

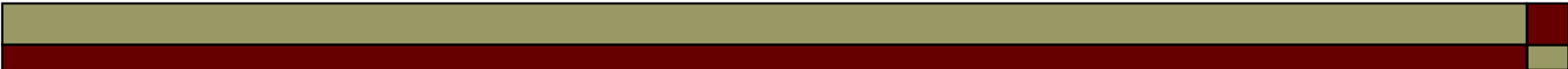
Week 6

Personal piety and popular religion

HPAH7015

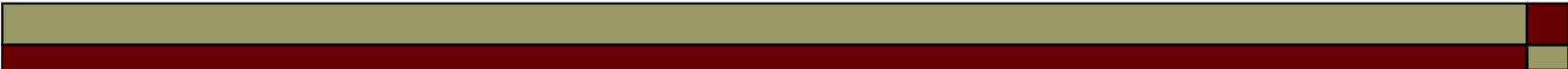
Ancient Egyptian Religion

Dr. Katharina Zinn



The nature of religion

- ❑ The myth(odology) (and theology)
- ❑ The cult
- ❑ Gods and Goddesses
- ❑ Temples
- ❑ Festivals and Processions
- ❑ Kingship
- ❑ Afterlife beliefs

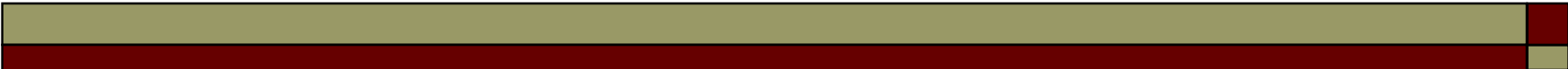


The nature of religion

- ❑ The myth(odology) (and theology)
- ❑ The cult
- ❑ Gods and Goddesses
- ❑ Temples
- ❑ Festivals and Processions
- ❑ Kingship → deified kings (Amenhotep I)
- ❑ Afterlife beliefs

Personal piety and popular religion

Shrines and prayers



Recommended Reading

- ❑ H, Lesko (Ed.), *Pharaoh's workers: the villagers of Deir el Medina* (Ithaca 1994), chap. 4 and 5.
- ❑ Baines. Practical Religion 'Practical religion and piety.' *JEA* 73 (1987): 88–93.
- ❑ Quirke. 70-103. (ch.3)
- ❑ Exell. Ancestor Bust
- ❑ Pinch. Hathor Offerings.
- ❑ Pinch. Votive Practices.

Readings

- ❑ Koltsida, A. 2006. Birth-Bed, Sitting Place, Erotic Corner or Domestic Altar? A Study of the So-Called "ElevatedBed" in Deir el-Medina Houses. In: *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 35, 165-174.
- ❑ Koltsida, A. 2007. Domestic Space and Gender Roles in Ancient Egyptian Village Households: A View from Amarna Workmen's Village and Deir el-Medina. In: Westgate R., Fisher N.R.E. and J. Whitley (eds.). *Building Communities: House, Settlement and Society in the Aegean and beyond*. London.

Egyptian Mining Operations 2000 - 1200 BC

Egypt

Sinai Peninsula was Egyptian Territory from 2000 BC to 106 AD

Egyptian Red Sea Wilderness
(Modern Sinai Peninsula)

Way of the Wilderness to the Red Sea (Ex 13:18)

The Wilderness to the Red Sea (Judg 11:16)

Wilderness of the land of Egypt (Ezek 20:36)

Wilderness of the Sea (Isa 21:1)

Egyptian copper & Turquoise mines

Serabit el-Khadim

Egyptian mining sea port

Israel

Ein Hatseva
(Tamar: Ezekiel 47:19)

Ain Qudeirat

Mt. Karkom

Kadesh Barnea
1400 BC

Wilderness of Zin

Wilderness of Paran

Edomites

Azmon "Strong"
(Kuntillet Ajrud)

Hezion "enclosure"
Karka "floor"

Timna

(Tell el-Kheleifeh)

Elat

Mt. Sin

Ezion Geber

Jezirat Faraun Island

Mt. Paran

Midianites

Succoth

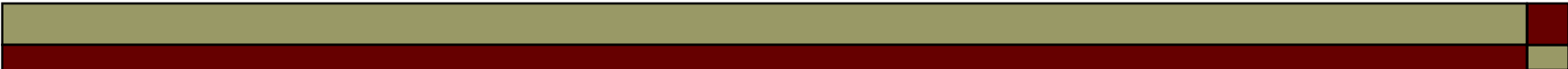
Red Sea: 1 ki 9:26)

Red Sea: Ex 10:19 (Gulf of Suez)

Hathor temple Timna, modern Israel

- Small structure built against sandstone formations, called “King Solomon’s Pillars”
- Building made out of white sandstone, carried to site from a distance (instead of accessible local sandstone)
- Egyptian and Midianite finds
- Eg. presence until end 19th, then from R III again



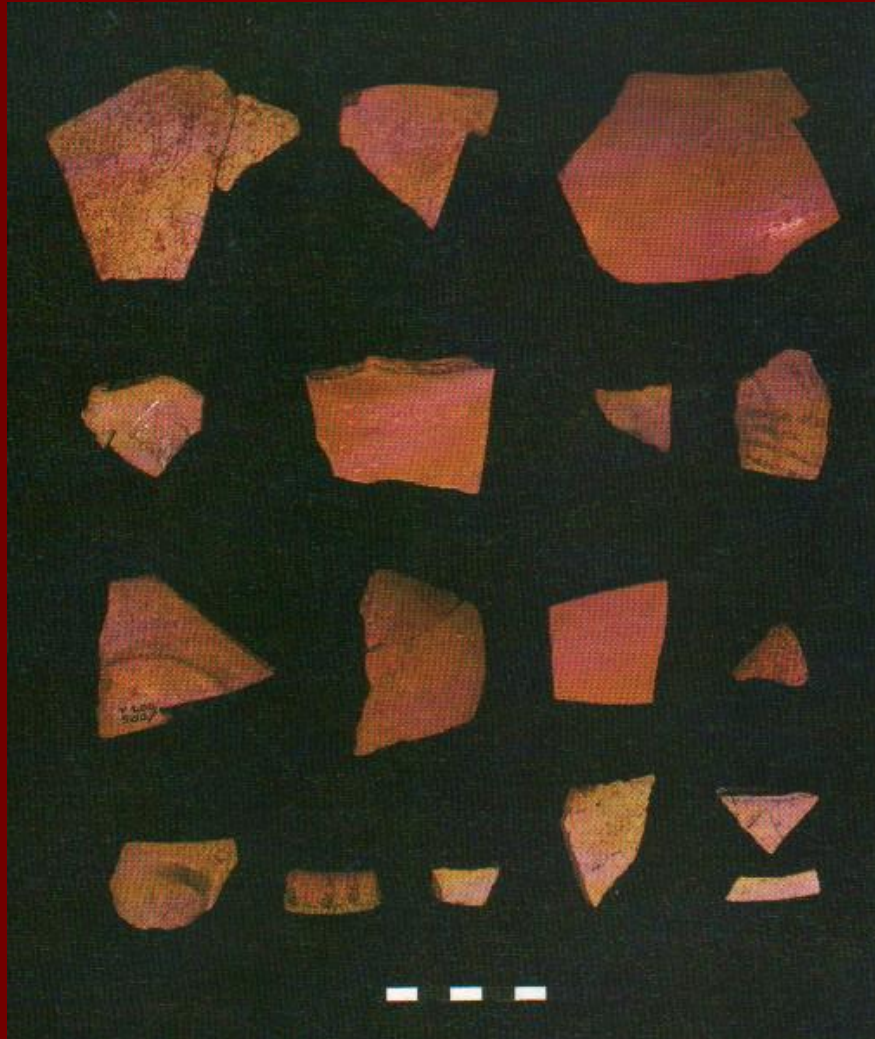


Egyptians finds

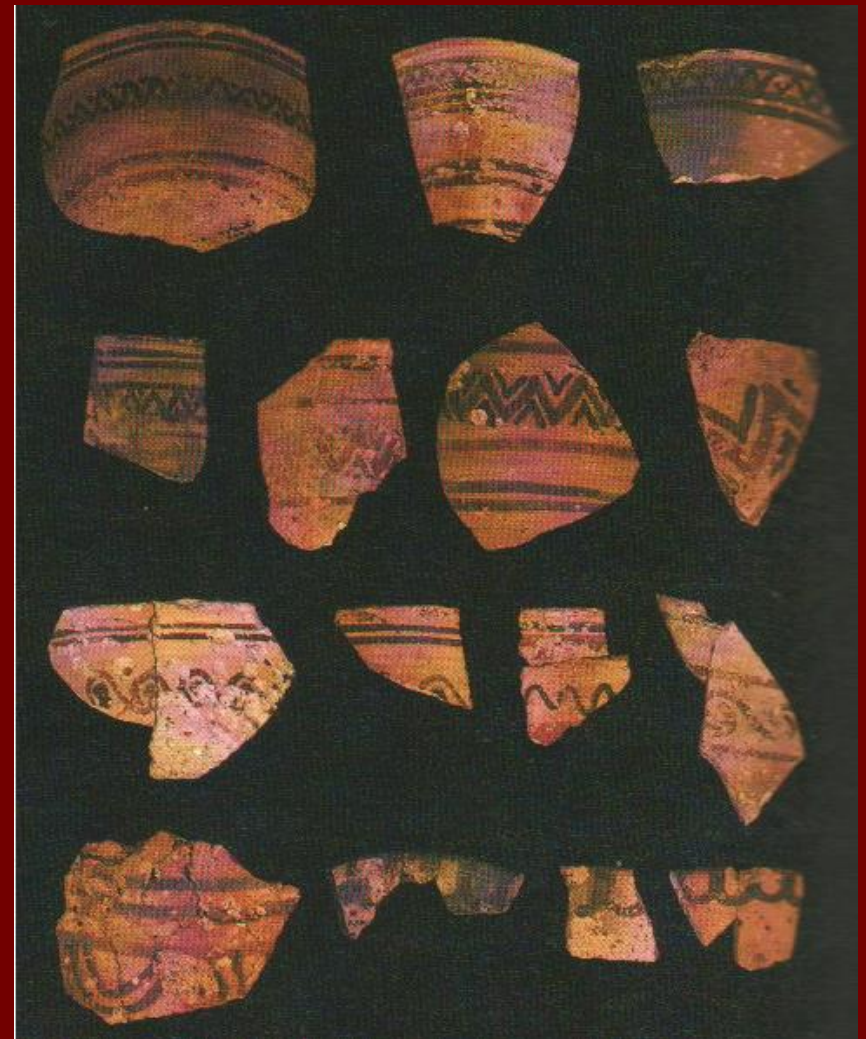
- ❑ Faience vessels, ushebti, menats, cat figurines, beads
- ❑ Scarabs, scaraboids, plaques, seals
- ❑ Pottery
- ❑ Wooden objects
- ❑ Metal and wire objects
- ❑ Eg. Glass

Pottery finds from temple site

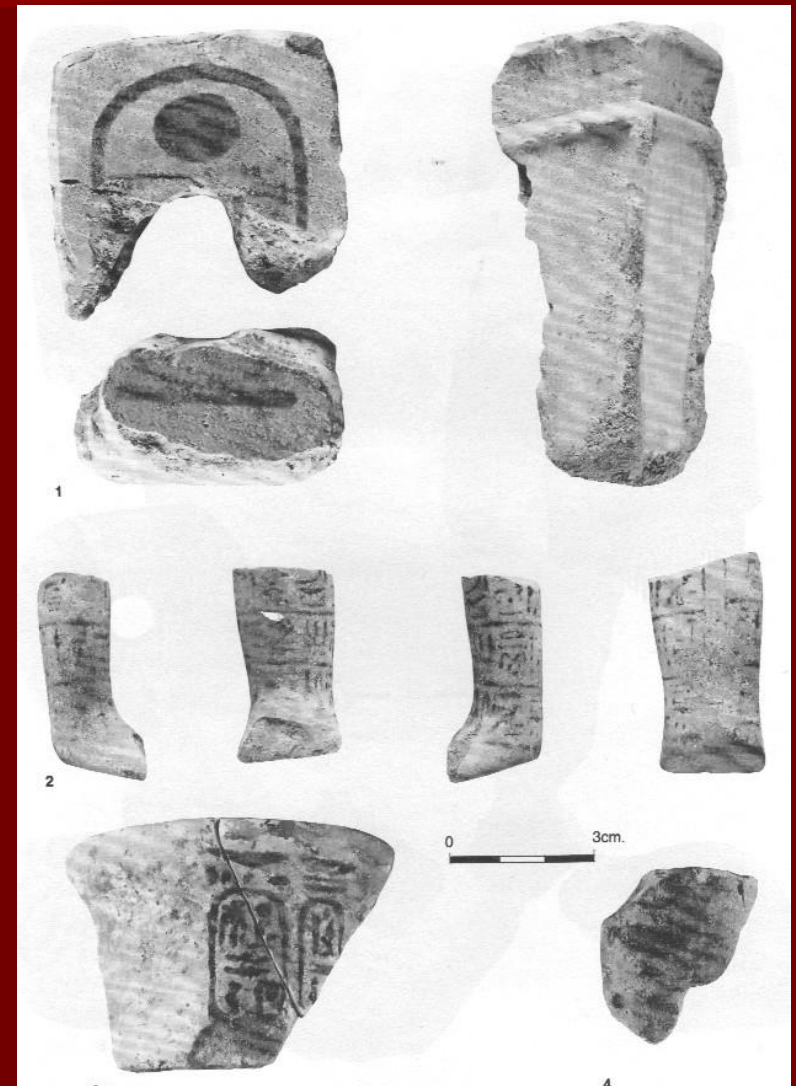
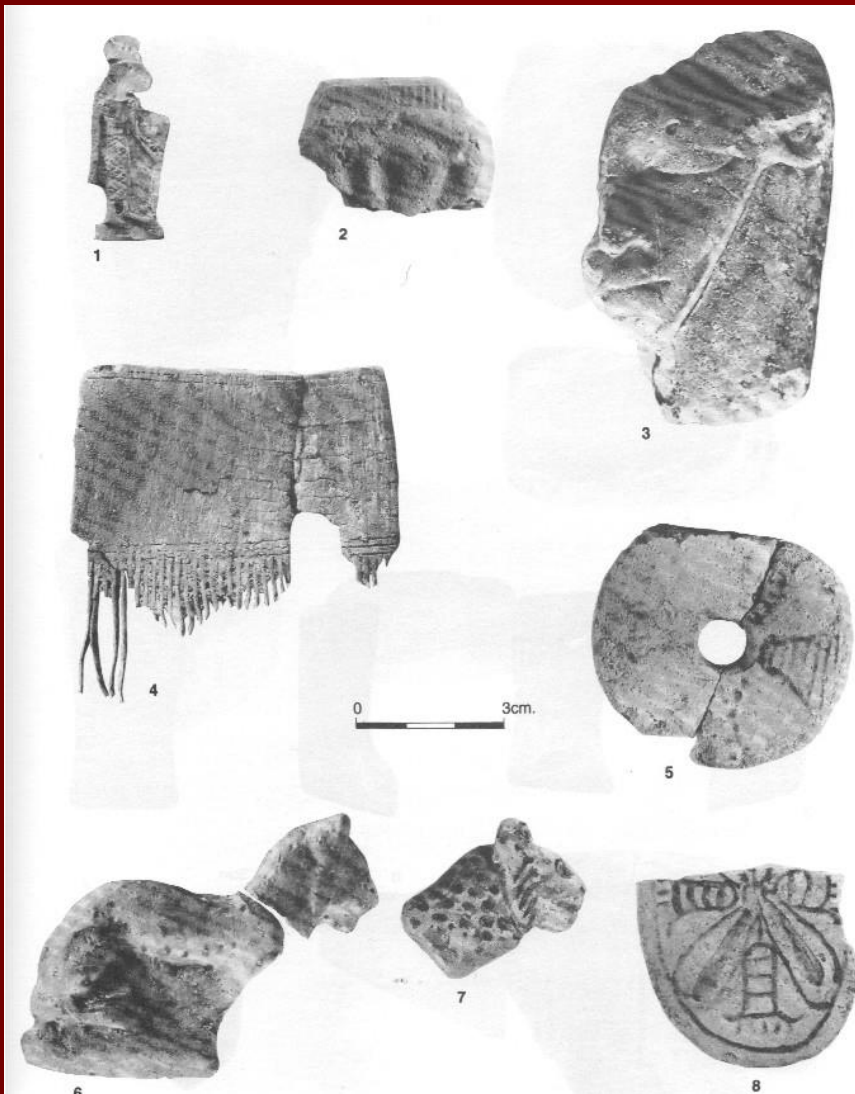
Egyptian pottery



Midianite Pottery



Egyptian finds (faience, bone, wood)

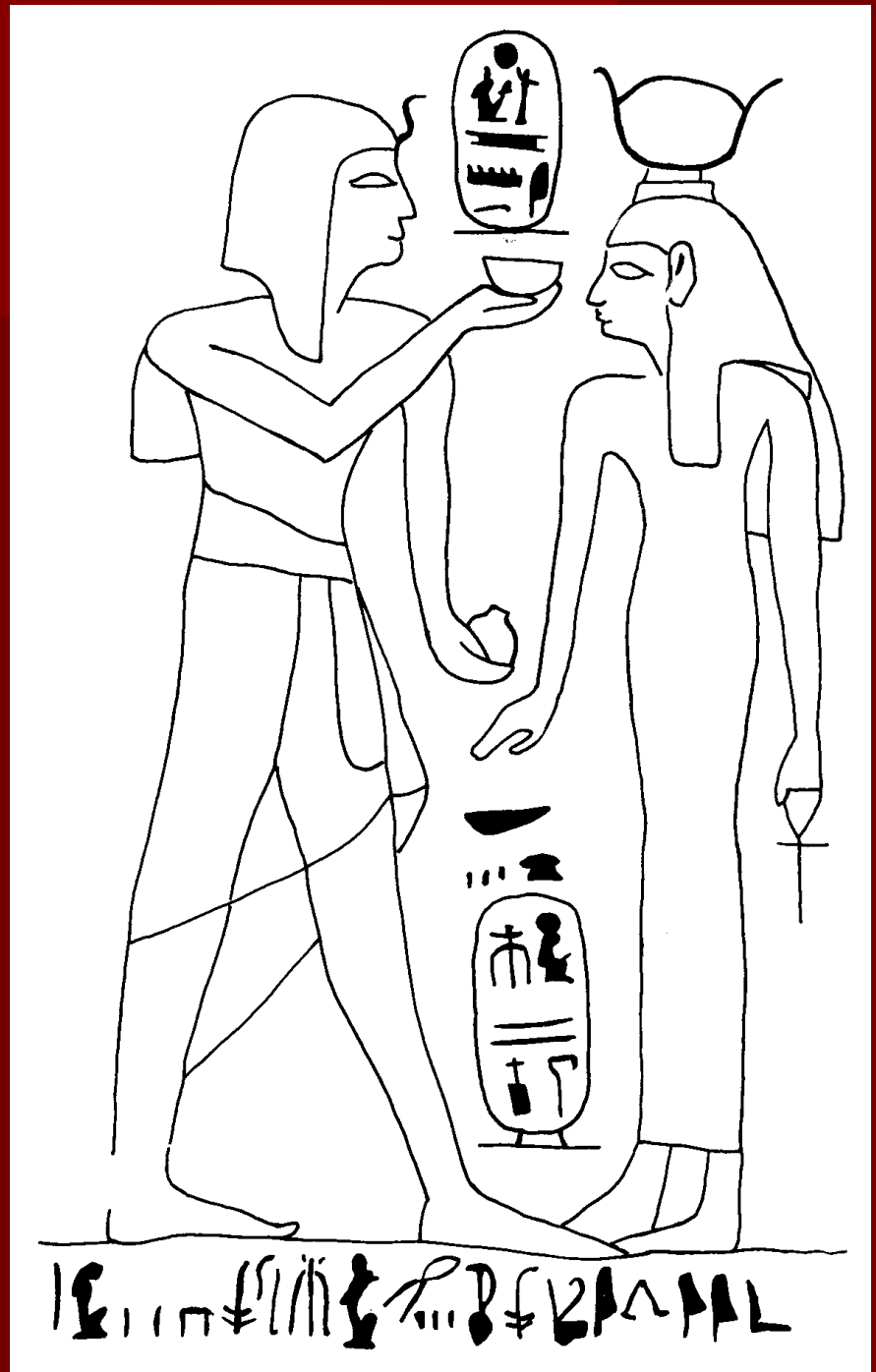


Egyptians finds

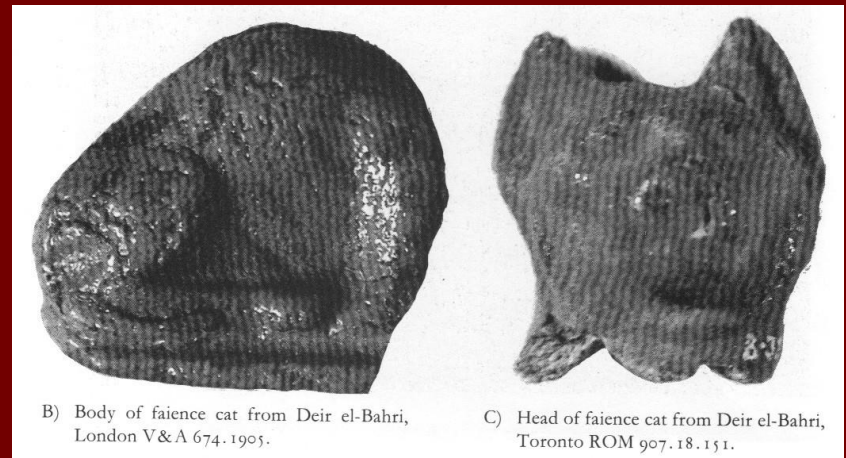
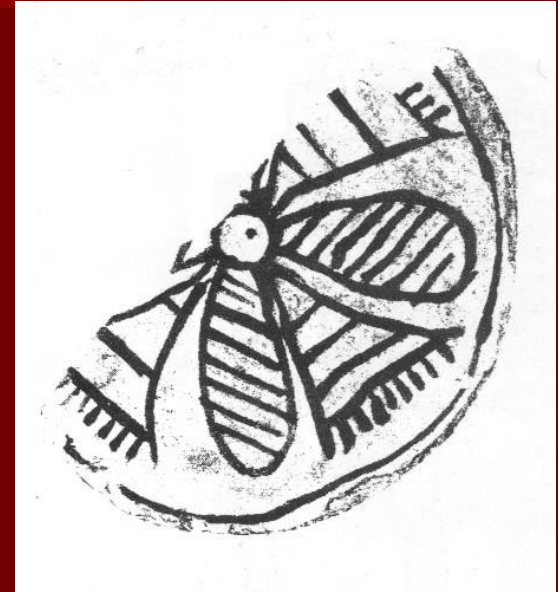
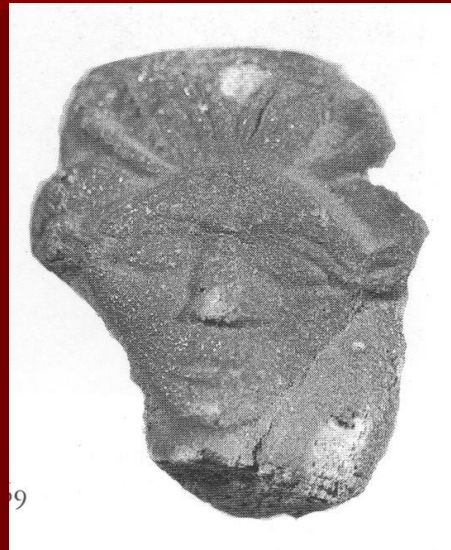
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- ❑ Wooden objects
- ❑ Metal and wire objects
- ❑ Eg. Glass
- ❑ Rock stela: round topped: pictures king (RIII as “Lord of Diadems” – nb h’.w) with nemes + uraeus, offering to a goddess, facing him → offered by royal butler Ramses-em-per-re (Asiatic origin)

Rock stela

- round topped
- pictures king (RIII as “Lord of Diadems” – nb h'.w) with nemes + uraeus
- offering to a goddess (must be Hathor due to attributes), facing him
- offered by royal butler Ramses-em-per-re (Asiatic origin)



Similar finds from different Egyptian sites



B) Body of faience cat from Deir el-Bahri,
London V&A 674.1905.

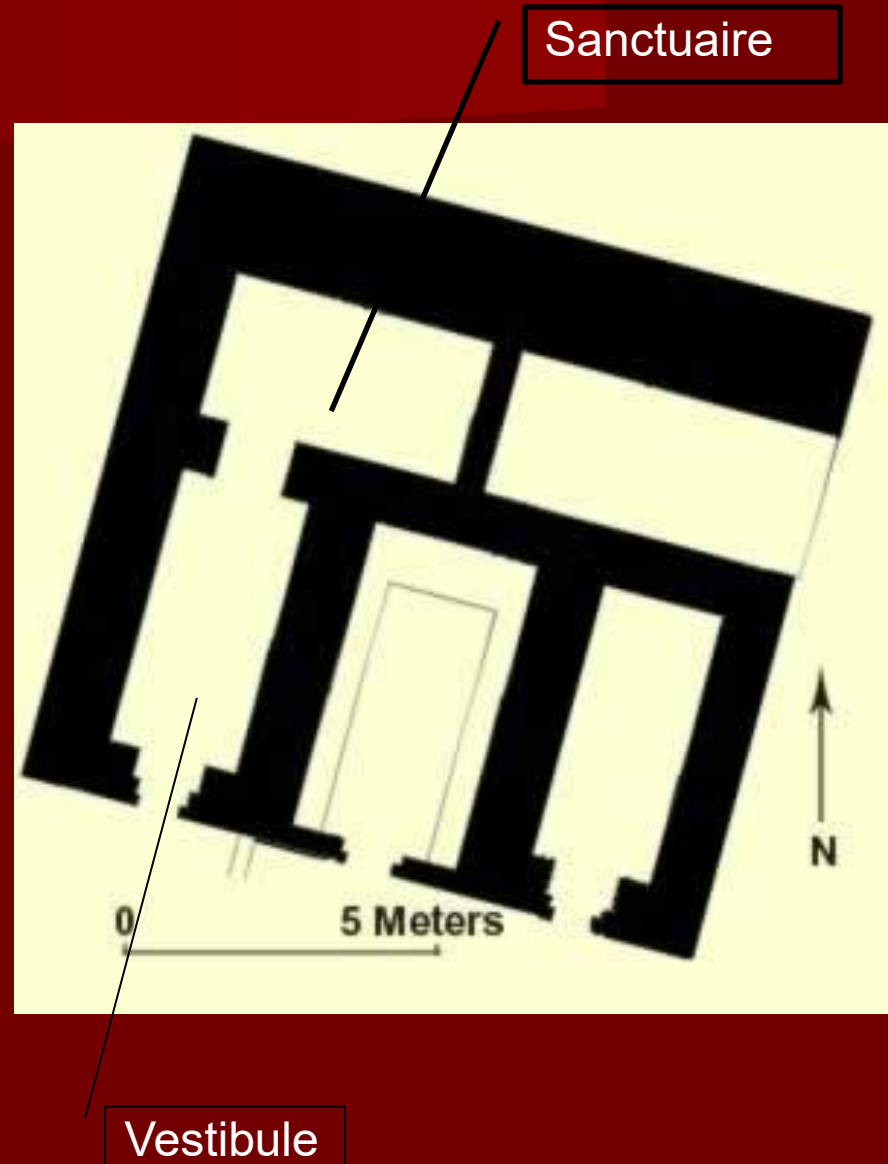
C) Head of faience cat from Deir el-Bahri,
Toronto ROM 907.18.151.

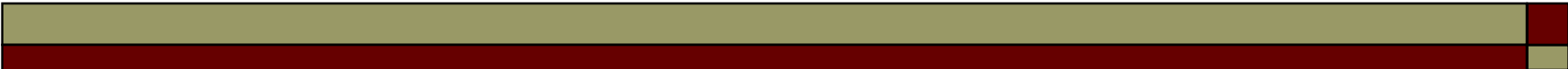
Hathor

- Symbol of continuity of belief between all levels of society
 - Pivotal position between popular and state religion
 - Fertility aspect = important folk religion
 - Goddess “who listen to prayers” → focus of personal piety
 - Prominent deity in state cult
 - Major role in royal and private funerary religion

Mirgissa (Second catarakt): Hathor shrine in fortress

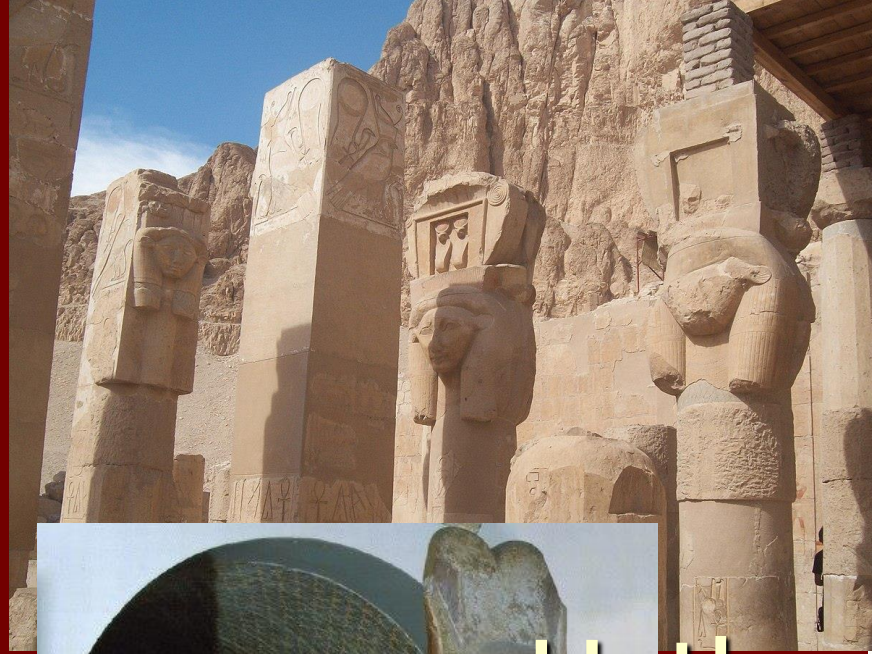
- North-west corner inner part Upper Fort, existing shrine on top of earlier structure
- Vestibule: mud brick, no plaster
- Narrow entrance
- Sanctuary on higher level, with wooden door, some traces of plaster (place for priest during daily ritual)
- Hathor related finds (stelae, scarabs, beads)





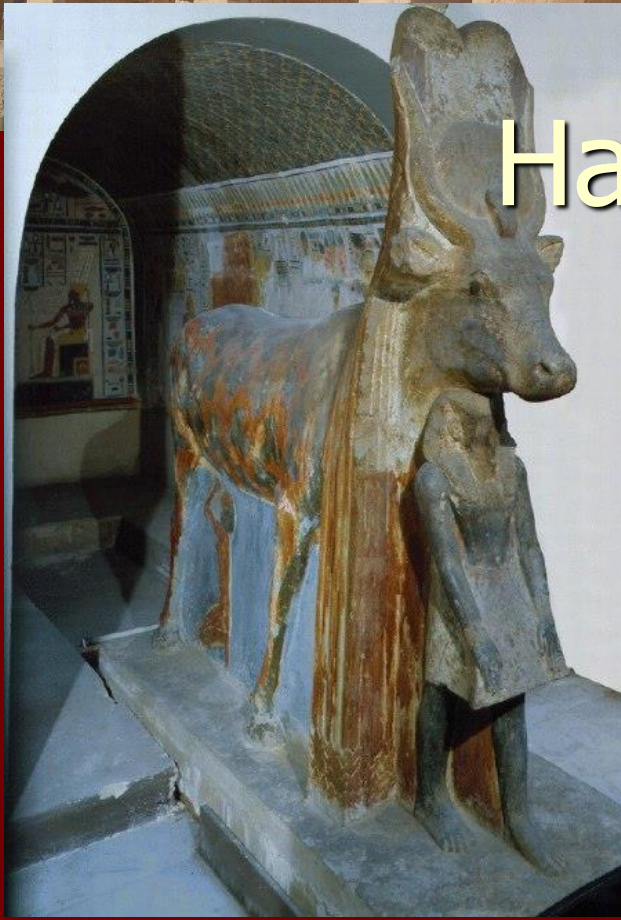
Shrines, votive offerings and state cult

- Most votive offerings conform strict conventions of Egyptian religious art (from temple iconography / royal funerary religion with some flexibility in figures of donors (no freedom of expression))



Hathor shrines

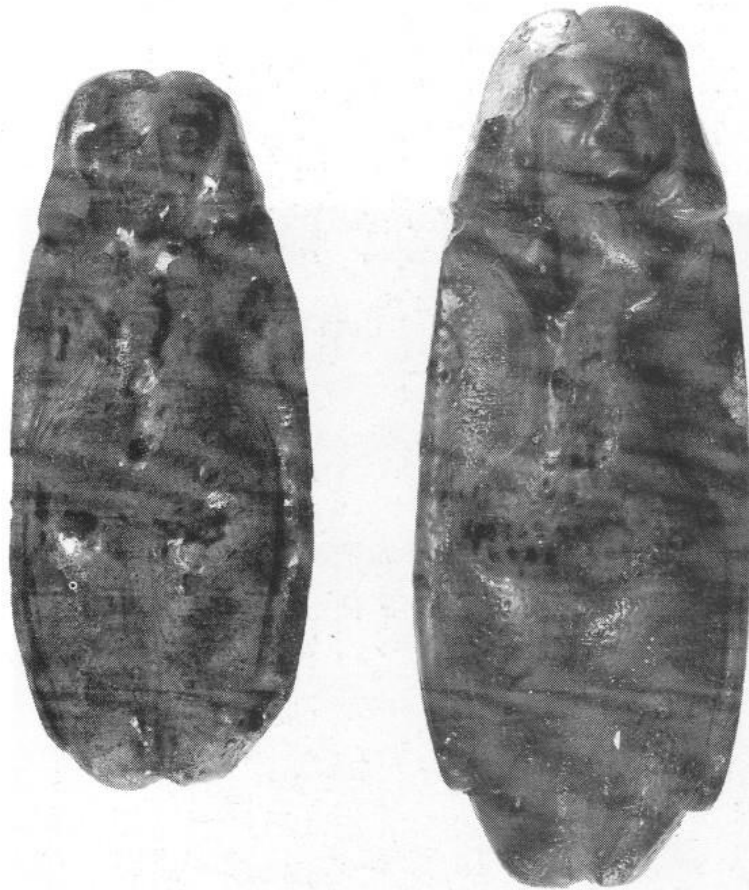
DeB



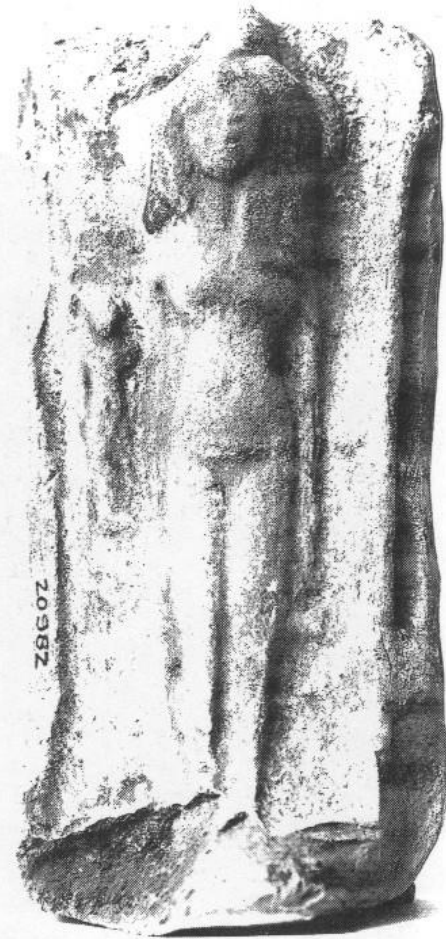
Shrines, votive offerings and state cult

- ❑ Kings (Hatsh., Th III) provided facilities for popular devotion
 - Hathor shrine Deir el-Bahari
 - Shrine of “Amun of the hearing ear” Karnak
 - earned gratitude of Theban people
 - Publicized own role as offspring Amun, Hathor
- ❑ Votive offering from temple background (cult objects like menits) or folk religion or magic (fertility figurines, Bes, phalli)

Fertility Figurines



A) Type 1 faience fertility figurines from
Kahun, London UC 16723-4



B) Type 6c pottery fertility
figurine, London BM 20982



Phalli as votive offerings



) Wooden phallus from Deir el-Bahri, Oxford Ash. 1926.401



Contra-Temple
Karnak
TIII, modified
Nectanebo

Contra temple (Shenhur)

- provision facilities for popular religion within state temples
 - Building / adapting shrine accessible to lay people
 - Appointing staff to deal with visitors
 - Manufacture mass votive faience offerings (with royal names) → only on sites under royal patronage?



FIGURE 1 *Shanhûr temple in 2001, with excavation trenches to the north and west of the temple*
PHOTOGRAPH: M. DE MEYER



FIGURE 3 *Shanhûr temple, contra-temple adjoining the north exterior wall*
PHOTOGRAPH: M. DE MEYER

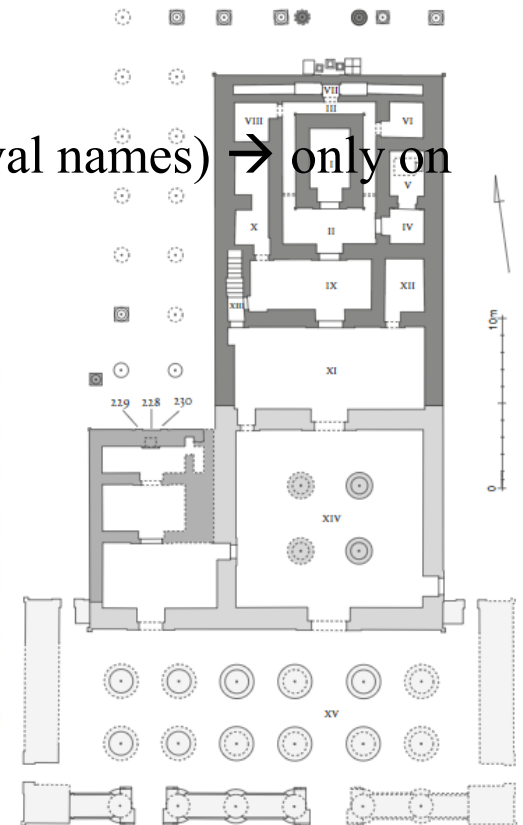
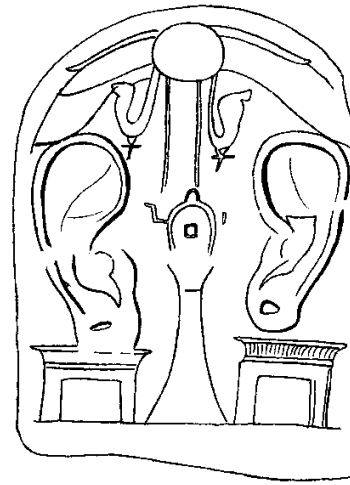
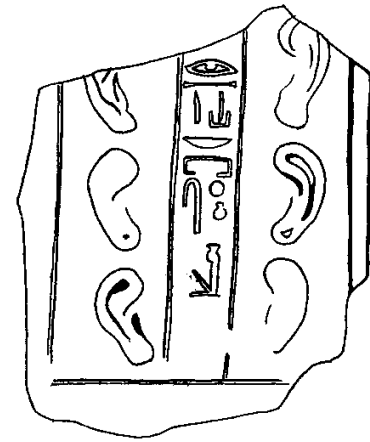


FIGURE 2 *Ground plan of Shanhûr temple*
DRAWING BY P. DILS (WILLEMS – COPPENS – DE MEYER, THE TEMPLE OF SHANHÛR, I, PL. 3)

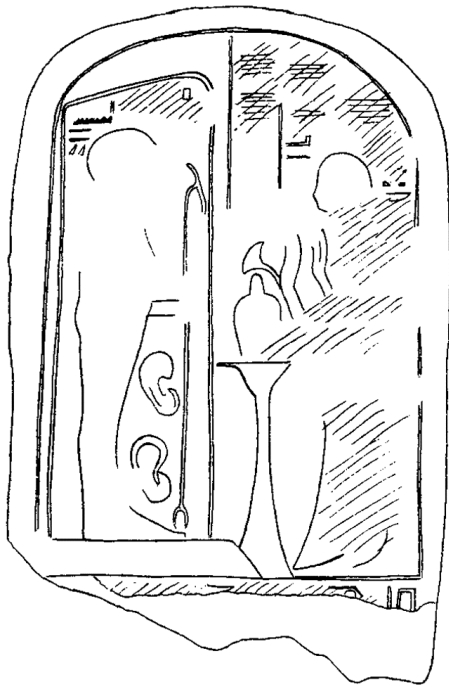
Ear stelae Memphis



A) Type 1 ear stela from the temple of Ptah at Memphis



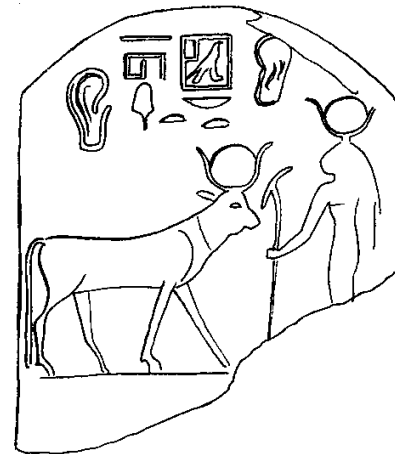
B) Type 1 ear stela from the temple of Ptah at Memphis



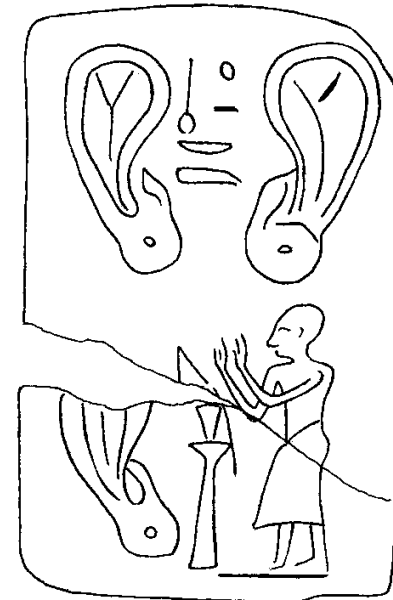
A) Type 4 ear stela from the temple of Ptah at Memphis



B) Type 4 ear and eye stela from Deir el-Medina

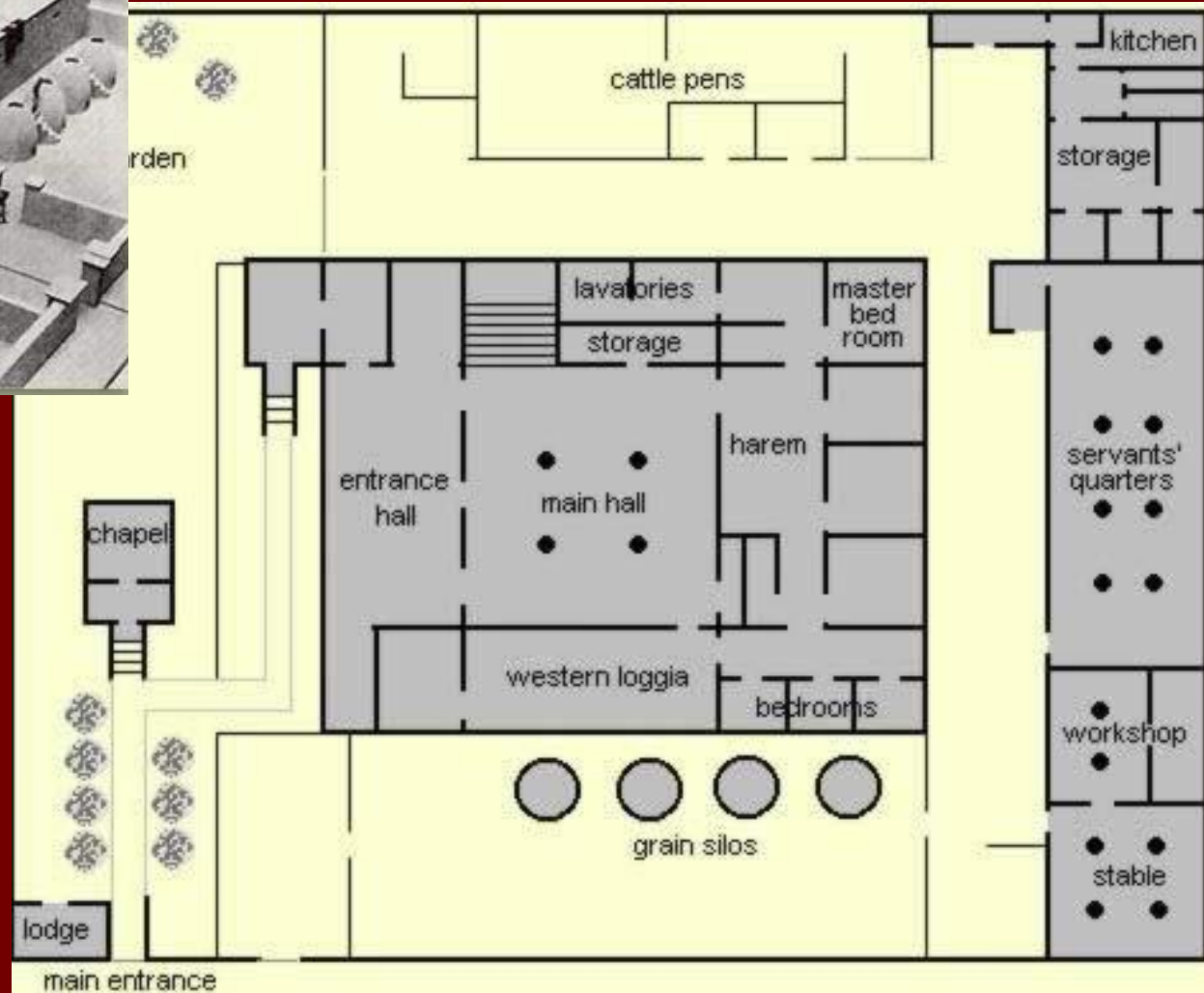
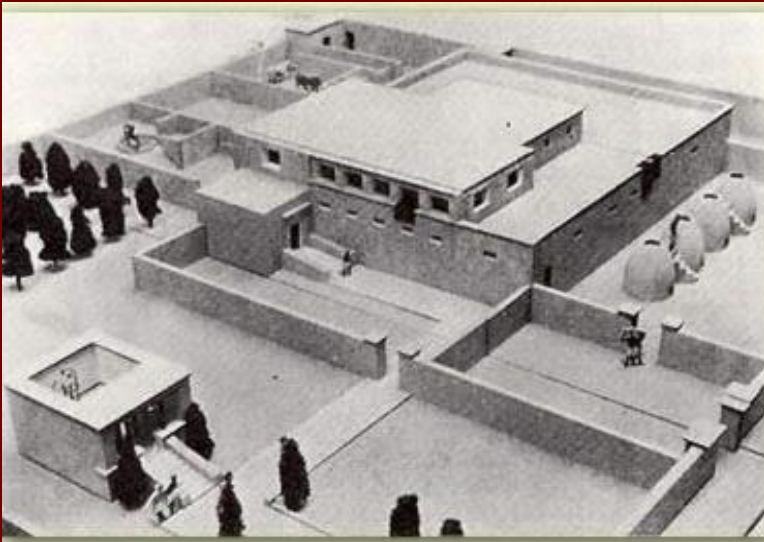


C) Type 2 ear stela from near the temple of Ptah at Memphis



D) Type 3 ear stela from the temple of Ptah at Memphis

Personal piety in Amarna



Facade of a private temple at Amarna, now in the Egyptian Museum Kairo

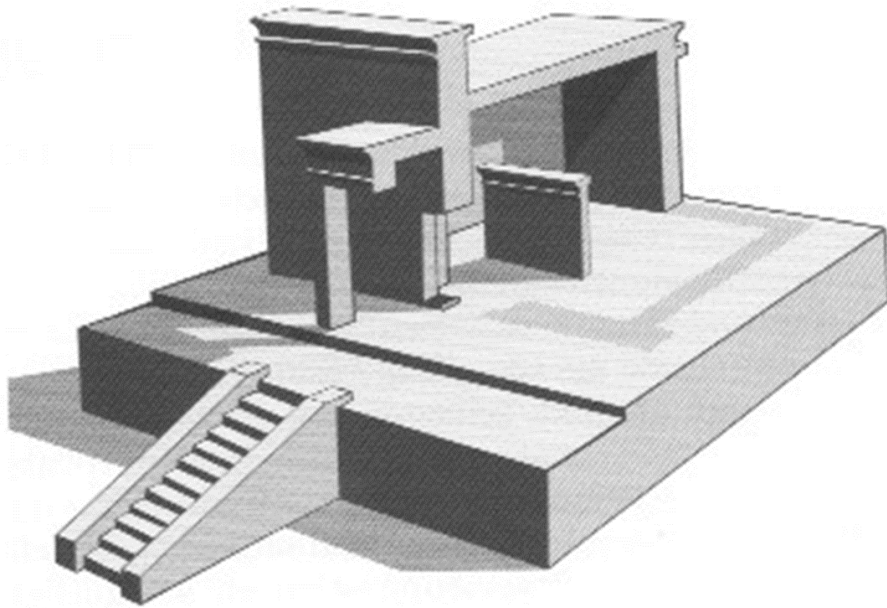
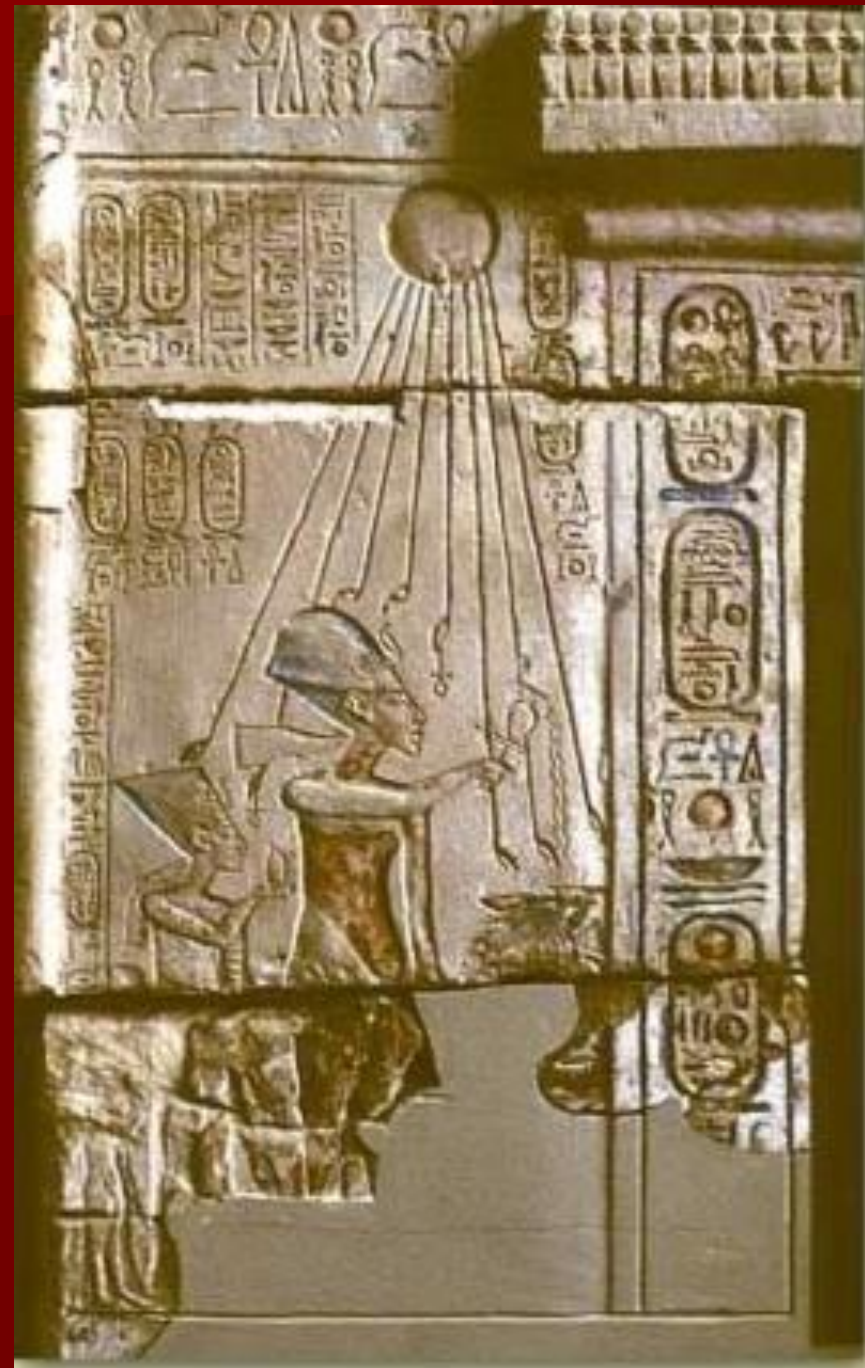
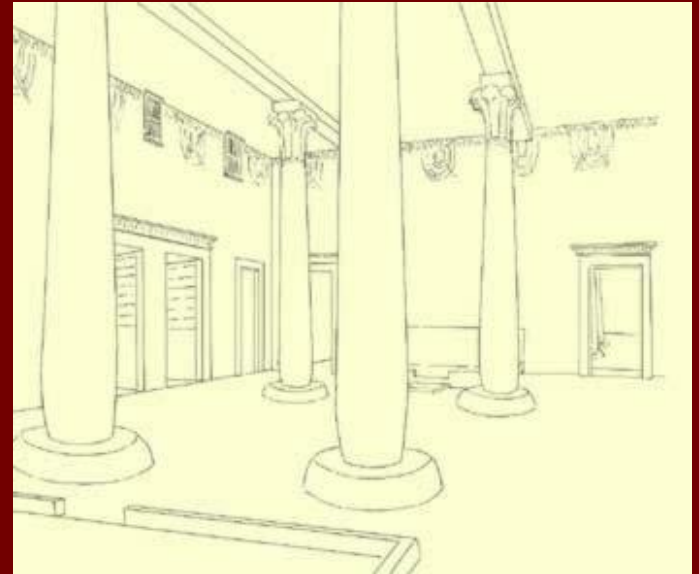


Abb. 5: Isometrische Rekonstruktion der Aton-Kapelle im Garten des Gehöfts des Pawah.



Central hall in the house of the Vizier Nakht

- central chamber was usually square , nucleus of the house plan, could have been used as a living area
- higher walls than elsewhere in the house
- Numerous doorways: strict pattern of symmetry and niches



- larger niches probably contained a stela / altar representing royal family / prayer to Aten disk.

House altar Amarna (Berlin)



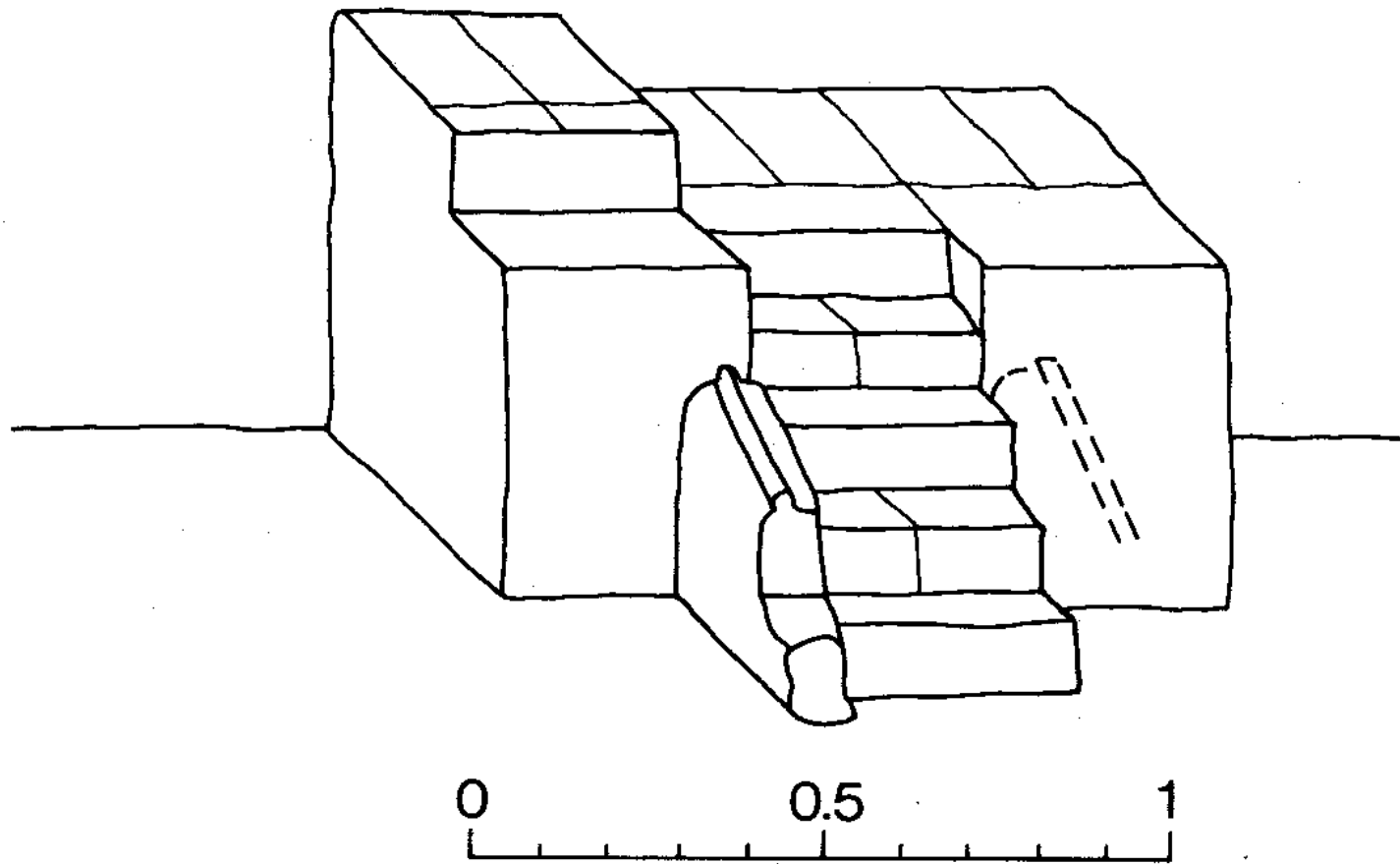


Figure 7. Indoor altar from Tell el Amarna. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing from Ludwig Borchardt and Herbert Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser in Tell el-Amarna* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1980), p. 255, fig. 38.

Personal piety in Deir el-Medina

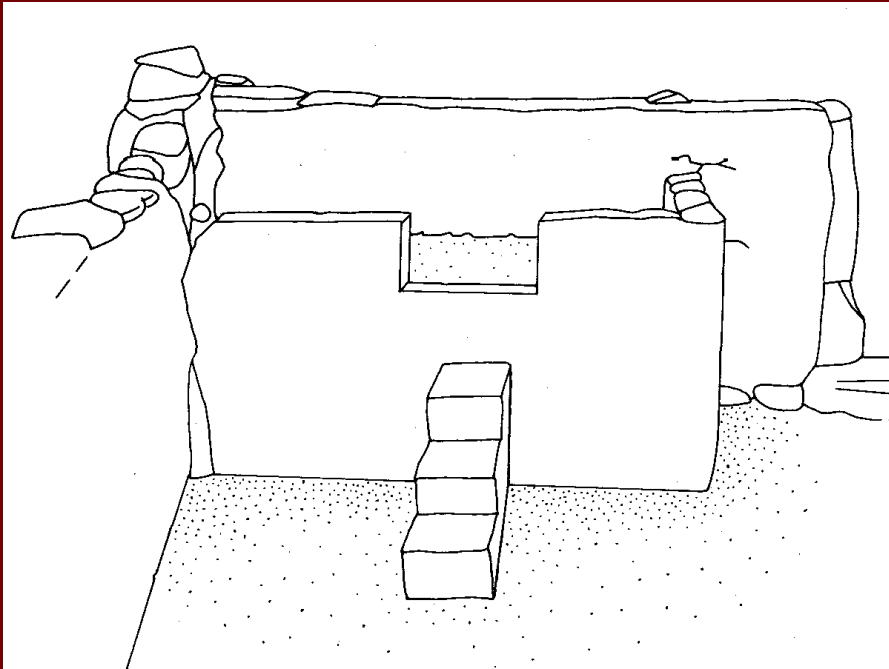
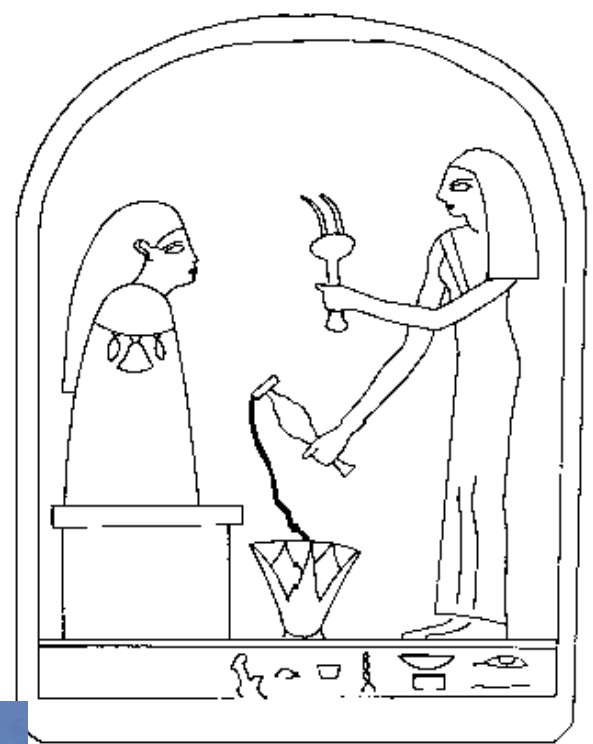


Figure 10. An ancestor bust from Deir el Medina. Courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, no. 20914.

Ancestor busts - Private ancestor worship

- 75 of 150 known from DeM
- 10-25 cm high, made of sand- or limestone
- Portable objects
- Rare traces of colour: red and yellow: gender open to question (red sometimes used for fertile figurines!)
- Most tripartite wig, *wsh* collar, painted lotus blossom around neck
- Nearly no inscriptions
- Found in DeM, fallen out of niches in 1st and 2nd room
- Represent akh-n-jkr



16550



16030



Akh-jkr stela: represents divinized ancestors

$\text{ʿ}h\ jkr\ n\ R^c$ – the able spirit of Ra

Inscriptions: short or more expansive

Some shows offerings

→ Offerings for recently deceased ones, which are maybe worshipped: gain intervention and aid

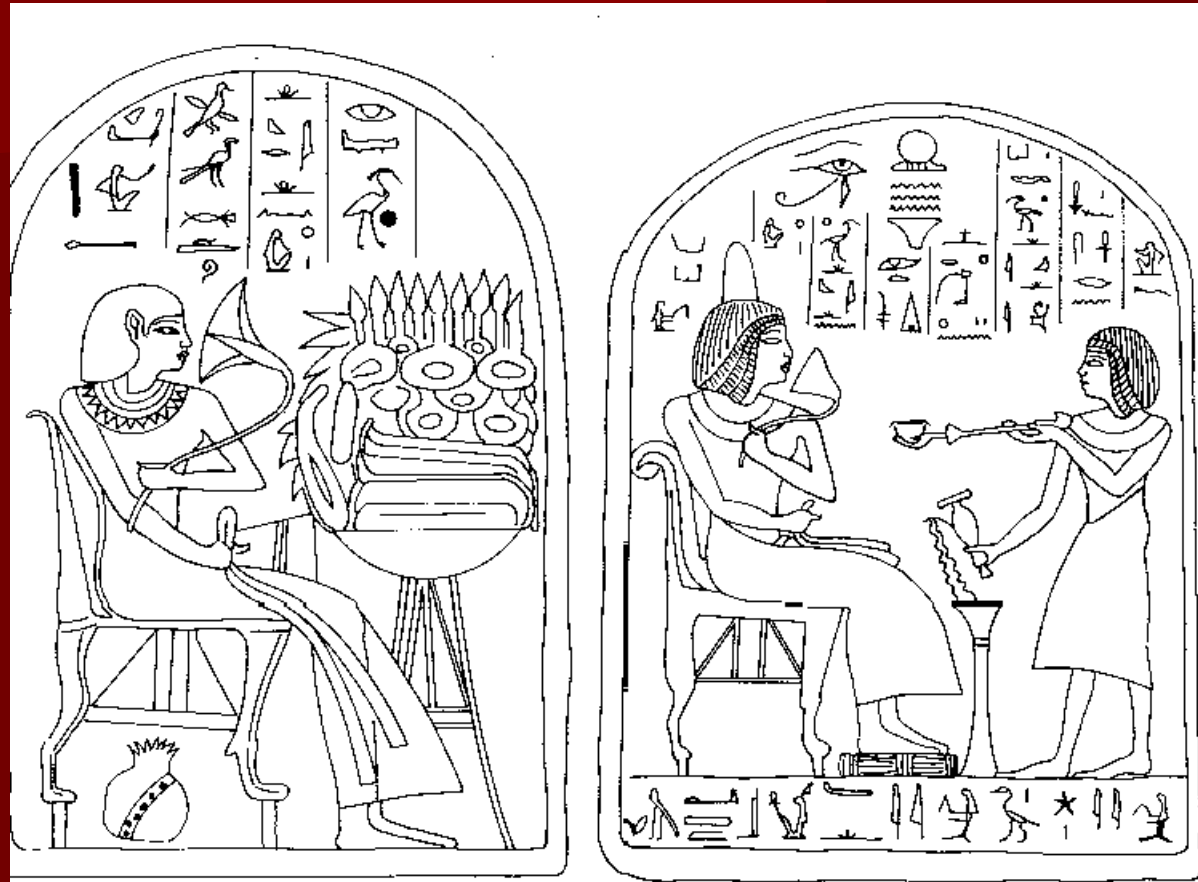


Figure 8. $\text{ʿ}h\ ikr\ n\ R^c$ stela from Deir el Medina. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing from R. J. Demarée, *The $\text{ʿ}h\ ikr\ n\ R^c$ Stelae* (Leiden, 1983), pl. VI, A17.

Figure 9. $\text{ʿ}h\ ikr\ n\ R^c$ stela from Deir el Medina. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing from R. J. Demarée, *The $\text{ʿ}h\ ikr\ n\ R^c$ Stelae* (Leiden, 1983), pl. XII, A49.

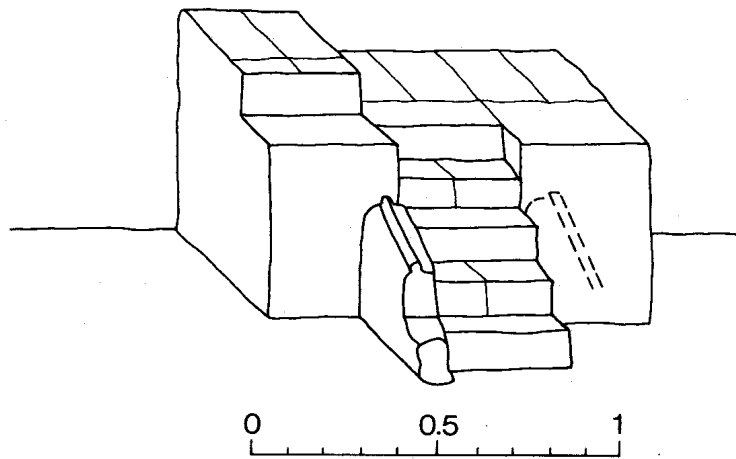


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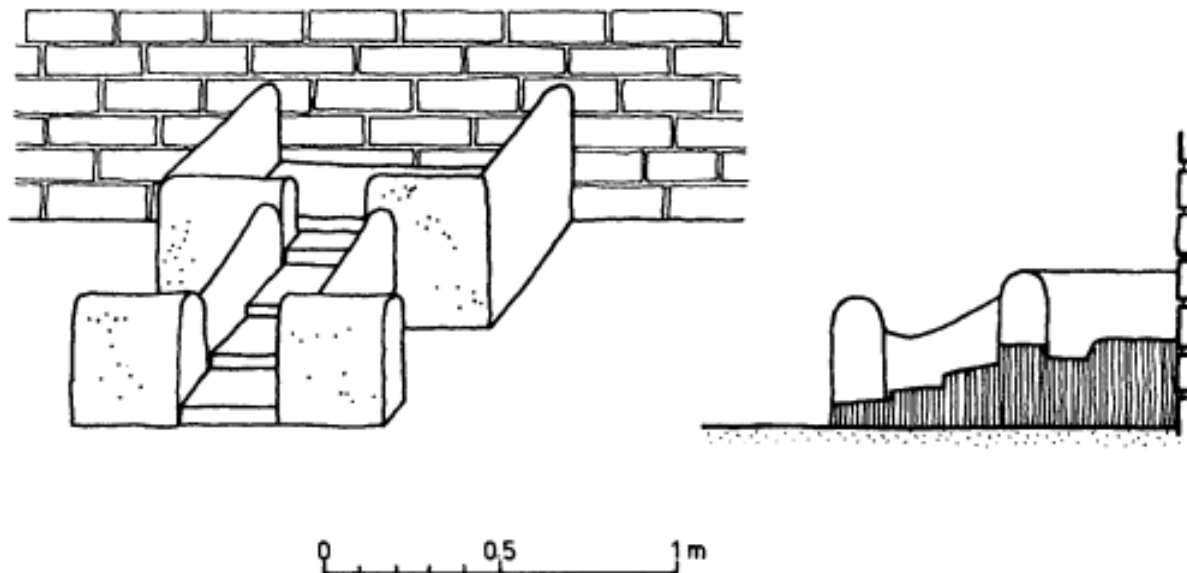


FIG. 2. Domestic altar with approaching staircase in house P47.22 (after Borchardt and Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser*, 132, Abb. 18; courtesy of the DOG and the DAI).

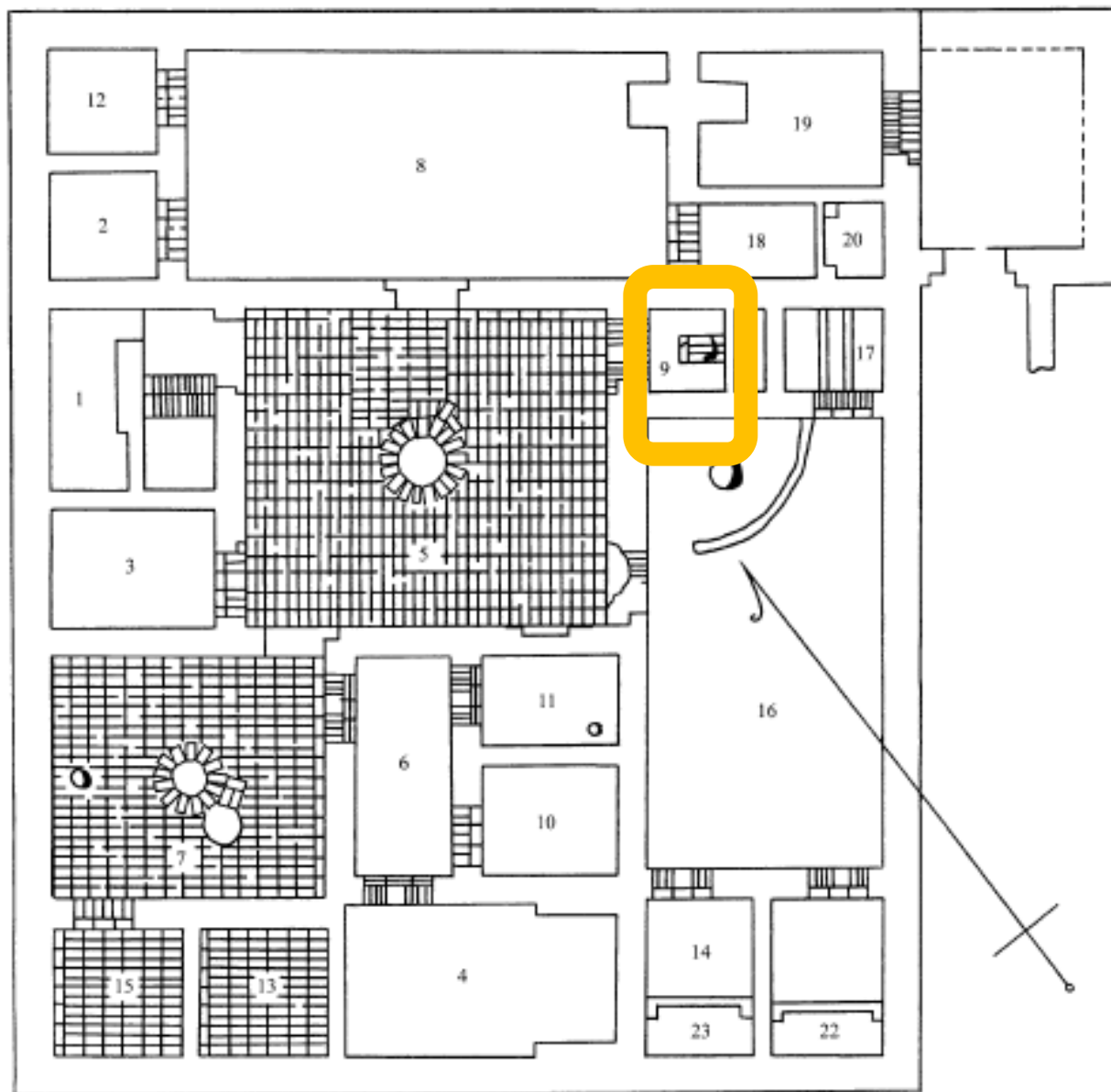


FIG. 3. Plan of house M50.1 with possible domestic altar in room 9, opening off the north-east corner of the central room (after Borchardt and Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser*, Hausplan 93; courtesy of the DOG and the DAI).

[illegible]

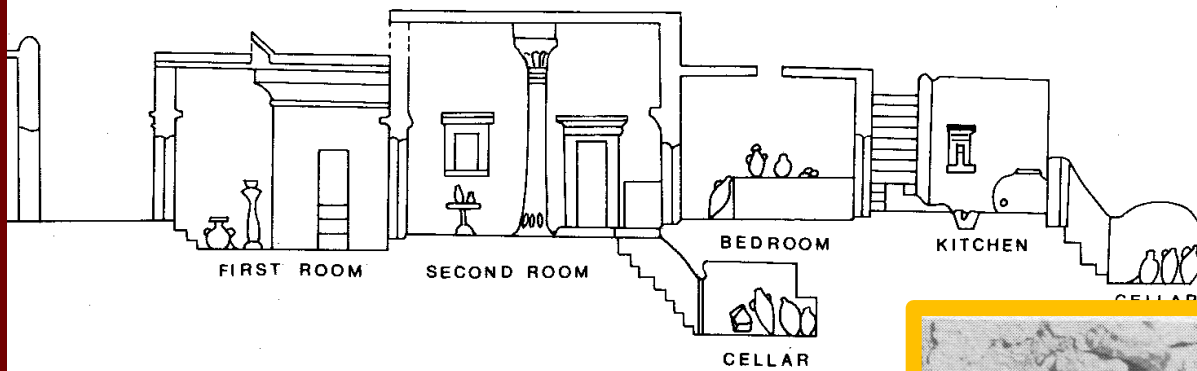
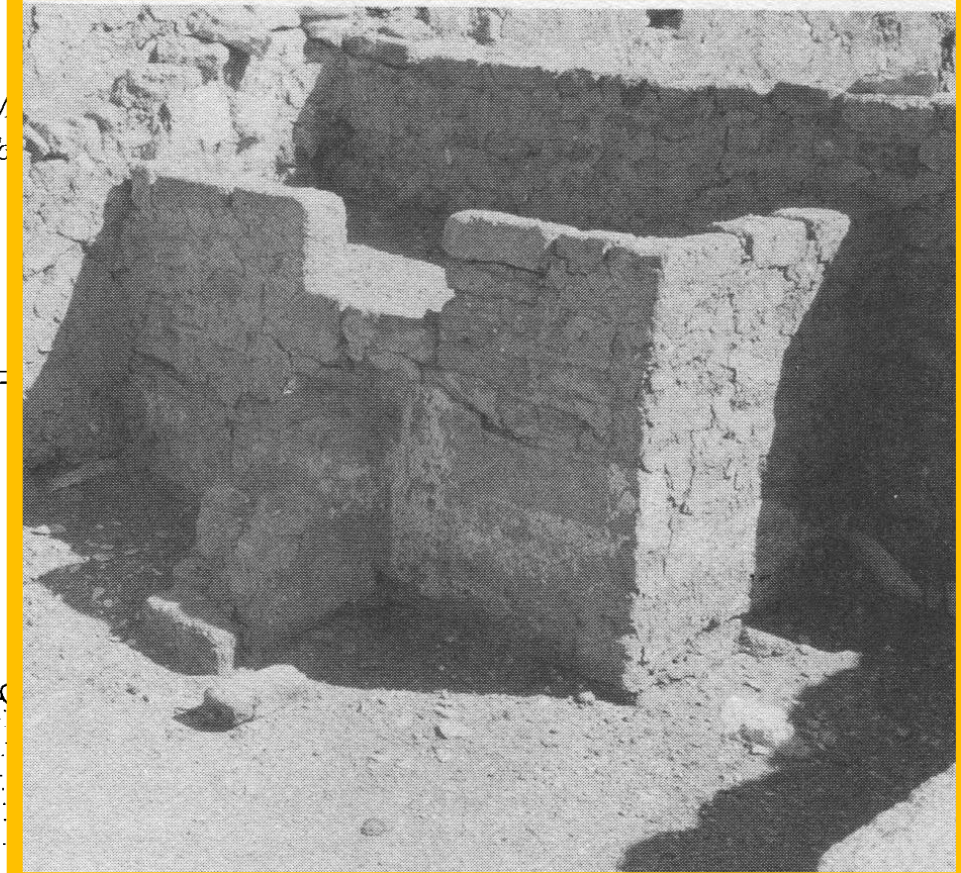
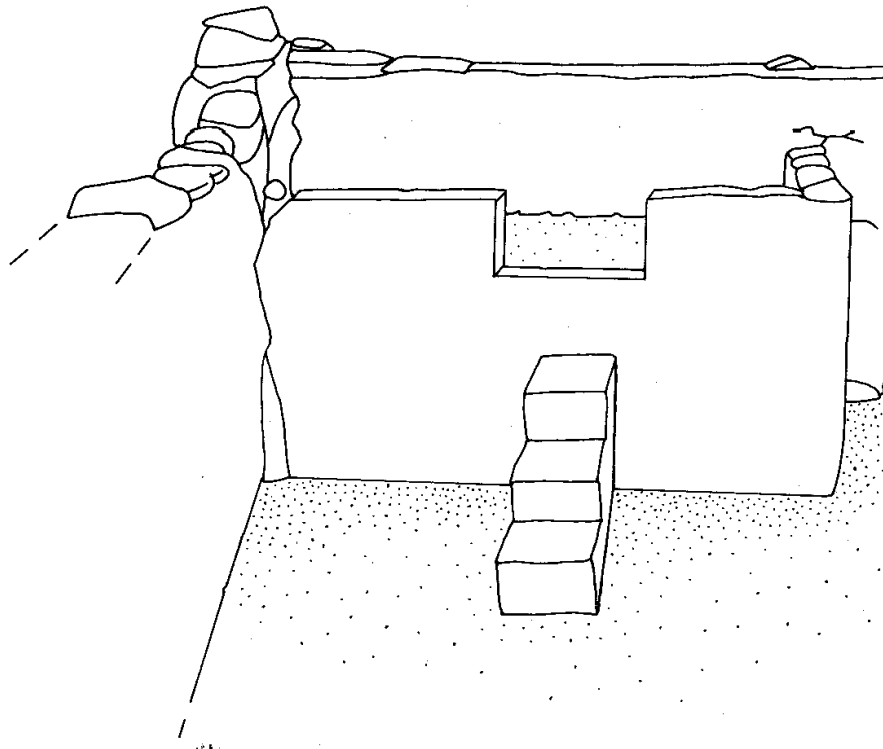
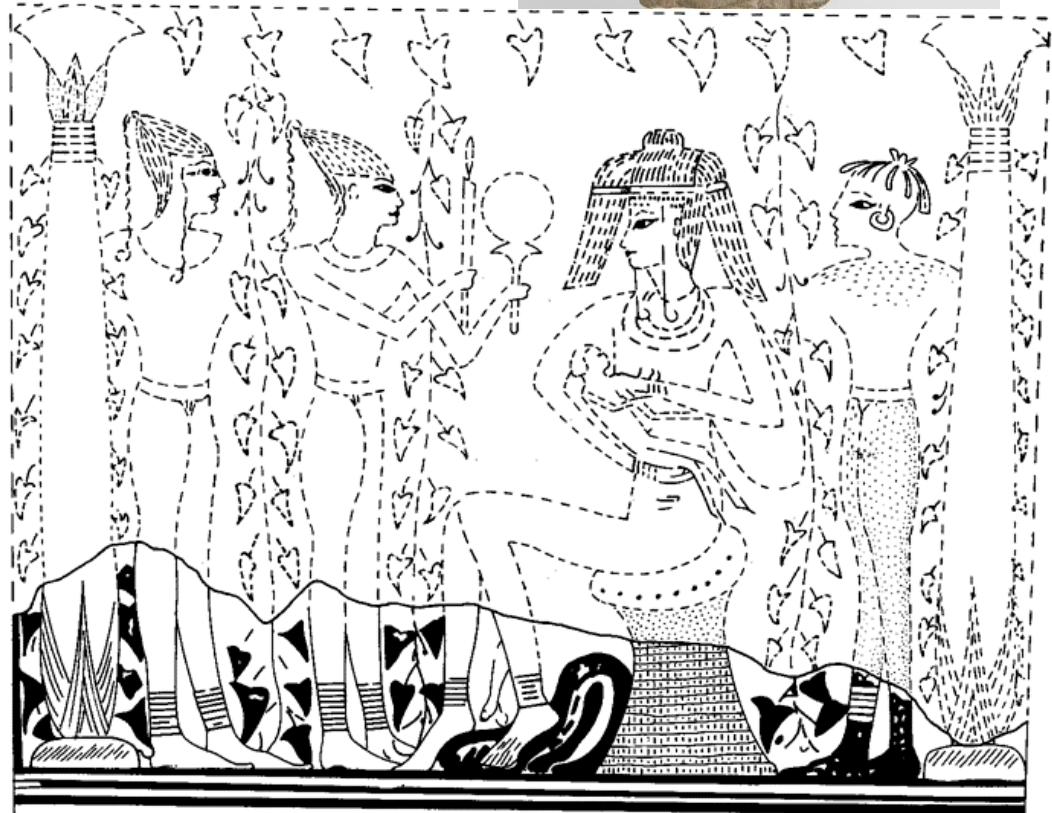
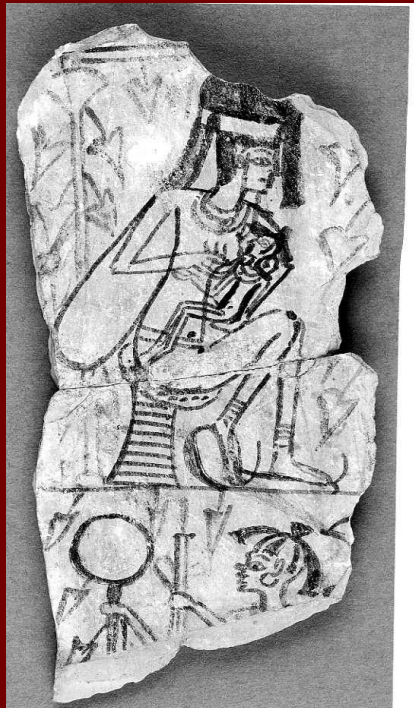
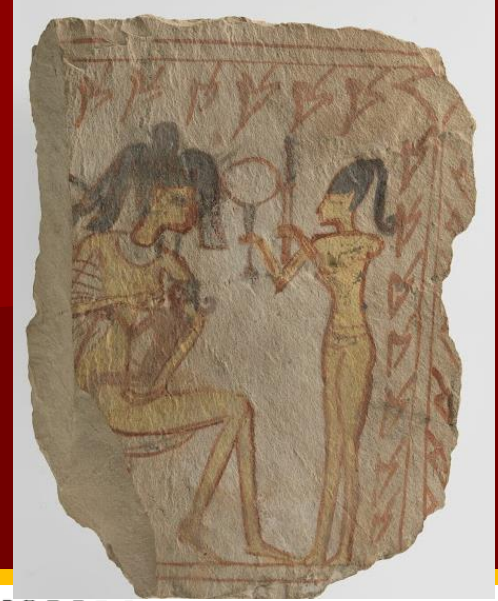
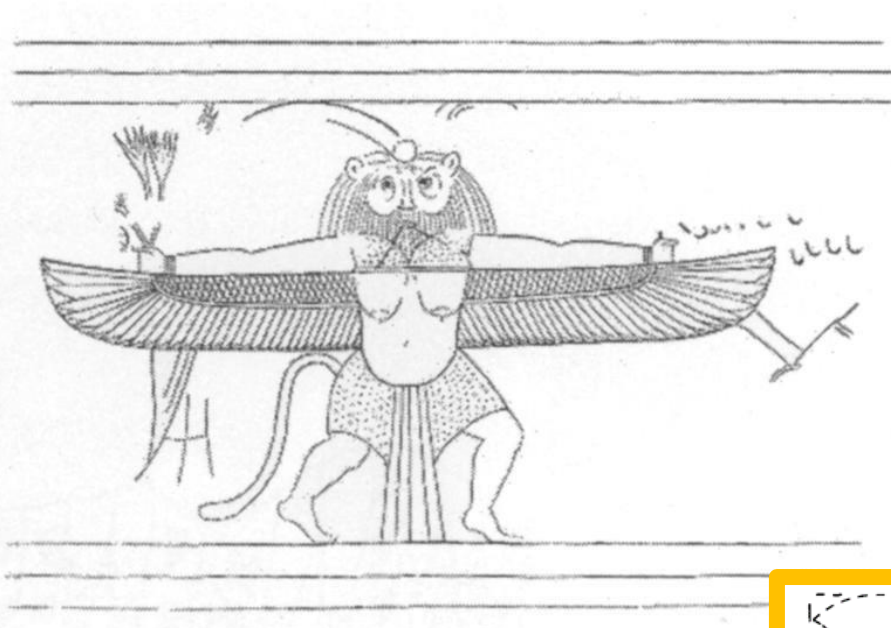


Figure 1. Plan of a typical Deir el Medina house. Drawn by M. after a drawing of Mrs. C. Barratt, in Morris Bierbrier, *The Tombs of the Pharaohs* (London, 1982), p. 69.





Popular religion

Oracles and Festivals

Readings

- ❑ Darnell. Opet Festival.
- ❑ Baines. Practical Religion
- ❑ A.M. Blackman, 'Oracles in ancient Egypt I & II' *JEA* 11 (1925): 249–55; 12 (1926): 176–85.
- ❑ Baines, J. Practical Religion 'Practical religion and piety.' *JEA* 73 (1987): 88–93.
- ❑ Processional Routes and Festivals.
→ <http://dlib.etc.ucla.edu/projects/Karnak/assets/media/resources/ProcessionalRoutesAndFestivals/guide.pdf>
- ❑ Sullivan, E.A. 2012. Visualising the size and movement of the portable festival barks at Karnak temple. In: *BMSAES* 19(2012): 1–37 →
<https://www.britishmuseum.org/PDF/Sullivan.pdf>



Oracles

- ❑ bjA[.t] - wonder
- ❑ more limited + practical than prophecy
- ❑ oracle = request to deity to answer some practical question through its public statue in procession
- ❑ Evidence: oracular decrees
 - engraved on temple walls or
 - delivered on papyrus to private persons → wore the oracle as an amulet
- ❑ references made in administrative or private records; original petitions on papyrus / ostraca and laid before the god; and statues and reliefs associated with oracles

Scenes from Chapel Rouge



Chapel Rouge Hatshepsut (South Wall): **Election of Hatshepsut by the King of Gods** (oracle)



- [Afterwards] his majesty [= Amun] took off to work a 'miracle'; his Ennead (was) in his entourage. However, there was no performance of his 'miracle' in any 'location' of the king. The whole country, it was quiet. 'Not one knows ', said the nobles of the king, the nobles of the palace: ' Let us bend the head!' (and) his followers: ' Why?' The wise (men) are (got) ignorant in the hearts. Their hearts trembled under the impression of his 'miracles'. His majesty (= Amun) got to the river under very great 'miracles', at both gates of the royal palace which are on the side of the sacrificial route.

Upper part of
limestone
stele of the
'scribe of the
divine booth
Shedsu-Hor'



Questions written to the Oracle of Sobek and Isis (Ptol., demotic)



pair of questions (149 or 138 BCE), oracle of Sobek and Isis (Soknopaiou Nesos - Fayum) → placed before the god

First: "Plea of the servant Teshnufe (son of) Ma're, who says before his master Sobek, lord of Pay, great god, and Isis, perfect of throne. If my soundest course is to plow the bank of the lake this year, year 33, and I should now sow, let this slip be brought out to me."

Second – corresponding negative provision "if it is not my soundest course...." , omits sowing

Oracles

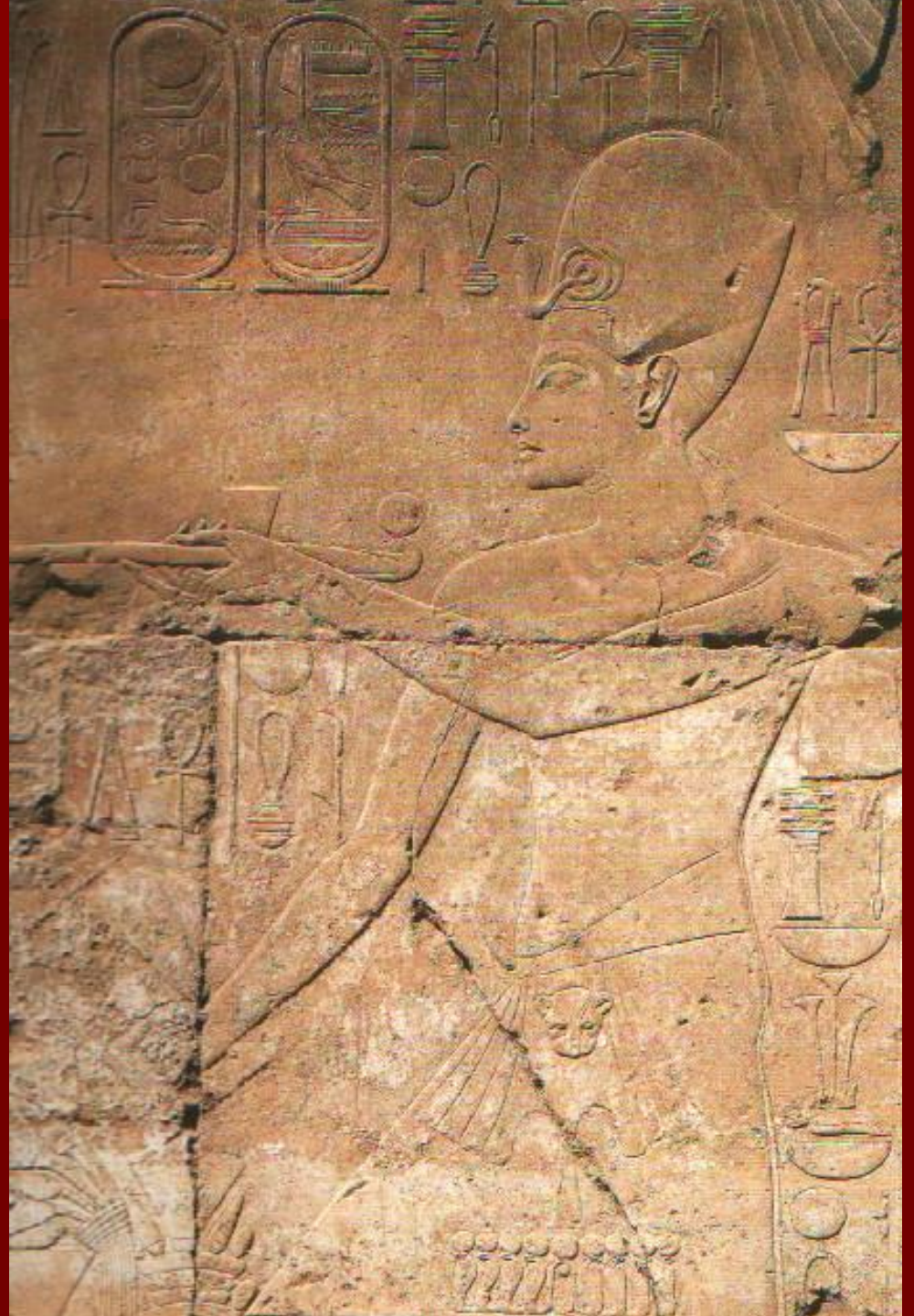
- ❑ Oracles = most effective when a "yes-no" question asked
- ❑ Questions could include
 - "who has done or will do something"
 - "what are the chances for achieving this plan"
- ❑ All levels of society sought oracles: Hatshepsut, Thutmosis III and any other member of society
 - king wished to confirm a god's approval of a military campaign
 - making a sensitive appointment to religious office
 - Farmers ask oracles about whether to cultivate a certain plot of land and with what crop
 - Decisions in law cases

Oracular amuletic decrees (Pap.Cleveland 14723 and BM EA24774)



Festivals:

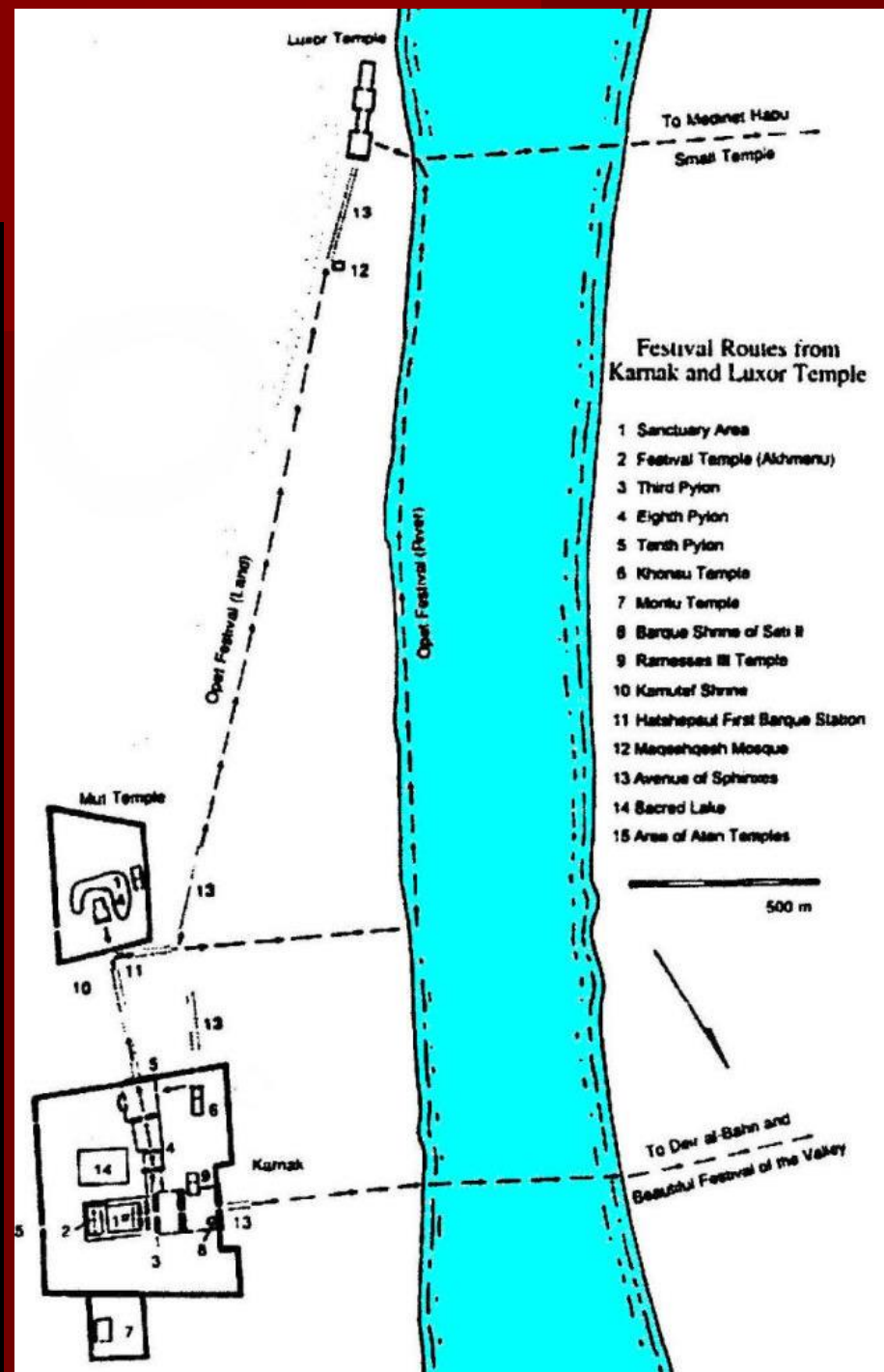
**Opet festival
(Tutankhamun)**



Festivals in ancient Egypt

- festival = periodically recurring religious celebration
- ancient Egyptian word for 'festival' was *ḥb* (*Heb*)
- Word found in personal names of men and women given at birth: male personal name Horemheb 'Horus is in festival', indicating the reach of such events into the lives of individuals
 - Opet Festival (Karnak – Luxor)
 - Beautiful Festival of the Valley (Karnak – Thebes West)
 - Sed-Festival (Saqqara, Thebes, ...)
 - (Abydos)
 - Coronation

Festival routes in Thebes



Luxor Temple: Preparations for the departure of the Opet Procession



Luxor Temple: Stacking of the altars



Luxor Temple: Female acrobats

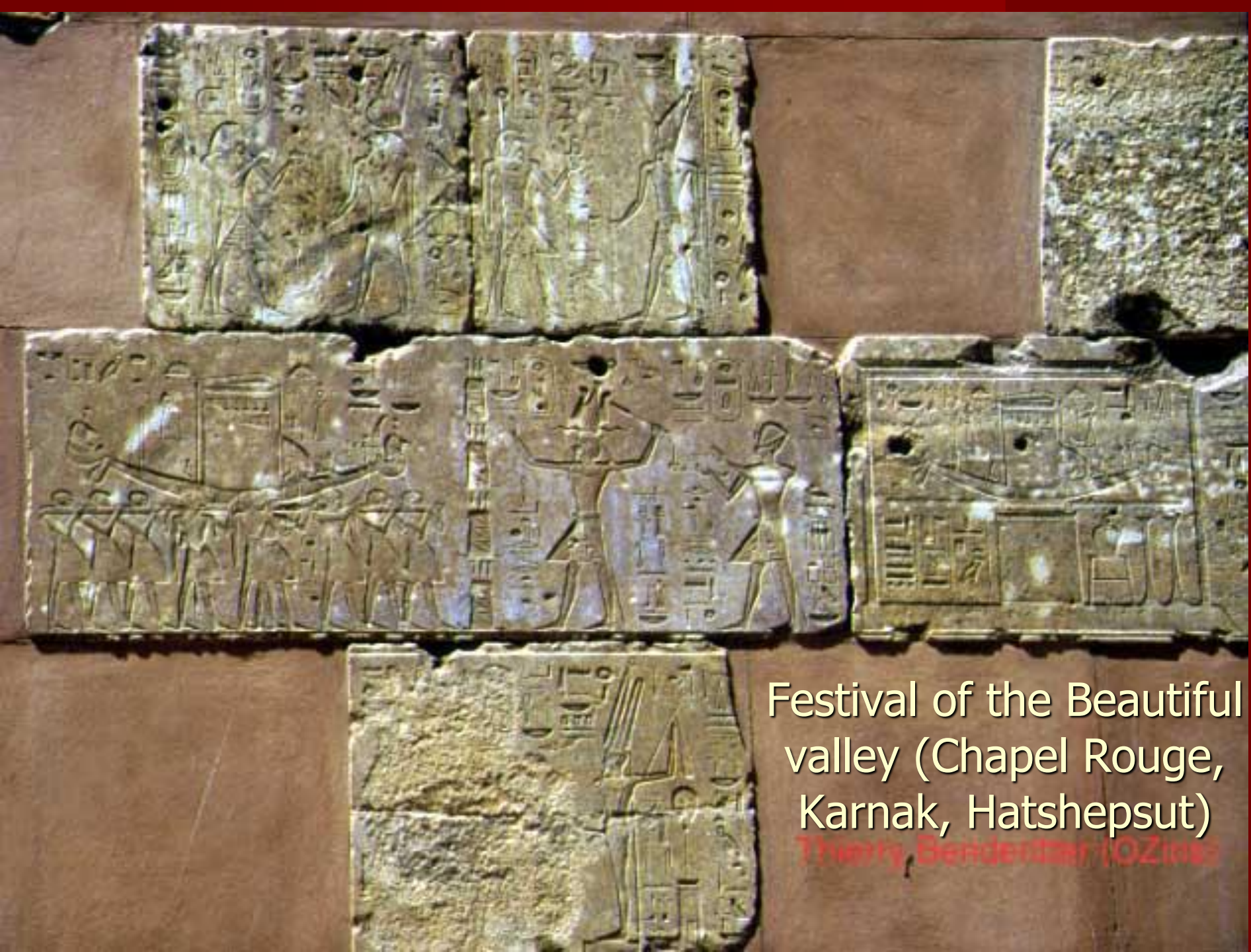


Luxor Temple: Return of Opet Procession



Chapel Rouge: Opet Festival, Return of the clergy





Festival of the Beautiful
valley (Chapel Rouge,
Karnak, Hatshepsut)

Thierry, Bénédictine (OZine)

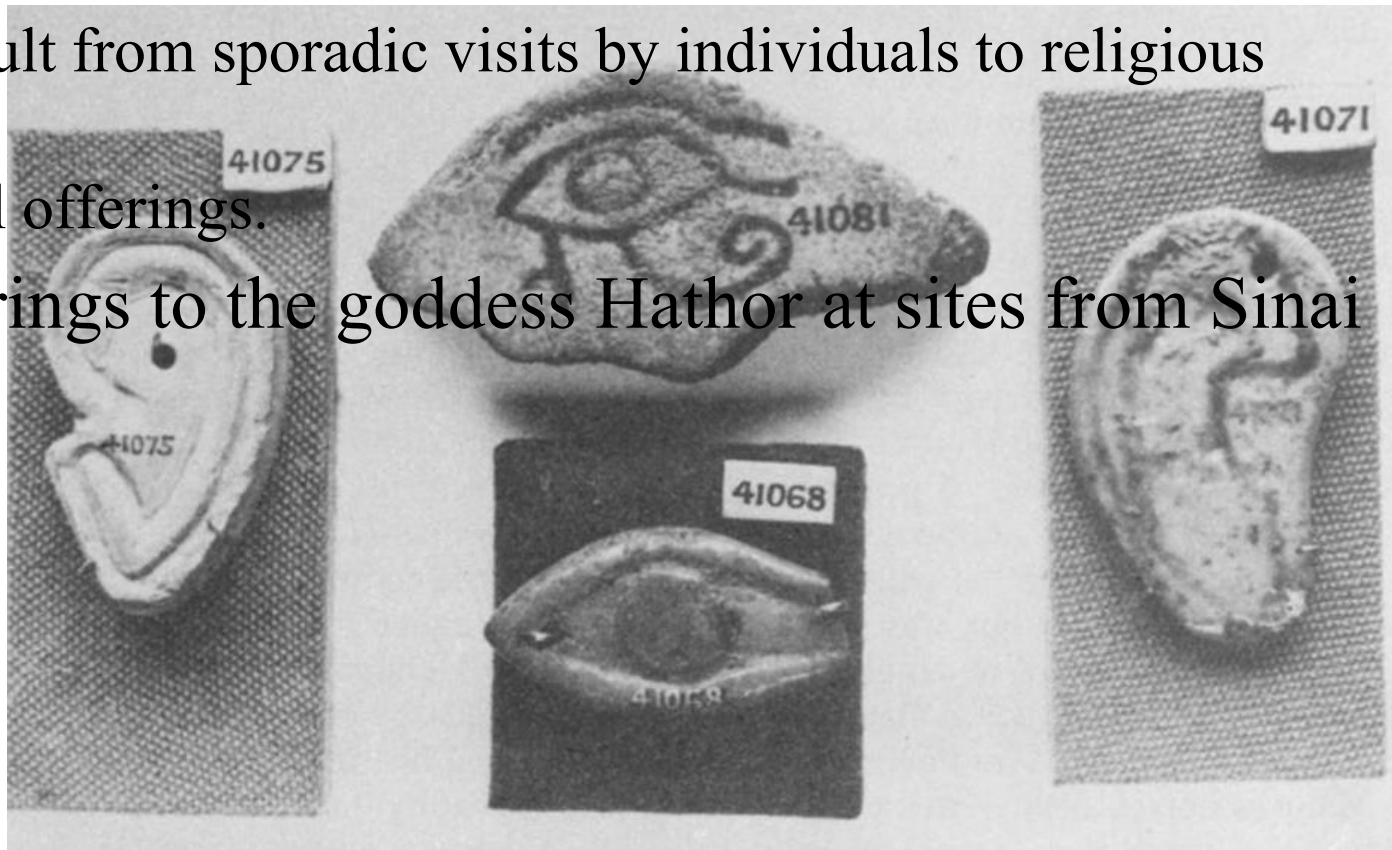
Festival leaders

- title held at certain periods by middle-ranking → new research is needed for investigating their activities in detail
- UC 8446: stelophor Amenemipet (18th dyn., dated due to stylistic grounds ThIII)
 - Black basalt, hands raised in adoration over stela, striated wig
 - stela inscribed with hymn to rising sun
 - Back pillar: Royal Scribe, high steward of the king, Amenemipet, true of voice; it is his brother who causes his name to live ...
Iahmes
 - base title 'Director of festivals of Amun'



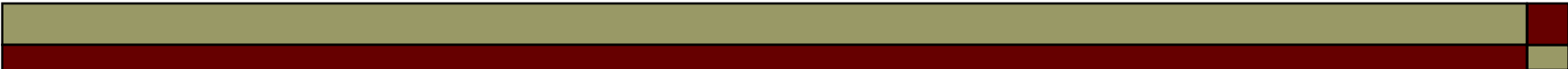
Archaeological evidence

- ❑ little researched
- ❑ substantial deposits of votive offerings
 - might result from sporadic visits by individuals to religious sites
 - or festival offerings.
- ❑ votive offerings to the goddess Hathor at sites from Sinai to Nubia



Written evidence for festivals

- Siegfried Schott: compiled a list of known festivals (from the scattered references):
 - Names
 - few detail from ritual manuscripts
 - monumental inscriptions and depictions
- Hbw nw pt 'festivals of heaven' and Hbw tp trw 'seasonal festivals' → division?
- fragmentary late Middle Kingdom (about 2025-1700 BC) accounts papyrus, from Lahun, records the days served by dancers and singers at festivals (**UC 32191**)



OK list

- ❑ Opening of the Year
- ❑ Thoth festival
- ❑ First of the Year
- ❑ Wag festival
- ❑ Sokar festival
- ❑ Great Festival
- ❑ Flame festival
- ❑ Procession of Min
- ❑ Sadj festival

NK list (part)

- ❑ **Season of Summer : Month 2 (10th month of 12 r)**
- ❑ Khentkhety = Paeninet = (approximately May)
- ❑ Festival of the Valley celebrated at the New Moon in this month; this was the greatest festival of the Theban necropolis, when the image of Amun of Karnak on the east bank at Thebes was brought to the temples for the cult of individual kings on the west bank - a distinctive feature of this festival was the presentation of great quantities of flowers - this would have been a time for each family to feast with their dead, and the architecture and decoration of tomb-chapels at Thebes reflect such festive banquets

NK list (part)

- ❑ **Month 4 (12th month of 12 in year)**
- ❑ Wepet-renpet 'Opening of the Year' = Mesut-Ra 'birth of Ra' = Coptic Messori (approximately July, ideally)
- ❑ days 1-2 festival, occasion not specified, according to late New Kingdom ostrakon Deir el-Medina 209, verso, line 4
- ❑ day 2 Ipip festival, according to the journal for work on the king's tomb, Necropolis Journal pl.59, line 19
- ❑ day 24 festival of Ptah (local?), according to a rough inscription on a Middle Kingdom pyramid
- ❑ day 30 eve of start of year

'The five days over the year' (= days 361-365 of the official year, added to the 12 months)

- ❑ day 1 birthday of Osiris
- ❑ day 2 birthday of Horus
- ❑ day 3 birthday of Seth
- ❑ day 4 birthday of Isis
- ❑ day 5 birthday of Nephthys

Architecture and practicability: boat processions in space and place



Architecture and practicability: boat processions in space and place (within Chapel Rouge)

