



CREATING AND RE-SHAPING EGYPT IN KUSH: RESPONSES AT AMARA WEST

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‘...bring me home! Surely you will let me see the place in which my heart dwells!’
[*The Tale of Sinuhe*. c. 1600 BC]

ABSTRACT

An ongoing British Museum research project at Amara West, Ramesside administrative center of Upper Nubia (Kush), is producing a range of evidence that allows different experiences of the colonial environment to be investigated. This paper considers the formal built environment (walled town, temple and associated decorative programs), household space, domestic cult, material culture and the role of writing to explore individual and household responses when residing in a context (cultural, environmental) distinct from Egypt itself. Alongside consideration of the limitations of the available data, the evidence for an increasing heterogeneity of the town (and its inhabitants) is also covered.

INTRODUCTION

Sinuhe’s plea, though fictional, evokes a longing for an Egyptian homeland. Emotional reactions to finding oneself in a distant land are near impossible to identify in the archaeological record, despite the long-term colonization of parts of Nubia and the Levant during various periods of pharaonic history. Nonetheless, architecture, cult practices and the presence of text can elucidate a range of responses, moving beyond the state to consider individuals and households. This paper will explore such evidence from an ‘Egyptian’ town in Nubia, Amara West, located between the Third and Dal cataracts (Figure 1), to achieve insights into responses to the colonial entanglement of Egypt and Nubia in the late second millennium BC.

Excavations under the auspices of the Egypt Exploration Society, before and after the Second World War, revealed a walled town, with decorated sandstone temple, areas of housing and a formal building identified as the residence of the Deputy of Kush, on the basis of inscribed doorways (some *in situ*) naming holders of this office.¹ The town is thus considered as a new administrative center for Egyptian Upper Nubia, founded in the reign of Seti I, and fulfilling that function for the ensuing two centuries. The island location, offering strategic advantages in terms of agriculture and security, must have been factors in its selection; it remains unclear why a new settlement was created here, given the proximity of Sai, just upstream, where a pharaonic town had been

founded in the early 18th dynasty.² The fluvial record indicates significant stretches of time during which the smaller channel that skirts the north of Amara West ran dry; this would have impacted upon the agricultural viability of the island, and is likely to have been a major contributing factor in the eventual abandonment of the site in the early first millennium BC (Figure 2).³ The effects of these environmental changes upon the lived experience and health of the inhabitants should not be underestimated.⁴

In considering how aspects of ancient Egypt were created in this remote setting (relative to Egypt), it is imperative that we consider the long histories of both Amara West and Upper Nubia as the inhabitants were not, unlike Sinuhe, recent arrivals in a distant land. For Amara West, the two centuries of occupation under the control of the pharaonic state amount to six or seven generations. We should not assume that the function and appearance of the town remained unchanged across such a lengthy period. Those first inhabitants of Amara West, in the reign of Seti I, may have had a range of different views as to what constituted home, compared to their successors of several generations later. In around 1300 BC, when Amara West was founded, the inhabitants are not likely to have solely comprised pharaonic administrators and military men (with or without families) from Egypt proper. Many may have been relocated from other settlements in Nubia, notably Sai, Soleb and Sesebi, important centers where the intensity of occupation seems to fall from the reign of Seti I onwards.⁵ Those settlements had all been founded in the early 18th



Figure 1: Aerial view (looking southwest) over Amara West, with ancient town in foreground. Photograph: Susie Green.



Figure 2: View south from desert escarpment across palaeochannel to town site.

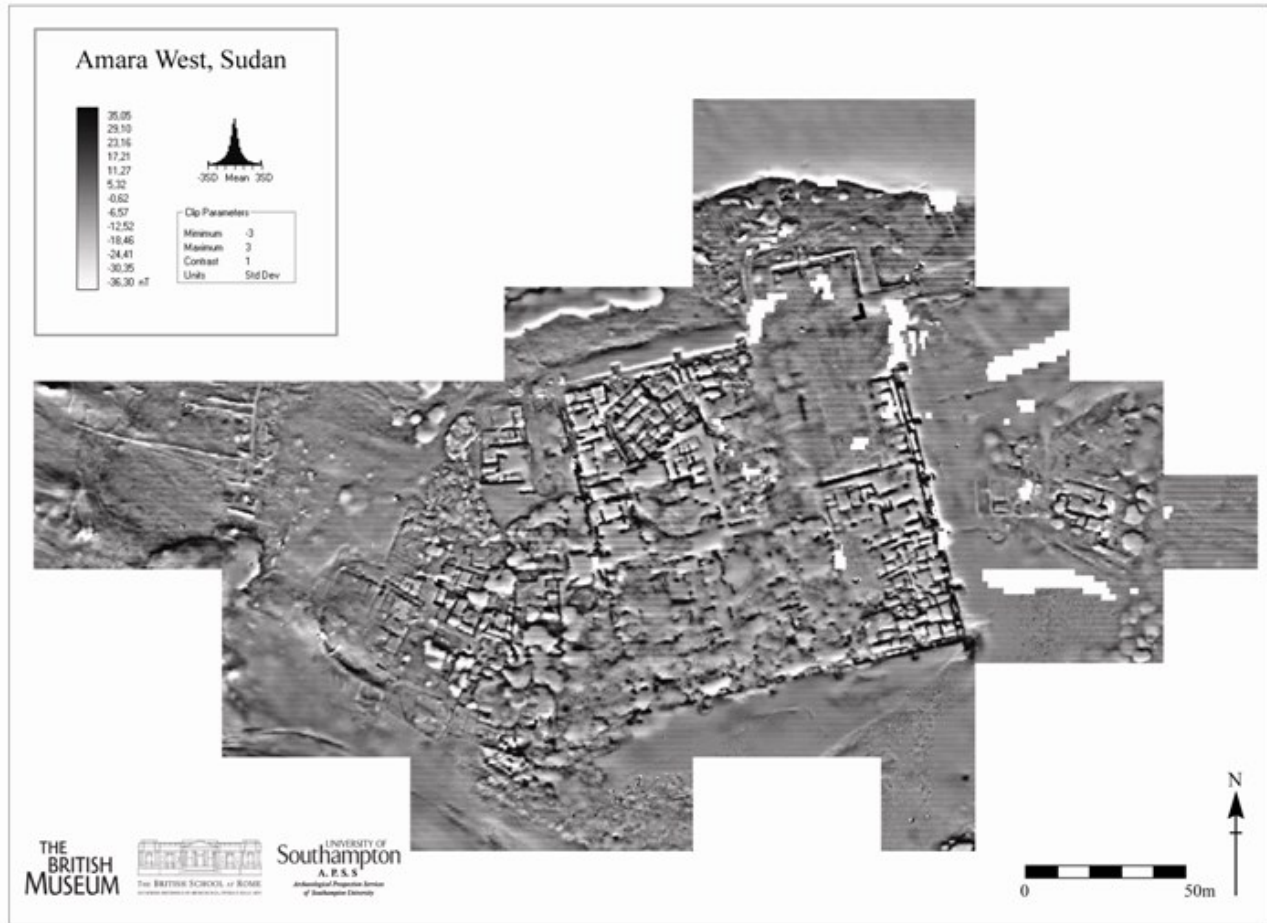


Figure 3: Magnetometry survey of Amara West town. In collaboration with the British School at Rome/University of Southampton.

dynasty, three centuries before Amara West was created. We are thus far from the moment of colonization when Amara West is created and occupied, and distinctions between Egyptians and Nubians may have become less clear cut; of course, the entanglement of Egyptian and Nubian cultures stretches back further still.⁶

Rather, the first population of Amara West might have encompassed individuals sent from Egypt, others relocated from other Egyptian administrative centers elsewhere in Nubia, Nubians co-opted into the pharaonic administration,⁷ and a spectrum of individuals of mixed Egyptian and Nubian background.⁸ We should not assume that the offspring of Egyptian parents, living within a colonial environment, would automatically adhere to their parents' culture and outlook.⁹ At the outset, the appearance of the town was redolent of Egypt itself; Lightfoot has argued that the layout of space, whether at regional, site or community level, can provide insights into the organizational aims and nature of the ruling state and its administration, whereas the microscale of the domestic arena provides glimpses at individual responses to colonial settings.¹⁰ After a brief consideration of the former, this paper will focus on individual/household responses, evident through domestic architecture, cult and even text.

THE FORMAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT

I have argued elsewhere that we need to consider Amara West a heterogeneous community, and one that changed significantly during the Ramesside period.¹¹ Nonetheless, those who conceived the layout and appearance of the new settlement, at some point during the reign of Seti I, clearly envisioned an Egyptian town that would boldly proclaim the authority and power of the pharaonic state. Located on an island that may only have been formed shortly before foundation, and upon which no evidence of pre-19th dynasty occupation has been identified, an imposing town wall was constructed to delimit an area of 108x108m for this new settlement (Figure 3): a materialization of Egyptian political control and cultural dominance. Coated in mud plaster, punctuated with bastions and corner towers, pierced with sandstone gateways bearing deeply cut hieroglyphic inscriptions (once brightly painted) and scenes of pharaonic control over neighboring lands, the town enclosure, which may have stood up to 10m in height, presumably sought to create an island of Egypt within Nubia, a vision of order within a chaotic, dangerous landscape populated with 'wretched' Nubians.¹² In year 8 of Seti I, around the time Amara West was founded, a stela was set up at

both Amara West and nearby Sai, recording a military campaign, justified as ‘the foes of the foreign land of Irem are plotting rebellion’.¹³ The threat from indigenous Nubia, whether real or not, was a prominent part of the ideology promulgated through the construction of walled towns.

The architectural approach mirrored that of contemporary foundations in the Western Delta (facing Libya) and Sinai (Levant).¹⁴ This was pharaonic power writ large, with no apparent recognition of the local cultural or environmental context.¹⁵ The northeastern quadrant of the town comprised a cult temple (Figure 4),¹⁶ a material expression of royal ideology and pharaonic religion, once painted and partly gilded. Though the temple decoration has yet to be published, divinities are not explicitly associated with the local context, in contrast to the approach adopted at contemporary temples in Lower Nubia (Horus of Miam, Dedwen, etc).¹⁷ Rather, the range of gods depicted in the reliefs includes the Theban triad (Amun-Ra, Mut, Khonsu), the First Cataract triad (Khnum, Anuket, Satet), Iah and Heryshef. Perhaps this distinction is rather modern: several centuries into the New Kingdom entanglement with Nubia, many of these Egyptian deities may have been viewed as gods with local relevance, rather than simply Egyptian imports. Amun-Ra, of course, would

become particularly prominent in Napatan formal religion (Török 1997: 300–12).

Alongside offering scenes, the temple decorative program comprised battle scenes. The peristyle featured a depiction of the king smiting enemies before Amun-Ra, while the hypostyle hall preserved a scene evoking the capture of the Syrian town of Arqata. While scenes of Nubian conquests may have existed in parts of the temple no longer preserved,¹⁸ it is noteworthy that the decoration was intended to proclaim Egyptian ideology as a whole: the power of pharaoh over conquered lands, not just Nubia. The temple decoration would not have seemed out of place in Egypt itself. The intended audience within such a temple, beyond the divine, would have been those serving as priests, presumably Egyptian officials, or those of a Nubian background that had been integrated into Egyptian society and administration. This global view of Egypt and foreign lands was further emphasized by the inclusion of foreign toponyms in the hypostyle hall, depicted as name-rings topped with bound captives.¹⁹

Two commemorative stelae of Ramses II were set up in the forecourt of the temple which projected beyond the town wall, overlooking the smaller Nile channel.²⁰ The *Marriage Stela* and *Dream Stela (Blessing of Ptah)* echo a world view presented in



Figure 4: Formal Egyptian architecture: view into the hypostyle hall of the sandstone cult temple. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society



Figure 5: Magazine E13.14.5, looking southwest. The base of the vault spring is preserved at the top of the wall to right.



Figure 6: Plan of area E13, phase III (early-mid 20th dynasty)

temples across Egypt: both texts were inscribed at Karnak (ninth pylon), with further copies at other sites, including Abu Simbel. The *Marriage Stela* relates a diplomatic alliance between Ramses II and a Hittite princess; Nubia is not mentioned. Only the inclusion of kneeling, bound, prisoners (Nubian and Asiatic) references the local context on the second stela, which comprises a long address from Ptah to the king, again referencing a Hittite princess.²¹

Beyond the temple, the walled town was, in its first phase, set out on a grid plan, with roads and alleys oriented with the town walls. A significant proportion of the earliest phase buildings can be characterized as ‘official’ structures, including large-scale storage provision and the Deputy’s Residence. The former included long, narrow corridors, many once supporting vaulted roofs (Figure 5), a type of institutional storage familiar from temple precincts in Egypt. Few structures within the first architectural phase can be identified as houses, though the southwestern quadrant of the town remains largely unexcavated; barrack-style dwelling units may have been situated here, in similar fashion to the situation at Sesebi.²² Until the nature of this part of the town is clarified, it will remain unclear whether housing was envisaged for family units or garrisons. This is important in terms of the social context and relationships between Egyptians and Nubians, as colonial environments with small outposts of men often prompt more intermingling with indigenous women.²³ It is also worth noting the dearth of communal spaces at Amara West, at least within the walled town, other than a food preparation area²⁴ and a well.²⁵

In summary, from the temple decoration targeted at the gods and Egyptian priests, to the buildings constructed within the walled town, the formal built environment seems very consistent with contemporary Egypt, with little emphasis placed on the Nubian context within which the town was founded. In contrast, the west gate of the town bore large scale scenes of Ramses II attacking Nubians (the inscriptions recording 2000 killed, 5000 captured), and the subsequent triumphant return to Egypt. This gateway led from the walled town (Egypt) to what lay beyond (‘wretched Kush’), while also providing access to the wall-top walkway. The decoration would have been seen by men patrolling the walls (an intention implicit in the creation of access to the wall top), but also persons passing through the gate, likely to have included persons of Nubian descent. Asiatic or Libyan foes are nowhere mentioned here, in contrast to the temple decoration.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES TO COLONIAL CONTEXT

Amara West was envisaged, by those who planned its layout and selected the decorative scheme for the temple and gates, firstly as a proclamation of Egyptian culture and ideology, and secondly as an oasis of order within wretched Kush. Within this built environment, individuals and households soon fashioned diverging approaches and responses to the local colonial context, both within lived spaces and in arrangements for burial and the commemoration of the deceased. As increasingly recognized in

other periods and regions, the actions of individuals and small groups play a major role in maintaining and developing social organization and cultural expression.²⁶ Unfortunately, at Amara West, we remain largely ignorant as to the identity of these individual actors. Inscriptions from the site attest to the presence of several Deputies of Kush,²⁷ a scribe and scribe of the Treasury,²⁸ an overseer of the double granary²⁹ and an overseer of priests.³⁰ These all held Egyptian names, though it is possible some were Nubians who had taken Egyptian names.³¹ Nonetheless, the arenas discussed below – household space, cult and display, written culture – provide insights into a range of strategies deployed by those living at Amara West.

Household Space

Excavations within the northwestern part of the walled town (E13) have allowed a partial, but nonetheless illuminating, 200-year biography of a neighborhood to be formulated (Figure 6).³² A considerable shift in function of this part of the town occurred in the mid- to late 19th dynasty, with a suite of contiguous magazines transformed into a densely packed agglomeration of small houses. The variety of approaches to creating each house, and the idiosyncrasies of plans and features within individual dwellings, supports the interpretation that the houses are largely the product of individual/household agency. The architecture of these houses comprised no obvious allusions to the immediate, Nubian, environment. Elements familiar from other New Kingdom settlements, such as Tell el-Amarna, include stone employed for interior and exterior doors, a broadly square room with a *mastaba*–bench against one wall, often combined with a hearth for cooking and warmth, and provision for food processing (grinding emplacements, ovens). Many of the spaces were covered, with staircases offering access to an upper storey or the roof. The excavation of this neighbourhood allows variation between houses to be tracked, but also an insight into how houses were replaced, or built into or above existing architectural spaces, resulting in little consistency of plan, despite many features being found in multiple houses. The presence of rooms with *mastabas*, often with other architectural or iconographic emphases (see below), indicates that approaches to practices of reception and display within the house were similar to those in contemporary Egypt, perhaps partly echoing idealized codes of conduct implied by textual sources.³³

In the late 19th dynasty, the ground outside the west gate was colonized with new houses (Figure 7). This expansion, indicating that the town wall was not deemed essential for defensive purposes (perhaps less important on an island), may have been prompted by an increasing population. The marked increase in the proportion of occupied space dedicated to house units might also support the notion that the town became increasingly dominated by family units, including extended families of the type known from the papyrological record (Valbelle 1985). The additional space available for the new houses resulted in the creation of large dwellings (villas) with a more idealized plan, more similar to those

encountered at Tell el-Amarna. Again, the built environment is consistent with that found in Egypt proper: the new houses, unconstrained by the architectural palimpsests in area E13, closely echo contemporary elite housing in Egypt proper, and are similar to dwellings at other pharaonic towns in Nubia, for example Sai and Sesebi.³⁴ An exception is building E12.11 (Figure 8), built outside the southeastern corner of a large villa (E12.10).³⁵ Constructed during the 20th dynasty, the two-roomed oval structure falls within Nubian, not Egyptian, architectural traditions, familiar from sites such as Kerma, Dokki Gel and Kawa.³⁶ Unfortunately, we are uncertain about the building's function, but it must have been constructed by, and for, someone with Nubian cultural affiliations.

Household Cult and Display

Within these dwellings, the inhabitants favored cult practices, and iconography, apparently consistent with that found at contemporary sites in Egypt. Few house doors were inscribed, though the poor quality of the local sandstone may have caused many to opt for painted decoration which is less likely to have survived. The builders of house E13.5, constructed in area E13 during the 20th dynasty, opted for stone fittings for all five doorways (street entrance and four internal doors), and to achieve this aim re-used inscribed stonework, perhaps recycled from the partly levelled magazines of the earlier phases. In one case, earlier doorjambes were re-used, installed upside down and plastered over to mask the earlier inscription, evidently deemed irrelevant for the new doorway. In the house next door (E13.6), built shortly afterwards, a different approach was taken. Stone fittings were again included in the doorways, except that between the oven and grain-processing rooms. The threshold survives in five cases, the jambs in two, but the shape of the walls indicates jambs were envisaged in all these doorways. The doorway from middle room to the food preparation area (grinding emplacements, ovens) were of plain sandstone, but the doorway (Figure 9) marking the transition to the main reception room – that with a *mastaba* against the back wall – was rather different. Upon excavation, all the stone architectural elements were found collapsed in a pile before the doorway. Poor quality sandstone jambs, apparently undecorated, were set upon the threshold stone, supporting a finely decorated sandstone lintel. This lintel (F5817) is significant for two reasons: it appears to be re-used from an earlier structure and invokes an ancestor king.

The inscription (Figure 10) is laid out in a symmetrical arrangement of two central columns, with a horizontal line of text running to either side, and continuing in a column once intended to continue on the doorjambes.³⁷ Here, however, the inscriptions stop abruptly at the bottom edge of the lintel: this decorated stone once formed part of another doorway. Three *h̥tp-di-nsw* formula invoke 'Amun-Ra king of gods, one with tall-feathered crown' and 'Horus the Bull lord of Ta-Seti', thus referencing both the Theban creator god and a Nubian form of Horus.³⁸ One of the three formula, on the left side of the lintel, offers a longer epithet of

Horus: 'the Bull lord of Ta-Seti, the *ka* of king Menkheperra'. In contrast to the focus of cult in the temple, an explicitly Nubian form of an Egyptian god was being invoked upon the doorway. Palaeographic details indicate that the decoration is of Ramesside date, thus the original doorway, from which the lintel comes, was already referring to an ancestor king, Tuthmosis III.

The invocation of a royal *ka* is found elsewhere in New Kingdom Nubia, such as upon doorways at Buhen,³⁹ Wadi es-Sebua⁴⁰ and Semna;⁴¹ the *ka* of Ramses II appears in a smiting scene within the temple at Amara West.⁴² Tuthmosis III was renowned for victorious campaigns in Nubia, and for emulating his grandfather Tuthmosis I in reaching Kurgus.⁴³ The reverence for this king in Nubia is exemplified by Ramesside officials adding to his decorated rock-cut shrine at Jebel Dosha, itself containing images of an older ancestor king, Senwosret III.⁴⁴ Tuthmosis III may also have been venerated in deified form at Debeira,⁴⁵ and is associated with Nubian forms of Egyptian deities upon other monuments.⁴⁶ Whether the door lintel was part of a building at Amara West or Sai – the high quality sandstone makes it likely that it was quarried at the latter site – the builders of house E13.6 salvaged the lintel, perhaps attracted not only by its high quality, brightly painted decoration, but also the allusion to a revered historic figure: Tuthmosis III? In recycling this lintel as part of the doorway into the main room of the house, in which the *mastaba* (and probably hearth) were located, the inhabitants of house E13.6 were ensuring visitors were aware of the importance of the



Figure 7: Orthogonal kite image of western suburb, with two excavated villas. Photograph: Susie Green.



Figure 8: View west over oval building E12.11

room, but may also have been seeking a bold statement of identification with pharaonic Egypt and its control of Nubia, through a revered king of the past.⁴⁷

Moving to house E13.3-S (Figure 11), at the northern end of the neighborhood, more modest ancestors were invoked. In the back room of the small three-roomed dwelling, itself created from the subdivision of a larger house,⁴⁸ a sandstone bust was found resting upon a pedestal created out of bricks set upon a sandstone slab (Figure 12). The pedestal itself was a purely functional structure, not even afforded a mud plaster finish, sufficient to support a small sandstone anthropoid bust. The bust (Figure 13), 29.2cm in height, depicts a male individual wearing a bag wig, coloured black. Remnants of painted decoration were discernible across the torso, including parts of a complex collar. Unless a painted inscription has been lost, it seems that the bust was never inscribed to be identified with a named individual, as with the majority of such artefacts.⁴⁹ The statue was likely to have been placed here not long after the house was created, as the pedestal lay upon a deposit (4363) that had built up over a floor (4364). The deposit contained a scarab of Ramses III, indicating that the bust was set up after c.1194BC, but it remained in use with the laying of the next two floors (4281 and 4280), the last resulting in the

bust standing only 44cm above the floor. Its discovery within an original setting, indicates that as at Tell el-Amarna, Deir el-Medina and Memphis,⁵⁰ houses were fitted with representations of individuals, presumably ancestors deemed capable of intervention in the lives of the inhabitants. Few other examples have been found *in situ*, principally in the first or second room of houses, thus it is unclear if the setting for, and potential use of, the Amara West bust differs from those found in Egypt itself; the only other example from a site in Nubia was found at Sesebi.⁵¹

The Amara West bust provides a hitherto unattested aspect to the treatment of these cult objects. After an undefined interval during which the bust stood in the back room, a layer (4275) of brick rubble and other debris accumulated, and the door into the back room was blocked up and plastered. Visitors to the house would no longer have been aware of the room, perhaps abandoned after a roof collapse, and not deemed worthy of reclearing. The anthropoid bust was not seen as a cult object worthy of recovery at the point where the room was sealed, perhaps indicating that the bust could not simply be repurposed to commemorate other individuals, that the original ancestor was not deemed relevant to the inhabitants (who may have been different) or the inhabitants no longer wished to engage in such rituals.



Figure 9: Reconstructed doorway into central room of house E13.6, comprising door lintel (F5817) and jambs F5818 and F5819

Another potential setting for household cult were niches emphasized with architectural motifs, and in some cases painted. Two were recorded in the EES excavation archives. A niche (1.25m square) was cut into the interior face of the eastern town wall, which doubled as the rear wall of a room within a small building, perhaps a house; torus moldings were shaped in mud, including over the schist lintel.⁵² A ‘wall shrine’, also cut into the town wall as part of house (?) E.12.1, featured more elaborate torus moldings and cavetto cornice, further enhanced with a colorful paint scheme that extended onto the wall below and to the sides.⁵³ A similar form of niche can be posited for the back wall of house E13.7, a mid- to late-19th dynasty house built over the remains of one of the magazines in area E13. Though the niche was not preserved, due to the levelling of the wall in preparation for a new house (E13.4; Figure 6), many fragments of the architectural moldings (Figure 14) were found scattered in front of the *mastaba*. These allow the tentative reconstruction of a niche at least 42cm wide, with cavetto cornice and torus molding projecting out from the wall surface. The importance of this feature within the main room of the house is underlined by its repeated refurbishment. In some places, it is possible to identify three superimposed layers of painted decoration, in some cases coated with a layer of mud-plaster and then repainted.⁵⁴ The later repaintings favored a simple coat of whitewash, but conservation of smaller fragments has indicated chequerboard patterns (from the side ‘jambs’ of the niche?) and stylized plant motifs on the cavetto cornice. Given the wall was only 45cm thick, the posited niche may have been designed as a setting for a small stela, of a form encountered in several houses at Amara West.⁵⁵

The motifs deployed for such niches, both architectural and painted decoration, evoke the language of Egyptian religious architecture and iconography. Though on a larger scale, and more complex, the painted decoration echoes the motifs found in the

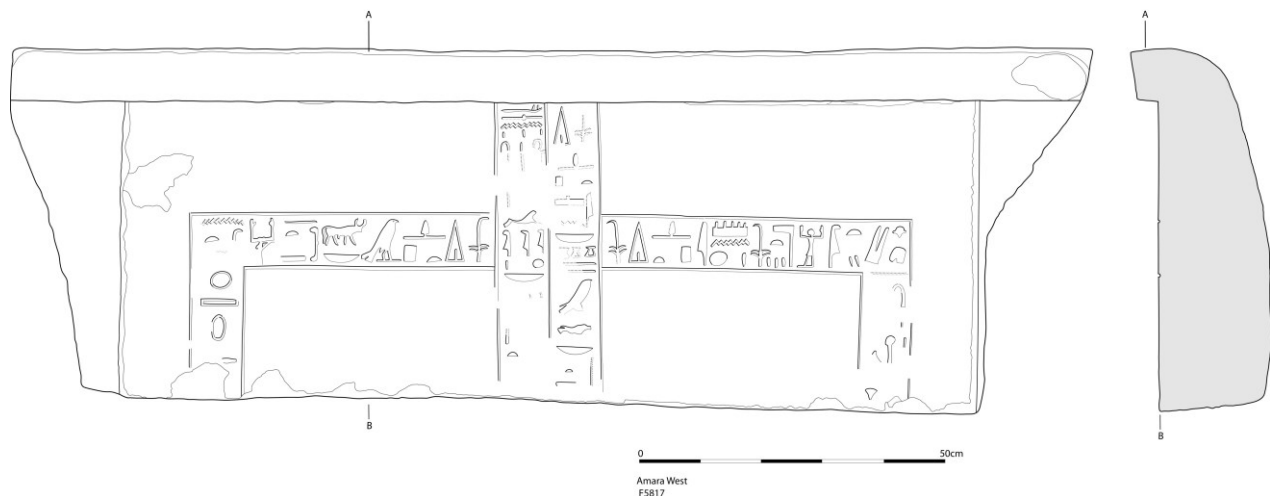


Figure 10: Door lintel F5817. Facsimile by Elisabeth Greifenstein and Claire Thorne

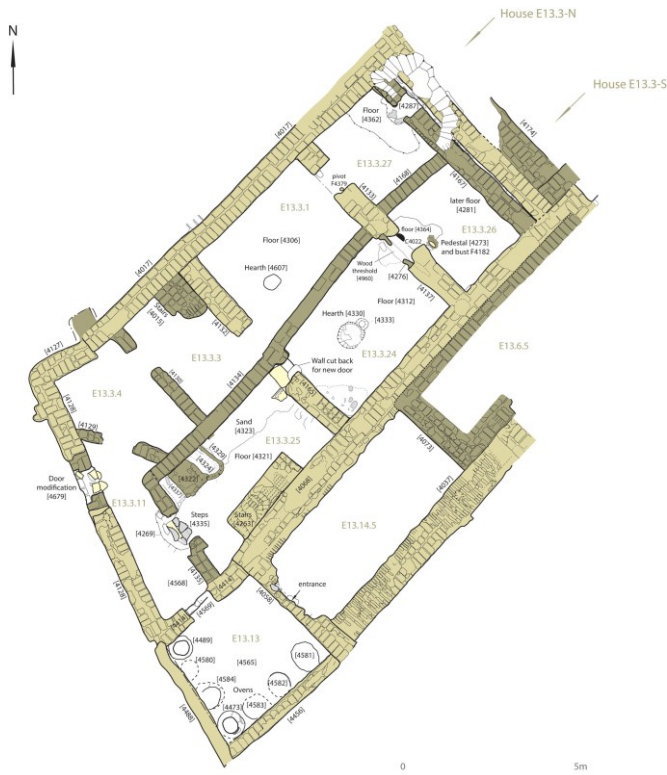


Figure 11: Plan of houses E13.3-N and E13.3-S, created within a larger, earlier, house (E13.3)

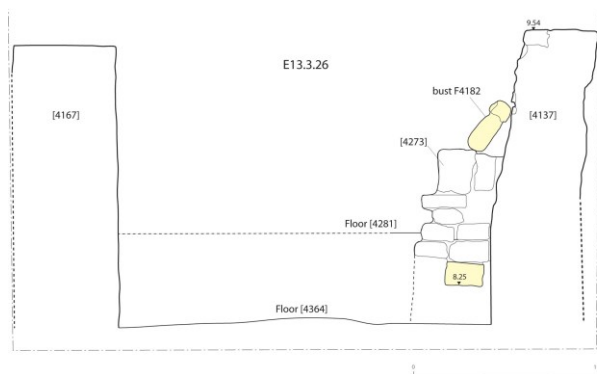


Figure 12: Northeast-southwest section through room E13.3.26, showing location of bust F4182, and successive floors

chapels of the Workmen’s Village at Tell el-Amarna⁵⁶ and presumably elsewhere. Again, the inhabitants were creating a visual domestic setting familiar to anyone who had lived within houses in Egypt proper. Painted decoration was not common in the houses at Amara West: most walls were simply mud-plastered, sometimes coated in a thin white wash, itself often refreshed. A small number of interior wall surfaces were painted red, and traces of yellow were identified behind the mastaba in house E13.7; the EES excavations recovered remains of painted ceilings within several rooms, featuring stylized floral and spiral motifs.⁵⁷



Figure 13: Painted sandstone anthropoid bust F4182, from rear room of house E13.3-S

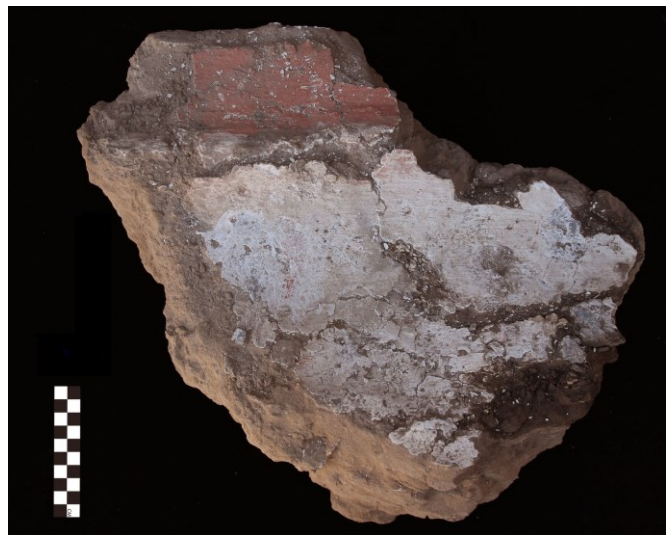


Figure 14: Fragment of moulded cornice, with layers of paint, from posited shrine in house E13.7

Writing and Literature

Beyond the decorated monuments and architecture of the temple, Deputy’s Residence and town gates, along with a smaller number of inscribed doorways in houses, the built environment seems largely to have been devoid of texts, one of the most distinctive aspects of Egyptian culture. Small stelae encountered in houses are notable for their minimal textual content, with scenes of devotion before a deity (house E13.6: F5808 [Figure 15]) or king (with cartouches and name of Satet; house D14.7, British Museum EA 68675).⁵⁸ Only the upper part of a stela (F4096), featuring a scene of Amun-Ra as a ram, was re-used to cover a large vessel buried in the back room of house E13.9.⁵⁹

The depositional environment precludes the survival of papyrus, largely due to termite activity, but one assumes that the machinery of pharaonic state bureaucracy was present here too, notably in the temple and Deputy’s Residence. Pottery ostraca from the town site further reflect the pharaonic administrative apparatus at work. A



Figure 15: Stela F5808, found in house E13.6



Figure 16: Ostrakon with hieratic text recording commodity deliveries (F4017)

fragmentary example (F4017; Figure 16), found in debris above a series of long storage rooms (E13.14) in the northwestern part of the walled town, evokes the control and record-keeping around goods stored in these facilities: the preserved text includes records of commodities being delivered on three days. Hieratic labels on wine vessels, well known from Tell el-Amarna though rarely found in house contexts,⁶⁰ have not been encountered at Amara West, other than a complete marl D amphora placed in an early 19th dynasty pyramid tomb in the upper necropolis (cemetery C). The vessel, inscribed in hieratic with a provenance of ‘year 10, wine of 3 days (fermentation) of the vineyard of Hormes’,⁶¹ was part of an assemblage of pottery within a burial chamber occupied by a man and woman placed in coffins. Dating to early in the town’s occupation, these were individuals (whether of Egyptian, Nubian or mixed descent) with particular access to luxury imports from Egypt proper. Fine Mycenaean stirrup jars are encountered in 19th dynasty deposits within the town and its houses, indicating groups of individuals with access (however indirect) to products from across Egypt’s empire and sphere of influence and trade. Such luxurious items are notably absent from 20th dynasty contexts.

A range of other ostraca have been found during both EES and British Museum excavations, many bearing few distinct

signs.⁶² One other administrative text has been written over, in an elegant literary hand, with a long text that might be part of a letter or unknown literary text, including reference to a ‘builder’ (F2201, Sudan National Museum 33308). A small group of ostraca (Figure 17), however, attest to the copying and reading of classic poetical texts. The *Teaching of Amenemhat* is attested on three ostraca from the site, one found in a layer of rubbish beneath an extramural villa (F2137, Sudan National Museum 33307), the other two (AW 270, AW 285) found in EES excavations near the temple but only recently identified.⁶³ Various parts of the text are represented on the ostraca, including the title and first stanza (AW 270), and the deceased pharaoh’s invocation to ‘my partners among mankind’ to make ‘a great battle’ (F2137). Both are popular sections for copies, and are important as the first direct evidence of Middle Egyptian classics being read or copied outside of Egypt itself.⁶⁴ The text itself is one of the best attested classics, with over 200 copies found across Egypt,⁶⁵ but from the perspective of Amara West, the copying or reading of such texts indicates the presence of individuals who identified with the elite scribal culture present in contemporary Egypt. The ceramic forms and fabrics of each ostraca are consistent with the assemblages found across Amara West, and it is reasonable to assume that some

were copied at the site. We are not, of course, able to ascertain if the copyist, or indeed subsequent readers, were Egyptian, Nubian or of mixed background, and can only wonder how the text was received by those local audiences.⁶⁶ While the text has no direct relevance to the contemporary historical or political context, it does include a passage describing the subjugation of Nubians and capture of Medja. Could the text, and its implicit imperial ideology, have had particular resonance at Amara West? And if the readers were of Nubian descent, would the fallibility of pharaoh, as evoked in the *Teaching of Amenemhat*, have prompted a degree of empathy?



Figure 17: Ostraca with copy of *Teaching of Amenemhat*. AW270 (left; image British Museum, courtesy Egypt Exploration Society) and F2137 (Sudan National Museum 33307; image: British Museum)

A more common form of interaction with text was through the practice of sealing, the point at which most inhabitants may have encountered, and engaged with, texts, on a regular basis. Sealings bearing the names of Tuthmosis III and Hatshepsut were identified by EES excavators in the temple area, interpreted as attached to papyri brought from administrative or temple archive of an earlier Egyptian settlements in Nubia.⁶⁷ However, many scarabs with the prenomens of Tuthmosis III are well known to have been produced long after the 18th dynasty. Examples of both scarabs, and seal impressions, with the name of this king – found throughout the town at Amara West – most likely reflect both the reverence of the great pharaoh (and perhaps his exploits in Nubia, as discussed above), but also the desire to employ a recognizable graphic device for sealing doorways, containers, bundles and papyri. The range of seals encountered in current excavations (Figure 18) – a very small number from the houses and many recovered from a layer of rubbish exposed beneath the extramural villas – again evokes a world largely devoid of explicit references to Nubia. Alongside the name Menkheperra, seals featured motifs of winged scarabs, tilapia fish, representations of gods (ibis, cobra and depictions of baboons worshipping an obelisk) and one example with scroll motifs; these are regrettably less informative than the Middle Kingdom seals from Nubian forts, which attest to various institutions and individuals. Only one seal seems to resonate in any

manner with the local context: an impression depicting a figure with bow and arrow, upon a chariot dragged by a rearing horse, with other figures, including individuals with weapons, shown nearby (F7312; Figure 18). A scarab buried with an individual in a New Kingdom tomb matches a seal impression found in a house within neighborhood E13 (Figure 19), but scarabs were also worn as items of adornment, often with an amuletic function. The range of motifs is similar to that attested on seals, but also includes names of gods and a Hathoric emblem (F4782).

HETEROGENEITY AND DISSONANCE: NUANCING THE RELATIONSHIP OF AN ‘EGYPTIAN’ TOWN TO EGYPT

Through seals and scarabs, administrative and literary texts, along with formal monumental scenes and inscriptions, core elements of Egyptian culture were being encountered on a regular basis by those living at Amara West. The introductory quote, the Egyptian Sinuhe exiled in the Levant, is distant from Amara West in both time and geography but does prompt one to wonder: did the inhabitants of Amara West yearn for a return to Egypt, and seek to create an environment as evocative of the homeland as possible? The former question is impossible to address, the latter fraught with difficulties and beset by limitations. On the one hand, this paper has outlined how architecture, administration, literature and religious concerns were all broadly consistent with what is found in contemporary Egypt; everyday stone tools⁶⁸ also echo assemblages from Egypt, though such artefacts tend to be less reliable as cultural markers. Yet two significant aspects of the archaeological data need to be considered: what survives, and how did the town – and the layers of meaning and interpretation developed by its inhabitants – change over time?

Firstly, caution is needed given the range of available evidence. The inscription of temple monuments, and the use of ostraca for literary or administrative texts, are implicitly Egyptian modes of elite representation and transmission: no indigenous writing tradition is known in Nubia of this period. The practice of sealing does, however, appear in Nubian contexts from the A-group onwards,⁶⁹ and was a prominent feature of Kerma culture, both at Kerma itself and the rural settlement of Gism el-Arba.⁷⁰ The temple, monumental gates and massive town wall were all structures that reflected the original vision for the function of Amara West: an Egyptian center largely dedicated to commodity storage, administration and presumably the oversight of trade routes and gold extraction. In common with all sizeable pharaonic settlements, a cult temple with ancillary buildings was constructed and maintained.

The archaeological context – through termite activity, aridity, and considerable wind erosion – precludes the survival of a range of object types where indigenous traditions may have been more prevalent, evident or even recognized as cultural markers by those who produced and used them. Wooden and ivory objects rarely survive in the town – a charred bone object (F7306, Figure 20), perhaps a brooch or element of adornment, found within one house may reflect both Nubian craftsmanship and modes of dress.



Figure 18: Clay sealings from the town at Amara West. Drawings by Elsa Yvanez, except F7312 by Claire Thorne



Figure 19: Clay sealing F7250 (from house E13.7) with scarab F9167 (from New Kingdom tomb G234)

Textiles, some perhaps used as soft furnishings in houses, had the potential to transform the appearance of built spaces and individuals' appearance, but none survive from the houses. With the loss of perishable items – and of course spoken language – we are missing two key arenas for the projection of social identities.⁷¹ The dynamic nature of this (and probably any other) settlement – its form, function and perhaps range of inhabitants changed considerably over six or seven generations – caution us against definitive characterizations within the spectrum from pharaonic Egyptian to indigenous Nubian. During this time, inhabitants may have reinterpreted aspects of the material culture and built environment, from how buildings were used to the meaning attributed to cult objects. The preservation, quantity and ubiquity of ceramics provide an important dataset for testing such hypotheses. The ceramic assemblage in the town is, like the architecture, overwhelmingly 'Egyptian'. Though much of it was probably produced at Amara West,⁷² the range of forms and the technology used to produce them mirrors that at sites in contemporary Egypt.⁷³ Indeed, the repertoire included storage vessels imported from the oases, Canaanite amphorae and Mycenaean stirrup jars. Hand-made Nubian ceramics are also present, principally large restricted cooking pots with basket impressions upon the exterior and a small number of fineware vessels. These are found in the houses, in varying proportions, though the ratio is notably higher (approximately 10% as against 1%) in the later phases of occupation. Further analyses are

required to coax out nuances in their use across different parts of the site and perhaps even across individual spaces within houses. While the hearths, ovens and indeed range of plants being used for subsistence (emmer and barley)⁷⁴ mirror that found in contemporary Egyptian settlements, it is intriguing that the containers used to prepare food partly reflect an indigenous, Nubian, tradition. This was not restricted to Amara West: a similar phenomenon is apparent at 18th dynasty Sai and Sesebi,⁷⁵ but also in Egypt itself, at Elephantine⁷⁶ and Tell el-Dab'a.⁷⁷ While a direct correlation between pots and people is untenable, one does wonder if the presence of Nubian cooking pots at 'Egyptian' towns from Elephantine into Upper Nubia might, to some extent, reflect either the presence of persons of Nubian descent, or at least influence from Nubian approaches to food preparation.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, organic residues were not sufficiently well preserved in the assemblage from Amara West, precluding research into whether a different array of foodstuffs was being prepared in Nubian and Egyptian cooking pots.⁷⁹

Though the majority of surviving artefacts from Amara West sit comfortably within typologies of pharaonic objects, one must allow for individuals, and groups, imbuing objects with new or



Figure 20: Charred bone object (F7306) from house E13.7



Figure 21: Detail of animal depiction cut into exterior surface of C4161

composite meanings, appropriating them for different purposes, conditioned by their background and the local context. Accessing any such re-interpretations is obviously difficult. Simple clay figurines of women with sexual features accentuated – whether of anthropomorphic (F2299) or schematic, plaque-like, form (F4471, F4898) were presumably used for purposes akin to in Egypt, but may have been re-interpreted; the sealing off of the anthropoid bust in the back room of the house may (or may not) reflect a localized interpretation of a 'standard' Egyptian cult object. Ceramics, again, offer great potential to identify changed meanings. Fragments of sizeable marl D storage jars recovered from the site are of a form, and fabric, common in contemporary Egypt. Yet at Amara West, a number of these have been modified, with non-textual markers cut into the exterior surface.⁸⁰ These include hieroglyphs, but also depictions of animals, including gazelle and oryx (Figure 21), and other signs difficult to interpret. Intriguingly, these vessels are attested in the latest phases of occupation, broadly contemporary with the 20th dynasty, and around the same period when an increase in the proportion of cooking pots occurs. A related phenomenon is the production of Egyptian-style vessels with indigenous technologies, with one

bowl (C8014) found in the cemetery formed by hand, rather than being wheel-thrown.⁸¹ The adoption of a technology or style does not, of course, imply an adoption of the culture from which these elements were introduced,⁸² but the integration of Egyptian form with Nubian technology, and a method of decorating storage vessels not attested in Egypt, both hint at local responses to, and re-interpretations of, material objects.

These developments seem to occur in tandem with the transformation of Amara West from a pharaonic foundation with well-defined primary functions and a relatively small population – as reflected in the architecture – to a more densely occupied town, where individual and household agencies were the significant factor in shaping the built environment. Was Amara West, in fact, becoming progressively more heterogeneous, perhaps more Nubian? A similar trajectory has been proposed for the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period at Mirgissa and Buhen,⁸³ on the basis of social complexity visible through the

cemeteries, or with the ‘demilitarization’; an increase in the prominence of Nubian material culture from the late Middle Kingdom onwards has been noted at Askut.⁸⁴

The excavations in two cemeteries at Amara West seem to confirm this development. Indeed cultural hybridity and entanglement is easier to trace in the funerary environment,⁸⁵ reflecting both a combination of preservational differences and a more conscious, considered construction (by those preparing the burial) of cultural identity, as expressed physically (architecture, objects) for eternity. In cemetery D on the desert escarpment overlooking the town, a 19th dynasty tomb (G301) featured architecture, artefact assemblages and a treatment of the dead (placed in wooden coffins) consistent with pharaonic practises;⁸⁶ an anthropoid coffin found in a similar tomb nearby (G309; Figure 22) mirrors the iconography and form of contemporaneous examples in Egypt. In contrast, an early 20th dynasty tomb (G244), in cemetery C on an alluvial *wadi* terrace to the northeast of the town, combines Egyptian-style subterranean chambers and artefact assemblages (pottery vessels, painted coffins, scarabs, headrests, but also at least one ostrich egg) with a tumulus superstructure, one of the most distinctive characteristics of Nubian funerary culture. The individuals who conceived this funerary monument were consciously seeking to convey Nubian cultural affiliation on the surface, yet below ground, Egyptian cultural markers predominate. In terms of the perception of a homeland, it may be that any individuals who considered themselves Egyptian never expected to ‘return home’, but envisaged a local burial, which could (to varying degrees) integrate Egyptian and Nubian cultural markers. Both cemeteries remained in use for two to three centuries after the end of the New Kingdom,⁸⁷ a period that is only represented through surface ceramics in the settlement. Perhaps unsurprisingly, indigenous cultural markers were more pronounced in the post-New Kingdom: tumulus superstructures become more common, niche graves are introduced, and the deceased are placed on funerary beds.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, there is no rejection of Egyptian cultural elements, with painted coffins, scarabs and other artefacts still included in tomb assemblages. Of course, by the 9th and 8th centuries BC, some seven centuries after Upper Nubia was conquered by early 18th dynasty armies, these may no longer have been consciously recognized as Egyptian, particularly by those of second- and third-generation mixed descent.

The elite New Kingdom cemetery was situated within a burial ground already used in the Middle Kerma period, with at least one tumulus (G305) remaining a prominent feature in the cemetery to the present day. Survey in the hinterland, undertaken in the 1970s, revealed a number of sites with both stone- and mudbrick-built structures, some with Egyptian pottery, others with Nubian ceramics.⁸⁹ Further research is needed to clarify the chronology of these sites: do they all predate the foundation of Amara West, or are some contemporaneous? This is crucial for understanding how Egyptian towns sat within both an environmental and cultural landscape, and the potential spatial proximity between different ways of life.⁹⁰ Returning to the walled



Figure 22: Fragment of painted anthropoid wooden coffin lid (F8110). Drawing: Claire Thorne

town at Amara West, a group of three stone axe-heads (Figure 23) were found in the middle room of a small house built against the inside of the north town wall (E13.8).⁹¹ These axe-heads are of a type familiar from Kerma sites:⁹² were these collected from nearby sites in the desert? How did the inhabitants of house E13.8 – in the central room with *mastaba* and hearth – use, view, interpret and discard these objects? Of course, they may not even recognized have recognized the axe-heads as old or Nubian, in the way preferred for archaeological typologies.



Figure 23: Stone axe heads from E13.8: (clockwise from top left) F5652, F5659, F5663

*

The ‘Egyptianization’ of Nubians,⁹³ and indeed Higginbotham’s model of ‘elite emulation’,⁹⁴ are increasingly recognized as problematic. This paper has not considered questions of ethnic identity in detail,⁹⁵ nor gendered responses to the cultural environment, but rather how individuals responded, and sought to shape, the colonial environment within which they lived. Some Nubians living at Amara West may have consciously adopted aspects of elite pharaonic culture, but these individuals should be placed within the context of a spectrum of responses and strategies related to cultural identity. The examples outlined here provide glimpses at how individuals, households and other groups may have negotiated the boundaries between Egyptian and Nubian culture, incorporating some elements, rejecting others, creating new expressions, maintaining traditions and even re-interpreting object forms, ultimately ‘establishing boundaries,

masking differences and articulating similarities’.⁹⁶ Many individuals and groups might not have fitted into the neat categories suggested in Egyptian formal representations, nor indeed any designations of modern scholars. Furthermore, these phenomena developed over time: hybridization and entanglement have a temporal dimension⁹⁷ which can be traced across the six to seven generations during which Amara West was occupied. Any hybridization was not of pure cultures, but rather ones that had co-existed, become entangled and (in some cases) competed for prominence over the centuries preceding Amara West. In some ways, Amara West represents the terminal or mature (depending on one’s outlook) form of ancient Egyptian occupation of Nubia, during the last two centuries of direct control. This period would set the stage for the integration of elements of pharaonic culture into the Nubian polities of the first millennium BC and later.

Some of these choices were being made by Nubians, or individuals of mixed descent, who were thus materially contributing towards the formation of a particular social world, an outcome apparently not envisaged by those who conceived the function, layout and appearance of towns such as Amara West. These individuals, households and groups were dynamic agents, who could adopt, adapt and reject elements of Egyptian culture.⁹⁸ Some may have seen Egypt as home, including those born and raised in Nubia who had never experienced Egypt directly.⁹⁹ Beyond the ‘Egyptian’ towns, with their increasingly heterogeneous populations, the effects of Egyptian colonialism are more difficult to ascertain;¹⁰⁰ though the military campaigns of the late 18th and 19th dynasties remind us that some groups continued to reject Egyptian control and modes of living.¹⁰¹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fieldwork at Amara West would not be possible without the permission and support of the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, with particular thanks to Hassan Hussein Idris, Salah Mohamed Ahmed, Abdel Rahman Ali Mohamed and our inspector, Shadia Abdu Rabo. Excavations in the houses described here were supervised and recorded by Matthew Dalton, Mary Shepperson, Thomas Lyons, H el ene Virenque, Elsa Yvanez, Sarah Doherty, Shadia Abdu Rabo and Anna Stevens; the cemetery excavations are under the direction of Michaela Binder. Ceramics were studied by Marie Millet, and hieratic texts have been translated by Rob Demar e (other than the literary ostraca, analyzed by Richard Parkinson). The Egypt Exploration Society provided permission to study and photograph ostraca from the earlier excavations. The research is funded through a Leverhulme Trust research project on *Health and diet in occupied Nubia through political and climate change*, with further funding from the British Academy, Fondation Michela Schiff-Giorgini and the Thames Valley Ancient Egypt Society.

For further information on the project, visit www.britishmuseum.org/AmaraWest.

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NOTES

- ¹ For the EES excavations, see Spencer 1997 and 2002. The enclosure wall includes bricks stamped with the cartouche of Seti I (Spencer 1997: 15–16 pl.8) who reigned from c. 1306–1290 BC; the temple includes the latest known royal inscription in Upper Nubia, of year 6 of Ramses IX (Spencer 1997), i.e. c. 1125 BC.
- ² Budka 2011.
- ³ Spencer *et al.* 2012.
- ⁴ For a summary of the bioarchaeological data, including age profile, disease and other pathologies, see Binder and Spencer 2014.
- ⁵ For Sai, see Budka 2011; Sesebi: Spence *et al.* 2011.
- ⁶ Smith 2003; Edwards 2004.
- ⁷ Säve-Söderbergh 1991.
- ⁸ A phenomena common to many colonial contexts (Stein 2005).
- ⁹ Van Gijsegheem 2013.
- ¹⁰ Lightfoot and Schiff 1998: 202–3
- ¹¹ Spencer 2014b.
- ¹² Smith 2003: 24–9; 177–87
- ¹³ Lundh 2002: 50–4.
- ¹⁴ Spencer 2013: 23–33.
- ¹⁵ On the ideology, functionality and impact of walled foundations, see Spence 2004.
- ¹⁶ Spencer 1997, 27–51.
- ¹⁷ The stela of the 18th dynasty viceroy Usersatet, perhaps originally installed at Sai, invoked the Elephantine triad (Khnum, Satet and Anuket).
- ¹⁸ A stela of Seti I was set up in the peristyle, recording the Nubian campaign of regnal year 8. The king is credited with ensuring ‘images of his father are set up in the temple of Ta-Seti [Nubia], the domain of Ramses II, the settlement (dmi), which was made for him by the son of Ra, Ramses II, given life’ (*KRI* II, 161–2; see Davies 2004b).
- ¹⁹ Spencer 1997: pls. 35–7.
- ²⁰ Spencer 1997: 29–31, pls. 21 [d], 25.
- ²¹ A hieratic stela set up at Amara West records a battle in year 3 of Ramses IV (*KRI* VI: 63,15–64,4).
- ²² Fairman 1939: 152 pl.8.
- ²³ Lightfoot 1995: 216–17.
- ²⁴ Spencer 2014b.
- ²⁵ Spencer 1997: 203. In contrast, an open space, or ‘midan’, was found within a neighbourhood of houses at Tell el-Amarna (Kemp and Stevens 2010a: 499–500, Figure 10.10).
- ²⁶ Stein 1995: 7.
- ²⁷ Spencer 1997: pls. 151–2, 154.
- ²⁸ Spencer 1997: pls. 156, 165.

- ²⁹ Horhotep; doorjamb F6900 found-reused in house E13.5.
- ³⁰ The range of titles attested at Sai is also rather restricted, though includes Haty-a ‘mayor’ (Minault-Gout and Thill 2013: 414).
- ³¹ Säve-Söderbergh 1991.
- ³² Spencer 2014b.
- ³³ See Shaw 1992: 147.
- ³⁴ The houses at Sai (Azim 1975: 98 [pl. IV], 118–20) and Sesebi (Fairman 1938: 152–3, pl. 8) are only summarily published as part of preliminary reports.
- ³⁵ Spencer 2010.
- ³⁶ Spencer 2011.
- ³⁷ See Budka 2001.
- ³⁸ Nubian forms of Horus are referenced at other sites, for example ‘Horus lord of Miam’ at Aniba, Horus ‘lord of Buhen’ and ‘lord of Baket [Kubban] at Buhen’ (Budka 2001: 65). Other doorways at Amara West invoke Osiris *ḥK3 nb-īw* and Anubis *ḥnty sh-ntr* (F6906, also re-used in E13.5), Werethekau and Sekhmet *ꜥ3* (F9010, found re-used in the cemetery, Spencer 2009: 59, pl.29) and *Rennenutet nbt kꜣ ꜥꜣ.w dꜥꜣw* (Spencer 1997: pl. 110).
- ³⁹ Budka 2001: 183–4 [139].
- ⁴⁰ Budka 2001: 232–3 [237–8]
- ⁴¹ Reisner 1960: pl. 21.
- ⁴² Spencer 1997: pl. 29 [d].
- ⁴³ Davies 2001.
- ⁴⁴ Davies 2004a.
- ⁴⁵ Säve-Söderbergh 1960: 27–30, pl. 15. For contemporary, or near contemporary, veneration of Tuthmosis III in Nubia, see Radwan 1998: 339.
- ⁴⁶ Seidel 1996: 158–61.
- ⁴⁷ That the inscription was deemed important is suggested by the later reworking that occurred, with an attempt to add further columns of inscription, though this may have happened prior to its installation in the house.
- ⁴⁸ Spencer 2014a
- ⁴⁹ Keith 2011.
- ⁵⁰ Keith 2011: 7–25.
- ⁵¹ Kaiser 1990: 278, pl. 61 [4].
- ⁵² Spencer 1997: 154, pls. 78, 100c.
- ⁵³ Spencer 1997: 175, pl. 11b.
- ⁵⁴ This trend towards simpler decoration might mirror the prevalence of simply plastered stone doorways in the later phases of occupation.
- ⁵⁵ Houses at Deir el-Medina featured wall niches, assumed to have held stelae; household niches for stela have also been identified at Askut (Smith 2003: 127–32).
- ⁵⁶ Weatherhead 2007.
- ⁵⁷ Spencer 1997: 123–4 (D14.2a; staircase room in a large house) and 172 (E.12.3; ‘magazine’).

- 58 www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=121121&partId=1
- 59 Spencer 2009: 51 pl.6. This preliminary report assigns the stela to room E13.3.9, now recognised as a room in house E13.9 (room E13.9.9).
- 60 Though sherds from these vessels are encountered in domestic areas, Gabolde 2010: 35–7.
- 61 Binder *et al.* 2011: 53, 81–2 figs.29–30
- 62 The EES ostraca remain to be studied; their findspots are provided in Spencer 1997.
- 63 Parkinson and Spencer 2009; Parkinson and Spencer forthcoming
- 64 A literary ostrakon has recently been found at Dokki Gel (Valbelle 2009, 115, 117 Figure11)
- 65 Adrom 2006.
- 66 Parkinson and Spencer, forthcoming.
- 67 Spencer 1997: 217.
- 68 E.g. Spencer 2014a.
- 69 Nordström 1972: 117–18.
- 70 Gratien 2006.
- 71 Stein 2005: 160–1. Smith notes that dress, adornment and other accoutrements are singled out as explicitly Nubian in ancient Egyptian texts (2003: 33); other than some elements of jewellery (bone, metal, faience), few objects of this type survive from Amara West.
- 72 Spataro *et al.*, forthcoming
- 73 Millet, forthcoming.
- 74 Ryan *et al.* 2012.
- 75 Budka 2011: 28–29; Spence *et al.* 2011: 37.
- 76 D. Raue, ‘Nubian pottery in the early 18th dynasty on Elephantine Island’, paper at *Nubia in the New Kingdom: Lived experience, pharaonic control and indigenous traditions*, British Museum colloquium, July 11–12 2013.
- 77 Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2006: 76, Figure 14.
- 78 Smith 2003: 43–53, with references.
- 79 See Smith (2003: 113–24), for a study of material from Middle Kingdom and early New Kingdom Askut. At Amara West, the botanical record does not suggest the presence of sorghum or millet as important parts of the diet, but rather plant subsistence strategies consistent with Egypt (Ryan *et al.* 2012); Carbon isotope analyses are suggesting C3 plants (and animals feeding on those plants) are the major part of the diet, rather than C4 plants (M. Binder, pers. comm.).
- 80 Millet, forthcoming; see also Spencer 1997: pls. 34–5, 51–4.
- 81 Millet, forthcoming. See Stockhammer (2013: 18–23) for a discussion of how Philistine groups incorporated elements of Canaanite practise (and material culture) in their pottery.
- 82 Pappa 2013: 41.
- 83 C. Knoblauch, ‘The plurality of the Egyptian presence and lived experiences in Nubia (c. 1900–1500 BC): the funerary architecture of the Egyptian community at Mirgissa in a regional perspective’ at the British Museum conference.
- 84 Smith 2003: 97–135.
- 85 The same phenomenon is noted at Tell el-Dab’a, where Syro-Palestinian cultural markers are more evident in tombs (Bader 2011). Research at Tombois (Smith 2003: 136–66) indicates a complex spectrum of Egyptian and Nubian cultural affiliations and admixture, throughout the New Kingdom. Isotope analyses have the potential to distinguish individuals from different geographic area: initial research on New Kingdom Nubia suggests that more individuals from Egypt were present in the earliest phases of the Tombois cemetery (Buzon and Simonetti 2013). The limited number of samples from Amara West included in the study are spread across New Kingdom and post-New Kingdom tombs, thus conclusions about that site remain tentative. The likelihood that ‘Egyptian’ officials were transferred from other Nubian sites (Sai, Sesebi etc) to Amara West in the early 19th dynasty further complicates such analyses.
- 86 Binder *et al.* 2011.
- 87 Binder 2011; Binder *et al.* 2011.
- 88 Several crouched burials have been found in the cemetery, but the single example from a New Kingdom tomb (G234, Binder 2011: 41 [Figure3], 44) was clearly a later intrusion.
- 89 Vila 1977.
- 90 Regional surveys near other Egyptian sites suggest the impact of pharaonic culture was rather minimal, at least in terms of the material evidence preserved in cemeteries and settlements (see Smith 2003: 87–84; Edwards and Osman 2012).
- 91 F5652, F5659 and F5663.
- 92 Caneva 1990; Welsby 2001: 380–1 [type 2], 421; Smith 2003: 106 Figure 5.10.
- 93 See most recently Van Pelt 2013, with further references.
- 94 Higginbotham 2000.
- 95 See Smith 2003: 12–55 and Van Pelt 2013, with references. The perception of ‘home’ and ‘homeland’ and ethnicity are not always, of course, identical.
- 96 Nevett 2010: 71.
- 97 Pappa 2013: 36–7.
- 98 For archaic Greek colonial settings, see Antonnacio 2013: 243.
- 99 Considerable numbers of Nubians lived in Egypt, particularly south of Thebes, and must also have displayed a spectrum of feeling towards what constituted ‘home’.
- 100 For example, the practise of taking Egyptian names, being educated at the Egyptian court and placed within the pharaonic administration (Säve-Söderbergh 1991) are attested for a very small number of individuals, given the 4–5 centuries of New Kingdom occupation. See also n.90.
- 101 References to individual campaigns, and sources, can be found in Morris 2005. The scale of these campaigns is not clear, and some may have been motivated by imperial ideology as much as necessity.