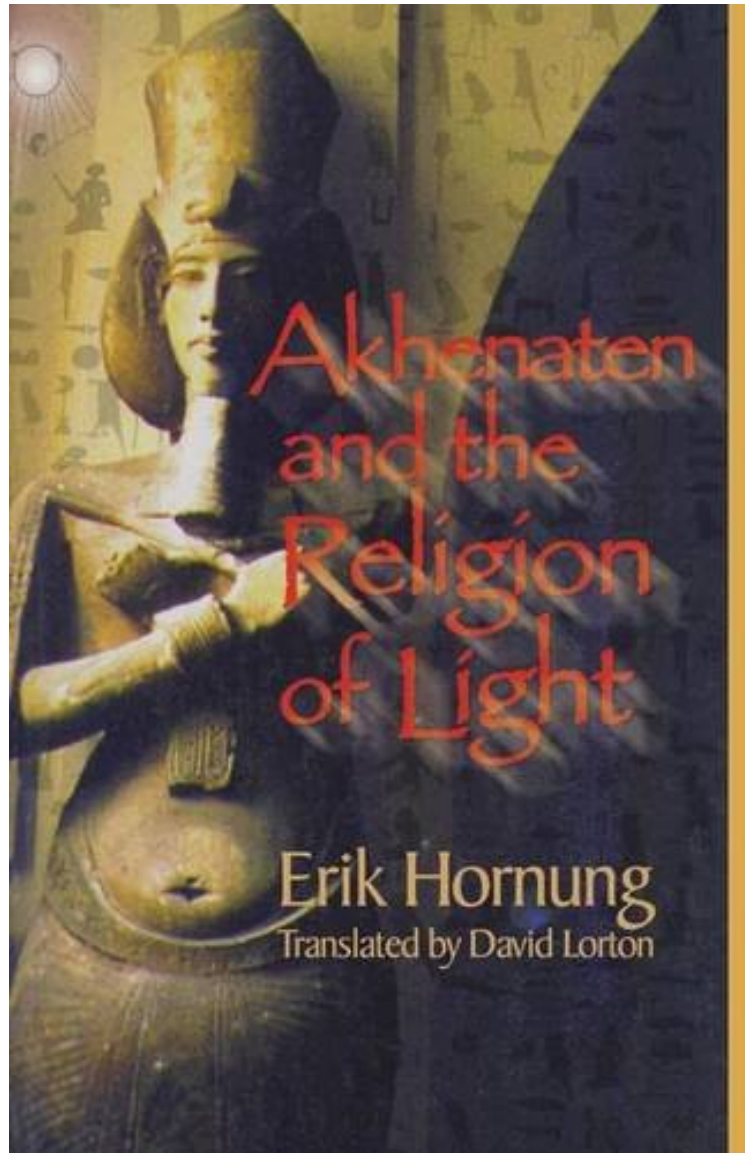


Akhenaten and the Religion of Light: Die Religion des Lichtes

Erik Hornung

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Erik Hornung : Akhenaten and the Religion of Light: Die Religion des Lichtes before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Akhenaten and the Religion of Light: Die Religion des Lichtes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Enjoyable Book on the Heretic KingBy DellaThis is a transcription of a lecture of some type by Hornung himself. Characteristic of Hornung, he tends to stick with the facts and tries not to interpret from them too much. If the facts as we know them don't support his theories, then he tends to

shy away from personal interpretations. He mentions other people's thoughts, though, and closer to the end Hornung gives us his opinion on Akhenaten. It's a mixture of positive and negative--not uncommon among a lot of people, I've found. I think part of Hornung's reticence is in part because there's a lot of rumors and occasionally outright hysterics surrounding Akhenaten. Sometimes it's hard to get through the fluff that surrounds him. I found myself deeply appreciating the near bare bones facts Hornung presented. Like one or two other reviewers, I also think this isn't a good "first book" on the subject. Akhenaten's revolution needs to be understood in the context of the New Solar Theology and the other changes in religious thought that were occurring in this time period. For those who are interested in a deeper interpretation of Akhenaten, the Aten, et al, I would recommend *Mind of Egypt* by Jan Assman. Jan Assman tends to interpret a little too much sometimes, but between him and Hornung, you can get a really good picture of different aspects of ancient Egypt. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. a lack of new scholarship was very disappointing. By doc peterson_ *Die Religion des Lichtes* -or "The Religion of Light" - was originally a lecture given at the Eranos Conference in 1988, hence its brevity (the book weighs in at just over 100 pages.) Perhaps because it was originally a lecture, it is light on original scholarship and long on a restating of previous work by other scholars. In itself this is fine; I was disappointed because I anticipated this would be a more detailed consideration of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and the Amarna Period. Beyond my initial disappointment in its scope is the lack of evaluation and assessment of the Amarna Period - even when merely discussing the work of other scholars it is enlightening to weigh, critique and assess the ideas and pet theories of fellow scholars. For those unfamiliar with Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and the Amarna Period there is some value to this book, although I think readers would be better served reading the chapters in a survey text on Ancient Egypt like *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* or perhaps *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Informative full of opinions. By Lorraine Jones Interesting in both detail and the author's opinions. We'll never really know what, why and exactly how the entire "Amarna" period played out since we can't know what the main participants in this strange royal family saga were thinking and feeling, what dynamics they lived in and how they met their final fates. It almost seems that the more detail that is revealed about these people and their lives, the deeper the mystery and the more room for speculation and opinion. It's all a fascinating puzzle with lots of pieces still missing.....It will always hold my interest.

Akhenaten, also known as Amenhotep IV, was king of Egypt during the Eighteenth Dynasty and reigned from 1375 to 1358 B.C. E. Called the "religious revolutionary," he is the earliest known creator of a new religion. The cult he founded broke with Egypt's traditional polytheism and focused its worship on a single deity, the sun god Aten. Erik Hornung, one of the world's preeminent Egyptologists, here offers a concise and accessible account of Akhenaten and his religion of light. Hornung begins with a discussion of the nineteenth-century scholars who laid the foundation for our knowledge of Akhenaten's period and extends to the most recent archaeological finds. He emphasizes that Akhenaten's monotheistic theology represented the first attempt in history to explain the entire natural and human world on the basis of a single principle. "Akhenaten made light the absolute reference point," Hornung writes, "and it is astonishing how clearly and consistently he pursued this concept." Hornung also addresses such topics as the origins of the new religion; profound changes in beliefs regarding the afterlife; and the new Egyptian capital at Akhetaten which was devoted to the service of Aten, his prophet Akhenaten, and the latter's family.

"The book is infused with critical inquiry; instead of merely repeating past theories, Hornung discusses and contextualizes the scholarship into the trends of the time it was written . . . Akhenaten and the Religion of Light is excellent." Choice In Akhenaten and the Religion of Light, Erik Hornung, . . . explores the metaphysical and religious dimensions of Akhenaten's 'perestroika' . . . shows how psychological and medical interpretations of Akhenaten's portraits based on a literal reading of their anatomy-bending style have often fed dubious moral presumptions. . . . 'Ugly' and 'sick' Hornung tells us were the most common epithets applied to Amarna art by scholars at the turn of the century." Lawrence Osborne. *Lingua Franca*. April, 2000. "In this book, the author provides a concise, accurate, and very readable account of Akhenaten's reign. . . It is one of the best books on the subject of this heretic pharaoh. Recommended reading for all." Frankie's Bibliography of Ancient Egypt "Eric Hornung. . . effectively and succinctly guides through the mess of interpretations to a sympathetic, yet historically critical understanding of the pharaoh's theology and impact upon Egyptian history. . . Like any good historian he explains the social and historical context that gave rise to Akhenaten and his religion of light. The author has spent a life time trying to unravel for us the intricacies of Egyptian religion. His books are accessible, well written, and full of useful information." Tom Collins, *Religious Studies in Secondary Schools*, Spring 2000. "A concise and thoughtful analysis of Akhenaten's reign and religious innovations by a foremost expert on Egyptian religion. . . Throughout, Hornung's knowledge of Egyptian religion and balanced coverage of the issues make this a publication of great value to anyone with an interest in Akhenaten or in Egyptian religion." Denise M. Doxey, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Religious Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4, October 2000 "This short and eminently readable translation. . . focuses on the nature of Akhenaten's religion, religious beliefs, and cultic practices, bringing together concepts and discussions from a wide range of scholarly

writing."Susan Tower Hollis, SUNY Empire State College. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 121, No. 3 (2001)About the AuthorDavid Lorton, an Egyptologist, is the translator of many books, including Erik Hornung's books *The Secret Lore of Egypt* and *Akhenaten and the Religion of Light*, both from Cornell.