

9. THE HOUSES H1 TO H5

(Fig. 15)

The houses H1 to H5 (Pl. 36.1) are located in the central part of the excavated area SAV1 and are flanked by the streets Rue NS1 in the east, the reconstructed Rue EO1 in the north, and Rue EO4 in the south. On the western side, a north-south oriented wall separates the residential quarter from the magazines in the west. The five houses comprise a total area of 1,273m², with a north-south extension of 64.50m and an east-west extension of 19.66m. It must be noted, however, that the northernmost part of House H4 does not exist anymore and one can only assume that it formerly had reached to Rue EO1 in the north.¹⁶⁸ The houses were erected in a strict orthogonal grid, with the walls perpendicular to each other.

Overall, the walls of the houses are standing up to the height of about 1.0m, though the condition of the walls in the south is generally less well preserved. Here, at House H1 and the southern part of House H5, only around three to four courses of bricks have survived, reaching a maximum height of 0.50m. Some of the walls can only just be seen as a slight elevation protruding from the ground surface. It is therefore sometimes difficult to detect whether the wall continued onwards or may have incorporated a doorway.¹⁶⁹ Also, the lowest courses of the walls were commonly laid without doorways being marked, so when the upper brickwork has been lost, the pattern of access across the continuous lengths of wall often cannot be identified clearly.¹⁷⁰

Apart from one example in House H3, there are no existing windows or niches in any of the walls,

possibly a result of the level of preservation. In general, windows in Egyptian domestic architecture are presumed to have been rather high up.¹⁷¹ The thickness of the walls for the houses H1–H3 and H5 is very uniform with 0.55m, consisting of one row of headers and one of stretchers per course, with the laying pattern alternated in every other course. The walls of House H4 were thicker, with the outer walls being 1.10m and the inner ones 0.75m, possibly indicating an upper story at this house.¹⁷² The format of the bricks used in all the houses was very uniform with 33 × 15 × 10cm. Nothing of a floor covering made of mudbricks or stone has been preserved; one may therefore assume that there were pressed mud pavements throughout the dwellings. Also, the wall plastering, conserved in a few areas, was made of clay.

9.1. THE HOUSES H1 TO H3¹⁷³

(Pl. 5, Plan 5 section 1)

The houses H1 to H3 are situated to the west of the main north-south thoroughfare Rue NS1 and are aligned in a row from the south to the north. They are designed as row houses, always sharing the dividing wall. The three houses all have approximately the same layout and size, consisting of five rooms: two main rooms in the east and two smaller rooms and an entrance room in the west. With an area of c. 55.0–58.0m² the houses are rather small in size.¹⁷⁴ The access of the rooms followed a spiral-form pattern¹⁷⁵ beginning from the entrance room 1 and ending in room 5. The main entrance to the houses

¹⁶⁸ In Azim's plan House H4 is not reconstructed to reach Rue EO1, but ends slightly to the south of the street. There is however no explanation given for this reconstruction. Cf. AZIM 1975, 98, pl. IV.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. KEMP/STEVENS 2010, 299.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. KEMP 2000, 88.

¹⁷¹ See SPENCE 2004, 131.

¹⁷² It must be noted however, that no traces of a staircase have been found. Also, the thickness of the walls does not necessarily indicate a second story. At Amarna, walls with a thickness of merely 0.14–0.18m also could have supported a lightweight upper floor. See SPENCE 2004, 129.

¹⁷³ AZIM 1975, 118. The nomenclature of the houses themselves was given by Azim, while the room numbers were assigned by the author for a better differentiation of the various rooms.

¹⁷⁴ The size of these houses corresponds with those of the small houses in the western quarter in Kahun as well as with the houses in the workmen's village in Amarna and Deir el-Medina. See TIETZE 1985, 48–85; LACOVARA 1997, 47–49; KOLTSIDA 2007, 6–7; SNAPE 2014, 66, 86.

¹⁷⁵ "Schneckenhaus-Grundriß" resp. "escargot-plan" as used by VON PILGRIM 1996b, 256, and LACOVARA 1997, 54, for explaining certain house types of Tell el-Dab'a and Kerma. See also BIETAK 1996, 24, fig. 3.



Fig. 15. Overview of the houses H1–H5

lay in the narrow north-south running corridor Rue NS2, situated between Rue EO4 in the south and the probably open area H3N in the north.¹⁷⁶ This corridor also separated the houses H1–H3 from House H5 in the west. As already noted by Azim,¹⁷⁷ no architectural elements of stone, such as thresholds or lintels, have been recovered in these dwelling units, nor have column bases. He suggests however that one could possibly reconstruct a central column in the principal rooms of the houses.¹⁷⁸ An interesting detail is that the walls between the respective rooms 2 and 3 did not follow the usual perpendicular layout, but were situated at a slight angle, especially in the houses H2 and H3. No remains of staircases exist at these houses, therefore one may conclude that they consisted only of the ground story.

9.1.1. House H1

(Pl. 6.1, Plan 5 section 4)

House H1 is the southernmost house of the row houses H1–H3. Its state of preservation is the worst of the three houses, with only up to three courses of bricks remaining of some of the walls (Pl. 36.2). The majority of the walls, however, have almost deteriorated to the ground level and can only be seen as a weak imprint on the ground. From the existing features it is possible to reconstruct the course of these walls, without being able to go into greater detail. Therefore, for example, it cannot always be determined where the entrances to the rooms had been in the original layout of the house.

The area of House H1 comprised 57.96m² with a north-south extension of 9.58m and an east-west extension of 7.30m. The house was entered from Rue NS2 in the west via Room H1/1,¹⁷⁹ a rectangular, corridor-like room measuring 2.56 × 1.39m. The opening to Rue NS2 covers the entire width of the room, the flanking walls of the entrance are however badly deteriorated, so it cannot be determined if perhaps the walls projected further into the room

to form doorjambs. A brick buttress added to the eastern end of the northern wall formed the northern doorjamb of the entrance into Room H1/2, situated to the east of Room H1/1. If a corresponding buttress also existed on the southern side cannot be determined from the present situation of the walls; it seems however likely.

Room H1/2¹⁸⁰ was almost rectangular, with a north-south extension of 4.26m and a width of 3.76m, amounting to an area of 16.39m². The room was entered from the west. If a second entrance existed on the eastern side, giving access from Rue NS1,¹⁸¹ cannot be determined with certainty, because the eastern wall of the room is badly deteriorated in this area. The southern wall of the room, being the dividing wall to Room H1/3, can only be seen as a weak imprint in the ground as well and therefore the exact position of the opening between these two rooms can only be guessed at.

Room H1/3¹⁸² is situated in the southeast corner of the building. At 15.61m² (4.18 × 3.76m) it had almost the same size as Room H1/2 and can be classified as the second main room of the house. Of the walls of this room, only the southwest corner is preserved up to a height of 0.38m, while the rest can only barely be seen as weak imprints on the ground. Here, once again, it is therefore not possible to determine the exact position of the door openings to the neighboring rooms. An interesting detail presents itself at the southeast corner, where the southern wall of House H1 continued onwards to the east, thus projecting into the street Rue NS1 for about 0.30m, where it formed a kind of a doorjamb at the crossing point to the east-west oriented street Rue EO4. At the small part of the remaining wall in the southwest corner of the room, the bricks in the lowest course are standing on edge. This could have been a means of leveling out any unevenness of the ground and creating a horizontal alignment before laying further brick courses.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁶ Azim mentions a second entrance into the houses in the east. These entrances cannot be confirmed, however, since the walls are badly deteriorated and one cannot determine if the openings in the wall were original doorways, entrances installed at a later period, or simply deteriorated parts of the masonry. Cf. AZIM 1975, 118.

¹⁷⁷ AZIM 1975, 118.

¹⁷⁸ AZIM 1975, 118. There are a few remains of column bases in the vicinity of the houses H1–H3 (two in H2, two in Rue NS2), none are however *in situ* and it cannot be determined if these bases were formerly part of the dwellings.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Chapter 14.19.1.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Chapter 14.19.2.

¹⁸¹ As postulated by AZIM 1975, 118; 98, pl. IV. For the reconstruction questionable openings were not considered, since domestic architecture in other Egyptian towns (e.g. Amarna, Elephantine, Tell el-Dab'a, Abydos) generally have only one main entrance and are not perforated with many openings. Cf. BORCHARDT/RICKE 1980; TIETZE 1985; ENDRUWEIT 1994; BIETAK 1996; VON PILGRIM 1996b; SPENCE 2004; KEMP/STEVENS 2010.

¹⁸² Cf. Chapter 14.19.3.

¹⁸³ Cf. KEMP 2000, 88 and see above Chapter 4.

To the west of Room H1/3 lay Room H1/4,¹⁸⁴ with a size of 8.84m² (4.35 × 2.04m). It was accessed from the east, although, as already mentioned, the exact location of the entrance is not known. The situation of the walls is similar to the rest of the house, with a preservation height of up to 0.40m (about three courses of bricks). Once again, the lowest course of the southern wall consists of bricks on edge.

Finally, to the north of Room H1/4 is the small, almost square chamber Room H1/5,¹⁸⁵ with 4.41m² (2.18 × 2.08m). It could be entered from the south. In the western part of the room remains of the mud pavement are still preserved.

9.1.2. House H2

(Pl. 6.2, Plan 5 sections 4 and 5)

Directly to the north of House H1, House H2 has the same layout as House H1 and (with an area of 55.19m²) is approximately the same size (Pl. 37). In general, the walls are better preserved, up to a height of 0.90m, making it easier to determine the exact course of the walls and the position of the doors. The house was entered from the west into Room H2/1.¹⁸⁶ The walls forming the doorjambes on the northern and southern side of the entrance are both badly deteriorated, so they could have formerly jutted out more than in the present condition. The room measures 2.57 × 1.32m, opening on the eastern side to Room H2/2, where a buttress is added on the northern side of the entrance (cf. H1/1). An equivalent doorjamb on the southern side seems possible, since the wall in that area is damaged.

The 15.02m² large Room H2/2¹⁸⁷ has an almost square form (4.07 × 3.76m). As in House H1, an opening to Rue NS1 on the eastern side of the room could be possible, even though the wall faces framing the entrance are not shaped as doorjambes, but are irregular. Therefore, the dimension of a possible door in this area cannot be determined. The southern wall of Room H2/2 is not parallel to the northern wall, but is situated at a slight angle. The opening to Room H2/3 is on the eastern side of this wall. The eastern wall of the room continues onwards to

Room H2/3; at the interface between the two rooms there is no indication of a buttress or doorjamb projecting to the west. An opening in the northern part of the wall was added at a later time and is not part of the original layout.

Since the northern and southern walls of Room H2/3¹⁸⁸ are both slightly slanted, the room has a trapezoid form, with an area of 15.18m². The room was entered from the north and a second door opening existed in the west towards Room H2/4. The western wall is badly deteriorated, therefore the exact location of this entrance cannot be determined. The walls of Room H2/4¹⁸⁹ are generally in a bad shape and very little of the original masonry is still intact. The layout of the room can however be clearly identified with measurements of 4.12 × 2.09m (8.58m²). Even though the exact position can, once again, not be determined, there must have been an entrance in the north to make Room H2/5¹⁹⁰ accessible. Apart from the entrance room H2/1, this chamber is the smallest room (4.45m²) and, due to its position in the house, seems to be the most private one.¹⁹¹

9.1.3. House H3

(Pl. 7, Plan 5 section 4)

House H3 is the northernmost of the three row houses, following the same layout. It is the best preserved of the three, since all the walls have a remaining height of at least 0.40m (Pl. 38). The surface area of the entire house is 56.42m². As in the other two houses, the (presumably) main entrance is in the northwestern corner, where one entered a 1.33m wide and 2.09m long corridor, Room H3/1.¹⁹² Here, the doorjambes, i.e. the walls framing the door on the north and the south side, have once again been badly damaged. On the eastern side of the corridor, a small wall juts out of the northern wall, forming a doorjamb for the entrance to Room H3/2. In this case, a southern counterpart cannot be reconstructed, since the southern wall is in good shape and there is no indication that a similar buttress was in place here.

In the 15.74m² large Room H3/2,¹⁹³ a 1.44m wide opening in the eastern wall is more pro-

¹⁸⁴ Cf. Chapter 14.19.4.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Chapter 14.19.5.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Chapter 14.20.1.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Chapter 14.20.2.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Chapter 14.20.3.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Chapter 14.20.4.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Chapter 14.20.5.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Room H1/5 and Room H3/5.

¹⁹² Cf. Chapter 14.21.1.

¹⁹³ Cf. Chapter 14.21.2.

nounced than in the comparable rooms H1/2 and H2/2 and the doorjambs can be more clearly defined. Nevertheless, this opening seems to be of a secondary nature and is therefore not considered in the reconstruction of House H3. In the southern wall of the room a 1.20m wide door leads into Room H3/3. Remains of the mud wall plastering are extant on the western doorjamb of this opening as well as on the wall itself. This southern wall is once again set in an angle to the other walls and is therefore not parallel to the northern wall. In the southwest corner of the room the remains of a former installation – perhaps a small storage bin – can be seen. The remains consist of one brick standing on edge with one brick lying on top, creating a niche with a width of 0.44m in the southwest corner.

The second main room of the house, the 14.66m² large Room H3/3,¹⁹⁴ could definitely be entered from Rue NS1; in the northern part of the eastern wall, a 1.23m wide entrance, where both doorjambs are preserved, can be identified. The only still existing window of all the dwellings is installed in this wall as well (Pl. 40). It is situated 0.50m to the south of the door opening and has a width of 0.67m. The window sill is 0.26m above ground level. On both sides of the window opening bricks are standing on edge, forming the window frame. Remains of a lime plaster are extant inside of the window opening. Directly to the south of the window, a rectangular installation was situated in the southeastern corner of the room, consisting of a row of bricks standing on edge and encompassing an area of 1.87 × 1.01m. This could have been a storage bin or, what seems more likely, a mastaba situated in the corner of the room, forming a close relationship to the neighboring window and therefore a link to the outside world (Pl. 39).¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, remains of the mud floor still exist in the western part of the room. Brick rubble was found in its center. If these tumbled down bricks

were formerly part of the masonry or the ceiling can no longer be determined. Azim also mentions the existence of the remains of the flat roof, consisting of a 0.15m thick layer of earth on top of straw mats and wooden beams.¹⁹⁶ This feature could however not be verified through the post-examination.

To the west of Room H3/3 was the rectangular Room H3/4¹⁹⁷ (4.34 × 2.02m), accessible through a 1.22m doorway in the east. The southern doorjamb was damaged, so the entrance was possibly narrower. To the north, the 4.35m² large Room H3/5¹⁹⁸ could be entered through a 1.08m doorway. Here, both doorjambs are covered in mud plaster.

To the north of House H3 is a presumably open area or courtyard (Area H3N¹⁹⁹), with a length of 12.14m and a width of 4.45m. This space was separated from Rue NS1 by a north-south oriented wall, leaving a 1.13m wide entrance into the area. Neither House H3 nor House H4 to the north could be accessed directly from the area H3N, only the corridors Rue NS2 and Rue NS3, leading to the entrances of the respective houses.²⁰⁰

9.2. HOUSE H4

(Pl. 8, Plan 5 section 4, Plan 6 sections 8–10)

House H4 was situated on the north side of the domestic quarter, though only the rooms in the southern part and to the west have been preserved (Pl. 41.1). Therefore, the total dimensions of the former dwelling must remain unknown. Due to the general layout of this town quarter, one could assume that House H4 formerly reached to the main east-west oriented street Rue EO1 in the north and therefore encompassed an entire area of about 368.0m² (11.91 × 30.95m).²⁰¹ The part of the house that can still be traced consists of seven rooms and an area of 111.90m². It is bordered by Rue NS1 in the east and Rue NS3 in the west, as well as the open area H3N in the south. The outer walls of House H4 are

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Chapter 14.21.3.

¹⁹⁵ Mastabas are a common feature in Egyptian houses, found for example in Amarna, Elephantine and Amara West, both inside and outside of the houses. See VON PILGRIM 1996a, 219 for Elephantine; CORREAS-AMADOR 2013, 416, 421 for Amarna; SPENCER/STEVENS/BINDER 2014, 38 for Amara West. Also, the so-called “box beds” in Deir el-Medina have similar dimensions (1.70 × 0.80 × 0.75m) and are placed in one of the front (main) rooms of the house. Cf. LESKA 1994, 98–100, 104, figs. 3 and 4; KLEINKE 2007, 17 and 30–31; SNAPE 2014, 79.

¹⁹⁶ AZIM 1975, 118.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Chapter 14.21.4.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Chapter 14.21.5.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Chapter 14.21.6.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Chapter 6.

²⁰¹ The possibility that more than one house existed in this area cannot be entirely ruled out.

between 1.02 and 1.08m wide, while the inner walls have a width of about 0.70m. The size of the bricks used here were the same as at the houses H1–H3, 33x15x10cm.

The main entrance, or rather the only known entrance, seems to have been on the western side of the building, where a 1.50m long stone threshold is situated *in situ*. Through this doorway one entered Room H4/1²⁰² from the corridor-like Rue NS3. Not all of the walls of Room H4/1 have survived, but enough to trace the outlines, establishing a room of 15.19m². A possible second doorway leading to the rest of the dwelling could have been on the eastern side of the room, where the wall has completely eroded, aside from the corners. The southern wall, added onto the massive outer western wall, was preserved in its entire length up to a height of 0.90m. From the northern wall, on the other hand, only the northeastern corner is still visible. The western wall, being the outer wall of the dwelling, was still preserved to the south of the threshold, where it continued to the south. To the north, this outer wall is only barely visible at ground level to a distance of 2.70m from the threshold. Another north-south oriented wall can be determined to the north of Room H4/1 as well; here a small chamber (Room H4/1N²⁰³) of 2.84m² can be reconstructed, of which the entrance lay either in the north or the east. The eastern wall of Room H4/1 also continued to the north, though the extent is not known.

Also unknown are the dimensions of the room to the east of Room H4/1. The only evidence here is the remains of a stone threshold situated in a doorway leading to the south (Room H4/2). The width of this entrance cannot be determined, since the threshold is not preserved in its entirety and the western side of the now existing opening is uneven. A secondary wall overbuilds the area, where presumably the original southern wall was situated. To the north and the east no trace of the original building remains.

Room H4/2,²⁰⁴ with 29.37m² (6.08 × 4.86m), seems to have been one of the main rooms of the house, being the largest room in the preserved part of the house. It is situated to the south of Room H4/1. Apart from the already mentioned entrance in the north, this room provided access to the southern rooms of the house, though the entrance to Room

H4/4 was closed off at a later time. Both doors leading to the southern rooms were 1.32m wide and presumably had sandstone thresholds. Parts of such a threshold are lying near the entrance in Room H4/5. Inside of Room H4/2, the base of a column was found. If a column was actually formerly part of the room must remain unknown, but due to the size of the room, one could assume that there was at least one column situated in the middle. The diameter of the base is 0.72m and the remains of the column are 0.28m in diameter.

To the east of Room H4/2 lay Room H4/3²⁰⁵, of which the northern part was completely overbuilt by a wall from a later time period. Therefore, the original size of the room cannot be determined. One can, however, see a small piece of masonry underneath this secondary wall, which seems to have been aligned to the northern wall of Room H4/2 and also probably formed the eastern doorjamb of the stone threshold located there. The eastern wall (being the outer wall of House H4) is only preserved in parts and is clearly a continuation of the better preserved part of the wall located at Room H4/6 to the south. Therefore, the size of the room can probably be reconstructed with 12.77m², with a length (north-south) of 4.77m and a width (east-west) of 2.46m. The former entrance into the room cannot be determined and is presumed to be on the northern side, since the remains of the western wall are for the most part too high to accommodate a door opening.

In the southern part of the house three rooms were situated next to each other (Pl. 41.2). In the southwestern corner was Room H4/4,²⁰⁶ a relatively small room with only 7.61m² total. This room is now completely closed off, since the former 1.20m wide entrance in the north wall was first narrowed down to 0.96m and later completely filled with brick masonry (Pl. 42.1). When these changes occurred is not known, but presumably after the main occupation phase in Pharaonic times. The walls of this room are very well preserved up to a height of 1.60m and still have parts of the original mud plaster, the exception being the outer southwest corner, which is almost completely destroyed.

The middle room located on the southern side, Room H4/5,²⁰⁷ had a size of 13.90m² and was the largest of the three rooms. It had a central entrance

²⁰² Cf. Chapter 14.22.1.

²⁰³ Cf. Chapter 14.22.2.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Chapter 14.22.3.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Chapter 14.22.4.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Chapter 14.22.5.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Chapter 14.22.6.

in the north (measuring 1.30m), with another doorway situated in the east, giving access to Room H4/6. This opening and the dividing wall between the two rooms was overbuilt in a later time period, but the original walls can still be identified underneath the secondary wall. An opening in the southern wall was not part of the original layout.

Finally, Room H4/6²⁰⁸ was located in the southeastern corner of the house. With 6.73m², it had about the same dimensions as Room H4/4. The only entrance was the 1.17m wide doorway in the west, leading from Room H4/5 into the chamber.

To the west of Rue NS3 is the area labelled Area H4W²⁰⁹ (Pl. 9), where the original layout is unclear because of the many secondary walls that were erected in this area. Nevertheless, some of the original walls can be determined and two rooms can tentatively be reconstructed. Three east-west oriented walls could have belonged to the original layout; they were all built onto the dividing wall to the storage room area, SAF5. These remains are at the most two to three courses high; in some parts they could only be determined as imprints in the ground. The outer walls were between 0.45m and 0.50m thick, while the interior wall was only 0.25m. The southernmost wall was aligned with the outer wall of House H4. An entrance to the southern room, with a size of 14.53m², could be identified from the corridor Rue NS3. Access to the larger northern room (c. 30.0m²) could have been either from the corridor or from the southern room. To the south of these two rooms a further room existed, labelled Room H5N,²¹⁰ which could be accessed from Area H3N. It also had an opening to House 5 in the south. For the reconstruction, it is assumed that the area to the north of these three rooms was built up with similar structures, thus creating, together with House 4, the corridor Rue NS3.²¹¹

9.3. HOUSE H5

(Pls. 10 and 11, Plan 5 sections 2 and 5)

The area to the west of the houses H1–H3 and up to the dividing wall to SAF5 is labelled as House H5,²¹² encompassing a total area of 303.16m² (Pl. 42.2). Azim assumed that there was only one rather large house with nine rooms here. However,

by viewing the ground plan it seems just as likely that there were actually two smaller houses situated here, divided by the central east-west corridor H5/5. For the description of the rooms, the house will be treated as one, while keeping the possibility of a separation into two in mind.

In general, especially in this house, it is difficult to determine in most rooms where the original door openings had been, because many of the walls are not preserved in their entirety and may also have openings and holes that were intentionally added in later time periods. Regarding the state of preservation, the walls in the northeastern part of the house are the best preserved, up to a height of about 1.20m, while in the southern part only about two to three courses of bricks per wall have remained.

The main entrance seems to have been to the east, at the above mentioned Corridor H5/5,²¹³ entering the house from the north-south oriented street Rue NS2. This 7.65m long and 1.38m wide corridor, leading through the house to the (probably) open courtyard H5/9 in the west, presumably gave access to the rooms lying to the north and south of the corridor. Unfortunately, the exact access points cannot be verified due to the state of preservation of the walls. It is however assumed that the rooms H5/3 and H5/6 could be entered from the corridor, since the walls of the neighboring rooms H5/4 and H5/7 are preserved higher and offer no possibility for doors. As for the openings of the corridor to the east and the west, buttresses on the northern sides of both doorways formed the doorjambes, though a corresponding element on the southern side did not exist. A further buttress was located as the extension of the dividing wall between the rooms H5/3 and H5/4, jutting out for 0.16m into the corridor H5/5.

The northern part of the house consisted of four rooms, H5/1–H5/4, forming a rectangular block. The 20.85m² (5.97 × 3.71m) large Room H5/1²¹⁴ is situated in the northwestern corner (Pl. 43.1). The walls of this room are not preserved in their entirety and the northern and western walls are especially damaged. Nevertheless, the outline of the room can be traced very well. Due to the state of preservation of the walls, entrances into the room could be pos-

²⁰⁸ Cf. Chapter 14.22.7.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Chapter 14.22.8.

²¹⁰ Cf. Chapter 14.23.13.

²¹¹ Cf. Chapter 6.

²¹² Cf. AZIM 1975, 118.

²¹³ Cf. Chapter 14.23.5.

²¹⁴ Cf. Chapter 14.23.1.

sible at all sides, though the remains of the eastern and southern walls most strongly suggest openings, since doorjambs seem to exist here. Therefore, the room was probably entered from an approximately central door in the south, while access was also given to Room H5/2 in the east, through a door situated in the southern part of the eastern wall.

The walls of the elongated Room H5/2²¹⁵, with 12.91m² (5.97 × 2.17m) in the northeast of the building are slightly better preserved, with the eastern and southern walls reaching a height of up to 1.18m. Entrances to the room seem to have been from the west (Room H5/1) and the south (Room H5/4). That another doorway may have existed in the east towards Rue NS2 cannot be entirely ruled out, since the northern part of the eastern wall is completely missing.

Room H5/3²¹⁶ was situated to the south of Room H5/1. It had an area of 21.02m² (5.93 × 3.71m), making these two rooms almost the same size. They were interconnected by a central doorway in the dividing wall. Another entrance to Room H5/3 formerly existed in the northern part of the eastern wall, though this door was closed off at a later time. The southern and the western walls of the room seem to have been replaced in a later period (modern?), since the bricks used here are very regular and have a different format than the ones used at the other walls (31 × 17 × 7cm). Nevertheless, they follow the original outline of the room. The northern part of the western wall is missing in its entirety.

To the east of Room H5/3 was Room H5/4,²¹⁷ which was the same size as Room H5/2. All of the entrances into this room lay in the northern part of the room. As with the door in the western wall, a 1.0m wide entrance in the east, leading to Rue NS2, was closed off at a later time as well.

Five further rooms of House H5 were situated to the south of the dividing corridor H5/5. From the corridor, Room H5/6²¹⁸ could probably be entered (see above). Unfortunately, the northern wall of this room is missing almost in its entirety, with only wall stumps on the eastern and western sides remaining. Therefore, the entrance situation is not assured. This almost square room (4.16 × 3.65m, 15.37m²) probably also had an entrance to Room H5/7 in the east.

Here too, the wall is not extant anymore, so precise statements are once again difficult to make. It can also no longer be determined if the column base that now can be found in the room was actually part of a column formerly situated here.

The neighboring 9.08m² large Room H5/7²¹⁹ was entered from the west and had another door in the south, giving access to the large room H5/8. A doorjamb was situated 0.15m to the west of the eastern wall, while a second one was probably 0.92m further west. The northern wall of this room was inserted between the eastern and western walls and may stem from a later period. Since the facings of the eastern and western walls are uneven on their northern sides, it is possible that they previously continued to the north, forming a larger room together with the eastern part of the corridor H5/5.

Room H5/8,²²⁰ with 52.63m² (7.90 × 6.50m), was definitely the largest and therefore the main room of House H5 (Pl. 43.2). Apart from the above mentioned entrance from Room H5/7 in the north, the room could be accessed directly from the outside via a 1.20m wide door in the southern wall, entering from Rue EO4. A column base with a diameter of 0.47m is probably situated *in situ* in the southern half of the room. A second, dislocated column base was also found here. Therefore, considering also the size of the room, it seems plausible to reconstruct two columns in this room for supporting the roof.

Two further rooms were situated to the west of Room H5/8, Rooms H5/10²²¹ and H5/11,²²² which could be accessed from Room H5/8. The walls of these two rooms are only 0.35m thick, but were connected to the western wall of the rooms H5/6 and H5/8, indicating that they were part of the original planning and not a secondary addition as one could suspect in view of the plan. The northern room, H5/10, is 12.03m², while the southern one, H5/11, has a size of 15.98m². Also to the west, bordered by the rooms of H5 in the east and the dividing wall to the area SAF5 in the west, is the probably open area H5/9,²²³ which can presumably be addressed as a courtyard. This 20.85m² large area was accessible from the corridor H5/5 of House H5, as well

²¹⁵ Cf. Chapter 14.23.2.

²¹⁶ Cf. Chapter 14.23.3.

²¹⁷ Cf. Chapter 14.23.4.

²¹⁸ Cf. Chapter 14.23.6.

²¹⁹ Cf. Chapter 14.23.7.

²²⁰ Cf. Chapter 14.23.8.

²²¹ Cf. Chapter 14.23.11.

²²² Cf. Chapter 14.23.12.

²²³ Cf. Chapter 14.23.9.

as from an 11.07m long and 1.09m wide corridor in the south (H5/9A²²⁴). A further entrance could have also existed in the north.

9.4. SUMMARY AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HOUSES H1 TO H5 (Fig. 16)

The domestic area in the center of SAV1 consisted of five dwelling units which were all arranged in the orthogonal grid that defined the southern part of the town. The assumed main accesses into the houses occurred from the north-south oriented corridors Rue NS2 and Rue NS3. The houses H1–H3 are row houses with an almost identical ground plan, with two main rooms in the east and two smaller rooms and the entrance corridor in the west, leading from the entrance in a spiral-form to the most private room.²²⁵ The neighboring house H5 consisted of a central corridor and nine rooms, situated to the north and the south of the corridor. In the west was an open courtyard. From the ground plan of the house it seems possible that H5 actually comprised two separate dwelling units, divided by the corridor. In this case, the northern house would consist of two larger rooms in the west and two elongated smaller ones in the east. The southern house possessed one main room in the south, probably equipped with columns, and four smaller rooms. The access to these two smaller houses would have been from the central corridor.

In the north of the residential sector was House H4, separated from the houses H1–H3 and H5 by an open area. Only the southern part of House H4 is preserved; it is however assumed that the dwelling reached to the main street Rue EO1 in the north. In the still existing part of the building, the main entrance could be detected in the west, on the longitudinal side of the house. The entrance room was followed by five further rooms of varying sizes, with the southernmost rooms aligned in a row.

As for the 3-D reconstruction of the domestic quarter (Pl. 58), one of the main problem is once again the former height of the buildings and especially the question of the existence of upper stories.²²⁶ As already addressed, the thickness of the walls do not necessarily indicate a possible upper floor. In fact, all the walls in the domestic area would have been strong enough to support one.²²⁷ However, no remains of staircases could be found in the entire area of the domestic buildings. Therefore, the houses H1–H3 and H5 are reconstructed as single-story houses with flat roofs, always spanning the entire building block.²²⁸ Parapet-walls of a height of about 0.50m enclosed the roof surface.²²⁹ If the houses had any windows apart from the single example in House H3, can no longer be determined; if windows were present, they were of small format and must have been situated higher up in the walls.²³⁰ As alternate sources of light and ventilation, openings in the roof or even roofless rooms also seem plausible.²³¹

In the extant part of House H4 no traces of a staircase could be detected anymore either. However, due to the presumed size of the house – and thus possibly being of heightened importance – a second story is proposed for this dwelling, assuming that the missing staircase was situated somewhere in the northern part of the house. In comparison to reconstructions of other contemporaneous dwellings, this second floor is presumed to have been situated only over two-thirds of the house, leaving the remaining part as a terrace, which was accessed from the upper story.²³²

Of all of the houses excavated here, the actual function of the rooms must remain unknown, especially since no finds are recorded for the specific rooms. One can therefore only suggest distinctions into main and secondary rooms according to their size. In general, larger rooms are classified as the

²²⁴ Cf. Chapter 14.23.10.

²²⁵ Row houses are a common feature in Egyptian settlements of all time periods. Exemplary are the row houses at the Middle Kingdom city of Kahun and the workmen's village at Amarna. See KEMP 1987, 21–50; LACOVARA 1997, 47; KEMP 2006, 212–217. For a listing of model settlements throughout the ages with detailed descriptions see KEMP 2006, 195–244. The domestic quarter at Sesebi consists of row houses as well. See LACOVARA 1997, 159, fig. 66.

²²⁶ The existence of an upper floor for Egyptian domestic buildings, especially those of special importance, is generally assumed. See SPENCE 2004, 123–152, KOLTSIDA 2007, 123–135.

²²⁷ Cf. SPENCE 2004, 129.

²²⁸ Cf. UPHILL 1988, 21, who also suggests this for the houses in Deir el-Medina.

²²⁹ Cf. ENDRUWEIT 1994, 48 with reference to house models of the Middle Kingdom. See PETRIE 1907, pl. XV.

²³⁰ Cf. ENDRUWEIT 1994, 25; SPENCE 2004, 131; SPENCE 2010, 291.

²³¹ Cf. KEMP 1995, 156. In his view, rooms with no windows or internal rooms which received their lighting through the doors of the neighboring rooms could have very well existed, depending on their usage and the need of the occupants for natural lighting.

²³² Cf. SPENCE 2004, 123–152; 134; KOLTSIDA 2007, 123–135.



Fig. 16. Reconstruction plan of the houses H1–H5

main rooms, where possible columns in a room heightened their importance.²³³ Compared to the classic Amarna house, with its tripartite plan²³⁴ considered the most common form of ancient Egyptian houses, no typical tripartite division can be identified here and thus also a subdivision into distinct sections cannot be made. Typical identifying architectural elements, such as niches or bed platforms for the bedrooms²³⁵ are also not extant here. In the case of the row houses H1 to H3, which shared identical ground plans, one could assume a sequence of rather public to private rooms following the spiral-form accessibility of the rooms, with the rooms 2 and 3 being the main rooms and the rooms 4 and 5 the secondary, more private, ones. House H5 is much more difficult to interpret in this way. Room H5/8 in the south can clearly be identified as the main room of the house,

set apart from the others by its size and the probable existence of two columns, while the remaining rooms are rather uniform in their size and layout. Furthermore, the accessibility of the rooms gives no clue to any hierarchy, with perhaps only the rooms H5/10 and H5/11 tentatively labelled as secondary rooms, given their location within the house. As for House H4, an interpretation is even more difficult, due to the fact that only the southern part still exists. The main entrance seems to have been in the central area of the house. One main room can possibly be identified with Room H4/2, while the three rooms in the south could have been more private ones. In general, one must assume for these houses that the rooms were seldom used for only one function, but were rather multifunctional and flexible, depending on the imminent need and seasonal factors.²³⁶

²³³ Cf. CROCKER 1985, 58–64; VON PILGRIM 1996a, 207–208; CORREAS-AMADOR 2013, 200. Columns in rooms were often not necessary for supporting the ceiling or roof beams, but served as an important status symbol.

²³⁴ Cf. TIETZE 1985; BIETAK 1996; VON PILGRIM 1996a, 190; LACOVARA 1997, 50; 56; SPENCE 2004, 127. A summary of

the research on the standard Amarna villa is given in CORREAS-AMADOR 2013, 27–36.

²³⁵ Cf. SPENCE 2004, 129; SPENCE 2010, 290. She points out, however, that these identifying elements only occurred in medium to large houses (larger than 100.0m²).

²³⁶ Cf. VON PILGRIM 1996a, 217; SNAPE 2014, 91.

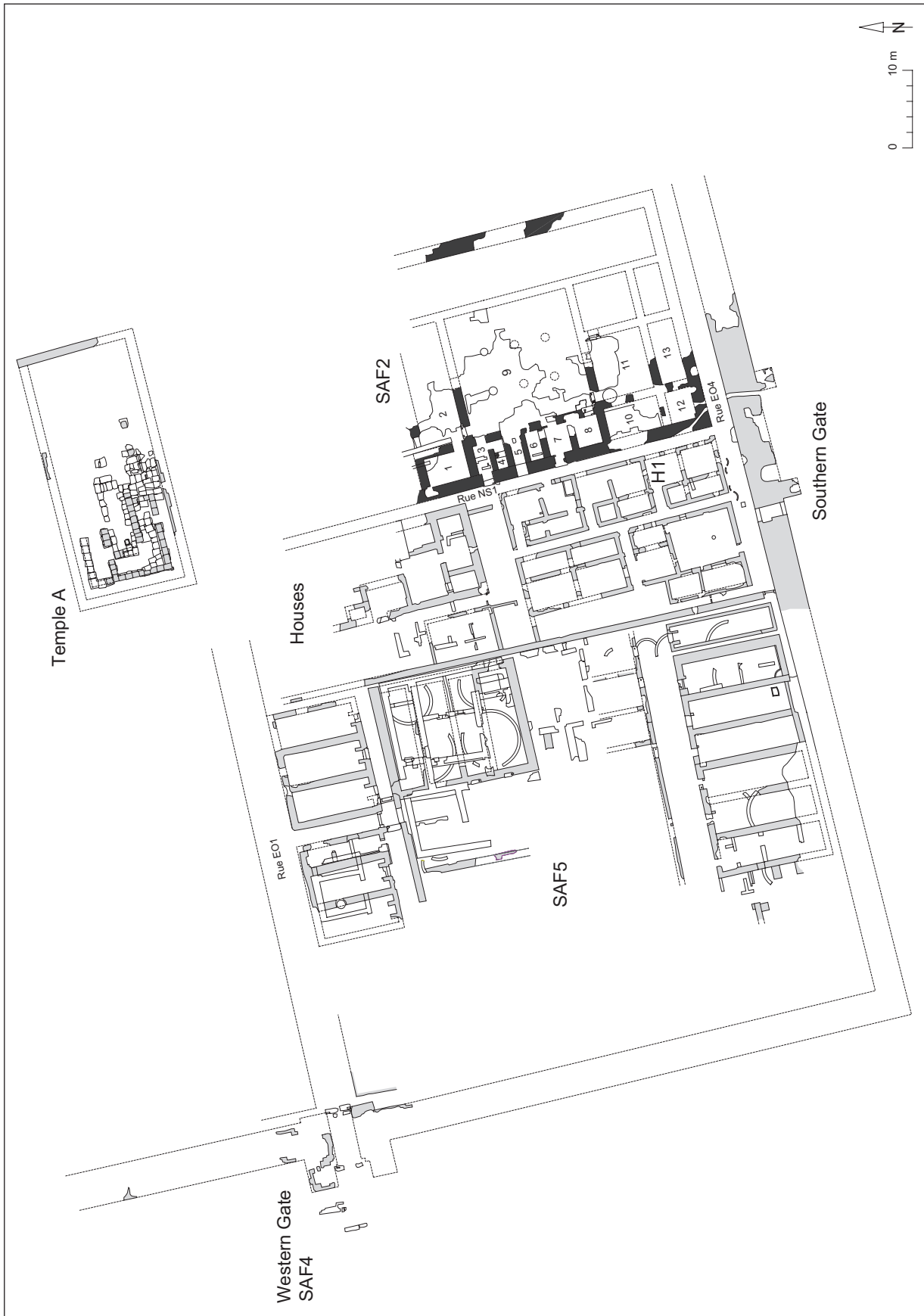


Fig. 17. Overview of SAF2