

A8

Personal Religion in Amarna

HPAH7022 - Religious Change and
Resilience: The case study of Amarna

Dr Katharina Zinn

Associate Professor in Egyptian Archaeology
and Heritage

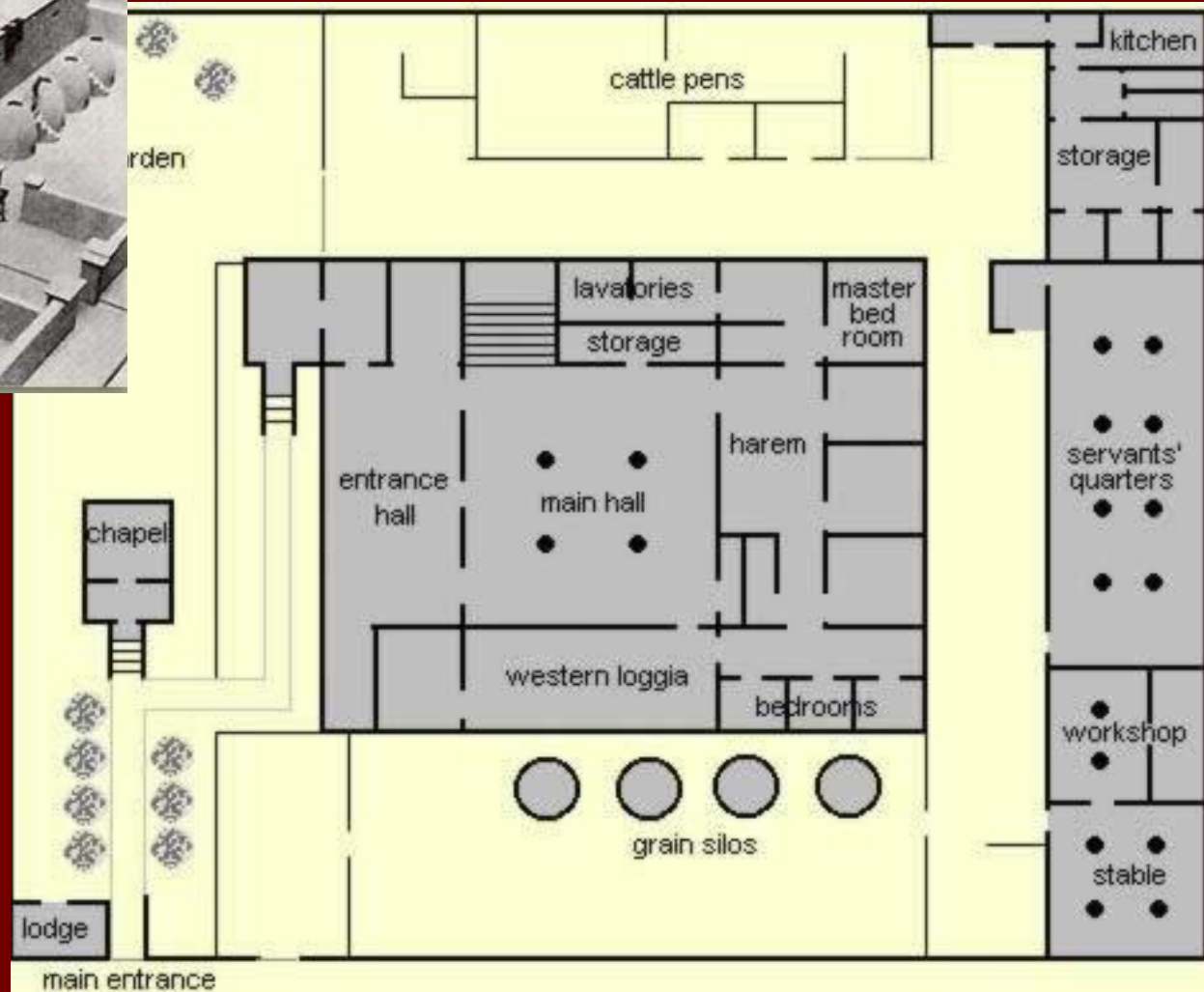
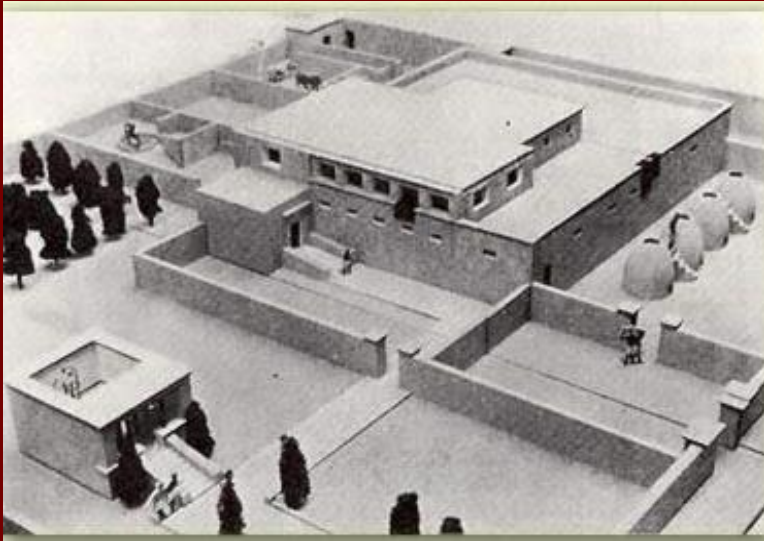
Readings

- ❑ Kemp, B.J. 2012. *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti: Amarna and its People*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- ❑ Kemp, B.J. 1979. Wall paintings from the Workmen's Village at el-'Amarna. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 65, 47–53.
- ❑ Kemp, B., 2009. A wall painting of Bes figures from Amarna. *Egyptian Archaeology* 34, 18–19.
- ❑ Stevens, A. 2003. The material evidence for domestic religion at Amarna and preliminary remarks on its interpretation. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 89, 143–68.

Readings

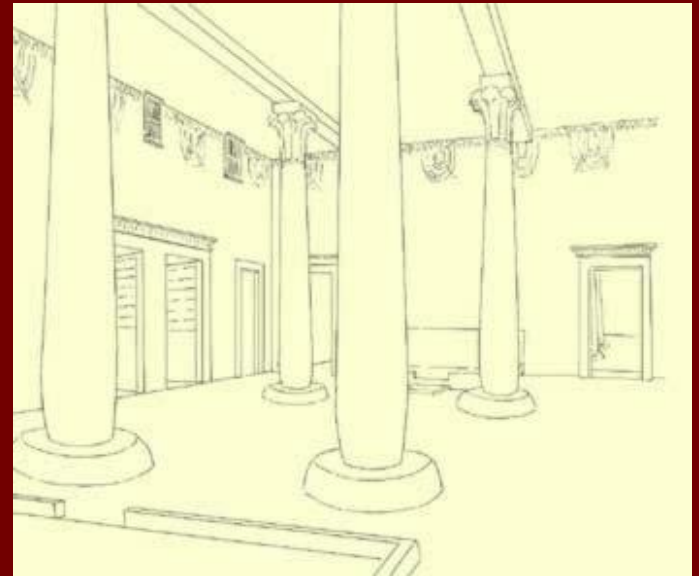
- ❑ Stevens, A. 2004. The Amarna royal women as images of fertility: perspectives on a royal cult. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 4, 107–27.
- ❑ Stevens, A. 2006. *Private Religion at Amarna: The Material Evidence*. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- ❑ Stevens, A. 2012. Private religion in the Amarna suburbs. In F. Seyfried, ed., *In the Light of Amarna. 100 Years of the Discovery of Amarna*. Berlin: Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 92–7.
- ❑ Koltsina, A. (2006). *Birth-bed, sitting place, erotic corner or domestic altar? A study of the so-called “elevated bed” in Deir el-Medina houses*. SAK 35(2006). pp.165-174.

Personal piety in Amarna



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.

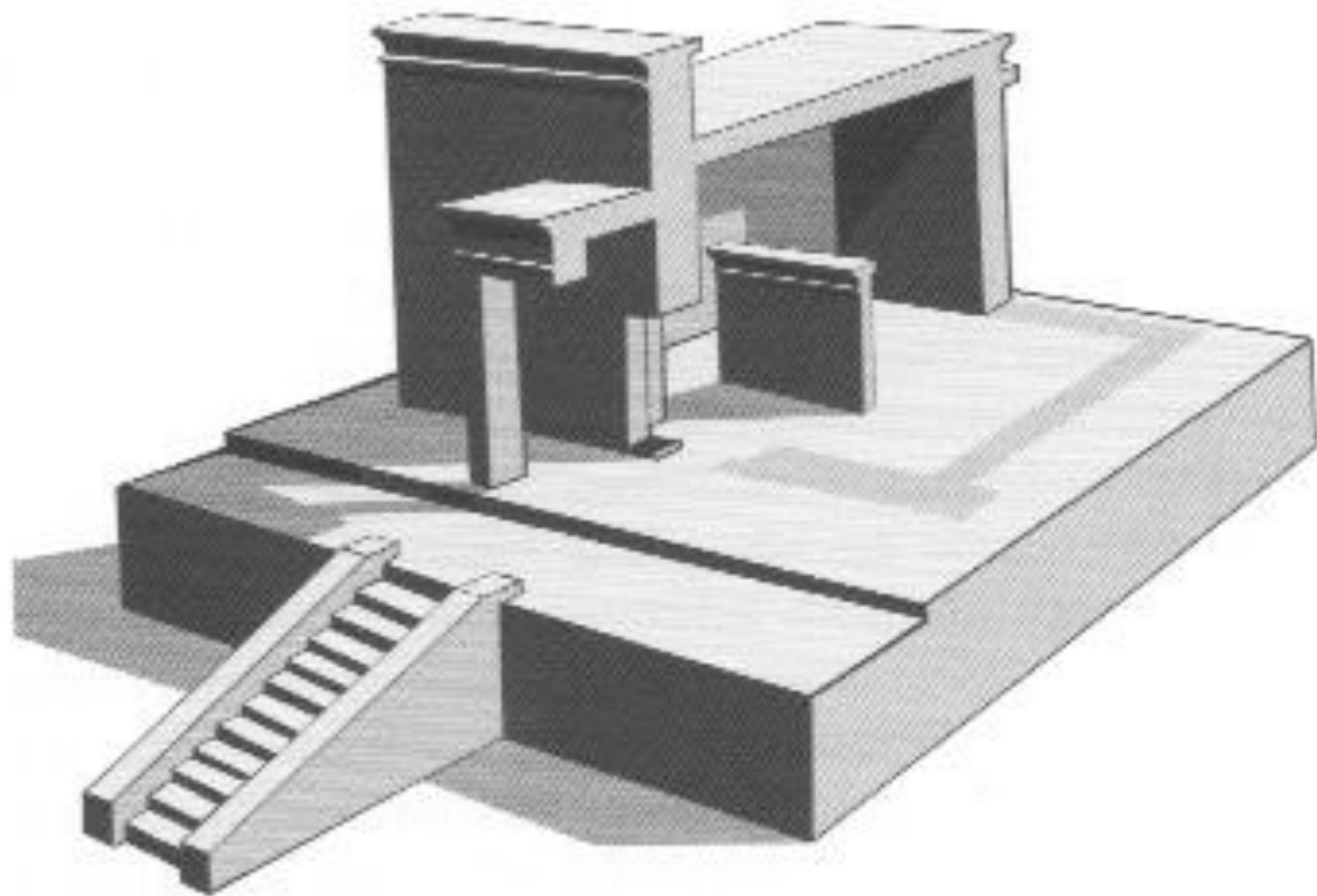
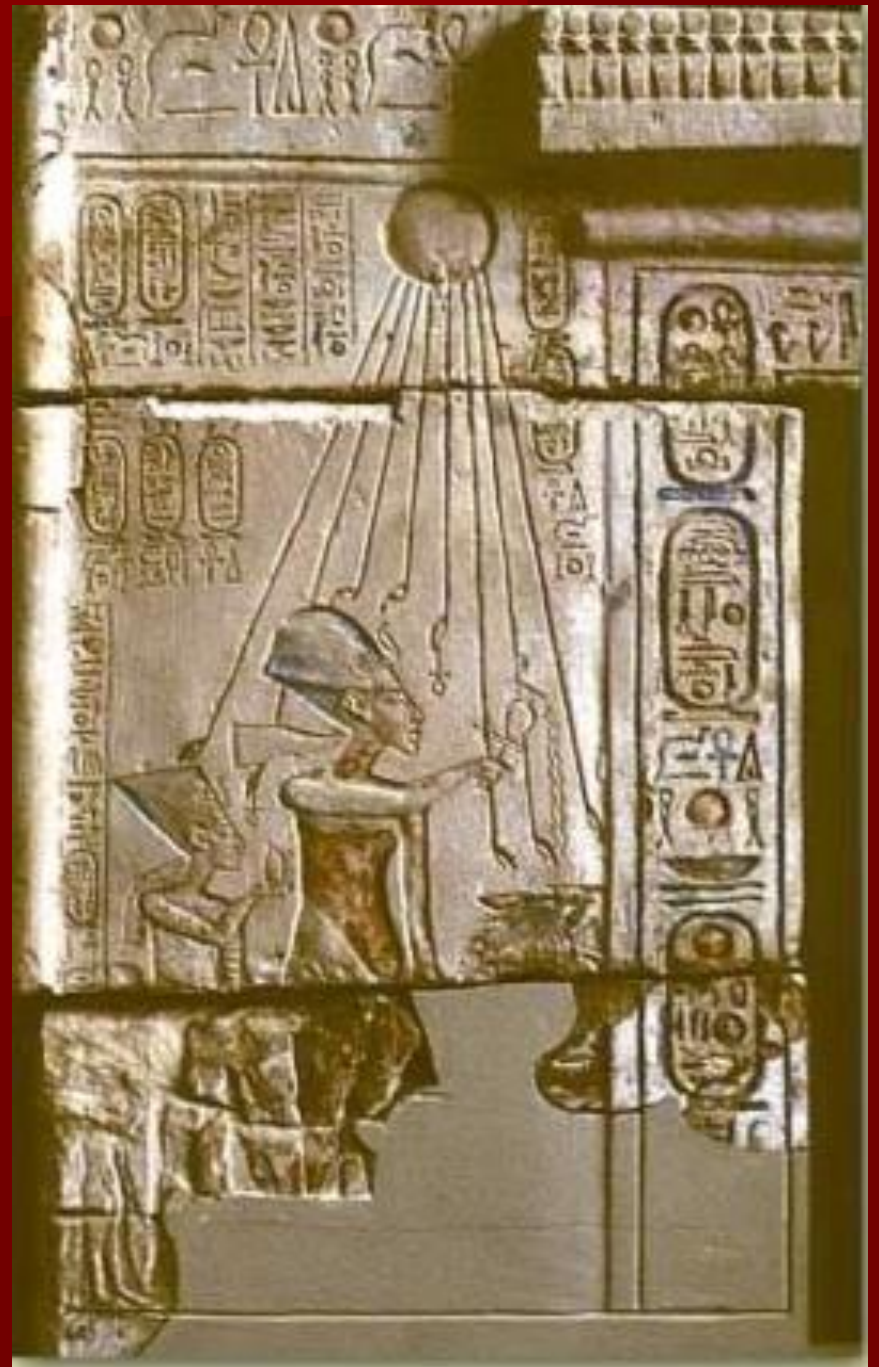


Abb. 5: Isometrische Rekonstruktion der Aton-Kapelle im Garten des Gehöfts des Pawah.

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



House altar Amarna (Berlin)



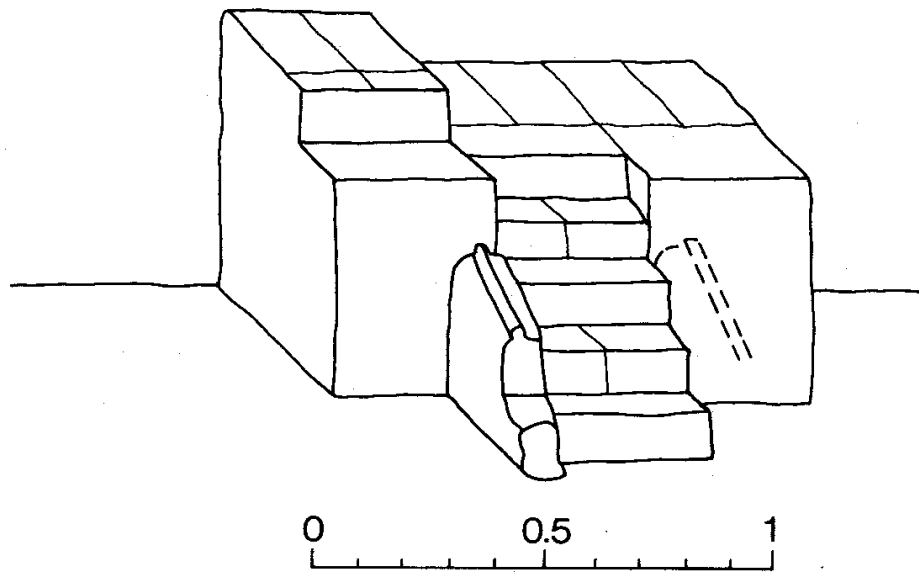


Figure 7. Indoor
drawing from 1
el-Amarna (Bei

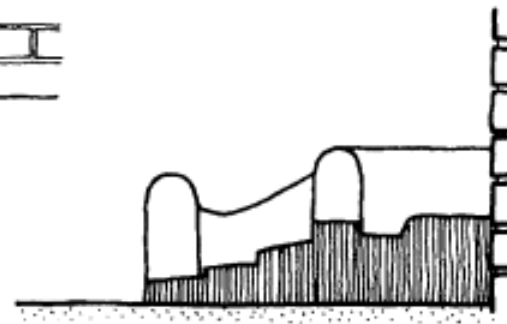
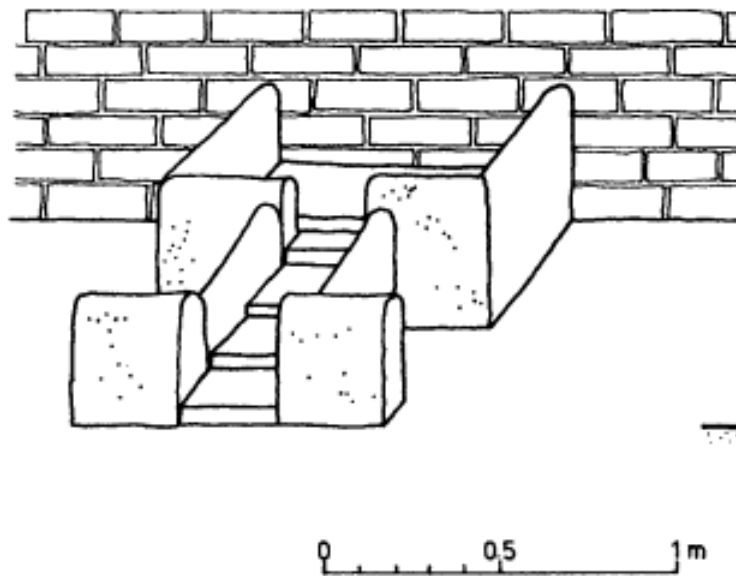


FIG. 2. Domestic altar with approaching staircase in house P47.22 (after Borchardt and Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser*, 132, Abb. 18; courtesy of the DOG and the DAI).

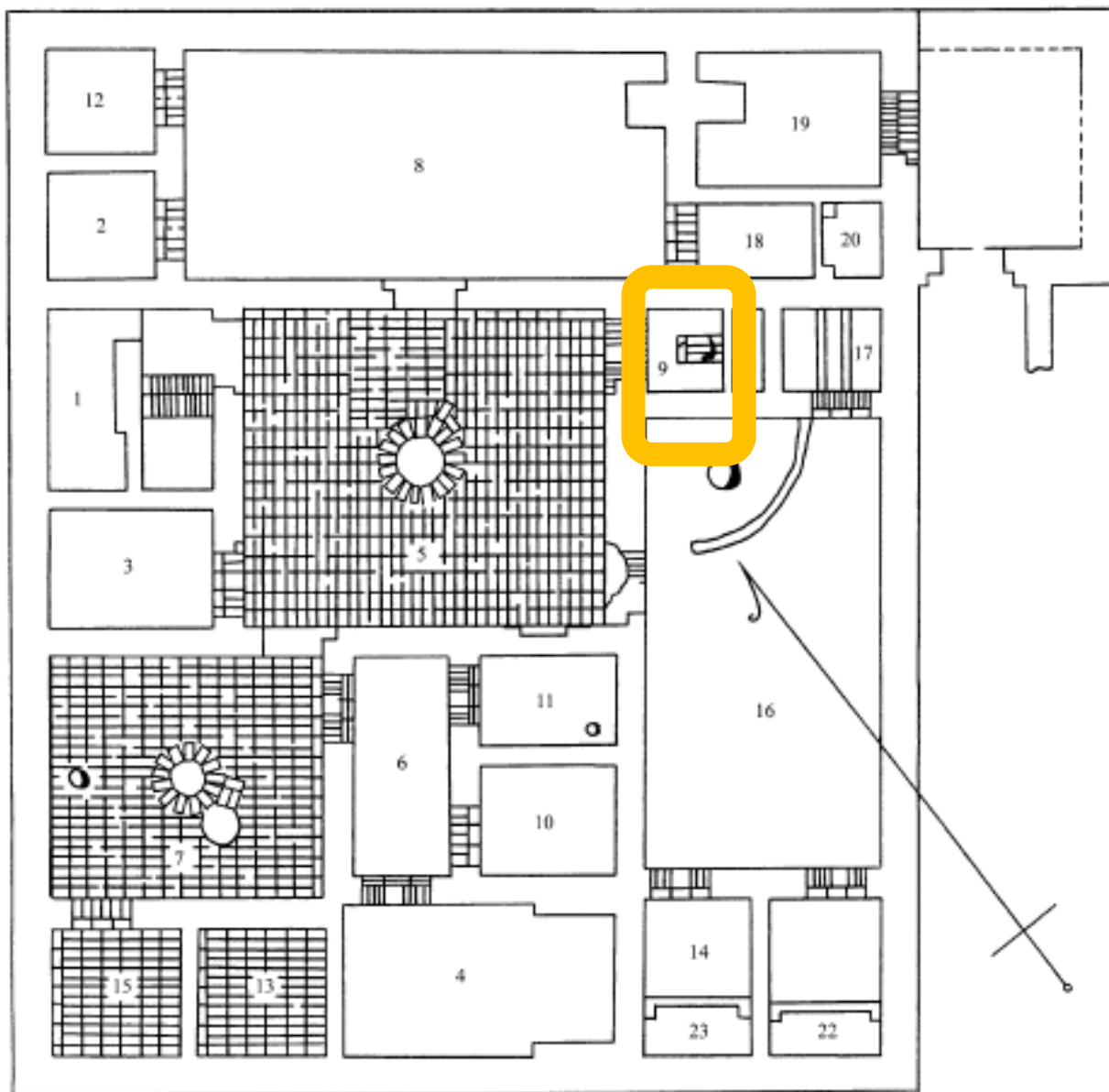


FIG. 3. Plan of house M50.1 with possible domestic altar in room 9, opening off the north-east corner of the central room (after Borchardt and Ricke, *Die Wohnhäuser*, Hausplan 93; courtesy of the DOG and the DAI).

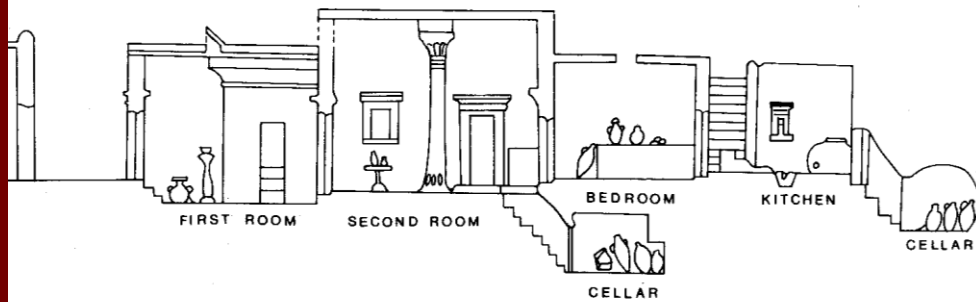


Figure 1. Plan of a typical Deir el Medina house. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing of Mrs. C. Barratt, in Morris Bierbrier, *The Tomb-builders of the Pharaohs* (London, 1982), p. 69.

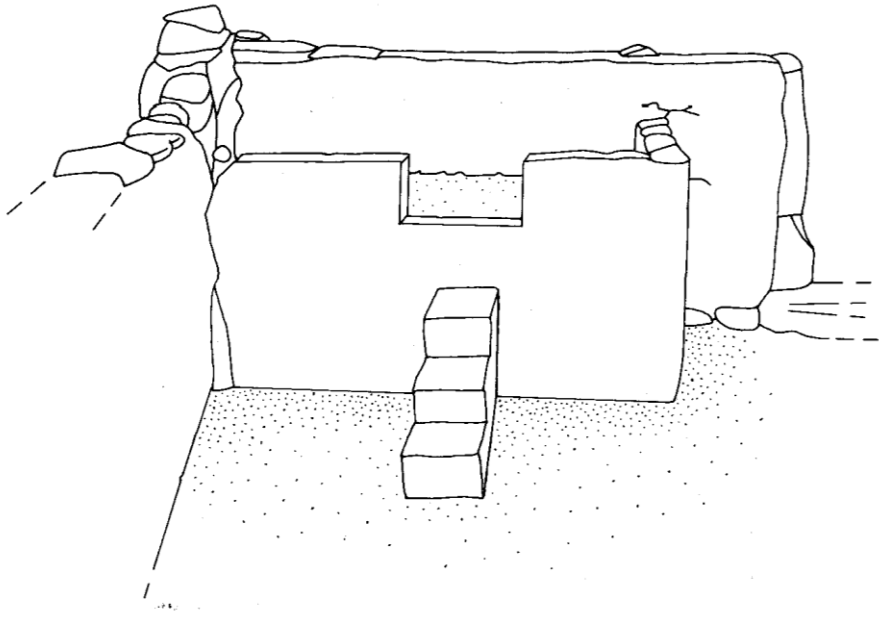
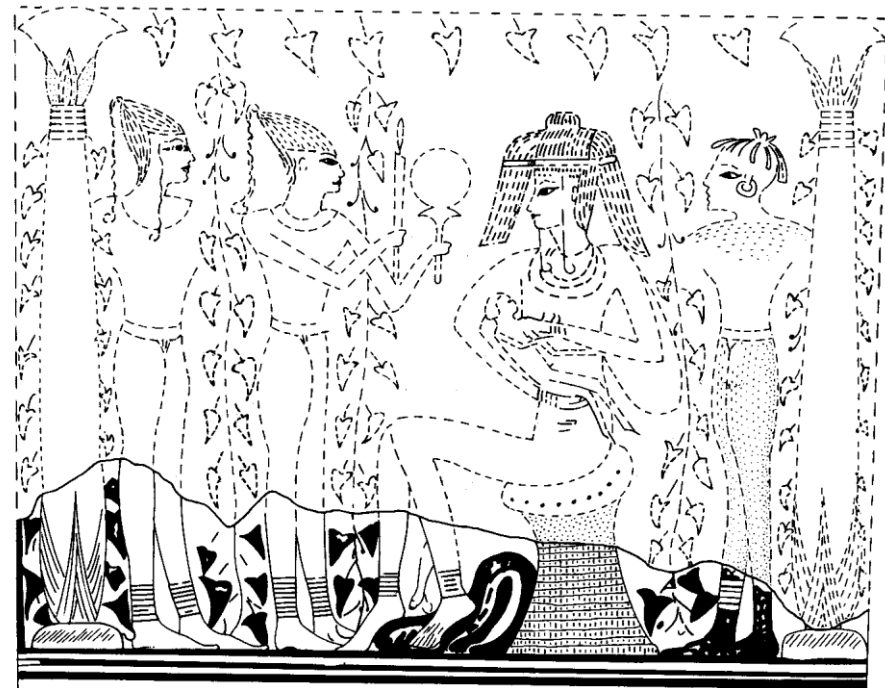


Figure 2. A so-called box bed. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a photograph in R. E. Freed, *Ramesses the Great* (Memphis, 1987), p. 89.



Personal piety in Deir el-Medina

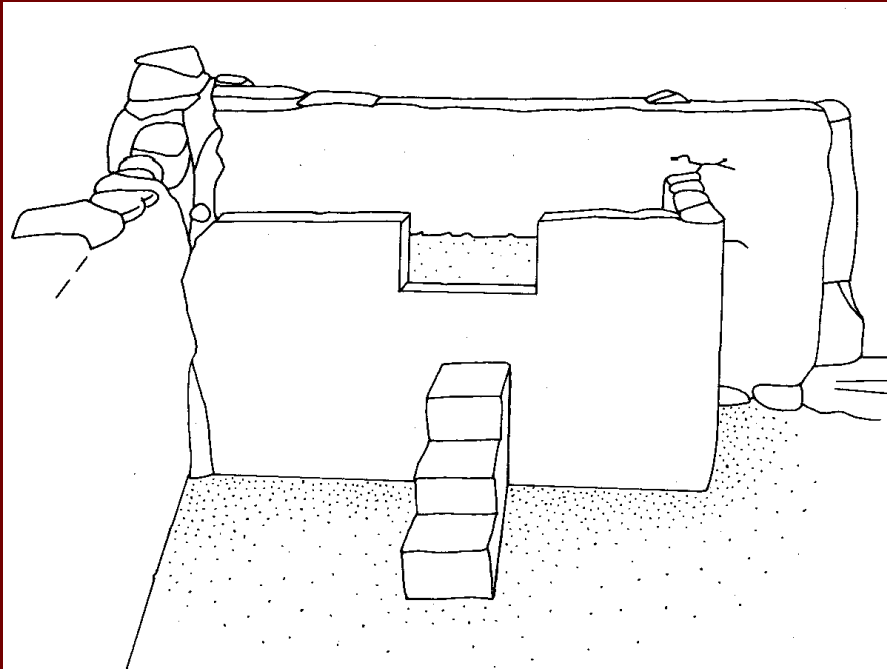


Figure 10. An ancestor bust from Deir el Medina. Courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, no. 20914.

Ancestor busts

- ❑ Private ancestor worship
- ❑ 75 of 150 known from DeM, some from Amarna
- ❑ 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

Akh-n-jkr stela: represents divinized ancestors

$\text{3}^{\text{h}} \text{ jkr } n \text{ R}^{\text{c}}$ – 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. $\text{3}^{\text{h}} \text{ jkr } n \text{ R}^{\text{c}}$ stela from Deir el Medina. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing from R. J. Demarée, *The $\text{3}^{\text{h}} \text{ jkr } n \text{ R}^{\text{c}}$ Stelae* (Leiden, 1983), pl. VI, A17.



Figure 9. $\text{3}^{\text{h}} \text{ jkr } n \text{ R}^{\text{c}}$ stela from Deir el Medina. Drawn by Mary Winkes, after a drawing from R. J. Demarée, *The $\text{3}^{\text{h}} \text{ jkr } n \text{ R}^{\text{c}}$ Stelae* (Leiden, 1983), pl. XII, A49.

Akh-n-jkr stela: represents divinized ancestors

- ❑ Range of discovery places (cemeteries, Osiris temple Abydos, palace of Merenptah Memphis, household DeM)
- ❑ 2 found near small wall niches (first and second room)
- ❑ Found together with limestone tables also with inscription akh-n-jkr → suggest domestic cult activity
- ❑ Depiction: seated man, sometimes offerings

MMA 11.150.21



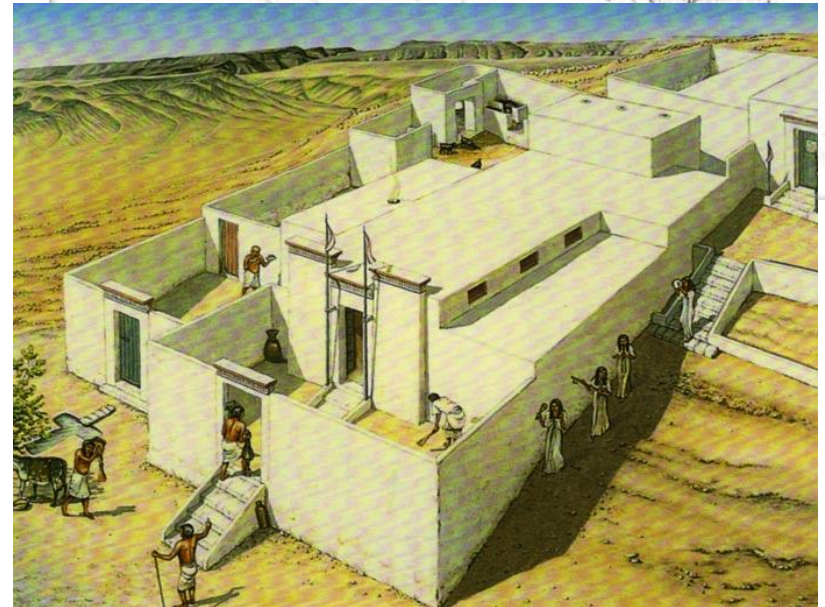
All of the individuals in this small group are males, represented according to the conventions of Amarna art. The intriguing group has been variously interpreted as a family comprising a grandfather, a father, and a son, or as one man at three different stages of life. The latter is most unlikely as the multiple representations of a single individual in one statue are not shown interacting as they do here. In fact careful examination of the faces and figures points to the statue's being a kind of domestic icon. The figure at left is a high-status individual and likely the oldest; he is probably a revered relative or the respected overlord of the man and boy who stand closely entwined with one another. The statuette would have received veneration in the household of its owner.

Interesting story – taken with them when left Amarna?

Probably from Southern Upper Egypt, Gebelein (Krokodilopolis); Probably originally from Middle Egypt, Amarna (Akhetaten)

Religious areas of the Workmen's Village

- Approx. 23 chapels
- Roofed, and sometimes with ovens and food remains
- Decorated with painted scenes



Religious areas

- ❑ Approx. 23 chapels
- ❑ Roofed, and sometimes with ovens and food remains
- ❑ Decorated with painted scenes
- ❑ Aten is absent, but there are references to Wepwawet and other deities



Portable objects as representations of personal piety

- ❑ Offering tables
 - 18 intact ones from Workmen's village and Main City
 - Ca. 15-25 cm in length
 - Could be spouted and spouteless
- ❑ Basins
 - Stone basins or troughs, large stone bowls in domestic context
- ❑ Shrines and Naoi
 - → little evidence, maybe made from wood, but uraei found, which might have been attached to naoi

Portable objects as representations of personal piety

- Statues, stela, figurines, ostraca, implements, vessels, jewellery
 - Most jewellery made from faience → includes images of divinities, animals, anthropomorphic figures, various hieroglyphic motifs + royal names; wedjat-eyes; Bes
 - Figurines: anthropomorphic images (fertility figurines); animals (cobras + monkeys); deities (Taweret + Bes)
 - most figurines made of pottery or unfired clay

Bes in Amarna

- Stevens (2006)
 - More than 500 Bes amulets / statuettes found



Portable objects as representations of personal piety

- Statues, stela, figurines, ostraca, implements, vessels, jewellery
 - Most jewellery made from faience → includes images of divinities, animals, anthropomorphic figures, various hieroglyphic motifs + royal names; wedjat-eyes; Bes
 - Figurines: anthropomorphic images (fertility figurines); animals (cobras + monkeys); deities (Taweret + Bes)
 - most figurines made of pottery or unfired clay
 - Statuary: Images of the royal family; Thoth; Ptah (?)
 - ostraca

Brooklyn Museum 38.876

- **Figured Ostrakon with Head of Akhenaten**
- Limestone trial piece with ink sketch of the head of Akhenaten + to the right a clenched hand
- elongated crown with royal uraeus
- long skull, very full lips, receding forehead
- quality of drawing fair



EC W9

