house Q44.1, towards the south-east. The site of house Q44.13, where the cartouche pot was found, is hidden behind the spoil heap that is right-of-centre of the picture.

One set of results of the rethinking of the composition of the creator god is carved on one of the inside walls of the central halls of the Ramesseum, the mortuary temple of Rameses II. It amounts to a table of elements for Ra-Horakhty (the proper form of the sun's name). The Aten is named, and its place in the scheme of things is as the disc of the sun, alongside the body of the sun and the hand of the sun (written only in the singular). Akhenaten had unpacked the elements and brought the disc and multiple hands to the fore. Now, in the Ramesseum, we see the disc and hands put back into the box, or made equal members of a table of parts, losing their unique pre-eminence.<sup>14</sup> But the Aten was far from having been rejected. In its retention in the Aten temples, on its own without Akhenaten and his family, into the last decades of the Eighteenth Dynasty we can see a path of transition, from radical simplifying to the accommodation of complexity (something always attractive to the ancient Egyptians).

<sup>14</sup> Kemp 2017, 18, (Figure 1)

This second life for the two main Aten temples at Amarna implies the existence of a community of people to maintain the buildings and some form of cult. Were attempts made to continue to supply the myriad offering-tables inside the temple? That there was a population living in the Main City at Amarna through the reigns of Horemheb and Seti I was a conclusion drawn by the director of the Egypt Exploration Society expedition of 1923, Francis Newton. One of the areas where he directed the excavations was just to the south of the Central City and the Small Aten Temple. It contained the grounds and house of a high official whose name, however, was not recovered. Instead we identify the house by a catalogue number, Q44.1 (Figures 14, 15). For many modern visitors to Amarna it is the place with a platform from the top of which they can take a close look at a good example of an Amarna large house. Newton wrote a preliminary report at the end of his season, published in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. It includes the following statement:

'Outside the southern wall of the garden of house Q44.1 were the remains of a small house Q44.13, the greater part of which had been washed away by the water from the wādī. In the yard of this house an interesting discovery was made. This was the top half of a large pot of the type used to contain preserved meat. The lower edge of this was broken and there were no traces of any fragments of the bottom half lying about, so it can hardly have been in its original position when in use (unless this broken half had been placed in the yard as a receptacle of some sort). On this sherd were three cartouches and an inscription in hieratic. The cartouches were those of Seti I, Horemhab and the third was entirely washed out, with the exception of the letter *n* at the bottom, which might indicate that it was that of Akhenaten. This points to a continuous occupation at any rate of part of the city down to the time of Seti I'.<sup>15</sup>

No further report on the pot (or Newton's excavations) was published (he died the following year). What happened to the pot? There is, at present, only a cold trail to follow provided by brief statements in archive documents. Newton left Amarna for Cairo at the end of December and, after a short stay, continued his travels, by car, to Mesopotamia (now Iraq) to join another archaeological expedition. The Egypt Exploration Society excavations at Amarna continued, none the less. The incoming director was F. Ll. Griffith, Professor of Egyptology at Oxford. He and his wife, Nora, supervised the excavation of a huge area, the results of which also still remain unpublished.

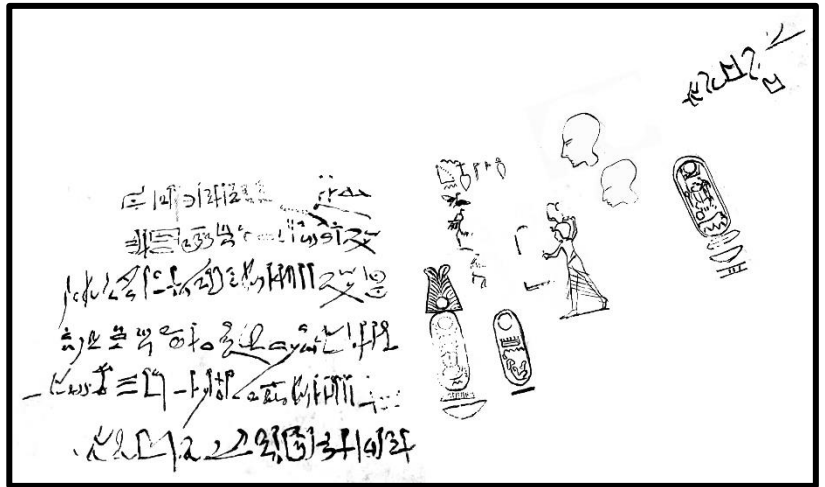


**Figure 16:** One of three photographs of Newton's cartouche pot, printed from a half-plate glass negative. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.23.042. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.

<sup>15</sup> Newton 1924, 293



We know from an archive letter that he took charge of the pot that Newton had found (even though it had already been assigned to the share of Newton's finds selected by two English officials of the Egyptian government Antiquities Service who represented the Egyptian Museum, Cairo). Griffith was an expert in reading and translating hieratic texts and found time whilst at Amarna to make a facsimile copy of the hieratic text and the accompanying cartouches and other graffiti, and to write brief notes on them. The pot had also already been



**Figure 17:** Schematic drawing of texts and iconography on the cartouche pot by Marc Gabolde, from drawings of F. Ll. Griffith (Griffith MSS 02.08.3–5), at the Griffith Institute, Oxford. Griffith had inked over prints of the photographs, presumably in the presence of the actual pot.

carefully photographed, on three half-plate glass negatives (Figure 16). Although a record had been made that was sufficient for a scholarly publication, this never happened. The glass plates became part of the archives of the Egypt Exploration Society in London; the facsimiles and notes remained with Griffith in Oxford and are now part of the archives of the Griffith Institute.<sup>16</sup> As for the pot itself, it seems to have vanished despite having an estimated width of around 40 cm. As for Newton's rather startling claim for a post-Amarna-Period occupation of part of the Main City, it seems to have attracted no recognisable interest.

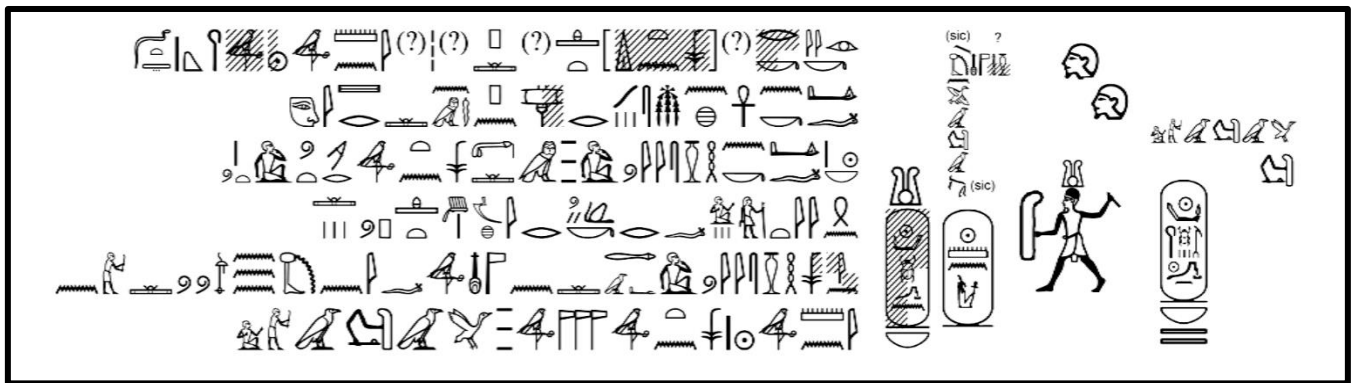
In the spring of this year (2022), at my suggestion, Prof Marc Gabolde (Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier III) received prints of the glass negatives and scans of the relevant Griffith papers. Within a short time he produced a transcription into hieroglyphic of the hieratic facsimiles (Figures 17, 18), with translations and preliminary notes.<sup>17</sup> The following is a precis of the results.

Griffith himself had clarified Newton's uncertainty in reading the smudged cartouche. It was not Akhenaten's but another version of Horemheb's. So two kings, Horemheb and Sety I, were honoured on the pot. The main text comprised six lines of hieratic which expressed a prayer to Amun-Ra, king of the gods, by a man with the intriguing name (not unique, though) Pa-aha, which means 'The warrior'. Marc Gabolde's preliminary translation runs as follows:

<sup>16</sup> <https://archive.griffith.ox.ac.uk/index.php/griffith-2-8>

<sup>17</sup> These are part of a preliminary publication, with more extensive background notes, in issue 22 of *Horizon* (for summer 2022), the newsletter of the Amarna Project (Kemp and Gabolde 2022).

'(1) May you [indeed make a *dj-nsw.f-ḥtp*-offering-formula for Amun-Ra ruler of eternity. (2) May He grant you that children live to be this sweet breathe (to) nostrils (3) every day. May He grant you to be praised in front of the king and may love you (4) his entourage until you reach the *jmꜣḥ*-condition (i.e. death) peacefully. (5) Is it he, the greatly praised one of his Perfect God (i.e. the king)? Or is it the *w'b*-priest (of the) craftsmanship of (6) Amun-Ra king of the gods, Pa-aha?'



**Figure 18:** Marc Gabolde's rendering of the hieratic texts using JSESH conventional hieroglyphic font.

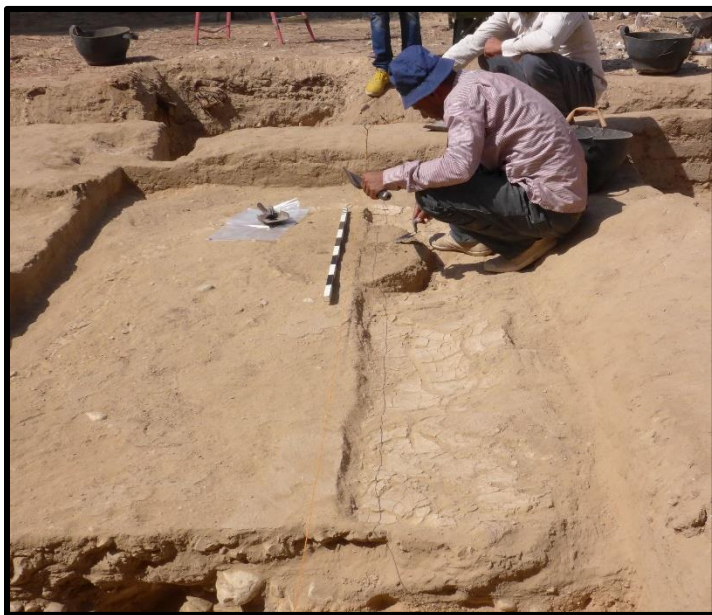
The main purpose of the prayer is clear: it is to request that children will live to be a source of comfort in old age (implying either that the children in question are not in good health or that healthy children have not yet been born). The writer, Pa-aha, is an official, an ordinary priest (*w'b*-priest) connected in some way to a group of men (a guild?) who are called 'the craftsmen of Amun-Ra, king of the gods' (or is he '*w'b*-priest *and* craftsman?'). In addition to where the name appears in the main text, the name Pa-aha is written twice above the cartouches to the right of the main text. Do these references all apply to the same man, who also wrote the main text, or is this a record of two men with the same name (father and son)? These uncertainties aside, neither in the texts nor in the imagery is there a hint of Akhenaten and the cult of the Aten. Since the text and graffiti must belong to the reign of Sety I does this mean that the attempt to keep alive the cult of the Aten in the two main Aten temples at Amarna had been abandoned and the temples were now either awaiting demolition or that demolition had already taken place? How did Pa-aha's professional affiliation to the cult of Amun-Ra manifest itself? There are no signs of an Amun shrine in the Main City at Amarna, but Pa-aha's respect for Amun-Ra could have been within his mind. The writing of the prayer and likely burial of the pot (only later to be dug up and broken) could itself have been the pious action that reinforced the prayer, not needing a special building to validate it.

Complex societies, such as that of ancient Egypt, almost invariably sort themselves into hierarchies. We recognise the hierarchies primarily from what the elite create for themselves. In the case of Amarna in its heyday the elite marked their presence by larger houses and, in the case of many individuals (though not all), by decorated rock

tombs. The creation of rock tombs at Amarna seems to have ceased shortly after Akhenaten's death. Only the tomb of Meryra II (no. 2) contains a scene (unfinished) depicting a king subsequent to Akhenaten, the king named Ankh-kheperura Smenkhkara-djeser kheperu.<sup>18</sup> Tutankhamun received neither mention nor image. We might read into this the rapid loss of confidence in the city's future by the elite, and probably their rapid flight or removal from the city or orderly re-location elsewhere.

Yet a population lived on in the city, through the reigns of Horemheb and Sety I. Newton himself considered this:

'So far excavation has shown no signs of a definite habitation of any of the houses later than Tutankhamun, but there have been traces in some of the houses of temporary squatters and, as will be shown later, this was clearly the case in the North Palace. It is quite possible that during the reigns of Horemhab and Seti I there was a colony of quarrymen occupying part of the town. The most likely place for them to choose would be the centre of the town near the great palace and on the bank of the river. As all the land between the great palace and the river is now under cultivation we cannot excavate there, and this would explain why up to now so few traces of any later occupation have been observed. The systematic way in which almost every stone in the town has been broken up or taken away would require a considerable amount of time, perhaps many years'.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 19:** *Garden shrine L50.9, view north-westwards. It was re-excavated in 2020. The brick floor, mixed with broken bricks fallen from the walls, had been turned into a small watered garden in which a circular bed of alluvial soil had been created, probably to allow a tree or shrub to be grown. The excavator is Walid M. Omar.*

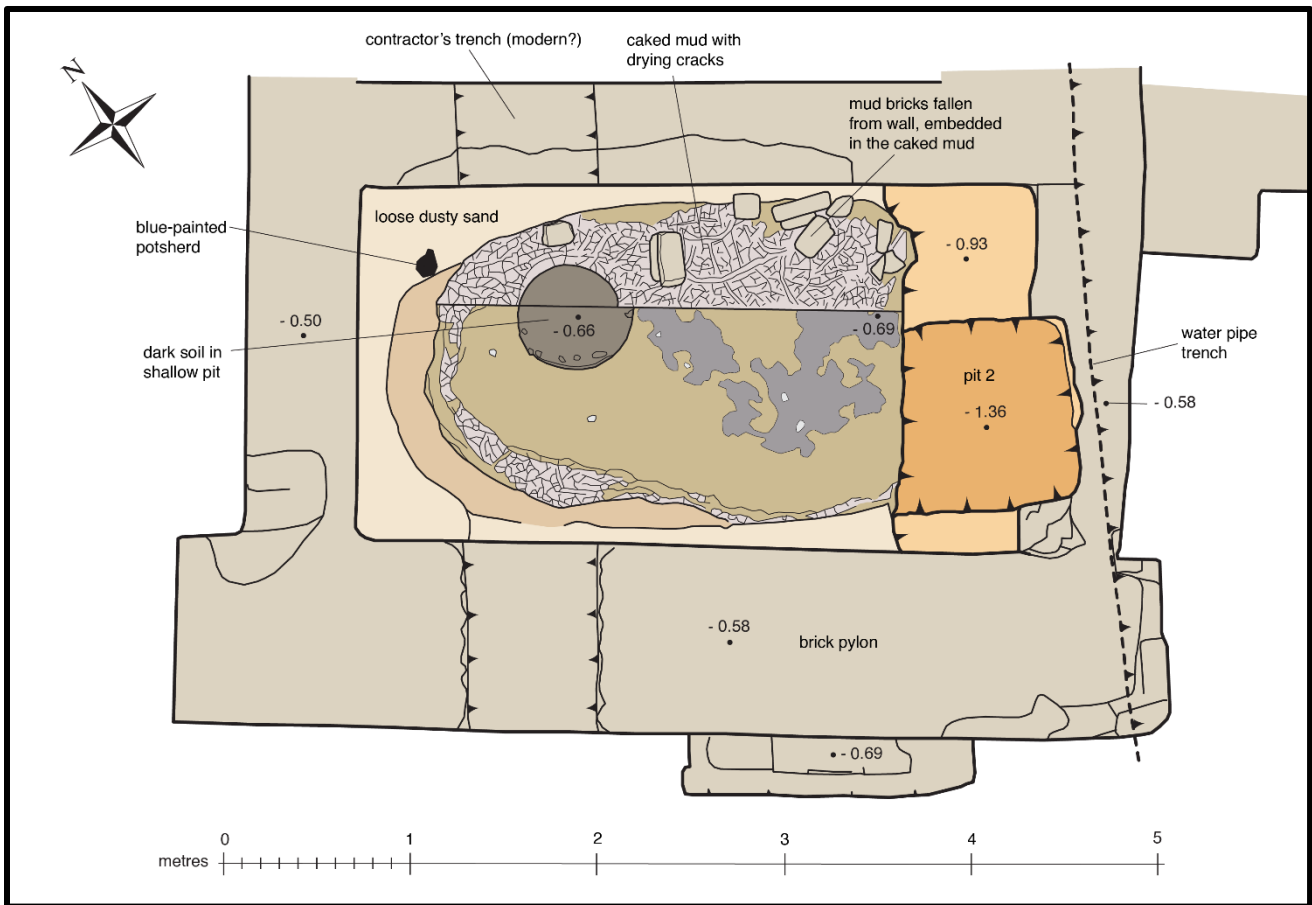
Now that we know what the hieratic text says, a different picture emerges. It is not the work of a 'squatter'. Our man, Pa-aha, was a scribe holding a junior position in the cult of Amun-Ra and was hence a member of a settled community functioning in the familiar style of the New Kingdom. His community must have had its own hierarchy even if its resources and aspirations had downsized. They seem not to have rebuilt their houses. The last rebuild that has been identified in the Main City is the house of the chariot officer Ranefer who, having demolished a smaller house to its foundations, built a newer and larger one on top.<sup>20</sup> He did this in the reign of Akhenaten's successor king. As for Pa-aha, his inscribed jar was found beside a tiny

<sup>18</sup> Davies 1905, 43–44, Pl. XLI

<sup>19</sup> Newton 1924, 293

<sup>20</sup> Kemp 2016

house built against the enclosure wall of one of the large estates (Q44.1) which must have originally been built for one of Amarna's elite. Newton listed instances from the main house itself of minor alterations<sup>21</sup> but, of course, we have no means of knowing when they were carried out within the life-history of the house. We should, however, bear in mind the possibility that Pa-aha was living in the main house, perhaps a descendant of the original owner or even the original owner himself (now with changed views and a title more in accord with the times). After all, only forty years separated the death of Akhenaten from a date mid-way through the reign of Seti I.

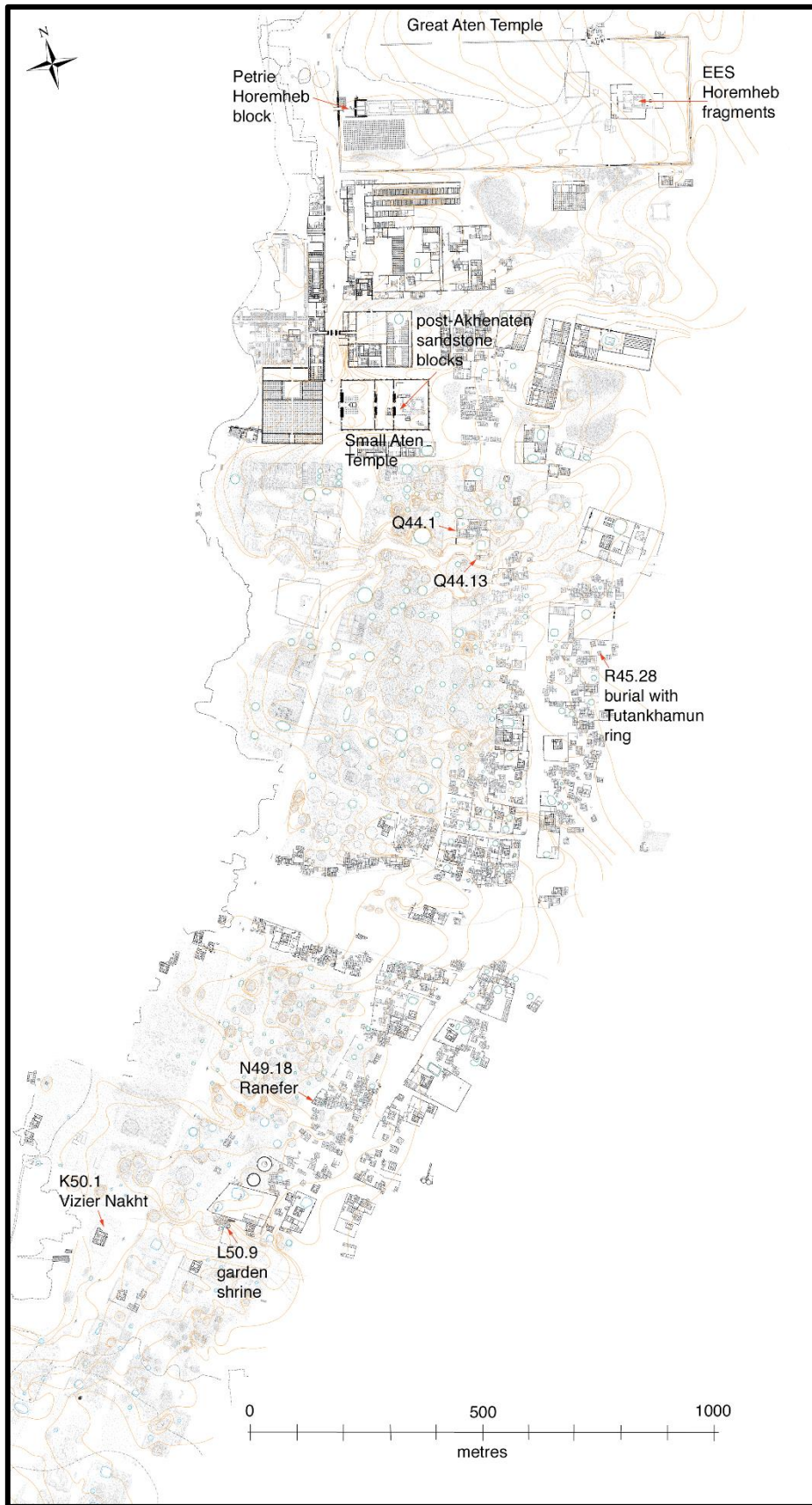


**Figure 20:** Garden shrine L50.9. Plan of the front room following excavation in 2020. Original plan by Juan Friedrichs.

The fact that, within the broader area of the Main City (lying south of the Central City), so far only Ranefer's house exemplifies the common ancient practice of building new houses on the foundations of older ones brings home how the energy which sustains settlements had drained away. The royal court had withdrawn from Amarna, taking with it the wealthy elite whose position in society brought them a responsibility to be generous to their dependents. Gone also would have been the imports that had supported the city's way of life. People had lowered their expectations and were making the best use of what had survived rather than building anew.

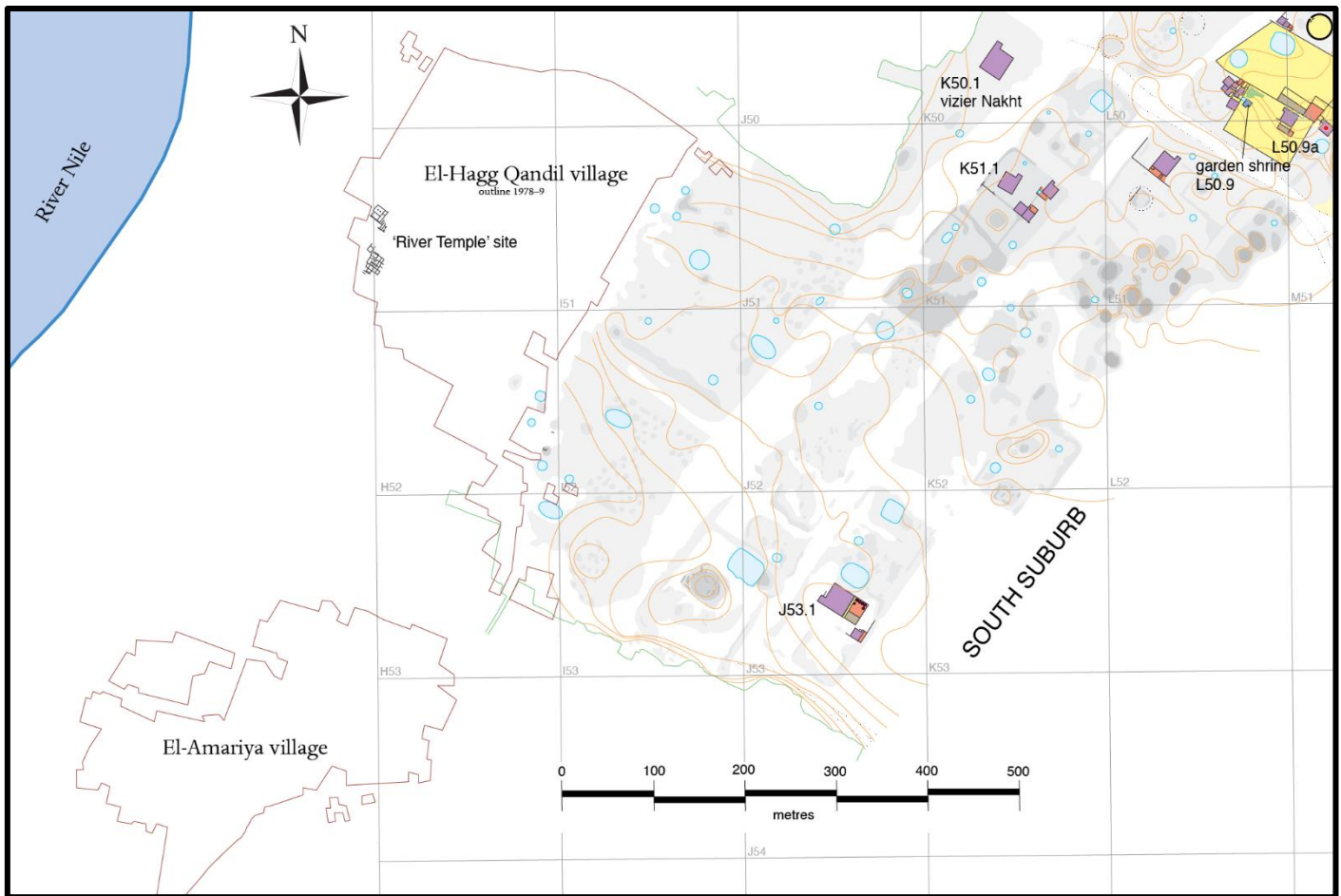
<sup>21</sup> Newton 1924, 292–293



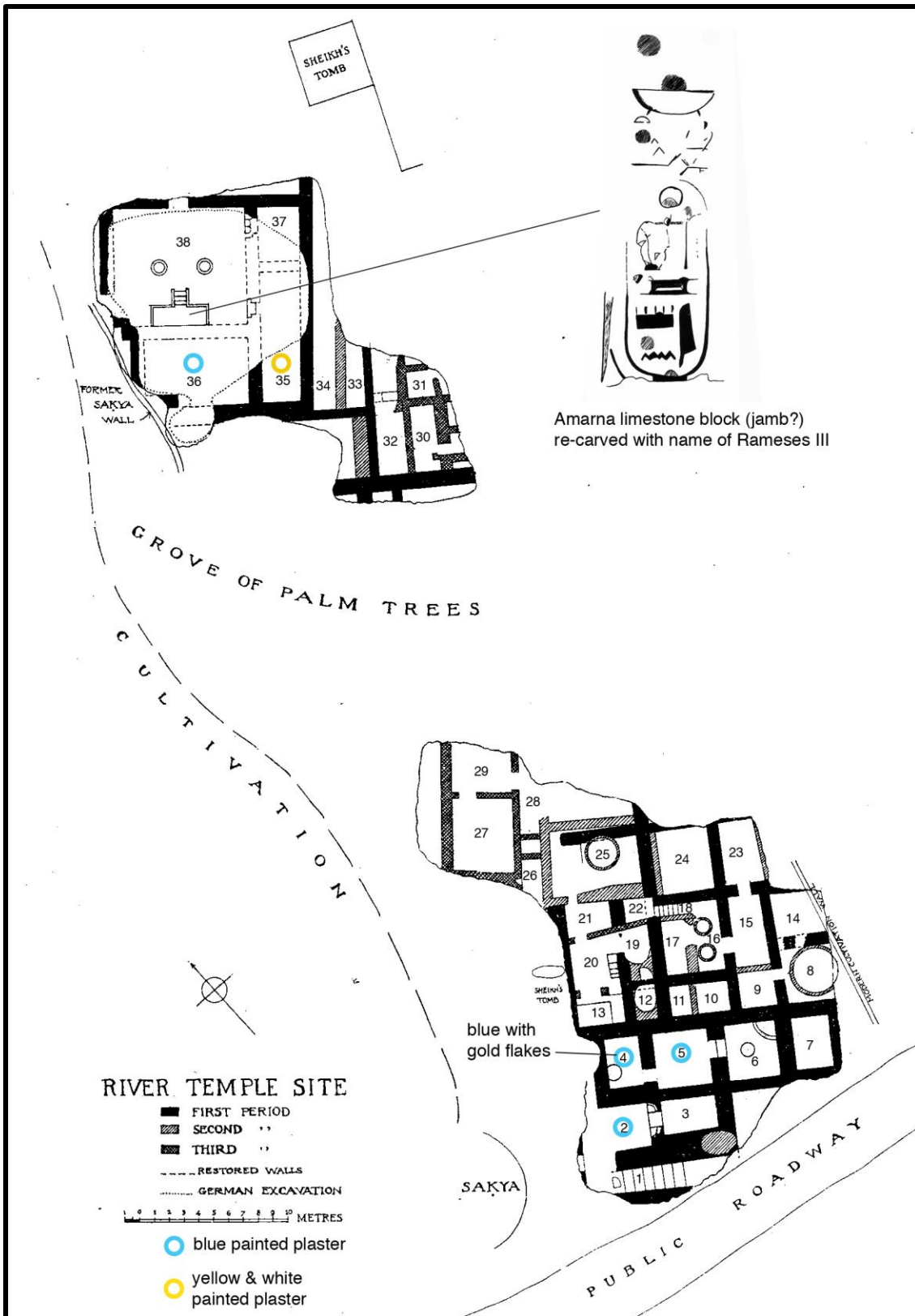


**Figure 21:** Map of the Main City and Central City showing places referred to in the text.

Although it is probably misleading to apply the term 'squatters' to those who stayed on, we should still look for signs of minor alterations of the kind which Newton had begun to list. One likely example came to light during foundation work in 2020 for an extension to the antiquities magazine beside our own southern expedition house which occupies part of the enclosure of the Amarna-Period house L50.9a. The digging uncovered the foundations of a mud-brick garden shrine first excavated and planned in 1924, during the season directed by F. Ll. Griffith (it has the number L50.9). The excavation had been rapid, and the plan of the shrine limited to a basic outline of its walls. Our own examination revealed that, after the walls of the shrine had begun to decay to the extent that bricks were falling to the ground, someone had developed a small garden in the front room of the shrine, below the level of its original brick floor (Figures 19, 20). The garden included a single circular bed of dark soil, suitable for a shrub or small tree. It had been watered, allowing the soil to develop drying cracks. Was this an attempt to maintain a small memorial garden?



**Figure 22:** Map of the southern part of the ancient city and the area of the modern village of El-Hagg Qandil, which covers the main part of the town of which the 'River Temple' site is a remnant. The main outlines show what was visible in the late 1970s, although the grey areas derive from aerial photographs of 1923. These areas have subsequently been largely lost beneath an extension to the modern cemetery which serves the village.



**Figure 23:** Plan of the 'River Temple' site by Francis Newton, with copy of the re-used Rameses III block added. After Peet and Woolley 1923, Pls. XLI, LVIII.157.



House L50.9a lies 1.5 km (about a mile) south of Q44.1 (Figure 21). The surface of the intervening ground is covered with a much greater density of sherds than is found, for example, in the area south of L50.9a (the South Suburb) or in the North Suburb. This could be a sign of a longer period of occupation. Yet with so much pottery and an abundance of small finds in and on top of the ground in this part of Amarna, why has it not been obvious that people were living here for some years, even some decades, after Akhenaten's death? The most useful type of find for Amarna's chronology is the cheaply made and easily breakable faience finger ring bearing on its flat upper surface the prenomen of a king. Also common at Amarna are the hard, almost indestructible small pottery moulds from which they were cast. Although rings, including those made in bronze, continued to be made and used, these particular lightweight and fragile versions in faience seem to have been a short-lived fashion extending no later than the reign of Tutankhamun (and they were perhaps mainly popular only in places where the royal court was established). The absence of rings with the names Horemheb or Seti I is no evidence at all. As for the pottery, the jar which Newton found in Q44.13 is a very common one in the standard repertoire of pots used in the city. If it had not been inscribed and borne its cartouches it would have called for no comment. It is known (particularly from the 'River Temple' site, see below) that parts of Amarna were, in fact, occupied for long enough for an overall change in the styles of pottery to have taken place. There is as yet, however, insufficient evidence to establish how late in the New Kingdom, and over what interval, the change took place<sup>22</sup> (see further below).

A place which helps us to evaluate Main City house Q44.1 and the society which developed at Amarna after the end of the Amarna Period (however one defines it) is the 'River Temple' (a probable misnomer; Figure 22). It was the subject of a brief excavation in the 1922 season of the Egypt Exploration Society's work at Amarna, the director being C. Leonard Woolley (better known for his later work in Mesopotamia/Iraq). The site had already been discovered by the Borchardt expedition from before the First World War. It lay on the edge of, and partly underneath, the village of El-Hagg Qandil and seems to have stood on a low mound of sand. Two adjacent but separate areas (north and south) were excavated (Figure 23).<sup>23</sup> Together they illustrate the kind of self-organised dynamic of long-term human settlement which one might have expected to see more obviously in the Main City.

The most striking discovery, which gave rise to the name 'River Temple', was part of a building in the north area. It has the plan of a house where the principal room (no. 38) was on the ground floor. The room measured c. 8 x 9 m. Two limestone columns had supported the roof (Figure 24). The capital of one had survived (though broken) and would have brought dignity to the room (Figure 25). Behind the columns had

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<sup>22</sup> Rose 2007, 6 comments on this

<sup>23</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 125–134; also Kemp 1995, 446–448

stood a dais reached by a short flight of steps. The surfaces of the dais had been clad in slabs and other pieces of limestone. Those around the sides had been cut specially with the design of a shallow cornice. Those on the top were a mixture of slabs and re-used pieces of column. One of the slabs had originally served as a block (perhaps a door jamb) from an Amarna building. Its surface had subsequently been reworked and the name of Rameses III carved into it.<sup>24</sup> There is a contrast between the facing of well-carved sides and the roughness of the stones which covered the top. The explanation could be that the stones on the top formed a firm foundation for a layer of mud plaster which would have been either painted or have borne a layer of painted gypsum plaster and on which a throne would have stood. This part of the building would thus have been a throne room not necessarily for a king but for a high official either when visiting or because he lived here. We might even possess the name of one of the officials who lived either in this house or another in the vicinity. Woolley (using notes and transcriptions by Battiscombe Gunn) published a fragment which looks as though it comes from a limestone door lintel (Figure 26),<sup>25</sup> with the comments: 'This stone was brought to us by a native of the place, who stated that it was found at the River-Temple site. It is not earlier than the XIXth Dynasty.' The owner's name was too eroded to be read fully but he had the title 'overseer of works', and was accompanied by his wife Mut-tu(y).



**Figure 24:** *Photograph of the northern area of the 'River Temple' site, viewed to the south-west. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.22.0102. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.*

<sup>24</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 160, Pl. LVIII.157

<sup>25</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 160, Pl. XXXV.2

Another sign that we are in the presence of a high-status residence is that several of the rooms (rooms 2, 4, 5, 35, 36), spread across both areas, had been decorated with blue-painted mud plaster, either on the walls or ceiling. In Room 4 gold leaf had been applied as well. Part of Woolley's description of Room 5 reads: 'Against the wall, low down, fragments of blue-painted mud plaster, and of inscriptions in very fine white plaster applied to a mud-brick surface, the characters partly moulded, partly finished by hand (very fragmentary)'.<sup>26</sup> The initial testing of the ground (not specifically over the site of the main building) had turned up 'quantities of mud brick bearing traces of blue paint'.<sup>27</sup> This evidence recalls the excavation of the house of the vizier Nakht at Amarna, located c. 700 m away. Its reception room (North Loggia, room 3), 'a hall of noble proportions', had a 'ceiling of a brilliant blue' whilst another of its columned rooms, the 'West Loggia' (room 9) had a 'blue-painted ceiling'.<sup>28</sup>



**Figure 25:** Limestone column capital modelled on palm leaves. It appears in Peet and Woolley 1923, 128, Pl. XLII.3 and had been left at the old EES expedition house. It is now in the antiquities magazine attached to the same house.



**Figure 26:** Piece of a limestone door lintel depicting the heads of a man ('overseer of works') and wife. Said to be from the 'River Temple' site, Peet and Woolley 1923, 160, Pl. XXXV.3, object no. 22/606. Probably Ramesside. Present whereabouts unknown. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.22.0199. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.

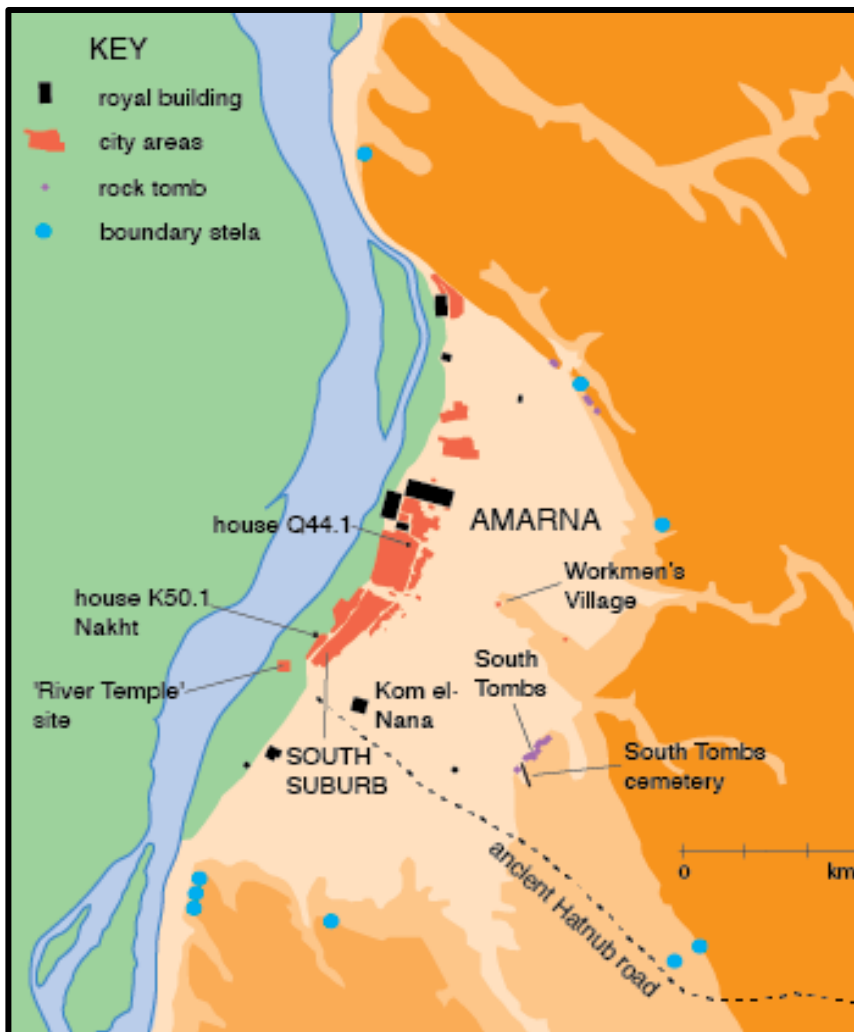
Woolley comments on the amount of broken and re-used decorated stonework of the 'Akhenaten period' which was scattered through the site. 'Fragmentary though the inscriptions were, it can safely be said that they were not of the sort which we find in the ordinary house-ruins of the city... This building may have been a palace; it is far

<sup>26</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 131

<sup>27</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 125

<sup>28</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 5, 7; also 42, and 44 where a 'rich blue' ceiling is given to the 'Central Hall', room 8





**Figure 27:** Map of the Amarna area showing places of interest to the later development of the Amarna town.

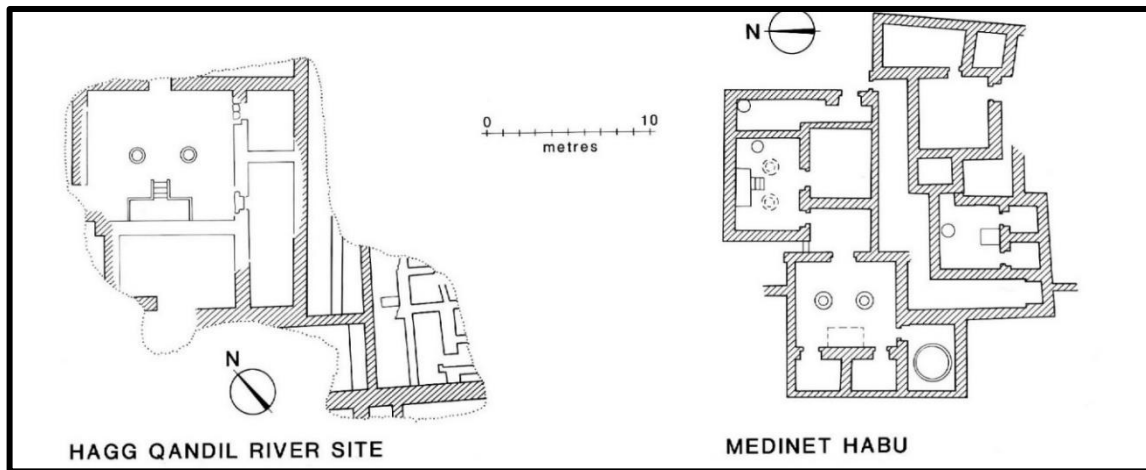
more likely to have been a temple'.<sup>29</sup> When Woolley wrote this it would not have yet been apparent that it is an almost invariable rule that Amarna stone buildings, even when relatively small, stood on a thick foundation layer of gypsum concrete. Nothing like this was found within the excavation areas. We should consider these, however, as a tiny portion of a much larger settlement, perhaps extending over much of the ground now covered by the village of El-Hagg Qandil (Figure 22) and joining the eroded remains which emerge along the village's east side (an area now mostly destroyed by the development of the modern cemetery). The area is sufficiently large to have contained the gypsum-concrete foundations for a stone building of moderate

size. On the other hand, the 'River Temple' site stands in a place where the old road coming in from the Hatnub quarries must have met the river bank (Figure 27). It could have served transport boats since the Old Kingdom (a few Old Kingdom objects have been found at Kom el-Nana which stood close to the road) and could have been one of the places from which blocks from recently demolished buildings at Amarna were shipped to places where they would be re-used. If this were so, the inevitable breakage from handling the blocks would explain the number of fragments scattered within the 'River Temple' buildings.

The 'River Temple' main building (and the other buildings which Woolley marks as of the first period) were built on the natural sandy ground. Over most of the excavated area, however, later walls had been built in or over them, providing a small lesson in how archaeological mounds build up over time, in the process of *tell*-formation. The

<sup>29</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 127

main building (Rooms 36–38), however, seems to have escaped this process so that, late in its history, the throne room stood at a lower level than the surrounding rooms. In Room 25 Woolley recorded 'five distinct floor-levels', the highest 1.75 m above the lowest. In Room 27 three floor-levels were distinguishable, the third 1.80 m above the lowest. We need not be surprised that a house plan that resembles that of a classic Amarna house should have survived for so long (as much as two centuries or even more). The plan reappears in the town that grew up around the mortuary temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu (Figure 28).<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 28:** *Left: the large house in the northern exposure of the 'River Temple' site compared to (right) a group of houses belonging to the town that grew up around the mortuary temple of Rameses III, Medinet Habu and dated to the late Twentieth Dynasty or later. Both are at the same scale. After Kemp 1995, 447, Figure 15.24.*

Borchardt's excavations had removed the fill and some of the walls from the centre of the main building so that we have no record of what it contained. In the adjacent Room 35, part of which had not been so damaged, Woolley comments: 'There were two floor-levels, the upper of laid bricks, the lower of beaten mud: between these were the sherds of numerous amphorae, painted blue all over, of XIX–XXth Dynasty type'.<sup>31</sup> For the first two seasons at Amarna, the Egypt Exploration Society expedition had a staff member (P.L.O. Guy) devoted largely to creating a new pottery corpus and to recording the pottery as it was found. The 'River Temple' produced quantities of pottery, including potsherds which can be seen in the site photographs perched in heaps on the tops of walls (though sadly it seems that time did not allow for all of it to be studied, Rose 2007, 170). Woolley's report (which must have incorporated notes on individual find-places made by Guy) recognised that the pottery covered a period extending from the time of Akhenaten to later dynasties (specifically the XXVIth: 'all the sherds in this heap which could be dated at all were of definitely XXVIth Dynasty types').<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> For the location see Kemp 2018, 362, Figure 8.17, not far from Medinet Habu's First Pylon

<sup>31</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 133; also 129

<sup>32</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 129

Guy had worked during both the 1921 and 1922 seasons and so had participated in the excavations in the Main City (including the house of Ranefer) and the Workmen's Village as well as the 'River Temple'. The 'River Temple' pottery included many types which were familiar from the Main City and Workmen's Village and could be assumed, therefore, to date to the main period of occupation of the city, thus the reign of Akhenaten and immediately following years. Also found at the 'River Temple' were types which had not been met with elsewhere at Amarna and were 'therefore not definitely datable to the Akhenaten period'.<sup>33</sup> Someone, whether Guy or not is not stated, felt confident to ascribe some of the vessels to the XXVIth Dynasty but without giving reasons. In the century that has elapsed since then, detailed pottery studies have still found it difficult to track the changes in pottery characteristics through the New Kingdom into later dynasties with sufficient clarity to be helpful here.<sup>34</sup> But two sets of data from Amarna have also become available although they seem to add to the difficulty of understanding what was going on at Amarna in the centuries following the Amarna Period.

One dataset (a large one) derives from huge quantities of potsherds which lie in front of many of the South Tombs and are clearly dumps from an excavation at the end of the 19th century AD.<sup>35</sup> The potsherds have been dated with some confidence to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty.<sup>36</sup> The quantities (and the vessels are largely for storage) suggest that the tombs were used as places for the storage of commodities since they seem far to exceed what one would expect from burials although later burials were apparently also made in the South Tombs. Were the people responsible living at the 'River Temple' settlement? The second dataset comprises sherds, sometimes re-used as tools, found in low numbers in the Main City (specifically the group of small houses in Grid 12, adjacent to the house of Ranefer).<sup>37</sup> The pottery characteristics are similar to those from the South Tombs and so indicate a date around the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. These sherds, from their fabric (marl clay) and profile, are distinctive and readily identifiable. The problem here is that far more vessels at this time were made from Nile silt and, when broken into sherds, become difficult to distinguish from Nile-silt pots made in the late Eighteenth Dynasty. At this time insufficient study has been made of the full quantities of sherds from Grid 12 to know if such sherds are present. We could, as a consequence, be underestimating the amount of post-New Kingdom activity in the Main City although it might not have amounted to people regularly living here and certainly not to building new houses, as happened at the 'River Temple' site.

Hierarchies frequently express themselves through burials. Where should we look for burials from the community to which Pa-aha belonged and from the inhabitants of the

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<sup>33</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 137

<sup>34</sup> Aston 1996, 43; and Rose 2007, 6

<sup>35</sup> Davies 1906, 10–11

<sup>36</sup> French 1986

<sup>37</sup> Kemp and Stevens 2010, II, 57–65



'River Temple' settlement? We know from the cemetery excavations at Amarna that began in 2006 that thousands of Amarna's people were buried there, mostly in cemeteries in the desert. The largest was the South Tombs Cemetery located in a narrow valley the mouth of which lies towards the southern end of the group of rock tombs which we know as the South Tombs. Partly through robbery in ancient times and partly through a widespread decline in the practice of providing the dead with grave goods it is not possible to distinguish burials that were made during the reigns of Akhenaten and his immediate successors and putative burials that might have been made later still, into the Nineteenth Dynasty and even beyond. The South Tombs themselves became a place for burials: 'Large numbers of coffins were, I believe, found by the first excavators, many being burnt and others removed to Cairo. No notes of this Departmental undertaking have been published'.<sup>38</sup> For the tomb of Ay (no. 25) Davies remarks that 'it was not fully cleared till 1893, and till 1883 was filled with later (New Kingdom?) burials and an enormous mass of broken sherds';<sup>39</sup> for the tomb of May (no. 14): 'the state of the walls and columns seems also to show that at some time when the hall was filled with confined mummies a fierce fire broke out in this inflammable material; for a foetid atmosphere seems hardly able to account for the appearance of the tomb, and some of the bones recently thrown out are certainly calcined, but whether by the excavators or no I cannot say'.<sup>40</sup> The most useful comment concerns tomb 16: 'Professor Petrie, in a note, describes Tomb 16 as containing "burials in palm-sticks, coffins, etc.," and this was also the case doubtless in the other tombs. Most of these remains were destroyed, I believe, by the excavators; but some probably were taken to Cairo, and may yet be identified and dated'.<sup>41</sup>

The 'burials in palm-sticks' are a characteristic of the Amarna-Period burials in the various cemeteries excavated in recent years, including those in the South Tombs Cemetery. The South Tombs Cemetery, as excavated since 2006, extends from its south-easternmost graves (as revealed by excavation) to a notional line across the wadi mouth, which is not far from the modern track which links the rock tombs.<sup>42</sup> Surface occurrences of human bones do, however, extend for some way across this line to the north-west, away from the wadi mouth, and also around the end of the wadi on the south, toward and in front of the tomb of Ay (the two burials beside marker 9 had the remains of stick coffins although they were not recognised as such at the time).<sup>43</sup> This raises the possibility that there was a time in the past when a cemetery

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<sup>38</sup> Davies 1906, 10–11; French 1986, 147, n. 1

<sup>39</sup> Davies 1908b, 16

<sup>40</sup> Davies 1908a, 1

<sup>41</sup> Davies 1908a, 14, note; Petrie's 'note' is not a quotation from his monograph on Amarna but, I assume, one written in a personal letter to Davies

<sup>42</sup> Kemp, et al., 2013

<sup>43</sup> Kemp 2005, 22–24

servicing the southern part of the ancient city extended down the wadi (which we have called the South Tombs Cemetery) across the plain in front, around both ends of the wadi and taking in the rock tombs themselves at a time after their original owners were no longer present but before some of them became inaccessible owing to rapid sand accumulation in front of their entrances (a factor which is not present at the North Tombs). Tomb 16, which Petrie claimed had contained 'burials in palm-sticks', is the tomb which is most prone to the rapid burial of its doorway which is below the level of the surrounding desert. The use of the cemetery could therefore have continued without a break from the Amarna Period to the Late Period. As Davies notes in several places, for the time when the rock tombs were being extensively used almost all of the evidence was destroyed by the late-19th century 'archaeologists' employed to clean and examine them.

A few burials in wooden coffins had also been made inside the Workmen's Village, as described thus:

'in the Eastern Village we came upon plundered coffins of, approximately, the XXII<sup>nd</sup> or XXIII<sup>rd</sup> Dynasty. There was nothing to explain their presence, but the tombs from which they had been carried cannot have been far from the village, and were probably some of those late tombs which the Germans dug in the next valley'.<sup>44</sup> In the house Main Street 4, living-room: 'Against the north wall, 0.40 m. above the divan, was a painted wooden anthropoid sarcophagus, lidless and empty, tilted up on its side: date probably XXII<sup>nd</sup> or XXIII<sup>rd</sup> Dynasty' (Figure 29).<sup>45</sup> In the living-room of the house next door (Main Street 3) we read: 'Along the west half of the north wall was found a plain wooden box coffin, length 1.79 m. It was much broken, and contained only a human rib and some fragments of linen'.<sup>46</sup> Another photograph taken at the same time (Figure 30) shows an anthropoid coffin lid in a similar location. The photographic register for the year ascribes it also to Main Street house 4, adding 'after sides had been removed from above it' (a statement that makes it hard to visualise what actions the robbers had taken). These are not coffins which have been brought from somewhere else but lie where they were originally placed, within rooms in the old houses which must have been filled with rubble. Another burial was within an elaborately painted wooden coffin in a pit grave beside the Main Chapel, the side wall of which was still standing when the burial was made (Figures 31, 32). When the wall fell outwards the brickwork covered the location of the pit. The coffin and its decoration display many characteristics of coffins of the Ramesside Period and Twenty-first Dynasty.<sup>47</sup> This date seems consistent with the group of five pottery vessels found within the grave pit'.<sup>48</sup>

Whilst writing an earlier version of this paper (the one that appears in *Horizon* issue 22) I remembered that, at the end of the New Kingdom, the community of workmen who lived at Deir el-Medina moved to live in the town at Western Thebes which

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<sup>44</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 129; but are they referring to p. 51: 'Actually there are graves in the *wādī* just to the north and one or two on the hill crest, and the German excavators in 1907 opened a few of these and reported that the burial furniture in them belonged to the time of the New Kingdom'?

<sup>45</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 76; also plan Pl. XVI

<sup>46</sup> Peet and Woolley 1923, 76

<sup>47</sup> Taylor and Boyce 1986

<sup>48</sup> Rose 1986

clustered around what was left of Rameses III's mortuary temple at Medinet Habu.<sup>49</sup> I wondered if something similar had happened at Amarna. Did the community which occupied the Workmen's Village resettle somewhere in the Main City at Amarna, perhaps joining the workforce needed to demolish the stone buildings, or in the 'River Temple' town? They retained a memory of how their families had once lived in the village and wished to be buried in a place to which they had a sentimental-cum-spiritual attachment.



**Figure 29:** *The coffin box that lay above the wooden lid (Figure 30) in Workmen's Village, Main Street, house 4, central room. Traces of decoration are visible. The excavators dated it to the Twenty-second or Twenty-third Dynasty. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.22.0038. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.*



**Figure 30:** *Lid of the wooden coffin shown in Figure 29. It lay beneath the coffin box. EES Amarna archive photo TA.NEG.22.0039. Courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society.*

Would family memories have extended this far (the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties represent a duration of more than two centuries)? The possibility should not be dismissed. One means by which people could preserve a link between themselves and former generations was ownership documents covering plots of land. The case of the high official Mose (Mes) is a good illustration of memory anchored through legal documents stored in official archives. Mose recorded a dispute over ownership of a piece of land which had been given long before to an ancestor ('the overseer of ships, Neshi') in the reign of King Ahmose (c. 1549–1524 BC). It was possible for members of the family as late as the reign of Rameses II to appeal to documents, both official and held privately, which gave names and notes on episodes in the dispute, which had begun at least 300 years before the time of Mose. This is a longer span of time than separates our nameless owner of the painted coffin from the time when the Workmen's Village was occupied. We cannot prove a link, but neither should we ignore the extensive and largely invisible connections, both over time and through geography, which governed the lives of individual Egyptians.

<sup>49</sup> Davies 2018, 1–3

In the history of Amarna, as widely viewed, the death of Akhenaten was followed by the swift rejection of his legitimacy as Pharaoh and equally swift abandonment of the city, with an allowance made for a delayed demolition of all its stone buildings. The foregoing review of the evidence suggests that the removal of legitimacy from Akhenaten and his close family did indeed happen swiftly but should be separated from how the subsequent regime (particularly that of Horemheb) viewed the Aten and its cult. It actually did so with some degree of favour, although the consequent reprieve for the two main Aten temples proved to be only short-lived. Moreover, events at Amarna at this time by no means left the city devoid of a population which included literate officials. What was written and drawn on 'Mr. Newton's cartouche pot' introduces us to the priest Pa-aha, active in the reign of Sety I and evidently living in a house in the Main City. When it came to the search for help from the gods, he accepted the primacy of Amun-Ra.

For how long a community, probably with limited resources, continued to live in the Main City remains uncertain, particularly on account of inconclusive studies of the pottery record, the most abundant source of archaeological evidence. What does seem clear, however, is that this barely visible population was peripheral

to a town of uncertain extent – represented by the 'River Temple' site – which developed probably close to the river bank at the end of the old direct desert road to the Hatnub quarries. For a while, until sometime after the reign of Rameses III, a residence was maintained which looks as though it served as the base for a senior official, implying a supporting community which included literate scribal subordinates. The people who lived here continued to use and to develop a cemetery which at first lay close to the southern group of rock tombs and eventually invaded them.

The town will have had its own place name (not Akhetaten, for sure). We do have, from the late New Kingdom, a list of places along the Nile Valley, written in south-to-north geographical order, the papyrus known in modern times as the Onomasticon of Amenemope. One of the place names evidently in this section of the Nile and



**Figure 31:** *Undisturbed grave on the north side of the Main Chapel in the Workmen's Village, viewed to the east. The grave pit had been covered by brickwork which had collapsed from the neighbouring wall on the south. The wooden coffin had been carried to the grave suspended by a rope from a long wooden pole. Rope and pole had been left in the grave.*



upstream of El-Ashmunein is Per-sheš, 'House of alabaster'.<sup>50</sup> The name had given rise much later to the Greek place name Alabastronpolis. When J.G. Wilkinson made his survey map of the city of Amarna in 1824 and 1826 Alabastron(polis) was the name he gave the place,<sup>51</sup> and the area of Amarna later became a choice for the location of Per-sheš, for example by Gardiner, the principal editor of the *Onomasticon of Amenemope*. More recently, however, it has been proposed that Per-sheš was located near El-Bersha, the site of alabaster workings and an alabaster quarry used in the New Kingdom.<sup>52</sup> In favour of the 'River Temple' settlement, none the less, is the archaeological evidence of a town having been there at the time when the *Onomasticon* was written, complete with its cemetery, and at the end of an ancient roadway to the Hatnub alabaster quarries.



**Figure 32:** *One of the coffin panels from the grave beside the Main Chapel at the Workmen's Village. Neither the owner's name nor titles have survived. Now in the magazines of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities at El-Asmunein.*

<sup>50</sup> Gardiner 1947, II, \*77–\*79; Kemp 1995, 448

<sup>51</sup> Wilkinson 1827, II, Pl. VI, opp. p. 106; Wilkinson 1878, 349, Pl. VII but by this time uncertain if correct

<sup>52</sup> Willems and Wala' Mustafa Muhammad 2010

Akhenaten's creation of Amarna began a train of events and of unintended consequences. His death and the deaths of his short-reigned successors who were unable to build on his legacy led to the suppression of their legitimacy to rule. The reason seems to have been more to do with the style of Akhenaten's reign and perhaps tensions within the royal family and less to do with the promotion of the Aten and the creation of temples at Amarna to serve it. In the case of the Great Aten Temple, it seems to have offered scope for a participation of the people on a novel scale accompanied by a cautious use of monumental architectural scale. The suppression of legitimacy was to the benefit of Horemheb, who became one of the founding kings of new dynasties.<sup>53</sup> Yet during his reign the two main temples to the Aten, now cleansed of references to Akhenaten and his family, continued to present only the Aten as supreme god.

Late in the reign of Horemheb, perhaps after his death, the experiment to maintain the cult of the Aten at Amarna was dropped and the temples joined all the other stone buildings facing complete demolition and removal of stonework. Even then, in the Nineteenth Dynasty, the Aten remained a key component of the way in which the Egyptians understood how the power of the sun functioned.

By this time also a community of people, including literate officials, had found reason and the means to live on at Amarna, developing a provincial town with a history ahead of it of several centuries. The history of this community deserves to be accepted as a subject of study in its own right.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to Marc Gabolde for his speedy edition of Mr. Newton's cartouche pot and for lively discussions on events following the death of Akhenaten, as well as a critical reading of my text. Stephanie Boonstra, Collections Manager of the Egypt Exploration Society, looked for documentation in the Society's London office. She also, with Kimberley Watt, attempted to pick up the trail of the missing pot in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (with the assistance of Registrar Marwa Mahmoud). In Oxford, the archivist of The Griffith Institute, Elizabeth Fleming, located Griffith's notes and copies of the cartouche pot and agreed to their publication. At the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Liam McNamara had the Horemheb block from Petrie's excavations located and, through Rosanna van den Bogaerde of the Ashmolean Picture Library, arranged for new photographs to be taken. The work of excavation at the Great Aten Temple, which earlier this year unearthed the two blocks which reveal the attempt to keep the Aten cult going after Akhenaten's reign had been proscribed, was partly funded by the Amarna Research Foundation. Heartfelt thanks to all TARF members. We plan to start up again at the temple in September.'

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<sup>53</sup> Phillips 1977

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## The Royal Court at Amarna – Part 4

*David Pepper*

This article completes my discussion of the members of the Royal Court at Amarna. Parts 1, 2, and 3 can be found in the Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Fall 2021 issues of the Akhetaten Sun.

### **RANEFER: Master of Horses**

Ranefer was an officer in charge of the horses and chariots of the king. He probably reported to Ay, Overseer of Horses. Figure 1, of a horse-drawn chariot and its driver, was found in the Great Aten Temple. Not much is known about Ranefer, but he did have a large house at Akhetaten, shown in Figures 2-6. It was built over the foundations of an earlier, smaller, house. On the doorframe of Ranefer's earlier house, he honors his king "Ankhkheperura (Smenkhkare), beloved of Neferkheperura (Akhenaten)." Smenkhkare was probably Akhenaten's co-regent [1].

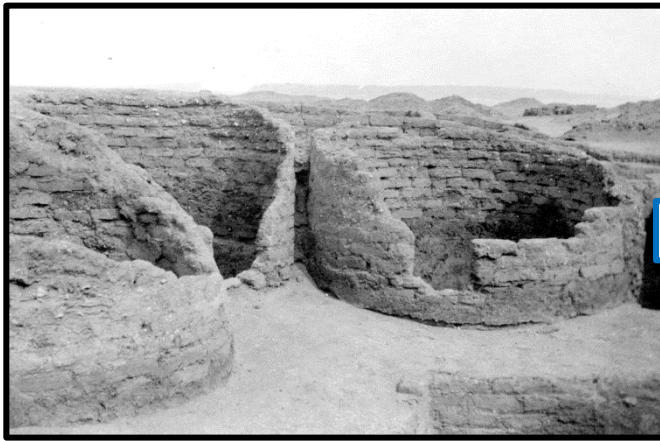


**Figure 1:** *Talatat found in Great Aten Temple, now in New York*

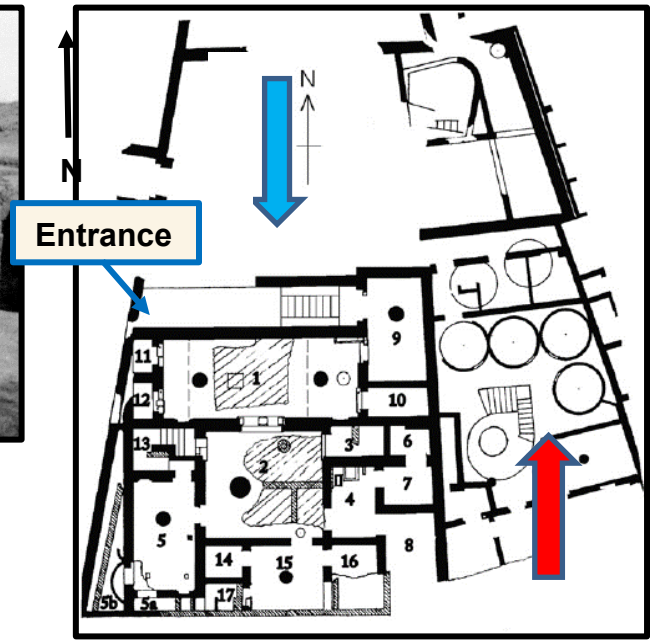


**Figure 2:** *Ranefer's house (1921), blue arrow in Figure 4*

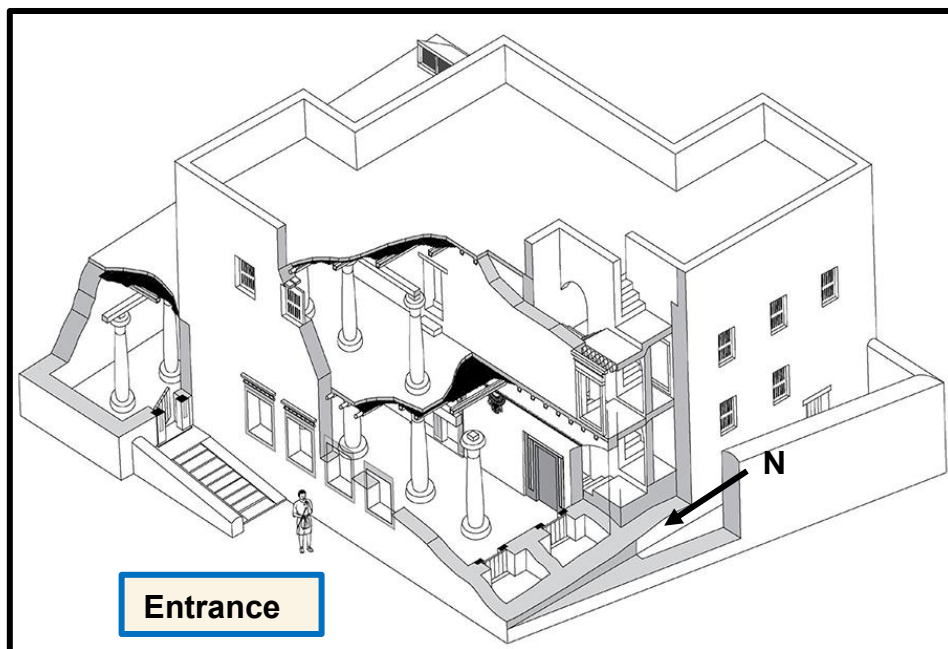




**Figure 3:** Grain storage silos, House of Ranefer, red arrow in Figure 4



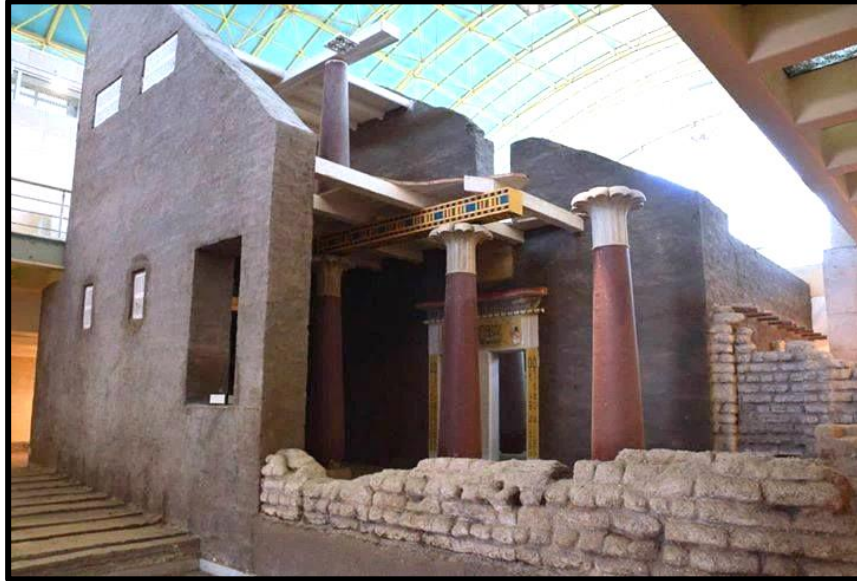
**Figure 4:** Plan of house of Ranefer



**Figure 5:** 3-D Reconstruction of the House of Ranefer, N49.18

Surrounding Ranefer's remodeled house were stone blocks with the cartouche of king Ankhet-kheperu-Ra, meryt wa-en-Ra (who was probably Nefertiti) [2].

Just south of Ranefer's house workshops were found with the remains of glass making. Fireplace kilns in houses M.50.14-16 were set into the ground and lined with fire-baked clay. These workshops were located beside the craftsmen's houses which surrounded the larger Nobles' estates scattered about the city [3].



**Figure 6:** *Reconstruction of Ranefer's House, Amarna Visitor Center*

Petrie, Woolley, and Kemp have all found the remains of glass and faience workshops during their excavations at Amarna [4].

Glass manufacturing requires very hot temperatures in excess of 1,100 degrees C. (2,000 degrees F.), which can be achieved using a leather bellows. Formed glass, however, can be remelted and reworked at somewhat lower temperatures of 800 degrees C. (1,500 degrees F.) using blowpipes, which have often been depicted in tomb scenes of metal-working. To create glass beads, bronze mandrel rods were dipped into melted glass, which was then spun and overlaid with threads of colored glass to achieve beautiful colorful glassware. (Figure 7)



**Figure 7:** *Glass beads, vessels, & rods found by Flinders Petrie at Amarna*

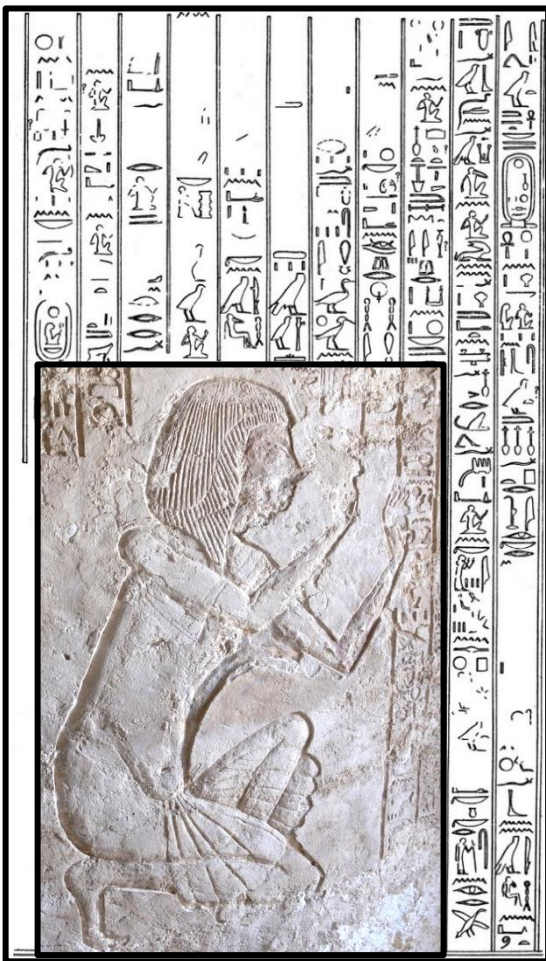


## RAMOSE: General

There were several individuals named Ramose documented in the Amarna Period, including Theban tomb TT55, a vizier of Amenhotep III who lived and served on into the reign of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten).

Tomb TA11's owner, however, was a general named Ramose, whose titles included Commander of the Troops of the Lord of the Two Lands, Royal Scribe, and Steward of the Estate of Nebmaatra (Amenhotep III) (Figures 8-9).

He lived in house P47.19 at Akhetaten, located and shown in Figures 10-13 [5]. General Ramose may have changed his name from Ptahmose, the name he might have been known by during the reign of Amenhotep III [6].



**Figure 8:** *Ramose*



**Figure 9:** *Ramose & wife*

Decoration in his tomb included a prayer, to Nefer-kheperu-ra (Akhenaten's throne name) "the living Sun for all mankind, by whose beauty there is health." (Figure 8)

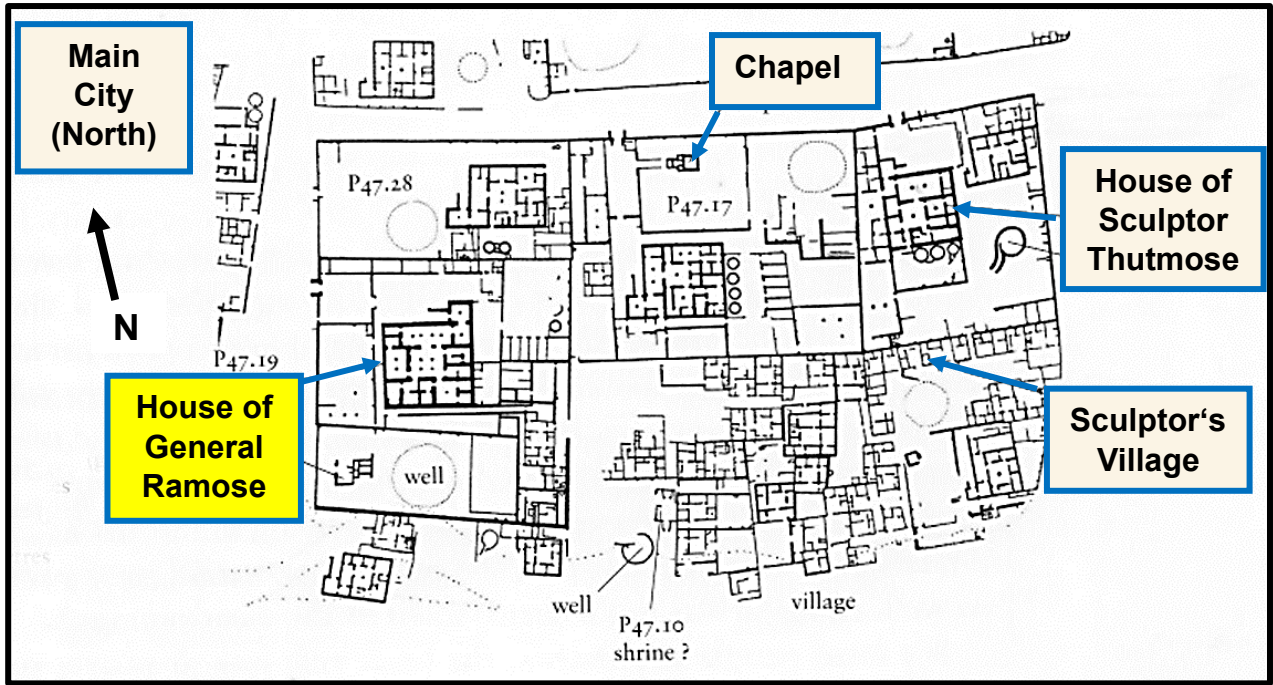


Figure 10: Location of the house of General Ramose, P 47.19

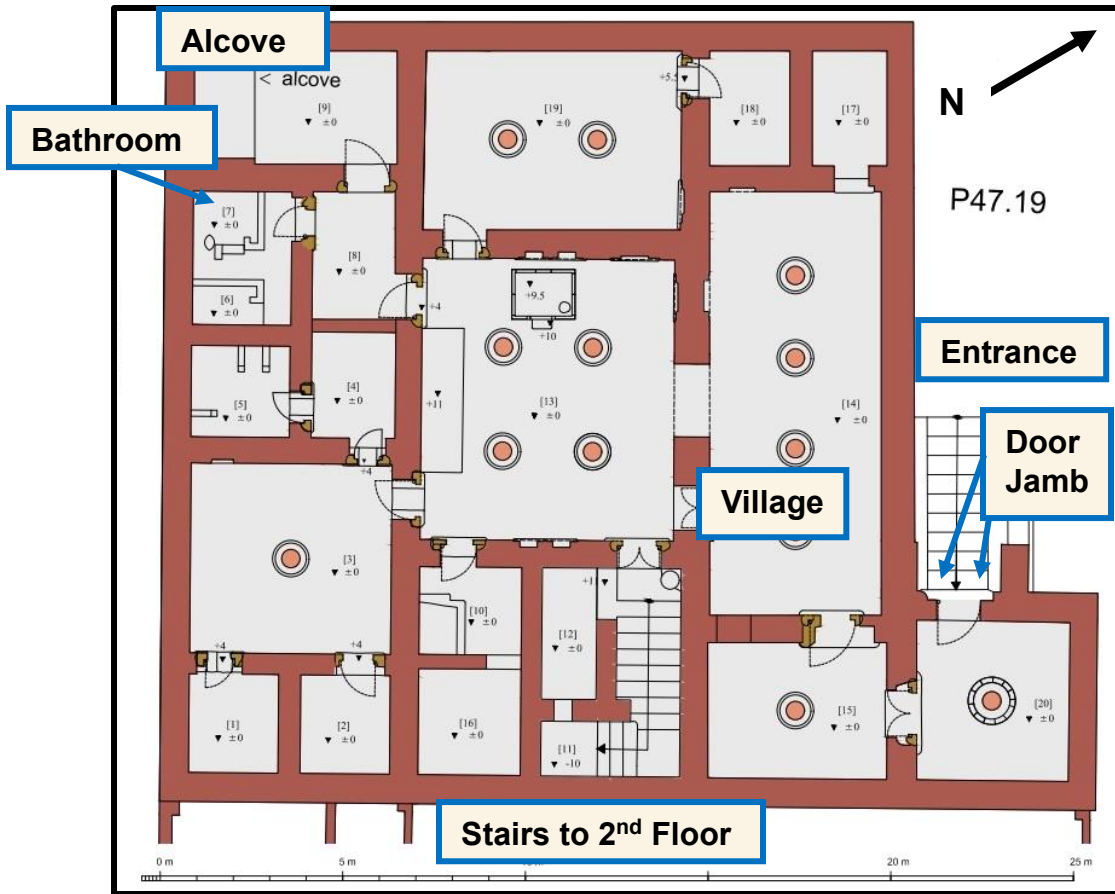
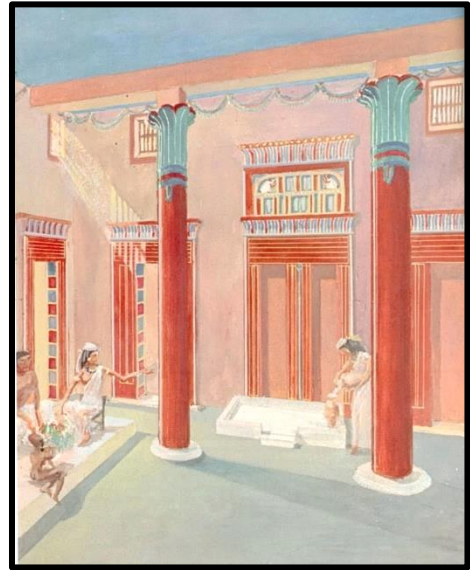


Figure 11: Plan of House of Ramose





**Figure 12** Door jambs naming General Ramose as house's owner

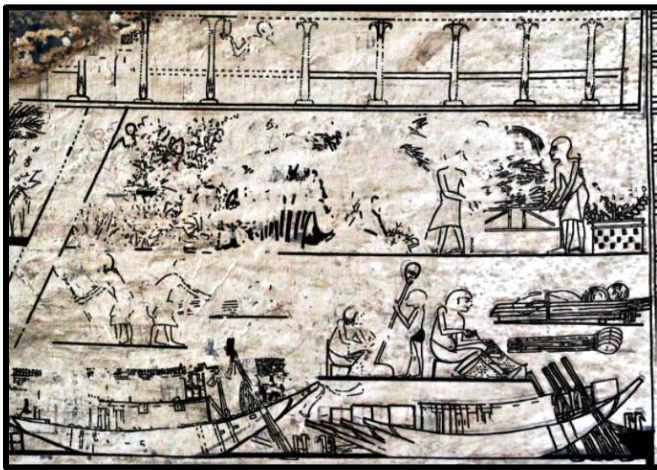


**Figure 13** Reconstruction of the central room of General Ramose's house

## MAY: Steward of the Sehetep-Aten Temple

Some of May's titles included Fan Bearer on the Right Hand of the King, Steward of the House of Sehetep-Aten in Heliopolis, Steward of the House of Waenra in Heliopolis, and Overseer of All Works of the King. As mentioned previously, Stewards were also in charge of the estates supplying the palace and royal residences with food.

May left an unfinished tomb at Akhetaten, TA14, and it wasn't until 1986 that his other tomb was found in Saqqara, dated to the reign of King Horemheb. It seems that he changed his name to Maya during the restoration period under Tutankhamun [7]. Scenes in his tomb are heavily damaged, as shown in Figure 14-15.



**Figure 14** Boats shown in Amarna tomb of May, TA14



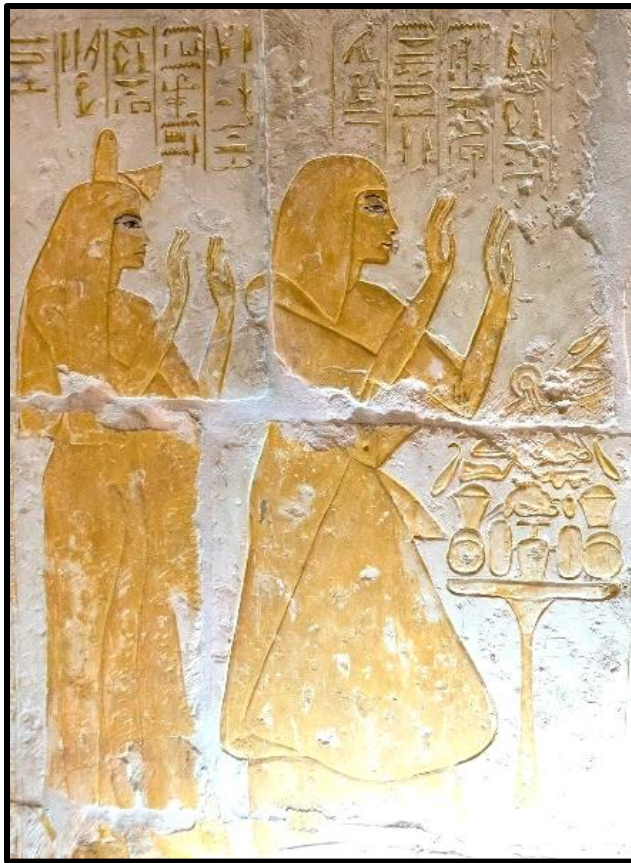
**Figure 15** May's unfinished Amarna tomb





**Figure 16:** *Maya & Meryt worship Osiris, Nut, Isis, and Nephthys*

Figures 16-18 are from Maya's huge tomb at Saqqara [8]. In these images, Maya and his wife Meryt are wearing Amarna-style clothing.



**Figure 17:** *Maya & Meryt adore Osiris & Nephthys*



**Figure 18:** *Meryt & Maya dyad found in the tomb's portico*

## TUTU: Overseer of All Works

Tutu's titles included Overseer of All Works of the King, Chamberlain, Overseer of Silver and Gold, and Chief Servant of the Aten. In his tomb TA8, he's shown praying to the Aten (Figure 19), and then receiving the gold of honor from Akhenaten (Figure 20).

He must have been a favorite of the king as Akhenaten tells his officials, "Pharaoh ordains that all the officials and chief men of the entire land be obliged to give him {i.e. Tutu} silver, gold, cattle, clothing and bronze vessels – they being imposed upon you like taxes." [9]

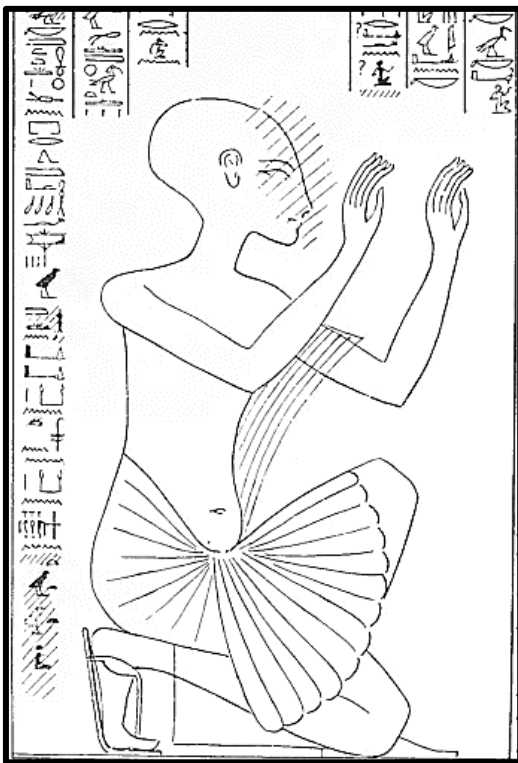


Figure 19: Tutu prays to the Aten

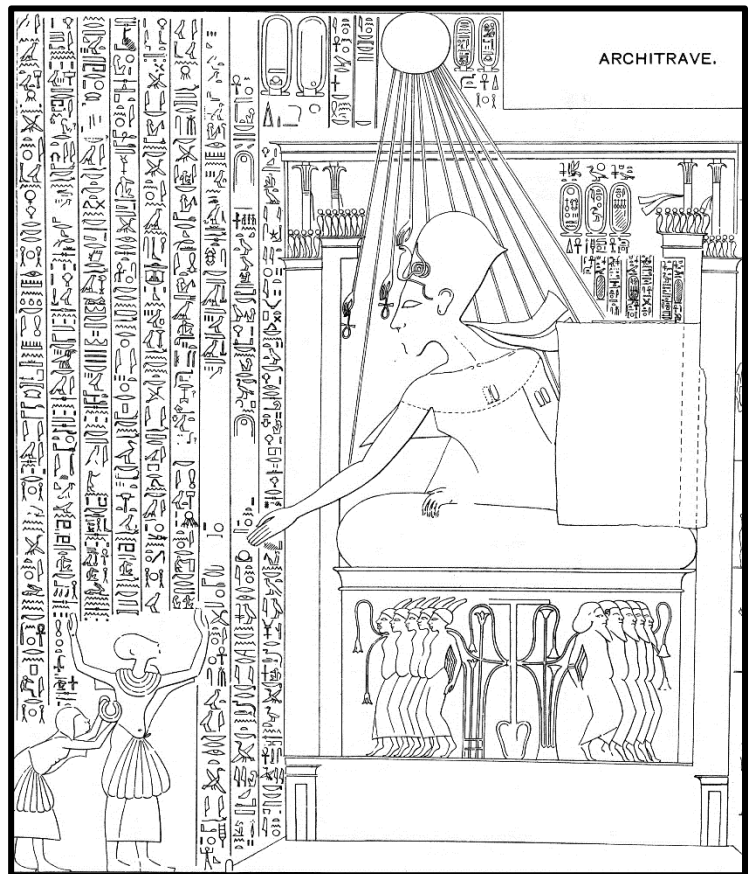


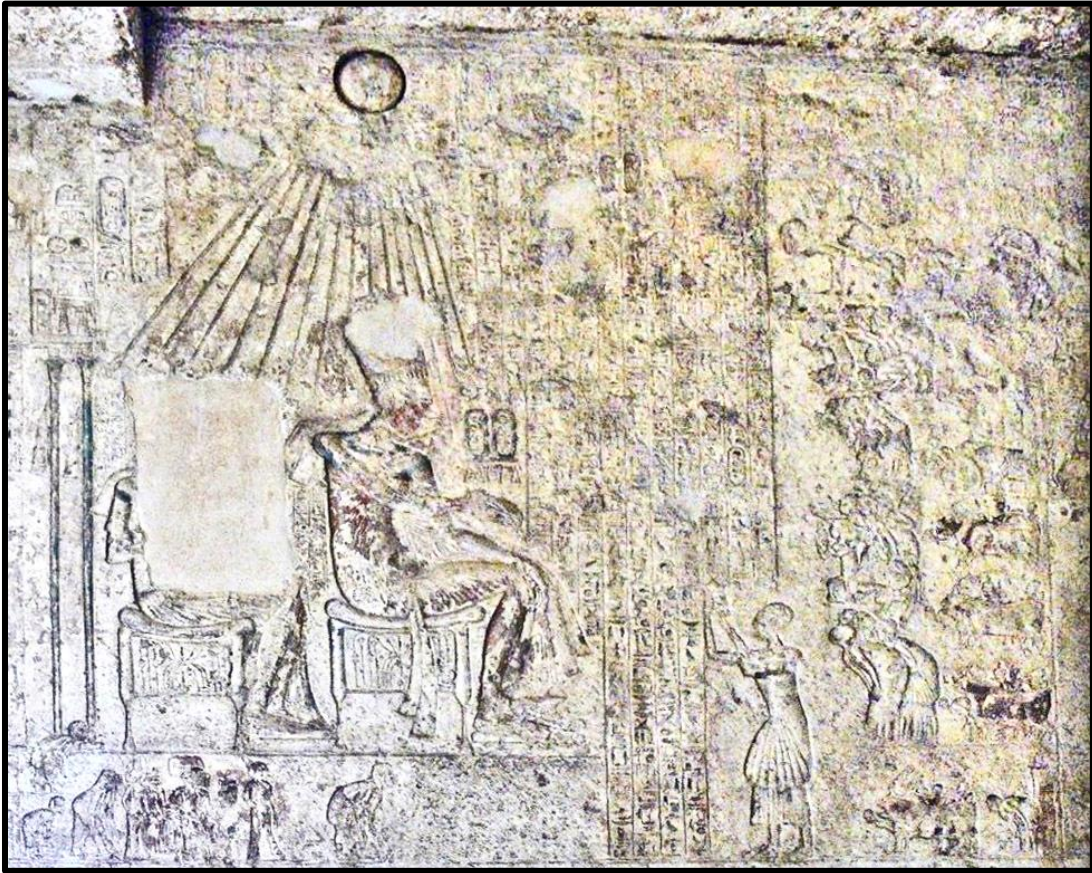
Figure 20: Tutu is rewarded with gold

On his devotion to his king and the Aten, Tutu says: "Maat makes her abode in me. I am not rapacious, I do not do evil, I do nothing which your son (the king) hates. ... My voice is not loud in the king's house. I do not swagger in the palace, I do not receive the reward of wrongdoing in order to repress Maat falsely, but I do what is righteous for the king." [10]

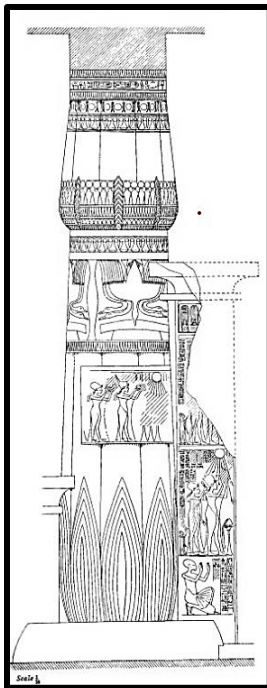
Tutu is also mentioned as a diplomat in Amarna Letter EA 164 from the king of Canaan, Aziru [11].

Tutu's tomb is shown in Figures 21-23.





**Figure 21:** Scene showing Akhenaten (right), Nefertiti was originally on left



**Figure 22:** Tutu's columns



**Figure 23:** Tutu's Amarna tomb



## HATIAY: Chief Builder

Hatiay, Akhenaten's Chief Builder, is known from the discovery of his house, found by Pendlebury in 1932 (T34.1 in the North Suburb). His title was discovered on the door lintel of his house (Figure 24). The lintel, drawn by Hilda Pendlebury (Figure 25), is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

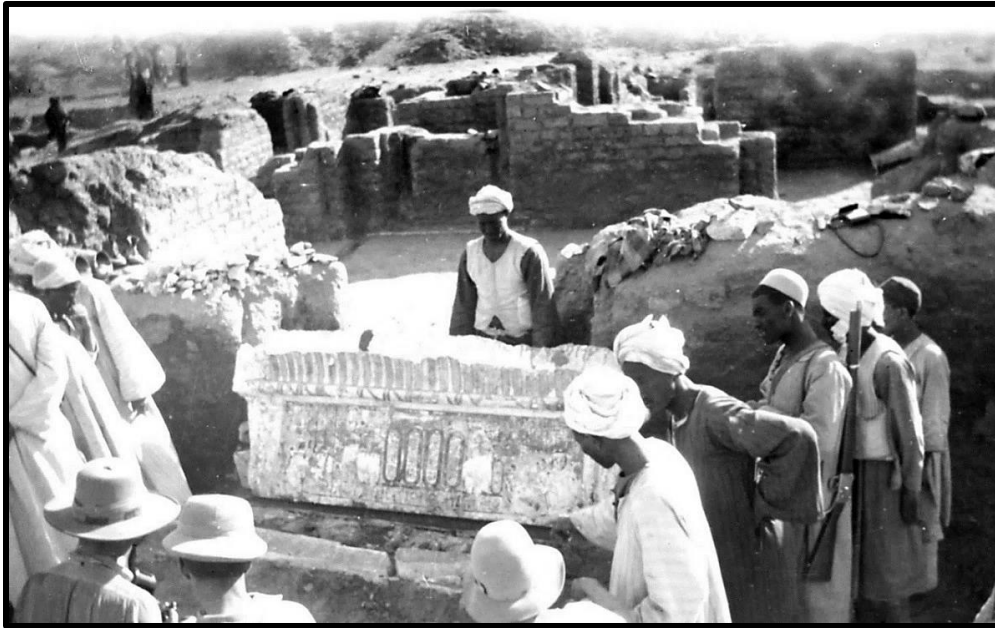


Figure 24: Lintel found while excavating Hatiay's house

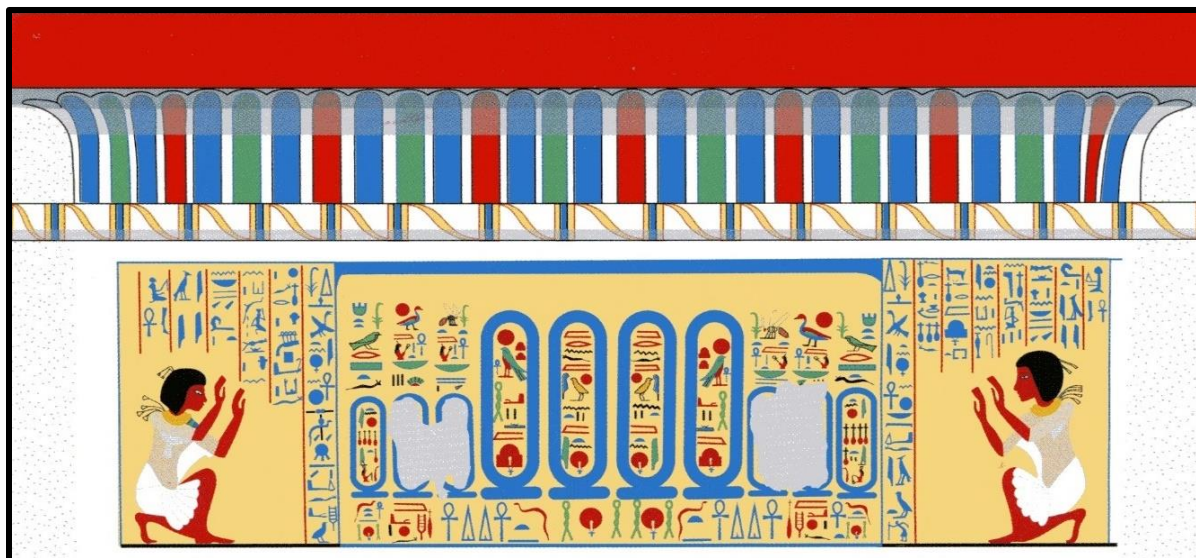


Figure 25: Drawing made of door lintel shown in Figure 24

Much of Amarna was built of mud brick. Temples and important buildings also used stone, quarried locally, and often in the form of talatat blocks (a talatat block is shown in Figure 1). In addition, some stone was used in the homes of wealthier people for floors, doorframes, altars, etc.

Figure 26 is Hatiay's stela, found in Memphis, which shows him venerating Sokar-Osiris (probably after leaving Akhetaten). His son, the wab-priest Ptahmose, stands behind him, and another son, unnamed, stands in front of him wearing a priestly robe.

Figure 27 shows the plan of Hatiay's house (shown in Figure 28), which had a chapel and private altar (Figure 29). Private altars were common in Amarna houses [12].

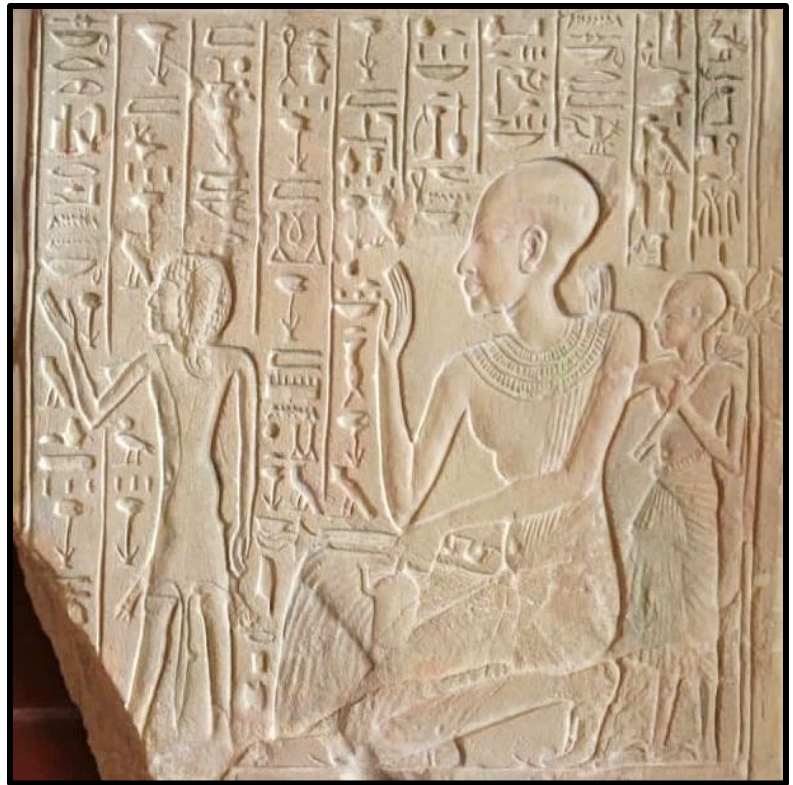


Figure 26 Stela of Hatiay

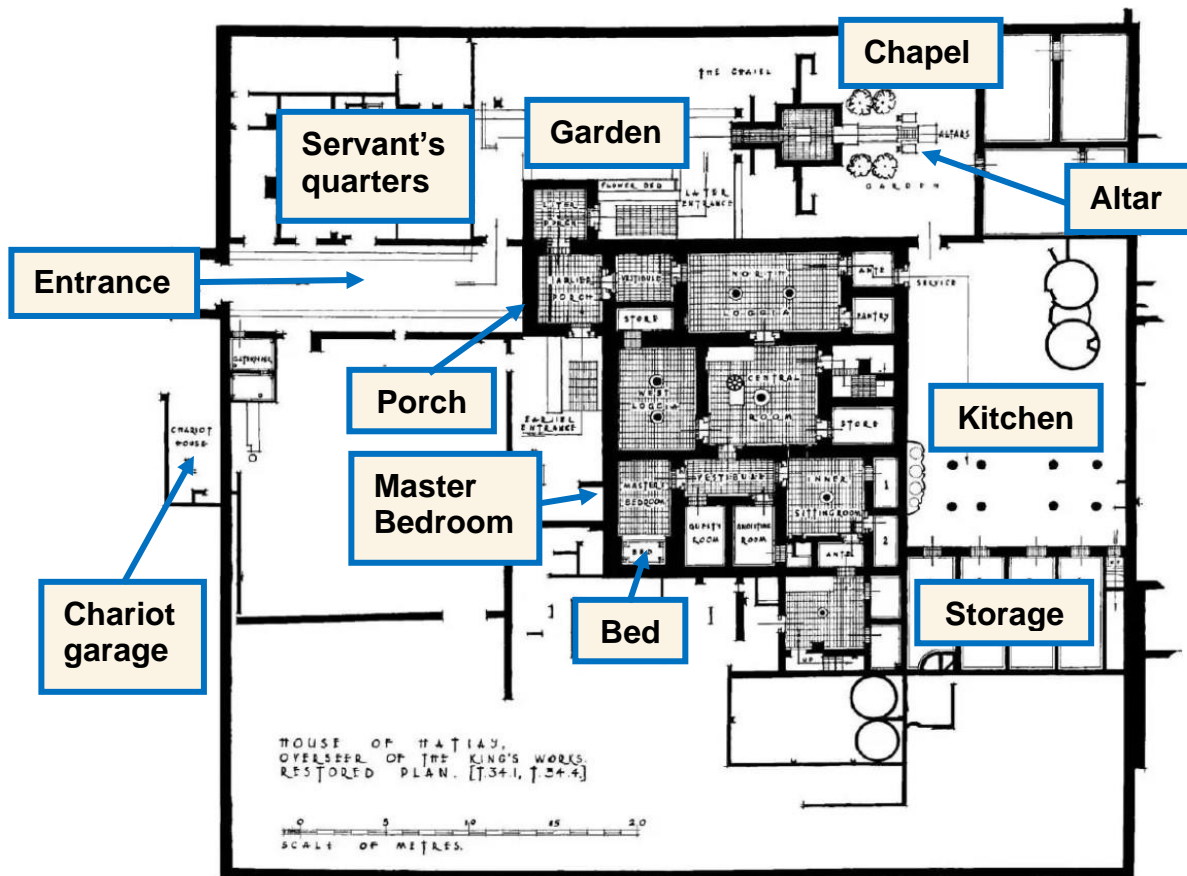
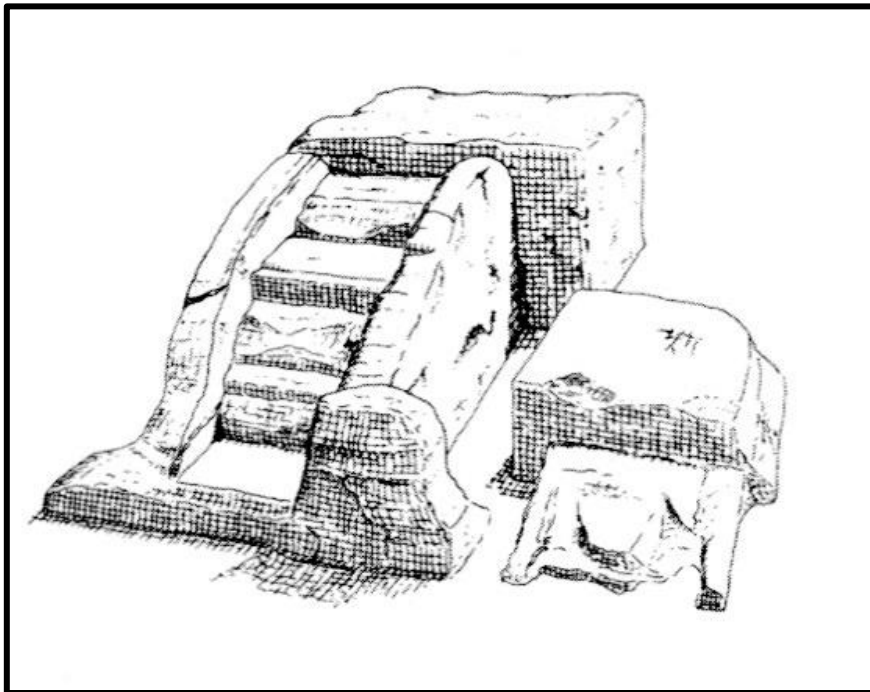


Figure 27 Plan of the house of Hatiay, Chief Builder



**Figure 28:** *Hatiay's house, T34.1, during excavation in 1932*



**Figure 29:** *Altar found in Hatiay's house*

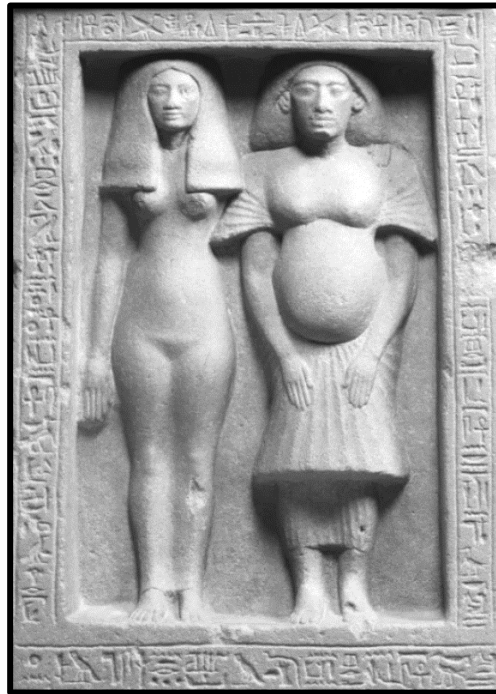
The North Suburb was completely excavated between 1926 and 1932. Barry Kemp said, "The houses were separated into zones by broad 'streets' running north-south, as if in continuation of the broad streets of the Main City, although the Central City lay in between and broke the continuity." [13]

The location of Hatia's tomb is not known.



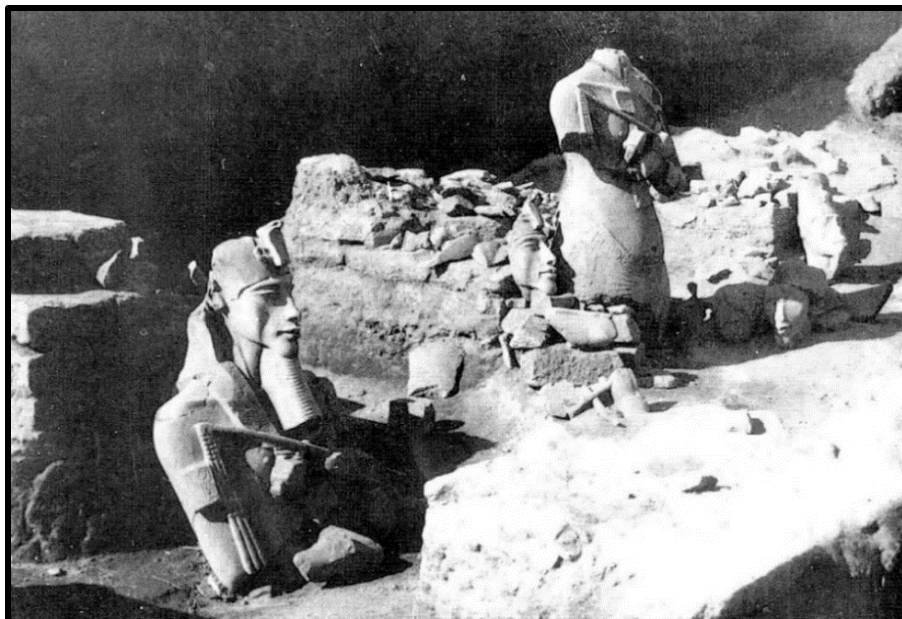
## BEK: Chief Royal Sculptor

Bek, whose name means “servant”, is shown with his wife Taheret on a stela (Figure 30).



**Figure 30:** *Stela of Bek & wife Taheret, Berlin*

Bek created sculptures for the king in the early years of Amenhotep IV. He was probably responsible for the colossal sculptures in Akhenaten’s temples at Karnak. Figure 31 shows two of the 16.5 foot tall colossi discovered buried in a drainage ditch at Karnak in 1926 [14].



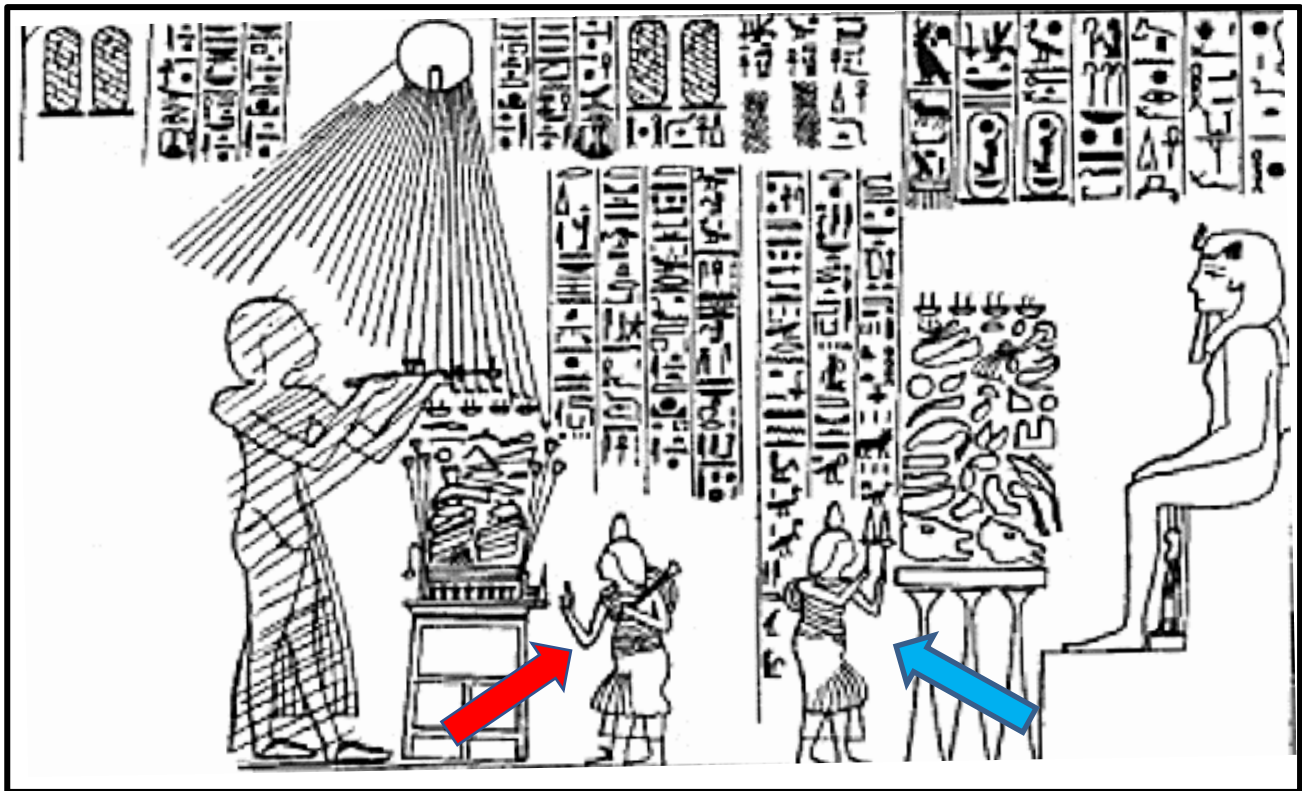
**Figure 31:** *Akhenaten's Karnak Colossi*



On a stela carved on a granite boulder just opposite the Cataract Hotel at Aswan, Bek (red arrow), stands in the left register venerating Akhenaten (figure and name erased) who is blessed by the rays of the Aten (Figure 32).

In the right register, Bek's father, Men (blue arrow), praises a statue of Amenhotep III, who is identified by his throne name *Neb maat Re*, instead of his birth name *Amenhotep*, to avoid naming the god Amun on the stela.

Bek also gives the name of his mother, Roy from Heliopolis, on his Aswan stela. Both Bek and Men are shown wearing Amarna-style clothing and gold collars.



**Figure 32:** *Men (father, blue arrow) and Bek (son, red arrow) at Aswan*

In the text, Bek declares he is “the apprentice whom his majesty (Akhenaten taught”, probably a reference to the king’s demand for a new style of Amarna art.

The titles of the Aten on the Aswan stela show it was made around Akhenaten’s 9<sup>th</sup> regnal year.

Bek supervised the quarrying of stone at Aswan and Gebel el Silsila, and the carving of the statues in the Great Aten Temple at Akhetaten [15].

Bek seems to have been succeeded by sculptor Thutmose (next section).

# THUTMOSE: Sculptor

In 1912, during the third season of excavation by Ludwig Borchardt, the house and workshop of sculptor Thutmose was uncovered (Figures 33-36). Many statues and sculptures were found there, including the famous bust of Nefertiti, now in the Berlin Museum.

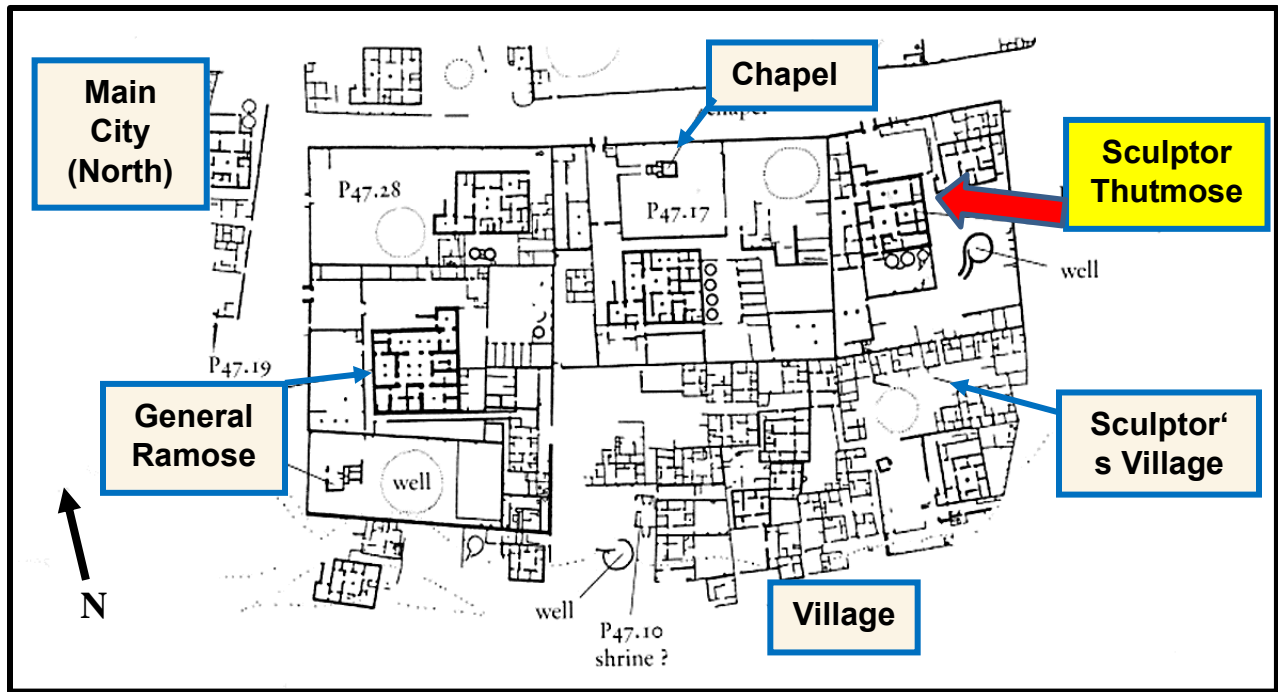


Figure 33: Location of sculptor Thutmose's house & workshop (red arrow)

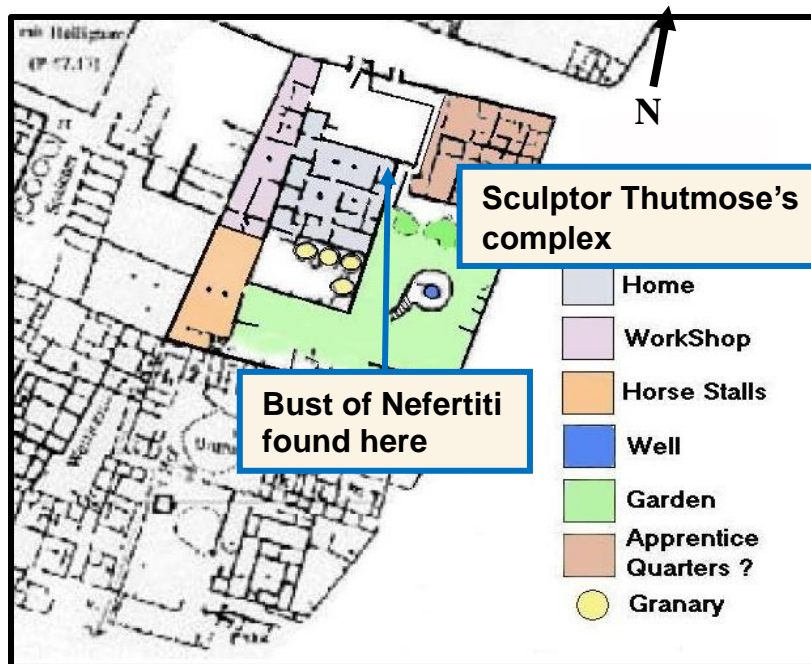


Figure 34: Findspot of Nefertiti's bust in workshop (detail from Figure 33)



Figure 35: Barry Kemp indicates the findspot of Nefertiti's bust

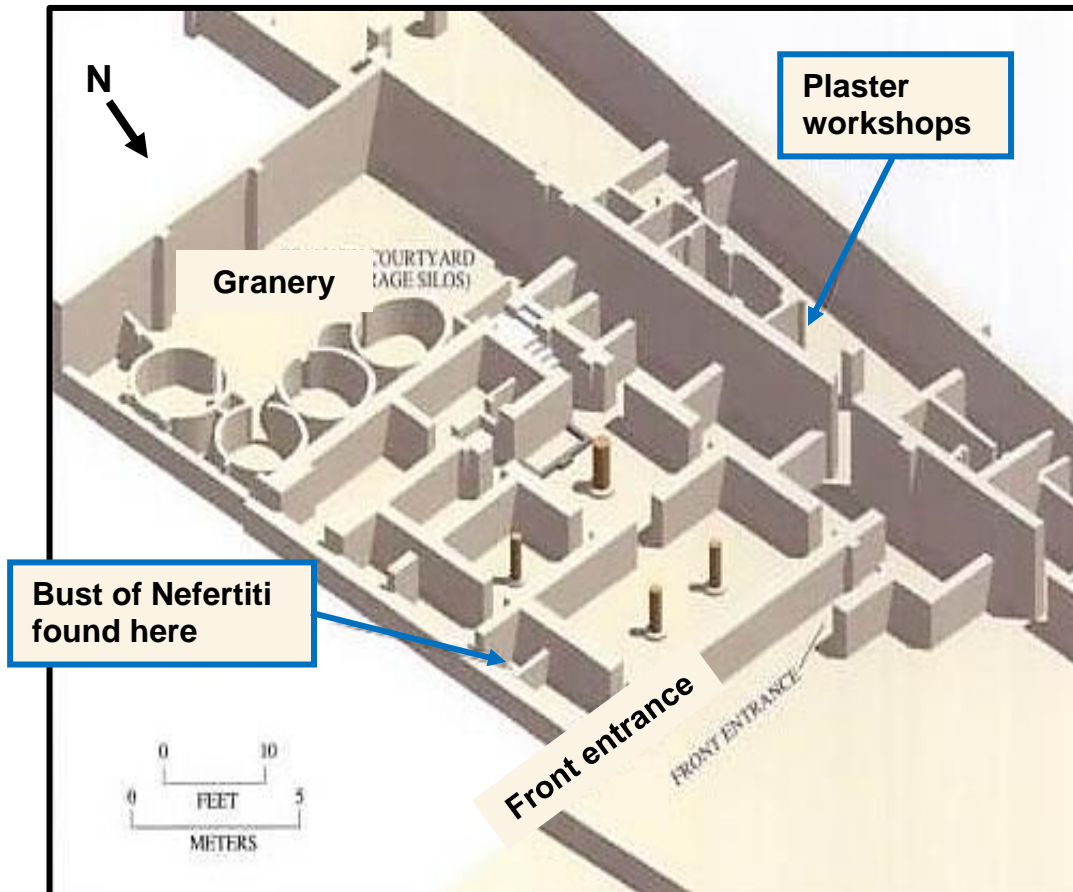


Figure 36: 3-D Plan of house and workshop of Thutmose





**Figure 37:** *Three heads found in Thutmose's workshop*

Figure 37 shows three carved gypsum plaster heads found in the workshop of sculptor Thutmose. The left & right heads are now in the Egyptian Museum, Berlin. The center one is in Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Borchart found an ivory horse blinker in a rubbish pit in the courtyard of the ruined house/workshop, which named Thutmose and gave his occupation as sculptor. So it is probable that the head of Nefertiti and the other sculpted heads found in the workshop were created in his studio.

One of the heads depicted an old woman, wrinkled, with bags under her eyes (Figure 37, right). A small limestone statue of an aging Nefertiti was also recovered, Figure 38, with a drooping belly, thick thighs, and stretch marks on her abdomen indicating she had borne several children. These realistic portrayals are very unusual from ancient Egypt.



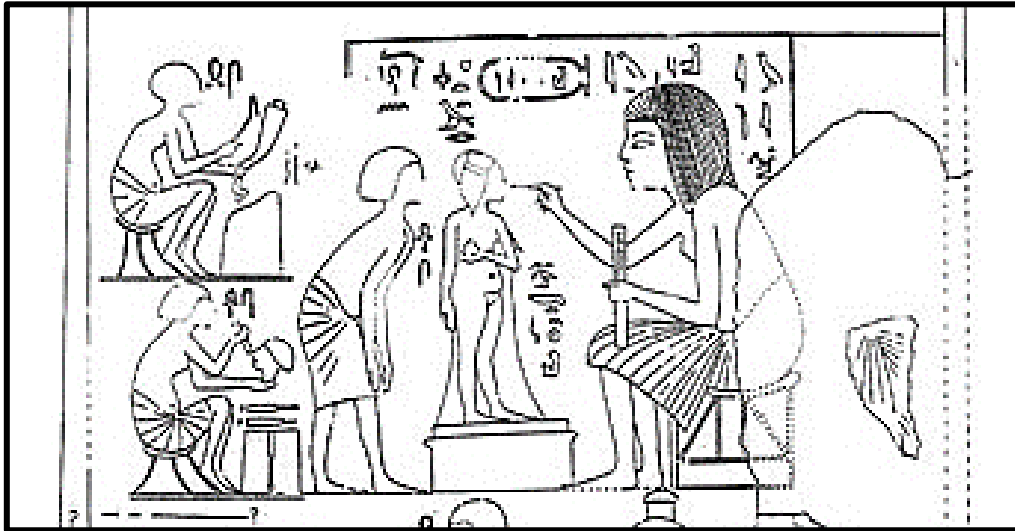
**Figure 38:** *Aging Nefertiti*



## IUTI: Sculptor

Sculptor Iuti, is only known from a scene on the wall in the tomb of Huya, Steward of Queen Tiye. (Figures 39 & 40)

In the scene, Iuti is creating an image of Beketaten, daughter of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye. He also supervises a group of sculptors, and above Iuti is his title “Master Sculptor of the King’s Chief Wife Tiye.” [16]



**Figure 39:** *Iuti painting a statue of Beketaten in his workshop*



**Figure 40:** *Iuti and Beketaten scene in tomb of Huya*

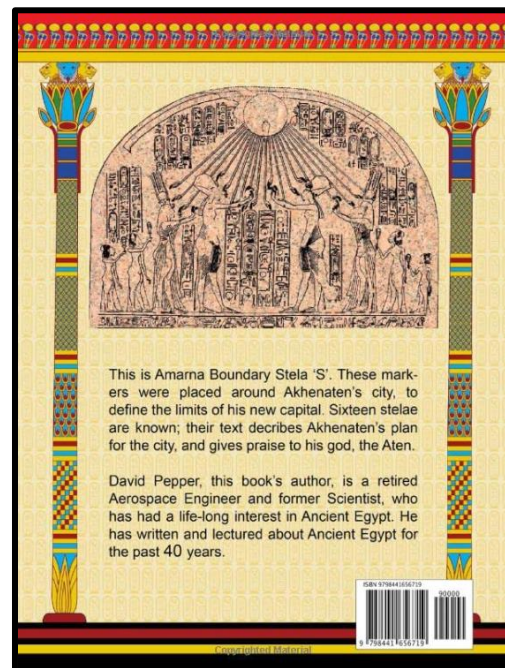
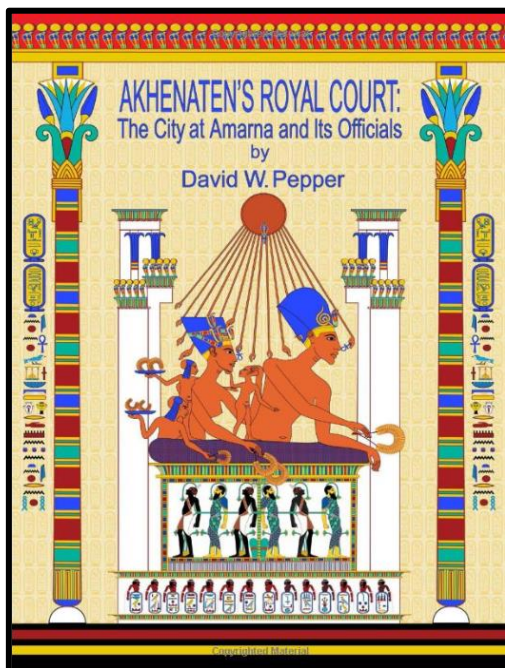
## ENDNOTES:

- [1] See Kemp, Barry, *The Akhetaten Sun* Vol 21 No. 2, p 25,  
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<https://www.egyptianhistorypodcast.com/140-tut-ankh-amun/>
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<https://www.theamarnaresearchfoundation.org/Sun2017%20Fall%20Vol%2023%20No%202.pdf>
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- [7] <https://www.archaeology.wiki/blog/2021/06/11/two-tombs-for-one-man-the-case-of-maya/?print=121419>
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- [9] Kemp, *The City of Akhetaten and Nefertiti: Amarna and its people*, p 42
- [10] Ridley, *Ibid.*, p. 160
- [11] Reeves, *Akhenaten, Egypt's False Prophet*, Thames & Hudson, 2001, p. 133
- [12] Kemp, *Ibid.*, p 232
- [13] [https://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/amarna\\_the\\_place/north\\_suburb/index.shtml](https://www.amarnaproject.com/pages/amarna_the_place/north_suburb/index.shtml)
- [14] Manniche, Lise, *The Akhenaten Colossi of Karnak*, AUC Press, 2010, p 122
- [15] Aldred, Cyril, *Akhenaten: King of Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, 1989., p 93
- [16] Aldred, *Ibid* pp 91-92

## FINAL COMMENTS:

More information can be found at [www.TheAmarnaResearchFoundation.org](http://www.TheAmarnaResearchFoundation.org).

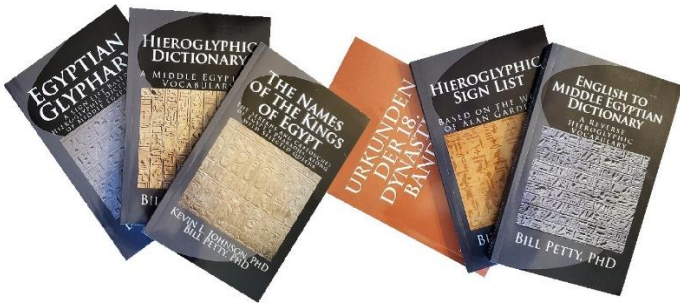
David Pepper has a book about the Amarna Royal Court. It's available on Amazon.





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