that title appeared too late for inclusion, I stress that this omission is not at the root of my less than favorable opinion of the work under review. As it stands, the bibliography is close to unusable for the target audience, given how few English speakers will tackle German, and how difficult it can be to gain access to an appropriate library.

The publisher did clearly recognize that an English edition of a book about tomb scenes needs more illustrations, and the number has been increased to 215 from the original 117. However, quantity seems to have been achieved at the expense of quality; I have yet to see a book with so many examples of bad color reproduction. Take, for example, two partly overlapping views of the Amarna period scene in Ramose (figs. 31–32); the left-hand example is brown, the right largely green. The photographs of the tomb of Inheretkhau are worse: some photographs more or less reflect the right colors, but many have a strong green hue, and are also out of focus (for example: pp. 280–81, with three awful and one acceptable photographs). Even if the origins were not the best, how can a major publisher go to press with such poor illustrations? The Cornell University Press could have sent a photographer to Egypt, or probably obtained most of the required images from libraries. This is a great shame, since the book is otherwise well-produced and laid out.

I deeply regret the negative tone of this review, which of course is far too long for a book of this sort. This book could have made a great contribution to the popular knowledge and perception of the importance of the private tombs of Thebes. As it stands, the purpose of the book really does remain rather obscure.

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Akhenaten and the Religion of Light (translated by David Lorton). By Erik Hornung. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999. Pp. xiv + 146.

The public interest in the remarkable figure of Akhenaten is virtually insatiable. Both scholarly books and popular books abound, with the volume under review standing as another welcome addition to the collection.

Erik Hornung's book developed from a series of public lectures, the most notable of which were presented at the Eranos Conference held in Ascona, Switzerland, in August 1988, and at the ARCE sponsored symposium "Akhenaten: Hero or Heretic?" held in New York in December 1990. This book first appeared in German in 1995, under the title *Echnaton: Die Religion des Lichtes*. David Lorton's fine translation now has made it available to an English-reading audience.

Among the aforementioned surfeit of books devoted to the subject of Akhenaten are two well-known works by C. Aldred (*Akhenaten: King of Egypt* [1988]) and D. B. Redford (*Akhenaten: The Heretic King* [1984]). Readers who are familiar with these volumes will find something different in Hornung's monograph. The former are larger and more extensive, serving as full-fledged bibliographies of the 18th dynasty monarch; while the latter is rather an essay about the phenomenon of Akhenaten and his new religion.

Hornung begins by surveying the discovery of Akhenaten, starting with Champollion's one-day visit to Tell el-Amarna in November 1828, a stopover which yielded "no knowledge of Akhenaten and his far-reaching revolution," but which did lead the founder of Egyptology to "some fleeting impressions regarding the distinctive quality of the art of his period as contrasted to the traditional style" (p. 2). As is well known, credit for the discovery of Akhenaten and the cult of Aten goes to Lepsius, who communicated his analysis to the Prussian Academy of Sciences in Berlin in June 1851. Not surprisingly, the first full synthesis of Akhenaten, and indeed of much of pharaonic history, was produced by the great Eduard Meyer in his classic *Geschichte des Altertums* (1884), to some extent as a reaction to the glaring omission of Akhenaten in Leopold von Ranke's *Weltgeschichte* (1881).

All of this makes for captivating reading in Hornung's opening chapter, as does the author's account of subsequent archaeological developments, such as the discovery of the Amarna letters and Davies's excavations of the Amarna tombs. Equally fascinating is Hornung's survey of scholarly appreciations of Akhenaten; men such as Petrie and Breasted saw perfection and purity in the new religion, traits that would not surface again until modern science (in the case of the former) or Christianity (so the latter). Though Hornung is quick to note that in the last fifty years, scholars have been more critical in their evaluations, the afore cited works of Aldred and Redford prime among them.

The single point that Hornung stresses again and again in this work is that for the first time—and the only time—in history, scholars are able to see a new religion develop firsthand. "And in contrast to the founders of all other religions (viz., Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, etc.], Akhenaten is not shrouded in the mists of later legends; all that we have of him is con-

temporary and goes back to the man himself. His teaching is revealed to us by him alone, with no intermediaries, and it is subject to falsification only by modern interpretations" (p. 17).

In a similar vein, Hornung writes, "For the first time in history, we have a close-up view of how a deity originated. It is as though the Aten suddenly emerged from the traditional form of the sun god and then quickly shed the last vestiges of his origin" (p. 34). For Hornung, Aten is not the solar disk, "but rather the *light* that is in the sun and which, radiating from it, calls the world to life and keeps it alive" (p. 54; and note the title of the book).

As the above two paragraphs illustrate, Hornung is especially effective in situating Akhenaten and the new religion within the study of the history of religions, often with simply a quick aside that the educated reader will comprehend. As additional examples: the founding of a new capital, Akhenaten, "was above all a religiously motivated *hegira* on the part of the religious reformer, one that did not take him to any of the old centers, but to this remote locale" (p. 51); and "Akhenaten left no holy scripture, so what he founded does not belong to the religions of the book. And a 'Word of God' is altogether inconceivable in this new religion, for the newly promulgated god remained silent. The Aten himself did not speak; rather, his preacher Akhenaten spoke about him" (p. 52).

On the question of monotheism, Hornung notes that, while Karnak was converted to the worship of Aten, and the worship of Amun in general was suppressed, other temples devoted to other gods persisted in their traditional manner. Only fifteen miles from Akhetaten, for example, Khnum, Thoth, and Osiris were worshipped at Neferusi. Furthermore, the divine triad persists, albeit with the royal couple of Akhenaten and Nefertiti as members, accompanying Aten (thereby replacing the traditional divine triads associated with Thebes, Memphis, etc.).

In light of this evidence, Hornung concludes: "Like so many concepts, monotheism cannot be defined with absolute strictness or effectuated in reality. But with its relentless rigor, this religion of light was the simplest and clearest religion that had ever been devised!" (p. 94). One can agree with the second sentence, certainly a truism for the 14th century B.C.E., but one must issue a strong demurral vis-à-vis the first sentence, especially when Hornung adds that "Akhenaten's thinking is more radical than that of Deutero-Isaiah ('Besides me there is no god,' Isaiah 44:6) or that of Islam. . . . Not until Christianity was there a renewed attempt to eliminate the plethora of deities in favor of the One!" (ibid). Clearly, monotheism can be defined with "absolute strictness," even in antiquity, and indeed the examples of Second Isaiah and Islam give clear voice in that direction. Moreover, since Second Isaiah and Second Temple Judaism in general precede Christianity by half a millennium, the reference to the later religion is quite bewildering.

On the topic of Judaism, I agree fully with Hornung's statement, "The temporal interval is too great to infer a direct influence from the Amarna Period on the monotheism of the Hebrew Bible. But undercurrents that remain hidden to us might certainly have exercised an influence; perhaps the author of Psalm 104 indeed drew upon the Great Hymn to the Aten" (p. 122).

Notwithstanding the slender nature of this volume, every issue relevant to Akhenaten is touched upon in some fashion. There is an especially excellent treatment of Amarna art. Hornung's clear and concise style is exemplified by the following: "Everything that had been static, fixed in place for eternity, is now set in motion" (p. 44). Similarly, the coregency and succession issues are treated in fine manner. Hornung concludes that there is no certain evidence pointing to coregencies, neither with his predecessor Amenhotep III nor with his successor Smenkhkare. The physical appearance of Akhenaten also is discussed, though Hornung dismisses the attempts to associate the king's condition with specific ailments (epilepsy, premature old age, Fröhlich's syndrome, etc.).

In sum, Hornung has written a very readable monograph on one of ancient Egypt's most fascinating personalities. Hornung's book may be recommended to anyone, especially to those outside professional Egyptological circles, as a convenient treatment of the subject. In addition, a series of black-and-white photographs and line drawings enhance the discussion. Finally, note that because the work is essentially an essay, it is not encumbered with footnotes; instead, the author has included a very useful annotated bibliography at the end.

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Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations. By RAYMOND COHEN and RAYMOND WESTBROOK (eds.). Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. Pp. xvi + 307.

In the one hundred plus years since their discovery in 1887, the Amarna letters have served as a crucial