

AKHNATON, THE REFORMER

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ABSTRACT

AKHNATON, THE REFORMER

By

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In the first chapter of this thesis I have tried to show the political and religious conditions prior to Akhnaton. I concentrated on the relationship between the pharaohs and their gods, explaining how the pharaohs were affected by the gods. The second chapter discusses how Amon and his priesthood gained power; how Amenhotep III, by becoming accustomed to ease, luxury and personal enjoyment, caused Egypt to gradually lose its power and wealth, and how Tiye (Amenhotep's wife) became a great personality with a tremendous amount of influence over her husband. Akhnaton's name; the duration of his reign; his co-regency with his father; the tutelage of his mother when he was a child; his marriage to Nefertiti, and his early work after he got to the throne, including some possible reasons for his revolution against Amon, are the subjects of the third chapter. The fourth chapter is confined to religion. The main gods mentioned are Amon, Ra and Aton; their nature, the rivalry among the priesthods which ended with Aton's supremacy

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over Amon. In the fifth chapter I discuss different opinions by some historians as to whether Akhnaton's new faith was a true monotheism or not. I finally arrived to the conclusion that Akhnaton's new faith cannot be taken as a true monotheism as we believe in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but at the same time his new faith can be taken as possibly a kind of monotheism.

The importance of Akhnaton's great revolution and the possible reasons for the rapid collapse of his religion are mentioned in my conclusion.

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Yousif Ali Al-Thakafi

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DEDICATION

*To my father, mother and
my wife, Meslaha*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to my thesis advisor Professor Eleanor G. Huzar for her guidance, advise and suggestions; to my main adviser Professor Donald N. Lammers for his advice, help and encouragement throughout my graduate program; to Mrs. Susan Brown for her editing; to Barbie Mel and Shirley Goodwin for typing the various rough drafts and my final copy, and last, but not least, to my wife, Meslaha, who offered words of encouragement and inspiration when they were needed most.

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Akhnaton, The Reformer

AKHNATON, THE REFORMER

INTRODUCTION

The Nile Valley in Egypt was one of the most important regions in originating and spreading civilization in ancient times. The successive periods of Egyptian civilization include: Age of Pre-History, Historical Period, Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, and the Last Decadence periods. During these periods, there were intervals of weakness and strength in political, economic, social, and religious issues, under the rule of various pharaohs.

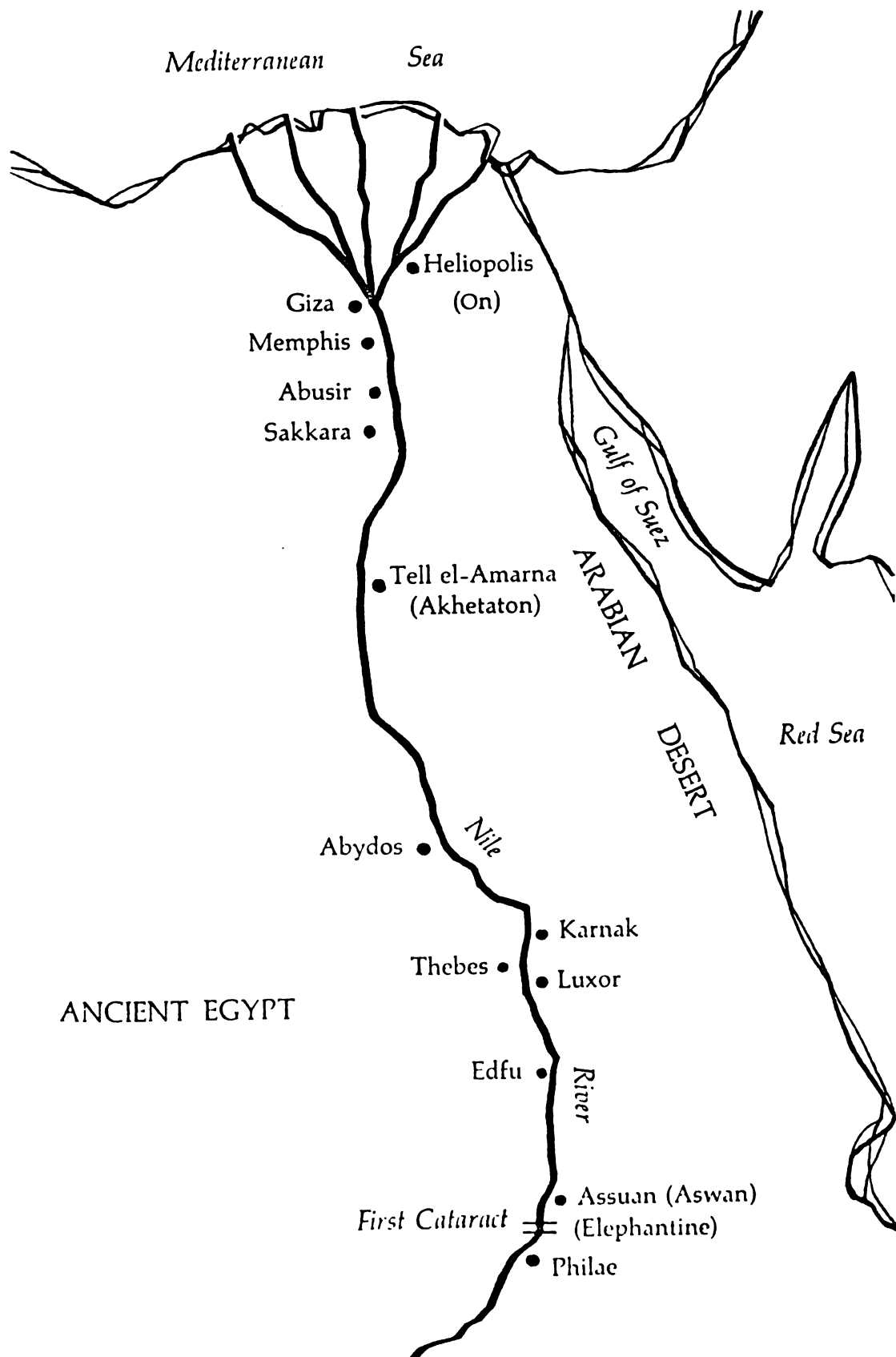
One of these pharaohs was Amenhotep IV (1367-1350), renamed Akhnaton according to the name of his god Aton. This pharaoh turned much of his attention to religious reformation; therefore most historians mention him as a reformer, rather than as a political person. Yet, some of our current literature and thought rejects the importance of Akhnaton's religious revolution. The point which should concern us in this reformation is not what Akhnaton failed to do, rather, what he tried to accomplish. The importance of Akhnaton's reform is that he attempted to sweep tradition

aside, discard the polytheistic myths and abolish the ancient rites.

In this thesis I have presented my analysis and interpretation of the evidence relating to the importance of Akhnaton's reformation. Particularly valuable in the preparation of my thesis were the works of earlier scholars such as Breasted, Brugsch, Baikie, Pendlebury, and Wilson. I also found useful articles written by modern historians in the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology and in the Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt. The figures and quotations used were selected as representative examples of a large body of evidence. A more complete reference list is found in the bibliography.

A thesis is an academic exercise done as professionally as possible. By writing this thesis, under the guidance of Professor Huzar, I have gained much: the opening of my mind to new and extensive data in the area of ancient Egyptian history, the methodology of thesis writing, and improvement in my English. I am at the beginning of a long road into the writing and the criticism of historical data and concepts.

--Yousif Ali Al-Thakafi



Map of Ancient Egypt

Source: F. G. Bratton, The First Heretic (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 9.

CHAPTER I

AKHNATON'S PREDECESSORS

What were the political and dynastic conditions prior to Akhnaton's accession to the throne? What were the beliefs about the relationship between the pharaohs and the gods? Did the religious beliefs actually help the pharaohs hold the throne? How did it happen that the priests became increasingly wealthy and powerful? Discussing these points in the following chapter, I hope to paint a clear picture of the decline of the Middle Kingdom and of the era prior to Akhnaton's time.

Two factors had precipitated the fall of the Middle Kingdom: internal weakness under Amenemhat III, and invasions of the Hyksos from the East. Thus began the second Intermediate Period (1800-1570 B.C.) during which local rulers controlled the South (Upper Egypt) and the monarchs of the Delta area became vassals of the invaders.

After prolonged struggle against the Hyksos by the Theban kings, Re-Sekenen and his son Kames, an outstanding leader, Ahmose I (1575-1550) the brother of Kames, drove the Hyksos into Palestine, and became the founder of the

Eighteenth Dynasty of Thebes. Ahmose I succeeded in unifying the North and the South. He built the foundation of a victorious Egyptian Empire. He also played a very important role in domestic affairs. However, it was not until his twenty-second year as ruler that the Egyptian monarch, victorious on every side, no longer apprehensive of attack, was able to turn his attention to domestic affairs, commerce, and restoration of those public edifices which had suffered either from natural decay or from hostile attack during the previous two or three centuries.¹

The Egyptian people exalted Ahmose I and made him the savior of their country. This is evident from the adage inscribed in the rock-cut tomb of Ahmose I at El-Kab.

As translated by historians, it was written:

For the name of a valiant man resides in that which he has done; it will not be obscured in this land forever.²

Ahmose I's consociation with Amon, the god especially worshipped in Thebes, was strong, proclaimed by Ahmose in order to assert his position as pharaoh through divine association. The gifts that Ahmose I gave for construction of monuments for Amon were great; this helped to make the

¹George Rawlinson, History of Ancient Egypt, Vol. II. (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1882), p. 214.

²Hans Goedicke, "Some Remarks Concerning the Inscription of Ahmose, Son of Ebana," Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt XI (1974), p. 31.

priesthood of Amon an important power in the land with great resources and authority.

Ahmose I was succeeded by Amenhotep I (1550-1538), his son by Queen Ahmes Nefertari. The name of Amenhotep means "Amon is content," indicating the influence of Amon upon the Pharaohs. Amenhotep I continued his father's work. He led two expeditions: one was to the Nubia and the other to Libya--the land of a people called Aamu-Kenak. The information we have of Amenhotep's deeds within Egypt are confined mostly to his service to the god Amon. His architect, Ineni, inscribed:

Amenhotep I; he made it [a Pylon on the south side of the great temple of Amon] as his monument for his father Amon, lord of Thebes, erecting for him a great gate of twenty cubits at the double facade of the temple, of fine limestone of Ayan, which the Son of Ra, Amenhotep, living forever, made for him.¹

Thutmose I (1528-1510) succeeded Amenhotep I. He was not the legal son but a half-brother of the late king. He marched through western Asia until he arrived at the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris. He also made campaigns among the Nubians and the Libyans. Although he did arrive at a distant area in Asia, his authority over the Asian territories was nominal if we compare it to the rule of the later King Thutmose III. Petty kings in Western Asia

¹James Baikie, A History of Egypt II (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1929), p. 20.

constantly fought one another disregarding Thutmose I and did not ask his help or compromise.

Thutmose I's relation to Amon was much like that of his ancestors' before him. His architect was Ineni, the one who worked for his father, and from Ineni's inscriptions I quote the following:

I inspected the erection of the great doorway named 'Amon-Mighty-in-Wealth,' its vast door was of Asiatic bronze, whereon was the Divine Shadow, inlaid with gold. I inspected the erection of two obelisks, and built the august boat of 120 cubits in length and 40 cubits in breadth, in order to transport these obelisks. They came in peace, safety and prosperity, and landed at Karnak--their track was laid with every pleasant wood.¹

Thutmose I not only took care for the god Amon but also beautified the temple of Osiris at Abydos. The inscription made by Ineni runs as follows:

Because I [Thutmose I] loved him so much more than all gods, in order that my name might abide and my monuments endure in the house of my father, Osiris, First of the Westerners, Lord of Abydos, forever and ever.²

After the death of Thutmose I, a confused political situation arose within the royal family. There was no son of pure royal family blood to inherit the throne, only one daughter--Princess Hatshepsut. There was, however, a son of another wife of Thutmose I, named Thutmose II (1510-1490),

¹Ibid., p. 34.

²Ibid., p. 37.

who could claim to be heir to the throne after he married his half-sister Hatshepsut. During his reign, there were two revolts in Kush and in Syria, but he was able to subjugate them early. He also continued to worship Amon in the manner of his forebearers.

Thutmose II failed to provide a male heir of full royal blood to succeed him, but a son by another wife, named Thutmose III, was able--with the assistance of the Priesthood of Amon--to succeed him under the guardianship of his stepmother Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut, however, took advantage of the youth of Thutmose III and attempted gradually to appropriate the rule for herself, disregarding Thutmose III. To execute her plan in spite of her knowledge that the priesthood had bestowed upon Thutmose III the right to the throne of his father, she called herself "The daughter of Amon."

The influence of Amon and his priests played an important role in Hatshepsut's gaining control of the throne through her assertion that she was the daughter of Amon. Two important achievements distinguished Hatshepsut's rule of 22 years: her peaceful commercial expedition to Punt, and the fine temple monuments constructed by her famous architect, Senenmut or Sen-Mut, at Deir el-Bahri. These monuments were constructed for the worship of Amon and the glorification of the "daughter of Amon."

When Thutmose III (1468-1436) became of age, he achieved his rightful throne. With the help of the priests of Amon, he immediately removed Hatshepsut's name from her monuments everywhere, inscribing his name instead. By doing this, Thutmose asserted to the people Amon's dissatisfaction with Hatshepsut, and he also demonstrated his own enmity toward her. In rejection of the peaceful policies of Hatshepsut, Thutmose III embarked on a vast program of imperial expansion. During his reign, the Egyptian Empire stretched from Libya on the west, Nubia, on the south, and Palestine and Syria on the northeast. Did Thutmose III plan to march upon these areas before his accession? If so, for what purpose? A proper answer to these questions is difficult with the available data, but we might assume that Thutmose III had felt that Hatshepsut's policies paid more attention to African politics than to Asian. Some countries such as the Mitannion Kingdom had started to make allies of tribes that were under Egyptian control in Asia in order to instigate revolts against Egypt. Such developments would bring disaster to the empire. Thus, Thutmose III took action at once and set out on his successful campaigns.

During a period of almost twenty years, the great Pharaoh had to carry on more than thirteen campaigns against foreign nations, in the course of which town after town had to be stormed, river after river to be crossed, country after country to be traversed in

long days' journeys, under the difficulties of a foreign climate and a hostile population.¹

Thutmose III's excellent plans brought him a victory both in the famous battle of Migiddo and in the occupation of Kadish, the strategic places of Thutmose's enemies. The Empire became very wide; however, there was a centralized administration, over a series of vassal states subject to control by Egyptian troops. Egyptian officials were sent everywhere and inspectors spread widely. Sons of the heads of conquered territories were sent to Egypt to study and consequently were influenced by the Pharaonic policies. Simultaneously, Egypt itself was influenced by Asia. New ideas and habits were spread, and the Egyptians adopted the worship of some Asian gods.

I will not go into the details of Thutmose III's relations with religion, as this is not the main purpose of this chapter, but I will glance at how Thutmose III continued in the path of previous pharaohs in respecting Amon and his priests and dedicating every good thing to him. Thutmose was distinguished also as a builder of temples for other gods of Egypt as well as Amon. A temple was built at Thebes and many excellent things from the South and the North--gold, silver, lapis lazuli, copper, bronze, lead,

¹Henry Brugsch, History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs I (2nd ed. London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1881), pp. 366-367.

and colors--were sent both to Amon's temple and also to temples of other gods, like the temple of Ptah at Thebes, the temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, and the Temple of the Nubian god, Kneph. Although Thutmose believed in and built temples to such other gods, the main and active god was Amon, who brought him victory. Evidence of this can be seen in the war songs and hymns that circulated among the people after Thutmose's successful campaigns, like this one in which Amon addresses Thutmose III:

I have come, causing thee to smite the princes
of Zahi,
I have hurled them beneath thy feet among their
highlands . . .
Thou hast trampled those who are in the district
of Punt,
I have caused them to see thy majesty as a
circling star . . .
Crete and Cyprus are in terror . . .
Those who are in the midst of the great green sea
hear thy roarings,
I have made them see thy majesty as an avenger
who rises upon the backs of his slain victim . . .
I have caused them to see thy majesty as a
fierce-eyed lion,
Thou makest them corpses in their valleys. . . .¹

One should not underestimate the great work that Thutmose III did, either the enlargement of the Egyptian Empire or the contributions to the great temples of Amon and other gods at Thebes, Heliopolis, and other places.

The great wealth and the supreme power of Thutmose contributed to the wealth and power of the priesthood of

¹James H. Breasted, Ancient Record of Egypt II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), pp. 264-265.



Head of Standing Statue of Thutmose III
(Cairo Museum)

Source: W. Stevenson Smith, The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt (London: Penguin Books, 1st ed. (1958), p. 96.

Amon. Because Thutmose's success was attributed to Amon, offerings of land and spoils were given to him. This power of the priesthood of Amon affected the next pharaohs and especially Akhnaton in his reformation.

When Thutmose III died, revolts, taking advantage of any change of government, began in Syria and Palestine against the Egyptian rulers. However, his son Amenhotep II (1436-1413) who took part in the rule of his father, marched into Syria at the head of his army, suppressing the revolting peoples. Amenhotep II was harsh in his treatment of captives from foreign countries. The inscriptions of a Memphis Stele show us some examples:

When his majesty returned in joy of heart to his father Amon, it was after he had slain with his own mace the seven princes who were in the region of Takhsi--one of the Syrian cities--they being hung upside down on the prow of his majesty's Falcon Boat. . . . Afterward [the king] hung six of these wretched men before the ramparts of Thebes alongside the hands [amputated from other slain enemies]. Then [the king] transported the other wretched one to Nubia and hanged him on the wall of Napata to demonstrate the victories of his majesty forever and ever. . . .¹

Amenhotep II believed that his god Amon gave him victory over his foes, and he tried to show his people that everything had been done under the direction of Amon. Temples were erected at Amada, in Nubia, and at Thebes, and

¹Anson F. Rainey, "Amenhotep II's Campaign to Takhsi," Journal of American Research Center in Egypt X (1973), p. 72.

great quantities of gold and silver were dedicated for decoration of the temples.

Amenhotep II was succeeded by a son by a subordinate wife, Thutmose IV (1413-1405), who followed in the footsteps of his father in maintaining the Empire acquired by his grandfather, Thutmose III. The political history of this Pharaoh was brief. From what we know, he sent one campaign to Asia and another to Nubia. But when the kingdom of the Mitanni made an alliance with the Egyptian Empire, to avoid oppression by the Hittites from Anatolia, the wars between Egypt and Western Asia ceased during the reign of Thutmose IV. Also, as a result of this alliance, Thutmose married the sister of the king of Mitanni. Thus, he brought foreign blood to the royal family and, again, new ideas, new habits, and customs were spread throughout Egypt.

The Pharaohs since the founding of the Eighteenth Dynasty all followed the same line in their religious faith in Amon. Now, in the reign of Thutmose IV, there are indications of certain different religious movements which influenced him. The priests of Heliopolis, who had been chafing against the power of Amon and had been striving to restore their own god, Ra--the ancient supreme deity before Amon--were chief among these. As for Thutmose IV's leaning towards the god Ra, several interpretations are possible. Perhaps he got to the throne with the help of Heliopolitan

priests¹ who were jealous of the power and riches which Amon and his priests had in Egypt. It is also possible that the ideas came to his mind before he became king. Thus, in an imaginative recreation:

When he was a young man he used to amuse himself upon the desert uplands of Memphis, going along the road there, shooting at a target with copper arrows, hunting wild animals, . . . and when the hour came for him to give rest to his companions he used to go to the region of Harmakhis--the area around the pyramids of Gizeh--. . . . And a dream of sleep fell upon him at the moment when the sun was at its zenith, and he found that the majesty of this god (Sun-God, the Sphinx) was speaking to him with his own mouth, as a father talks with his son. 'Behold me, look at me, my son Thutmose,' said the Sphinx. 'I am your father, the Sun-God, and I will give to you my kingdom on earth, . . . Yours shall be the land of its length and breadth, . . . my countenance is upon you, and my desire is toward you, . . . I am with you. I am your guide.' And when he had finished speaking, the prince awoke, and, understanding the words of this god, he kept silence in his heart.²

Possibly the ideas may have come to Thutmose through the influence of his foreign wife from Western Asia--a center of religious speculation. But this kind of departure was not a new thing in the history of the pharaohs. As I have mentioned, Hatshepsut names herself the daughter of Amon to proclaim his consent and support in attaining the throne. Thutmose IV, though he was not the oldest son of his father,

¹ E. A. Wallis Budge, Tut-Ankh-Amen (London: Martin Hopkinson and Co., Ltd., 1925), p. 19.

² Arthur Weigall, A Short History of Ancient Egypt (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1935), pp. 134-135.

embellished his dream to make himself the legitimate son,
chosen by the God of Heliopolis to rule Egypt.

CHAPTER II

AKHNATON'S PARENTS

Amenhotep III (1405-1367) was not a son of royal blood. Because of this, the priesthood of Amon plotted a story that Amenhotep III was born by the consent of Amon.¹ They wanted to return to Amon the power which had been lost during the days of Thutmose IV and the priesthood of Heliopolis, who tried to restore the worship of Ra, the old Egyptian god, in place of the worship of Amon and his predominant priesthood. The ascent of Amenhotep to the throne indicates the power still held by Amon and his priesthood.

Amenhotep--or as his people called him, Nap-Maat-Re--broke away from old Egyptian custom and married a girl of common blood named Tiye. Tiye was a daughter of Yuya and his wife Tuya. The tomb of the former was discovered by Davis, Maspero, and Weigall in February, 1905. The grandson of these two insignificant people, in a few years, altered the whole course of Egyptian history and brought into existence

¹This was inscribed on the wall of the temple of Amon at Luxor. Abdulhameed Zide, Egypt, the Eternal (Cairo: Dar El-Nahtata, Al Arabia, 1966), p. 583.

a new movement which was destined to become the subject of study and argument among historians and philosophers.

The origin of Tiy has been much debated. Rawlinson suggests that she was Arabian, or possibly Ethiopian. Breasted agrees with Maspero that she probably was a native Egyptian. Some historians avoid the argument altogether. Arthur Weigall writes:

Neither the names of the parents nor the place of birth are known; and the reader will presently find that it is not easy to say whether the child [Tiy] was an Egyptian or a foreigner.¹

Sir Gaston Maspero (1907) says,

Until we have new evidence, I shall consider Touiya, Tuiyou, and Tiyi as being natives of the country within which they lived and where their mummies have been found.²

There is a strong possibility that she was Egyptian for two reasons: first, as some archeologists like Baikie and Smith discovered, her parents had been buried within Egypt, therefore they may have been natives; second, Amenhotep III, as we will see, wanted to show his subjects that he married a commoner, and if he wanted to stress any significance to the Egyptian people that his wife was of common blood, he must have chosen a native. It is also possible that her

¹Arthur Weigall, The Life and Times of Akhnaton, 2nd ed. (London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 1934), pp. 20-21.

²James Baikie, A History of Egypt, Vol. II. (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1929), p. 178.

father was a Syrian hostage brought to Egypt during one of the conquests of Thutmose III or his successor Amenhotep II. Tiy did not show her approval of the worship of Amon, and her affections seem to have been with Aton, whose worship was much more akin to that of the dominant faiths of Syria.

According to Jones:

Her father was a priest of Min, the Egyptian equivalent of Pan, or Adonis, and perhaps not in sympathy with the corrupt priesthood of Amon-Re.¹

Therefore, it is possible to assume she was a foreigner from Syria. I cannot make a clear decision as to her origin, but I would opine that if she was a foreigner, it is possible the creed of Aton could be found to correlate with her personal background.

At any rate, whether Tiy was a native or a foreigner, she was a great personality, and she had a tremendous amount of influence over her husband, Amenhotep III. Amenhotep announced to his subjects his marriage to Tiy and inscribed a series of commemorative scarabs and distributed them throughout his empire letting everybody know that he had married a commoner. It might be concluded that Amenhotep was attempting to show his people that he was a simple and unassuming ruler able to deal with different classes even in the marriage situation.

¹M. E. Monckton Jones, Ancient Egypt from the Records (1st ed. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1924), p. 141.

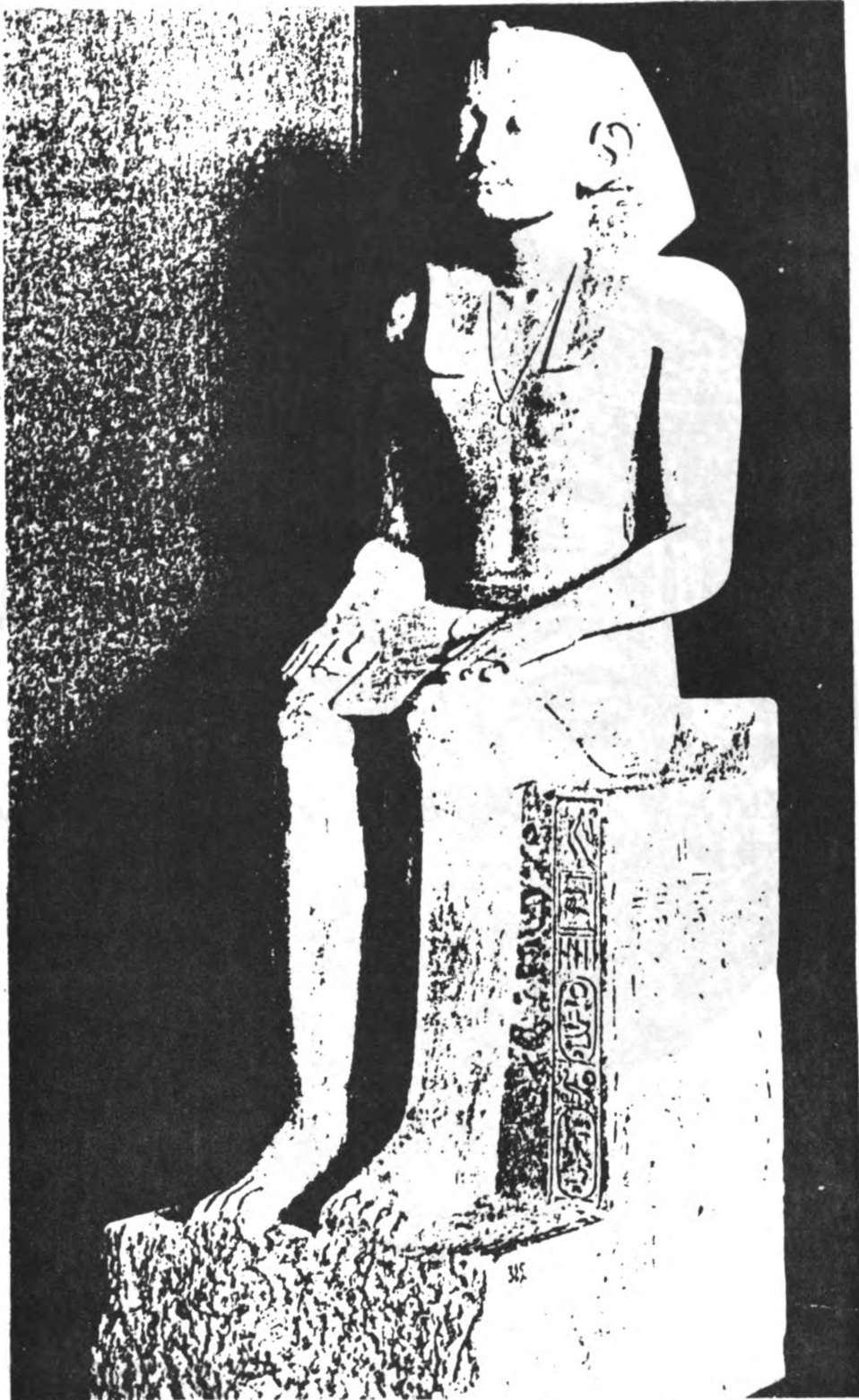
The commemorative scarabs were inscribed:

Live . . . king Amenhotep, who is given life, [and] the great king's wife Tiy (Tyy), who liveth. The name of her father is Yuya (Ywy), the name of her mother is Tuya (Twy). She is the wife of a mighty king whose southern boundary is as far as Karoy (K-r-y) (and) northern as far as Naharin (N-h-ry-n).¹

Tiy's greatness and influence can be seen through letters sent to her from minor kings and princes in Asia. These letters contain direct requests for nearness to the royal court through her influence upon her husband. Although he married other wives--Sitamen, his daughter by Tiy; Gilukhepa, daughter of the prince of Mittani; Shatarna, who brought with her many ladies-in-waiting; and Tadukhepa, a daughter of Dushratta of Mittani--they were mere names compared with Tiy's position in his palace.² Gradually, Tiy came to hold unique powers and began to make public appearances at the king's side. Royal decrees were made in the name of Amenhotep III and Tiy. Her strong personality among Amenhotep's wives encouraged her husband to execute his order of building for himself and his wife a sumptuous palace at Malkata on the western bank of the Nile near Thebes. East of the palace a beautiful lake was created.

¹James H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), p. 345.

²Abdulhameed Zide, Egypt the Eternal (Cairo: Dar El-Nahtata, Al Arabia, 1966), p. 585.



Seated Statue of Amenhotep III
(Cairo Museum)

Source: F. G. Bratton. The First Heretic (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 138.



Wooden Head of Queen Tiy
(Berlin Museum)

Source: W. Stevenson Smith. The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt. (1st ed. London: Penguin Books (1958), p. 117.

A scarab inscription records this venture of Amenhotep III.

His majesty commanded to make a lake for the great king's wife, in her city of Zerukha. Its length is 3,700 cubits; its width, 700 cubits. His majesty celebrated the feast of the opening of the lake in the third month of the first season, day 16, when his majesty sailed thereon in the royal barge, "Aten Gleams".¹

The sun god was known by different names: Atum, Re Harakhti, and Amon-Re; Aton was merely the word for the sun-as-sun, the solar disk. The name of the barge is evidence that Aton was a common word in the Egyptian vocabulary before the time of Akhnaton. It would seem that Aton was favored by Amenhotep's wife, Queen Tiye, for she did not show her approval of the worship of Amon, and the barge was named to humor her. No evidence exists that Amenhotep himself was an Aton worshipper, but he was aware of Aton. Amenhotep built the new palace far from the old one which adjoined the temple of Amon, which might represent a desire to retreat from the presence of the jealous priests of Amon. Although he primarily worshipped Amon, he did not make any recorded objections to Aton. It was known that Aton was an important god; only a limited number of people had heard of him before the middle of the Eighteenth Dynasty; but, in the near future, Aton was to bring about a theological revolution.

¹Abdulhameed Zide, op. cit., p. 584.

The appearance and the circulation of the worship of Aton stemmed from the time of Thutmose IV. During Amenhotep III's reign the idea of the worship of Aton spread, and by the assistance of the women of Mittani at the royal court, the priesthood of Heliopolis, and the most dynamic person in the palace--Queen Tiy--a new cult of Aton took form in Thebes. From the study by Bille-De Mot, I quote:

His name [Aton] appeared in all the domains, a company of the royal guard was named after him; the golden barge in which the king and queen floated on the recently dug lake on the left bank was called Splendour of Aten. A final daughter, born late in the life of the royal couple, was named Bakitaten, Aten's Slave.¹

Almost half a century after the conquests of Thutmose III, during the reign of Amenhotep III, shared with his wife Tiy, Egypt was able to indulge herself in imperial magnificence. Though some of the neighboring kings did not come under the direct control of Egypt, they came to be allies with Egypt; they felt the Egyptian power and, consequently, they tried to have her friendship rather than her hostility. Boundaries were opened for trade. Movements of people became more widespread. Smith gives us a picture of this internationalism:

From Nubia and the Sudan, Sinsi, Palestine and all of Syria, Riches had been pouring into her [Egypt's] coffers for nearly a century. Merchants and couriers

¹Bille-De Mot, The Age of Akhnaton (London: Evelyn, Adams and Mackay, LTD., 1966), p. 39.

laden with wealth traveled between the Nile and the Euphrates or Orontes with a degree of safety that has perhaps not been equaled since.¹

Kings from these lands sent letters to the pharaoh urging him to send them very great quantities of gold. This letter which had been sent by the king of Mittani is an example:

When I wrote to my brother [Amenhotep III] I said, 'Let my brother make our friendship ten times greater than with my father,' and I asked of my brother a great deal of gold saying, 'More than to my father let my brother give and send me . . . so let my brother send me gold in very great quantities, without measure . . . for in my brother's land gold is as common as dust.'²

What was the influence of the wealth of Egypt upon Amenhotep III? Did he use this wealth in strengthening his military force and making new conquests as his predecessors had done, or did he use it all for his personal life, or for Amon and his priesthood? Did the power and the wealth of Egypt influence his son, Akhnaton and his reformation? Answers to these questions will be attempted in the following pages.

The character which historians give to Amenhotep III differs from that of his ancestors. Brugsch equates Amenhotep III's reign with that of his grandfather

¹Homer W. Smith, Man and His Gods (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956), p. 54.

²Abdulaziz Salah, Ancient Near East: Egypt and Iraq (Cairo: Al-mactaba Al-Ameria, First Division, 1967), p. 218.

Thutmose III's,¹ while Rawlinson believes the opposite:

Amenhotep did not extend the power of Egypt either in the north or in the south. There are indications that he maintained in the north the dominion which had descended to him from Thutmose III, and abundant proof that he engaged personally in military operations in the south; but we cannot ascribe to him any extension of the Egyptian territory even in this quarter.²

There is no evidence that Amenhotep engaged in any military operation. Abdulaziz Salah emphasizes that the military operations of Amenhotep III either in the North or in the South were mere inspectional campaigns.³ As long as there is no archaeological evidence or clear inscriptions to indicate new conquests in the days of Amenhotep III, it is unfair to refer to him as a conqueror equal to his grandfather Thutmose III. Amenhotep's deeds indicate that he was mainly interested in hunting, building, and in surrounding himself with grandness. He enjoyed the wealth of Egypt and spent lavishly on his own pleasures. The plurality of wives in his court is an indication of his possible susceptibility to female influence. This reminds me of Louis XIV of France (1643-1715) and Ismail Pasha of Turkey (1879-1893). Nevertheless, tremendous building projects

¹Henry Brugsch, History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs I (2nd ed. London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1881), p. 469.

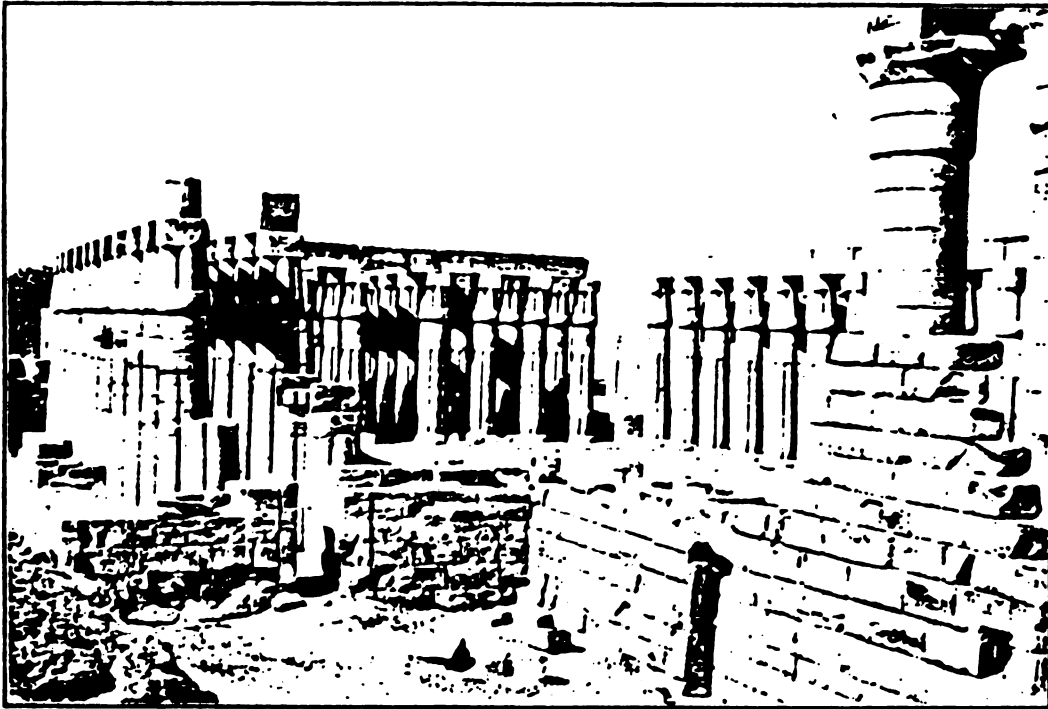
²George Rawlinson, History of Ancient Egypt, II (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1882), p. 271.

³Abdulaziz Salah, Ancient Near East: Egypt and Iraq (Cairo: Al-mactaba Al-Ameria, First Division, 1967), p. 217.

give Amenhotep III a place among the most distinguished of the Egyptian pharaohs. In addition to the palace of Malkata and the lake east of it, temples and statues were erected everywhere. At Thebes, the temple of Amon which was built in honor of Amenhotep's divine birth, was one of the most magnificent in all Egypt. To the north of this temple, Amenhotep III erected a new temple of Amon and to the south he built another to the divine mother Mut. Also, temples of Amon and Sedeing were built at Soleb in Nubia. Buildings for the priesthood were constructed close to the temple at Luxor. Inscriptions tell us how the god Amon appreciated all of these establishments and favored Amenhotep and gave him power and victory.

My son, of my body, my beloved, Nibmare,
 My living image, whom my limbs created,
 When I turn my face to the south,
 I work a wonder for thee,
 I cause the chiefs of Kush, the wretched,
 to turn to thee,
 Bearing all their tribute upon their backs.
 When I turn my face to the north,
 I work a wonder for thee,
 I cause the countries of the ends of Asia
 to come to thee,
 Bearing all their tribute upon their backs.
 When I turn my face to the west,
 I work a wonder for thee;
 When I turn my face to the Orient,
 I work a wonder for thee;
 I cause to come to thee the countries of Punt,
 Bearing all the pleasant sweet woods of
 their countries.¹

¹Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt, pp. 361-62.



Luxor, Forecourt of Amenhotep III

Source: James Baikie. Century of Excavation in the Land of the Pharaohs (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1934), p. 124.

Egypt lost its power and wealth gradually. Amenhotep III became accustomed to ease and luxury and dedicated himself to his personal enjoyments forsaking the habit and tradition of his predecessors of going from time to time to the borders of Egypt to seek out and assure the neighbors and simultaneously to suppress and limit revolutionary desires against Egypt. International relations between the ancient Near East kingdoms were undergoing rapid changes during the reign of Amenhotep III. Egypt under her supine pharaoh was inert while Hittites started picking a quarrel with the frontiers of Syria and the Mitanni. The Mitanni were contented with their alliance with the Egyptian pharaoh. Assyria, meantime, was also preparing for the amazing race she was to run. Therefore, letters requesting help and letters of flattery were sent to Egypt from the kings of adjacent countries. The Mitanni's king sent a letter to his ally Amenhotep III demanding his support against the Hittites when they invaded Mitanni. The answer of Amenhotep was negative, for the Hittite king was his ally. In the middle and to the east of Syria, Amorite chieftains-- Ribaddi and Abdashirta and his son Aziru--invaded each other's properties, and all sent letters to Amenhotep III requesting his assistance; but, simultaneously, they were under the encouragement of the Hittites. The Hittite king used this advantage to make puppet chieftains and evil

geniuses of Egypt's Asiatic Empire without openly showing his hostility to his ally, the pharaoh. Amenhotep, whose desire was for peace in his time and for the enjoyment of life, did not take the matter seriously. He might have thought that he would not trouble his royal magnificence with the petty affairs of a few border provinces. He neglected to note that the Hittite kingdom, as a great growing power, was behind every movement in the Asiatic provinces leading to uprisings against the Egyptian Empire.

It is worth focusing here on the main points of this chapter and tracing the basic developments which took place during Amenhotep III's reign. With the exception of his inspection and oppression mission to Nubia, there was almost nothing on the military side deserving mention. However, one should not underestimate his interest and support of the advancement of arts and construction. This interest is apparent through the huge luxurious temples for his god Amon at Karnak, his palace at Thebes, and the great lake of Queen Tiy.

Amenhotep III's ancestors' conquests and the peaceful era that prevailed in Egypt during his reign had a great impact on the social arena. Due to his cultural interests, large numbers of foreigners from Asia settled in Egypt and affected the social and racial structure of Egyptian society. This new social fabric gave impact to the growth of new

religious ideas represented in a return to the worship of the old Egyptian god, Ra, in the form of the sun. Hymns to Ra inscribed by the twins Suti and Hor, Amenhotep III's architects, were similar in literary content to the ones written during Akhnaton's era. This could be taken to indicate that the concept of Aton existed prior to Akhnaton. The controversy over the appearance of the name Aton and its spread during Amenhotep III's era is still an unsettled issue among historians. However, if it is true that Amenhotep did not show resistance to the spread of Aton's name side-by-side with Amon's, then it is probable that he could have advocated the new religion had he not been in fear of Amon and his priesthood. It would be realistic to assume that the call to worship Aton was supported by Tiye, and the priesthood of Heliopolis.

Queen Tiye is one of the characters that had a tremendous influence over Amenhotep III (her husband). Her influence extended far beyond running the daily affairs of the government. Amenhotep's polygamy, his interest in hunting, and his search for personal satisfaction required her to play an important role in the political life. As a consequence, her influence upon her son and his beliefs cannot be disregarded.

CHAPTER III

DURATION OF AKHNATON'S REIGN AND HIS EARLY YEARS

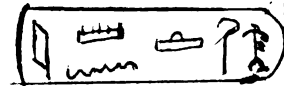
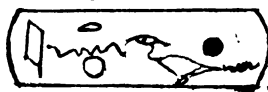
After Tiy had grown to womanhood, she bore several daughters and a son named Thutmose to Amenhotep III. This son died when he was very young. After twenty years of the reign of Amenhotep III (approximately 1400 B.C.),¹ she bore the future king of the Egyptian Empire. His parents named him Amenhotep, the fourth pharaoh in the Eighteenth Dynasty that was known by this name. Later he was known by the name of Akhnaton.

It is very difficult for us to know the correct name and date of Akhnaton because of the many years which separate his time and ours, during which much data has been lost. But in the nineteenth century, the archaeologists who specialized in ancient Egyptian studies translated the hieroglyphic inscriptions and tried to insure the correctness of the historical data available.

¹Arthur Weigall, The Life and Times of Akhnaton (2nd ed. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 1934), p. 36.

His actual name Amenhotep was changed to the name of Akhnaton, in respect for the god Aton. The name means "the spirit-soul of Aton." The name has been spelled by historians in different ways, such as Akhnaton, Akhnaten, Ikhnaton, Akhenat and so on. In the hieroglyphic inscriptions, the name Amenhotep was given as:

and the name Akhnaton as:



As for the duration of his reign, historians mention different dates; for instance, Hayes says Akhnaton came to the throne of Egypt between 1370-1353 B.C.,¹ but Starr states that Akhnaton was pharaoh between 1367-1350 B.C.² According to Jones, he reigned between 1358-1350 B.C.³ Abdulaziz Salah gives the same date as Starr.⁴ But according to observations made on Akhnaton's mummy by some anatomists, Akhnaton was less than 25 years of age at the time of his death.⁵ Thus, it seems probable that the

¹William C. Hayes, The Scepter of Egypt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 280.

²Chester G. Starr, A History of the Ancient World (2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 92.

³M. E. Monckton Jones, Ancient Egypt from the Records (1st ed. London: Methuen and Co., LTD, 1924), p. 146.

⁴Abdulaziz Salah, Ancient Near East: Egypt and Iraq (Cairo: Almactaba Al-Ameria, First Division, 1967), p. 148.

⁵R. G. Harrison, "Pharaonic Remains Purported to Be Akhenaten," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology V, 52 (1966), p. 104.

duration of Akhnaton's reign extended from 1367-1350 B.C. However, I would dispute the anatomists contention that Akhnaton was less than 25 years of age at his death. This seems unlikely in view of the length of his reign (17 years) and the tremendous reformation he undertook during that time.

Here another issue regarding a possible co-regency between Akhnaton and his father should be discussed. Most historians corroborate the idea of joint rule while others hold to the opposing idea. Aldred supports the idea of the co-regency, depending on the inscriptions which mention the celebration of three Jubilees to Aton III.¹ Since worship of Aton developed under Akhnaton rather than under his father, who worshipped Amon, yet the Jubilees of his father (Amenhotep III) coincided with Jubilees for god Aton, the existence of a co-regency seems probable. Aldred also studied the work of Ramose, the vizier of Amenhotep III, through the inscriptions and found it a good indication of the co-regency. Ramose is shown in some inscriptions giving a bouquet to Amenhotep IV (Akhnaton) which indicates his (Ramose) appointment to office. Other inscriptions show Ramose serving Amenhotep III as his vizier. During the first Jubilee in the 30th year of Amenhotep III, Ramose donated four jars of ale to his Lord. Yet after this

¹C. Aldred, "The Beginning of the El-Amarna Period," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology V, 45 (1959), pp. 30-31.

year Ramose fails to appear in any reliefs. Death, supposedly overtook him.¹ Ramose's appointment under Amenhotep IV and his serving under Amenhotep III, coupled with not appearing in reliefs after the first Jubilee, point to a co-regency between Amenhotep III and Akhnaton.

Fairman concludes from the inscriptions on three cartouches with the name of Amenhotep III, and on another cartouche in front of it on the same stone block with the name of Amenhotep IV, that both kings were alive and reigning together. This block and other documents which have survived, inscribed with the names of both kings, give Fairman evidence of the co-regency. Fairman writes:

The remarkable feature of this block is, of course, the association of Amenophis III [Amenhotep III] and Amenophis IV [Amenhotep IV], a form of association that is without exact parallel in any of the other documents of the Amarna period. In the first place, it will be noted that the royal name is that used before the change in name and the block cannot therefore be dated much later than year 5 of Amenophis IV/Akhenatoen [Akhnaton]. In the second place it is quite extraordinary to find the names of both kings with that of young king, Amenophis IV (Amenhotep IV), preceding that of his father.²

Pendlebury supports the same idea of the joint rule, but he is not sure of the exact length of it. One of his

¹Aldred, "Two Theban Notables During the Later Reign of Amenophis III," Journal of Near Eastern Studies 18 (1959), pp. 116-120.

²H. W. Fairman, "A Block of Amenophis IV (Amenhotep IV) From Athribis," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology V, 46 (1960), p. 81.

statements follows:

Unfortunately, in the present case we are not certain of the exact length of the co-regency of the two Amenhoteps, but we have an indication. In the ninth year of the new king's reign an alteration was made in the titulary of the god Aton. A number of objects have come to light bearing this later name of the god in conjunction with the name of Amenhotep III, and in one case in conjunction with his portrait as an old man. This points to a co-regency of at least eight years.¹

Another interesting piece of evidence supporting the co-regency was discovered by Pendlebury in the Tomb of Huya, the chief steward of the household of the queen Tiye. The reliefs of the tomb deal with an important celebration of some sort and a visit paid to Akhnaton in Tel El-Amarna by the Queen Tiye. These are dated to the year 12. In part of the tomb Queen Tiye's portrait is shown alone, and in another part she is shown with her husband, Amenhotep III, as though he was still alive. Pendlebury believes that the appearance of these two pictures together is a good evidence of the co-regency.²

Giles, after he considered the views of those opposing the idea of the co-regency and those who support it, went to the supporting side: ". . . I shall take the co-regency as a matter of fact, not theory. . . ."³

¹J. D. S. Pendlebury, Tel El-Amarna (London: Lovat Dickson and Thompson, Ltd., 1935), p. 11.

²Ibid., pp. 11-12.

³F. J. Giles, Akhnaton (London: Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 1970), p. 84.

Redford wrote extensively in his book History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt, trying to understand, analyze, and discuss whether or not the co-regency existed. He believed that the appearance of the names of the two kings together cannot be taken as an evidence of joint rule. They might have appeared together because the death of Amenhotep III brought a temporary halt to the nearly completed decoration of the temples, but the work was continued by his architects as if he were still alive, or because Akhnaton might have ordered finishing the work as a memorial to his father.¹ In another statement he proposes that Amenhotep III abdicated his functions in favor of his son.²

Gardiner, basing his argument on the Tel El-Amarna letters, states that Akhnaton succeeded only at the death of his father, when he was a mere youth. For the appearance of the names of the two kings together, Gardiner argued:

I am convinced that the juxtaposition of the names of Amenhotep III and of Akhenaten, wherever it occurs, was due merely to filial piety, probably coupled with the fact that a reference to Maat, the "Truth" so much

¹D. B. Redford, History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 103-105.

²Redford, "Some Observations on Amarna Chronology," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology V, 45 (1959), p. 35.

in the forefront of Akhenaten's creed, forms a part of Amenhotep III's prenomen.¹

Smith does not accept the co-regency of 11 or 12 years, but he seems to approve the existence of the co-regency for a short period of two or three years:

. . . and that the young king acceded to the throne upon the death of his father at the end of the co-regency beginning in the 36th or 37th years, seems to be backed by the other Amarna foreign correspondence.²

In summary of these different theories: the ideas of Aldred, Fairman and Pendlebury concerning the appearance of the names and portraits of Amenhotep III and Akhnaton together in reliefs, on different occasions, support a co-regency between the two kings. Redford's idea that Amenhotep III retired and abdicated in favor of his son is not positive for lack of evidence. It is possible, but not likely, that Amenhotep III wished to make his son more practical in government work, and so abdicated in favor of him. Gardiner's argument against co-regency depends on the letters which were sent by the Hittite king, Suppilulliuma, and the Mitanni king, Tushratta, to Akhnaton and his mother Queen Tiy after the death of Amenhotep III. These letters

¹Sir Alan Gardiner, "The So-called Tomb of Queen Tiy," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology V, 43 (1957), p. 14.

²Sir W. Stevenson Smith, The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt (1st ed. London: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 184-185.

do not contain convincing proof because they do not indicate whether there was a co-regency or not. Therefore, I agree with Giles when he says:

The Suppilulliuma letter constitutes no argument either for or against the co-regency, . . . the same group of letters certainly show that the monarchs of the time only began bringing their business to Ikhnaton after Amenhotep III had died.¹

Also, Gardiner's theory of the juxtaposition of the names of the two kings as due to filial piety or correlated to Maat is insufficient to refute the existence of the co-regency. Even if what Gardiner believes is true, the filial piety itself does not prove whether or not there was a co-regency.

Finally, because there is no precise evidence to support the existence or the nonexistence of the co-regency, although most arguments are in favor of its existence, and because the joint rule is not alien to Near Eastern countries either in ancient or in modern times, in my estimation, the co-regency between the two kings is probable. One hopes that in the future we will gain more evidence to clarify this question of co-regency.

Although there is not adequate information regarding Akhnaton's childhood, three important elements, relevant to the early years of Akhnaton should be studied: the

¹Giles, op. cit., p. 61.

tutelage of his mother, his marriage with Nefertete, and the early work of Akhnaton after his ascension to the throne.

The important and the effective personality influencing Akhnaton during his childhood and youth was his mother, the Queen Tiy. When her husband was alive, she worshipped the god of Heliopolis and not the god of Thebes, possibly due to her ancestry. Later, she gave her sympathy to her son's belief and joined the royal family in worshipping the one god Aton.¹ As for her influence on her son, Brugsch says:

In the house of his mother Thi [Tiy], daughter of a foreigner, beloved by his father, hated by the priests, the young prince had willingly received the teaching about the one God of Light; and what the mouth of his mother had earnestly impressed upon his childish mind in tender youth became a firm faith when he arrived at man's estate.²

Tiy's position, as queen-mother and a guardian of her son, was emphasized in most of the inscriptions of the reign of Akhnaton. After her husband (Amenhotep III) slipped into premature senility and during the probable co-regency, she was the real head of the government. Diplomatic letters to or from Asiatic kings were sent

¹Abdul Monaam, Akhnaton. (Cairo: Al-Maktaba Al-Thakafia, 1961), p. 37.

²Henry Brugsch, History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs I (2nd ed. London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1881), p. 492.

under her name. As an example, a letter from Dushrata of Mitanni has survived, dating from the last years of Amenhotep III's reign; it is addressed, not to the old king or to the young co-regent, but to the queen Tiy. This letter carried greetings to Tiy, to her son, and his bride, Tadukhepa. After the death of Amenhotep III, Tiy continued her grasp upon the government, and her son came under her trusteeship. Some letters were sent from the allies of Egypt to Tiy and to her son reminding them of the friendship of the allies with the late king and trying to strengthen relations with the new heir.¹

Because young marriages were frequent in Egypt, Akhnaton, like his father, married a girl when he was about twelve years old. Her name was Nefertete which means "the beautiful one who came." Nefertete's origin is uncertain. Bille-De Mot believes that she was a foreigner from an Asiatic country, and identifies her with the daughter of Tushratta, Tadukhepa, to whom Amenhotep III was married.² Bratton and Smith believe that she was a native, perhaps a half-sister of Akhnaton. But in considering two things, I believe that she probably was not a foreigner identified

¹James Baikie, A History of Egypt II (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1929), p. 237.

²E. Bille-De Mot, The Age of Akhnaton (London: Evelyn, Adams and Mackay, Ltd., 1966), p. 40.

with Tadukhepa, but rather a native. First, there is a letter sent by Tushratta to Amenhotep III distinctly referring to Tadukhepa as Amenhotep III's wife, not Akhnaton's; "with Tadukhepa, my daughter, the wife, whom thou lovest, may it be well."¹ Secondly, the bust of Nefertete (this was found at Amarna and is now in the Berlin Museum), shows in the style of the work, the shape of the crown, and in Nefertete's features, the portrait of a native.²

Nefertete's life with Akhnaton was much like the life of Tiye with Akhnaton's father. After Akhnaton, she was the most interesting figure of the reign, and her influence upon her husband was remarkable. She shared with her husband all the glories of the empire. Her portraits generally appear with her husband's, and her name is frequently inscribed side by side with her husband's name. To show how much Akhnaton loved his wife, Queen Nefertete, he swore an oath by his father:

Sweet love fills my heart for the Queen, . . .
Grant a great age to the Queen Nofri-Thi [Nefertete]
in long years; may she keep the hand of Pharaoh. . . .
What I swear is true avowal of that which my heart
says to me.³

¹Baikie, op. cit., p. 242.

²Smith, op. cit., p. 205.

³Brugsch, op. cit., p. 504.



Queen Nefertete
(Painted Limestone)

Source: Immanuel Velikovsky, Oedipus and Akhnaton
(New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960),
p. 90.

A prayer to Akhnaton and his wife also indicates the great love for Nefertete:

For the great king's wife, his beloved, abounding in her beauty; her who sends the Aton to rest with a sweet voice, and with her two beautiful hands, bearing two sistrums, the Mistress of the Two Lands, Nefernefruation-Nefertete, living forever and ever. May she be by the side of Wanre [Akhnaton] forever and ever as the heavens abide under that which is in them.¹

In Tel El-Amarna, the young pharaoh and his wife lived a quiet life. She devoted herself to her husband and to the religious reform to which he dedicated his life. She bore him six daughters and appears to have been her husband's constant companion. Reliefs depict Nefertete playing with her husband and her daughters. In other portraits, she is sitting on her husband's knee, giving him a kiss, and sometimes riding her horsed chariot side by side with her husband in visits to the temple of Aton.² She was faithful to her husband's religious beliefs, and hers was the first supporting hand in spreading the worship of Aton. She named her palace, in the northern end of Tel El-Amarna, The House of Aton. Her name was changed to Nefer-Nefru-Aton which means "Beautiful is the beauty of Aton."³

¹James H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt V, II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), p. 410.

²Monaam, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

³Jaroslav Cerny, Ancient Egyptian Religion (1st ed. London: William Brendon and Son, Ltd., 1972), p. 36.

But because Nefertete gave birth to seven daughters and did not provide Akhnaton with a son heir, Akhnaton married two of his daughters, one after another, and Nefertete was exiled to another palace. This probably contributed to the collapse of his religion.

When Akhnaton ascended the throne, his main preoccupation was with religion. In the beginning, he showed his respect, through worship, to different gods, in particular the god Re-Harakhti. As an example, when Akhnaton came to the throne as a youth he fixed his titulary in the following manner:

Mighty Bull, Lofty of Plumes; Favourite of the
Two Goddesses, Great in Kingship in Karnak;
Golden Hawk, Wearer of Diadems in the Southern
Heliopolis; King of Upper and Lower Egypt,
Beautiful-is-the-Being-of-Ra, the Only-One-of Ra;
Son of the Sun, Peace of Amon [Amenhophis],
Divine Ruler of Thebes; Great in Duration,
Living for Ever and Ever, Beloved of Amon-Ra,
Lord of Heaven.¹

But it was just a short time later that we find the surprising title: "High Priest of Ra-Horakhti, rejoicing in the horizon in his name, "Heat-which-is-in-Aton."² Akhnaton, gradually, transformed and enhanced the obscure solar cult of Aton until he eventually came to believe that Aton was

¹Arthur Weigall, The Life and Times of Akhnaton (2nd ed. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 1934), p. 50.

²Ibid.

the only one to be worshipped. The development and nature of Aton will be described in the next chapter, but a question which I would like to discuss is: What were the reasons which motivated Akhnaton to make a religious revolution against Amon and his priesthood?

Abdul Monaam leans to the belief that Akhnaton was educated by the priesthood of Heliopolis in his mother's house. They (the priesthood) taught him the nature of Ra and his supremacy in the past time and the maltreatment which people suffered under the priesthood of Amon.¹ Supportive ideas to Monaam's belief are given by Smith, Seele and Steindorff. Steindorff and Seele write, "It appears quite possible that the education of Amenhotep IV was considerably influenced by the priesthood of Heliopolis."² Giles points out that the motivation came to Akhnaton from the East--the Asian countries. Giles idea depends on the existence of great numbers of the Asian people in Egypt. Those people included dreamers, philosophers and poets. They impregnated Akhnaton's mind with ideas of philosophies and mysteries which he applied to his religion.³ Ward argues that the

¹Monaam, op. cit., p. 71.

²George Steindorff and Seele, When Egypt Ruled the East 2nd ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 201.

³Giles, op. cit., p. 20.

power of the deity, Amon, kindled a desire on Akhnaton's part to free the throne from a supposed stranglehold of the Amon priesthood.¹ Weigall believes that the young pharaoh was influenced by his mother and her circle during his younger years, but: "He was himself the leader and instigator of the movement from the fourth year of the reign onwards. . . ."²

It seems that Akhnaton, as a young boy, might not have realized which of the two religions was better morally and theologically for him; the worship of Amon, the main religion in Thebes in those days, or the worship of the sun-disk, predominant in the city of Heliopolis. But when he became old enough, he thought and looked carefully to the type of worship of the sun the ancient Egyptians employed. He might have compared that worship with the present religion of his day, the worship of Amon whose priesthood lived in wealth and luxury. He thought, possibly then, that a return to the old Egyptian beliefs in the form of a sun-disk by the name of Aton would be better and, consequently, might stop the domination of Amon and his priesthood.

As for Akhnaton's political work, in his early years, Egypt foolishly lost one of her allies after another. As I have mentioned, his main preoccupation was with religion.

¹William A. Ward, The Spirit of Ancient Egypt (1st ed. Beirut: Khayats, 1965), p. 70.

²Arthur Weigall, A Short History of Ancient Egypt (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1935), p. 150.

In the words of Breasted, "the philosophizing theology of the priests was of more importance to him than all the provinces of Asia."¹ On his accession, affairs in the Asiatic countries were in very bad shape. A series of letters, now famous as the "Tel El-Amarna Letters" inscribed in cuneiform characters, gives many details about the slow disintegration of the empire in Asia as a result of the new forces in that area. At the same time the letters show that Akhnaton did not wish affairs of those countries to be brought to his attention.²

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the Hittites were behind most movements in the Asiatic provinces leading to uprisings against the Egyptian empire. In the days of Akhnaton the Hittites took advantage of his pacific policy and marched on Egyptian provinces in Syria.³ Another foreign danger came from the nomadic bands, the Habiru, in southern Palestine.⁴ The answer of Akhnaton to all the letters which were sent urging action was a negative one. He dedicated himself to his religious beliefs and forgot that everything that is taken by force must be taken back by force.

¹James H. Breasted, A History of Egypt (2nd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 356.

²Salah, op. cit., p. 220.

³Ibid.

⁴Giles, op. cit., p. 27.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS REFORM

The Background of Egyptian Religion

Egyptian civilization has spanned thousands of years under the rule of different dynasties, during which many political, social, economic and religious changes have occurred. Thus, the roots of the Egyptian religion were as remote to Akhnaton as he is to us. The ancient Egyptians' religion changed and developed along with the political system.

The ancient Egyptians looked to the forces of nature as the most powerful influences in the course of their lives; therefore, they honored and worshiped these forces which they hoped would protect and keep them safe. The people worshiped the sun because the sun gave them heat and light, the earth because it produced the plants, and the cattle because they plowed the ground. The Nile River was an important factor in the life of all Egyptians¹; in fact,

¹Abdulaziz Salah, Ancient Near East: Egypt and Iraq (Cairo: Al-mactaba Al-Ameria, First Division, 1967), p. 297.

they considered it the artery of their life. Many of these natural forces were represented as gods in the form of animals. Among those worshiped were the jackel-headed god, Anubis; the ibis god, Thoth, the cat goddess, Bast, the cobra-headed god, Edgo, and many others.¹ Why did these dieties appear in the form of animals? To help answer this question, we must consider the environment and the written language. The great use of pictures of animals in the hieroglyphic script indicates that those animals existed locally. Therefore, it is possible that the ancient Egyptians, by portraying their gods in the form of the local animals, desired to form a strong relationship between the gods and the environment in which they lived. It is possible also, that each region--wanting to distinguish its local god from others--chose a sign for its god which the people believed would represent the real work of the animal symbolized. For instance, the god Ra was represented in the form of an animal body with the head of a falcon, and the falcon is distinguished from other birds by the height of its flight and the sharpness of its sight.

In ancient Egypt there was a multiplicity of gods reflecting the multiplicity of the districts. Family gods were among the earliest gods in Egypt, even before it came to be known by the names of "Upper and Lower Egypt."

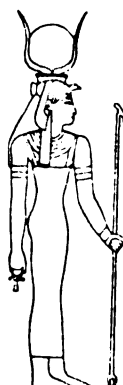
¹Ibid., pp. 297-298.



SĒTH



HORUS



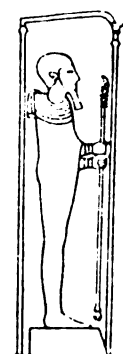
ISIS



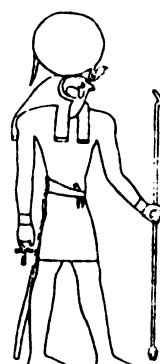
OSIRIS



MĪN



PTAH



RĒ'-HARAKHTI



AMEN-RĒ'



BAST



CHNUM



MA'Ē



THOTH

Some of the Principal Egyptian Deities

Source: Sir Alan Gardiner, Egypt of the Pharaohs (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961).

When small regions unified to form a state, the god of the ruling family became the state god; however, other gods still existed. I will not review any of the gods, except the gods Amon and Ra as they are closely connected with Akhnaton's religious reform.

Ra, the sun-god, had been worshiped in Egypt since the dawn of history. He was symbolized as the sun-disk (the brightest body of the celestial bodies), and at times he was depicted in human form with a falcon head.¹

Ra's powers changed in the process of time. He became a very important god from the fourth dynasty onward. He was sanctified and worshiped in most of the areas in ancient Egypt where it was believed that he was the creator of every thing, including gods and men. He daily sailed in his boat from the Eastern horizon to the Western horizon, and was called Ra-Horakhti in the morning and Atum in the evening.² The rise of Ra from the East in the morning and his evening descent in the West every day symbolized the Egyptian belief in life after death.³ Because of the importance of Ra, his

¹James H. Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. 9.

²E. A. Wallis Budge, The Mummy: Chapters on Egyptian Funeral Archaeology. 2nd ed. New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1964, p. 270.

³This belief can also be observed in the construction of the great pyramids and in placing furniture in them, for use by the dead in the life after death.

name was incorporated with the name of the pharaohs; such as: Snef-Ra, Khaf-Ra, Ne-user-Ra, Saru-Ra, and so on¹; Sometimes the pharaoh became Ra himself or the son of Ra. The pharaoh was regarded as a direct link to god and the agent of the god. To strengthen this position a more direct link was often created. An old Egyptian legend tells us that the wife of one of the priests of Ra conceived by Ra the first three pharaohs of the fifth dynasty. "She is the wife of User-Re, priest of Re of Sakhabu, but her three children are in truth the sons of Re, his father."² Successive pharaohs of Egypt were Ra's direct descendents, and Ra was described as the first supporting hand of the pharaoh.

He settles for him Upper Egypt, he settles for him Lower Egypt; he hacks up for him the strongholds of Asia, he quells for him all the people, who were fashioned under his fingers.³

Also, the priesthood of Ra of Heliopolis held an important position; for these priests proclaimed that Ra gave them the power to direct the affairs of the lives under his omnipotence.

¹John A. Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt (13th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 88.

²M. E. Monckton Jones, Ancient Egypt from the Records (1st ed. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1924), p. 23.

³Breasted, op. cit., p. 14.

Amon, the God of Thebes, whose name means "the Hidden One," was depicted as a man sitting on a chair, with two long feathers of green and red on his head, possibly to represent the tail feathers of a bird. As early as the fifth dynasty, his name was found in the text of the pyramids from that dynasty.¹ He was a god of harvest and later a god of the wind which "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."² His wife was called Mut, meaning "mother", and their son was the moon god, Khon. His priests were the mediators to whom the people went to ask help, health, or victory from Amon.

The reputation which Ra and his priesthood held in the twelfth dynasty and prior to that encouraged the priesthood of Amon, the local god at Thebes, to a syncretic identification between Amon and Ra called Amon-Ra. From the beginning of the twelfth dynasty Amon was frequently called Amon-Ra. The priests of Amon shrewdly believed that they could gain power with the pharaoh and be able to have more control of the treasury of Egypt. Joining the names was, in fact, a heavy blow for the priesthood of Heliopolis

¹Mohammad Sabir, Misr Tahta Zilal Al Faràinah (Cairo: Dar Memphis, 1965), p. 653.

²H. Frankfort, Ancient Egyptian Religion (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), p. 22.

whose power weakened. The placement of Amon's name first in the sequence and the locus of Amon's worship in the capital of Thebes contributed to Amon-Ra's becoming the state god and the king of gods, under the domination of the priests of Amon.

Hail to thee, Amen-Ra, lord of the throne of the earth, chief of Ap-to (Thebes), lord of truth, father of the gods, maker of man, creator of the beasts, lord of existences, enlightener of the earth, sailing in heaven in tranquility.¹

Although Amon-Ra was frequently worshiped as one God, the priesthoods of Amon and Ra continued to struggle for dominance; and the supremacy of their own god.

The relationship between the pharaohs and the gods gives us an indication of how the priesthoods gained and held power. By ancient Egyptian legend, most of the pharaohs came to the throne by the help of gods. The pharaohs, in returning the good favor, put everything into the hands of the priests of the gods, believing the gods would then be the first supporting help in case of political difficulties. For example, Thutmose III of the Eighteenth Dynasty conquered his enemies under the auspices of his god Amon. These achievements were recorded by him (Thutmose III) on the wall of the temple of Karnak.² This record shows

¹James Bonwick, Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought (Indian Hill, Colorado: Falcon's Wing Press, 1956), p. 107.

²Supra, p. 13.



A Gold Statuette of the God Amon
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Source: F. G. Bratton, The First Heretic (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 79.

the strength and grandness of Amon and his priesthood. The reward to Amon from Thutmose III and other pharaohs was the construction of huge temples in Thebes and in other parts of the large empire. To these temples was donated most of the booty which had been gained during the Asian conquests; also, many plantations were given to Amon and his priesthood. The pharaohs believed that all of Egypt was indebted to Amon, for he caused its very existence, its fertility, its wealth, and its progressive civilization. As a result, the priests became the superintendents and despots of the country; they were the beloved known sextons to Amon, his private communicants--in short, the priesthood of Amon began to dominate everything in Egypt, and by its intercession with Amon the country flourished under his blessings.

Still, the main concern of the priesthood was for the establishment of its control and the increase of its wealth. Because these concerns clashed with the existence of other gods, the priests established, as I mentioned, a syncretic identification between Amon and the other gods. At this juncture the reputation and wealth of Amon and his priesthood increased day after day while the priests of Ra and other gods suffered the lack of financial resources and the loss of position. Therefore, covetousness and jealousy were surfacing among the priests of those gods. At the head of these malcontents was the priesthood of the god Ra

at Heliopolis. To justify and support their movement against Amon and his priesthood, the priests of Ra spread the idea that Amon's faith and his theological school did not affect the common life of Egypt and had not wrought the progress in Egypt that their own theological school at Heliopolis had done.

By the influence of the priesthood of Ra, Thutmose IV (1413-1405) succeeded to the throne, and hostility to the priesthood of Amon resulted. Ra was depicted as the sun-disk with two extended arms ending in two human hands surrounding the king and giving him prosperity.¹ (This representation was chosen by Akhnaton for his god Aton.)

It would appear that the accession of Thutmose IV, coming to the throne by the influence of the Heliopolitan priests, was the first blow to Amon and his priesthood. This change seems to be an introduction to a new doctrine, an alteration point or a new image of the sun-god which was to be completed by the pharaoh, Akhnaton.

The great influence of the priests of Amon, still in control of the temples, as well as the short life of Thutmose IV, gave the priests of Amon the opportunity to regain their power over the throne. They worked in favor of the new pharaoh, Amenhotep III, until he showed his

¹Salah, op. cit., p. 308.

loyalty to Amon by the construction of huge temples at Thebes and other places. Even though he was a loyal pharaoh to Amon, he did not show clear objection to the new movement which was the main threat to Amon during the reign of his son Amenhotep IV (Akhnaton). This movement was the declaration of the worship of Aton. The threat (still important in the estimation of historians) was that Akhnaton's new faith was considered as the first hesitant step toward the belief in one god on earth, or monotheism.

Aton's Nature and His Supremacy Over Amon

It is not easy to determine the time of the emergence of the word Aton as a religious name for one of the ancient Egyptian gods. Most of the ancient evidence represents Aton in the form of the sun-disk. The story (written on papyrus and now in the Berlin Museum) of Sinuhe, one of Ammenemes's I princes during the Twelfth Dynasty, speaks of the death of Ammenemes I; "He flew away up to heaven and was united with the sun [Aton], and his divine limbs were absorbed into him who created him."¹ But does the word sun (Aton) mean the physical form of the sun or a deity? From Sinuhe's text, it seems that reference is made to a god not to the physical form of the sun. Also, there is

¹Arthur Weigall, A Short History of Ancient Egypt (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1935), p. 74.

other evidence, frequently appearing in some of the Egyptian texts, of the sun-deity. One is the phrase "Lord of all that the disk surrounds," another is the epithet "The Living Aton."¹ A commemorative scarab, issued to Thutmose IV, stating that the pharaoh fought "with the Aton before him, and that he campaigned outside Egypt to make the foreigners to be like the [Egyptian] people, in order to serve the Aton forever,"² indicates that the existence of the name of Aton as a god before Akhnaton's time was true.

We have in this scarab definite proof, not only that the Aten was already regarded as a separate and distinct form of the sun-god by Thutmose IV, but that he was actually worshipped as a god of battles who gave victory to the pharaoh and ensured his pre-eminence over the rest of the world, making all mankind the subjects of the Disk.³

Under Akhnaton's father, Amenhotep III, the old name for the material sun, Aton, had come into prominent use. The royal barge of Amenhotep III and his wife Tiye bore the name "Aten Gleams",⁴ Ra-mose, the vizier of Amenhotep III, worked as "steward in the temple of the Aton," and there was an inscription asking this pharaoh to induce Amon-Ra

¹Abdulhameed Zide, Egypt the Eternal (Cairo: Dar El-Nahtata, Al Arabia, 1966), p. 611.

²A. W. Shorter, "Historical Scarabs of Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III," Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 17 (1931), p. 23.

³Ibid., p. 24.

⁴Supra, p. 25.

to give a mortuary offering to the "scribe of the Treasury of the Temple of the Aton" named Pen-buy.¹ The hymns which were engraved on the funerary stele by the twins Suti and Hor are another supporting piece of evidence:

Homage to thee, Aton of the day . . . creator of men and women, maker of other lives . . . the creator of himself he was not born . . . conqueror of the two lands from the greatest to the least.²

From the reign of Thutmose III there was an inscription from the Semma reading:

They [various gods] shall cause your [King Thutmose] stability to be like the stability of the heaven, your lifetime like the Aton in it.³

In all of these, Aton seems to have been known as a deity. He had his own temple at Thebes, but the oppression of the priesthood of Amon did not give Aton the opportunity to rise as a state god until Amenhotep IV had reigned several years. Although, by the fifth year of Akhnaton's reign, art had been changed and the worship of Aton had made great strides toward supremacy, the various other gods were still acknowledged; and there was, as yet, no mention or indication of the "monotheism" which Akhnaton was soon to concern

¹Wilson, op. cit., p. 210.

²Budge, op. cit., p. 32.

³F. J. Giles, Ikhnaton (London: Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 1970), p. 116.

himself with.¹

The cult of Aton depended greatly upon the ancient cult of Heliopolis. Gardiner cites:

How dependent upon the ancient cult of Heliopolis this early work was is seen not only from its dedication to Re-Harakhti, but also in its mention of his great obelisk in Karnak, for at Heliopolis the impressive monolith known as the benben or obelisk was as characteristic of the place as was later at Arabian Mecca the black stone known as the Kaaba.²

To indicate this dependence further, Gardiner continues--

So too in year 16 the high-priest of the Aton, Meryre, still bore the time-honoured Heliopolitan title 'greatest of seers'.³

Akhnaton did not try to conceal his new faith in the old sun-god Ra; when he instructed his vizier about the new faith he said:

The words of Ra are before thee . . . my august father who taught me their essence. . . . It was known in my heart, revealed to my face, I understood. . . .⁴

The vizier Ramose replied

Thou art the Only One of Aton; in possession of his design. . . . Thou hast directed the mountains. The fear of thee is in the midst of their secret

¹Arthur Weigall, The Life and Times of Akhnaton (2nd ed. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 1934), p. 75.

²Sir Alan Gardiner, Egypt of the Pharaohs (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 218.

³Ibid.

⁴James H. Breasted, A History of Egypt (2nd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 360

chambers, as it is in the hearts of the people.
The mountains hearken to thee as the people
hearken.¹

Thus he made the worship of Ra the basis of his new faith. Akhnaton then assumed the office of High Priest of his new god with the same title as that of the high priest of Ra, "Great Seer".² The important thing that one should observe which differentiated the new faith from that of the sun-god Ra was the concept behind the name by which Akhnaton called his god, "Heat Which Is In The Sun" [Aton]. By this epithet the king was trying to distinguish his god from the material sun by giving him an abstract nature. Breasted emphasizes the spiritual character in these words:

However evident the Heliopolitan origin of the new state religion might be, it was not merely sun-worship; the word Aton was employed in place of the old word for "god" (nutzer) and the god is clearly distinguished from the material sun. . . . The king therefore, was deifying the vital heat which he found accompanying all life.³

Regarding the phrase of "Heat Which Is In The Sun" [Aton], Budge wrote

The heat of Aten gave him life and maintained it in him, and whilst that was in him Aten was in him. The life of Aten was his life, and his life was Aten's life, and therefore he was Aten.⁴

¹Weigall, op. cit., p. 71.

²Breasted, op. cit.

³Ibid., pp. 360-361.

⁴Budge, op. cit., p. 82.



Akhnaton and His Wife Worshipping Aton

Source: Immanuel Velikovsky. Oedipus and Akhnaton
(New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960), p. 90.



Akhnaton and His Family Under the Radiating Arms of Aton

Source: Bille-De Mot. Age of Akhenaten (London: Adam & Mackay, Ltd., 1966), p. 100.



Akhnaton Sacrificing Before the Altar of the God Aton

Source: Bille-De Mot. Age of Akhenaten (London: Adam & Mackay, Ltd., 1966), p. 52.

The symbol of Aton was never portrayed in human or animal form, he was always represented by the solar disk with rays extending from it, each terminating in a hand as if the ray were an arm bestowing "life".¹

No specific time of the break with Amon and his priesthood is recorded. We have seen that there were attempts by some of the earlier pharaohs to break with Amon, but these pharaohs were not as successful as Akhnaton because they were subordinates of the power and influence of the priests of Amon. Also, because the Egyptians believed that the pharaoh was chosen by Amon, and because--sometimes--the pharaoh was worshiped as a god, it was hard for the Egyptians to change their habit of devotion to Amon by turning to a worship of Aton. But the crisis for Amon came after the sixth year of Akhnaton's reign when--by any means--he decided to reduce and, in fact, to end that strong power of the priests of Amon. After seeing the domination of the priests, Akhnaton moved against Amon and his priesthood by announcing that they had to worship only one god, Aton-- "The Living Father Aton". He said that Aton was "Ra-Harakhti Radiating in the Horizon, as he was the light found in the star Aton."² Akhnaton meant that he wanted to limit

¹Ibid., p. 81.

²Salah, op. cit., p. 309.

this new belief. He did not want to surprise people with a new name they were not familiar with, and he tried to inspire the people to return to their forefathers' god.

The priests of Amon were afraid of Akhnaton's declaration, especially when he called his god "Heat which is the Sun", and when he declared his creed: One god not many, Aton not Amon. His orders were given to workmen and servants to obliterate the name of Amon, not only from the temples of Thebes but also in different parts of the Egyptian empire. The temple of Aton was built in the garden of Amon. Thebes was called "City of the Brightness of Aton". This was followed by the change in his name--from Amenhotep IV to Akhnaton.

No doubt, Akhnaton was genuinely interested in reforming religion, but I think his major motive was to break the power of the priests of Amon. Thus, the atmosphere at Thebes became confused over the change in religion, and hostility characterized the relationship between Akhnaton and the priests of Amon. Therefore, to sever every connection with Amon and to further his religious reform, Akhnaton thought it a good idea to move from Thebes, at that time the capital city of Egypt and the abiding place of Amon, to a new city called Akheteton "The place where Aton rises".

Life in Thebes must have been increasingly dangerous for Akhnaton amidst the growing resistance of the priests of Amon to his new doctrine, and he may have felt that Thebes was not a suitable place in which to develop his new plan without a disturbance. It is possible that his departure from Thebes may have been as much an act of self-preservation as it was a grand symbolic gesture of independence. Regarding this, Baikie wrote:

Much more likely to impress his mind was the obvious fact that Thebes, with its whole soil cumbered with ineradicable roots of Amenism, and its atmosphere poisoned by hostile tradition, was an absolutely impossible field for the growth of the seed which he was set upon sowing and fostering.¹

Thus Akhnaton knew that it would be better to develop his plan of religious reform in a virgin soil, undefiled by temples of the other Egyptian gods. Akhnaton departed as other apostles and prophets in history have done. The prophet Mohammad in 622 departed from Mecca to Madina in the Arabian peninsula trying to develop the religion of Islam in a new environment and among new people. The difference was that Madina was inhabited before Mohammad's departure, while Akheteton was uninhabited, virgin soil. Mohammad also was sent from god as a prophet, but Akhnaton was an Egyptian king, a god sent by himself or his god.

¹James Baikie, A History of Egypt II (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1929), p. 259.

The similarity between Mohammad and Akhnaton was the realization that a change of place was necessary to eliminate every connection with the old traditional belief which would stand as an obstacle in the road of the new doctrine.

Akhnaton found a location north of Thebes¹ for his city. According to my facts on the location, I would agree with the historian, M. E. Jones, who gives its location as about 160 miles above modern Cairo.² When Akhnaton was nineteen years old, he developed his plan; at twenty-one he took up residence there. The town was built as rapidly as possible. He brought workmen from every profession and housed them in villages some distance from the city. In hot haste according to the king's plan, the workers erected temples in honor of the new faith, Aton.³

The city, with the name which means "The Place Where Aton Rises", was built according to the king's oath which was recorded on stele at the extreme northern and southern boundaries of Akheteton, thus:

His majesty raised his hand to heaven, to him who made him, even to Aton, saying, "This is my testimony forever, and this is my witness forever, this Landmark (stele). . . . I have made Akhetaton on its

¹ Supra, p. 5.

² Jones, op. cit., p. 149.

³ Henry Brugsch, History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs I (2nd ed. London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1881), p. 494.

south, on its north, on its west, on its east. I shall not pass beyond the southern landmark of Akhetaton toward the south, nor shall I pass beyond the northern landmark of Akhetaton toward the north. . . . He has made his circuit for his own, he has made his altar in its midst, whereon I make offering to him.¹

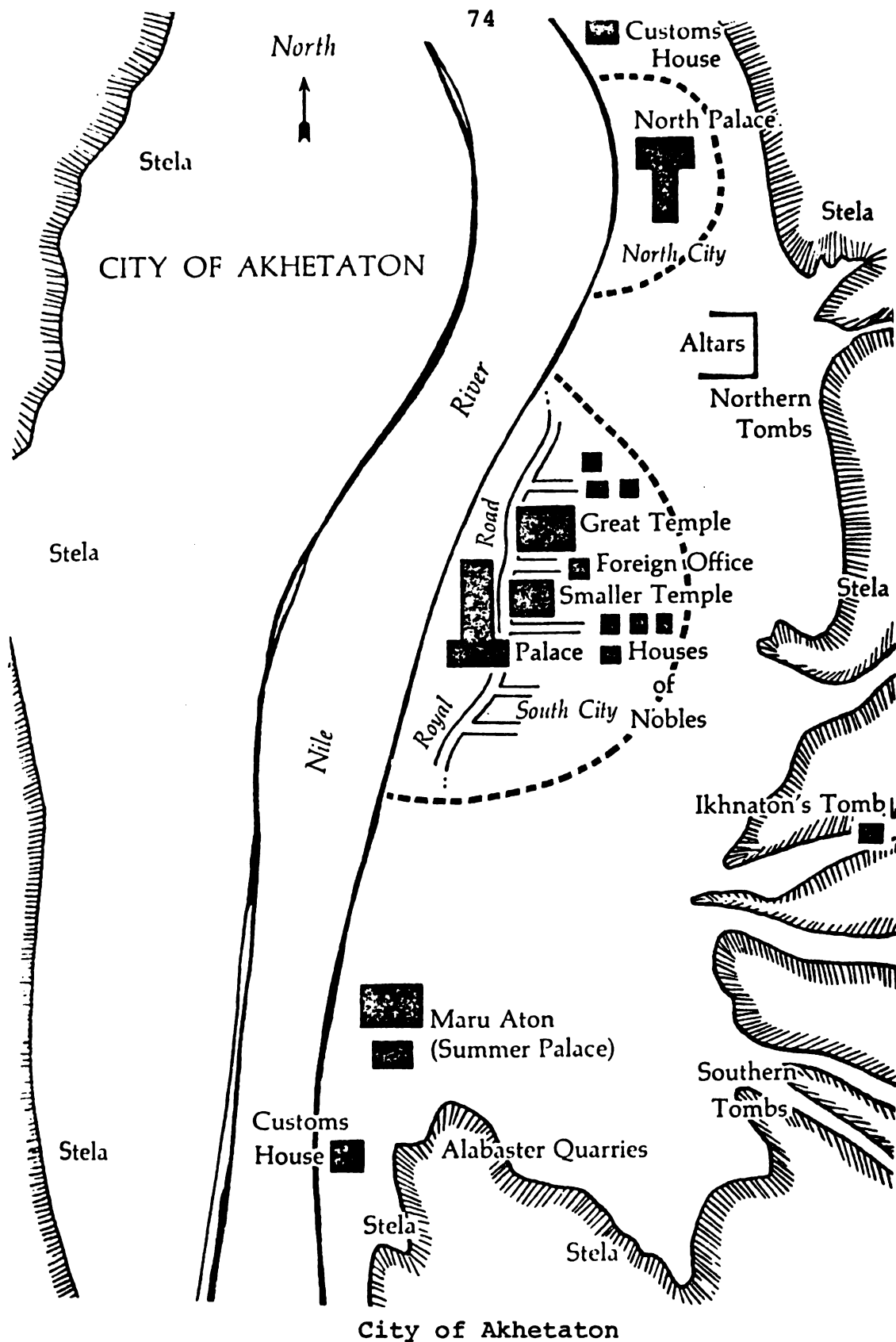
Six years after his plan the whole city was more or less habitable. There was no differentiation between rich and poor districts--residences of nobles were intermixed with those of civil servants, merchants and artisans, small houses were built among large palaces. This can be taken as a symbol of the democratic side of Akhnaton's politics. In the middle of Akhetaton was the administration quarter; north of this lay the merchant district; farther northeast was the royal palace; and to the east were the queen's apartments. There were also zoological gardens where the king could watch animals and birds.² The temple of Aton was erected in the middle of the city. It was open to the sky and people could offer their devotions in every part. For the burial of the king a decorated tomb was hewn in a desert valley some five miles east of the city.³

The fine art in Akhetaton cannot be disregarded as part of Akhnaton's contribution to reformation.

¹Breasted, op. cit., p. 365.

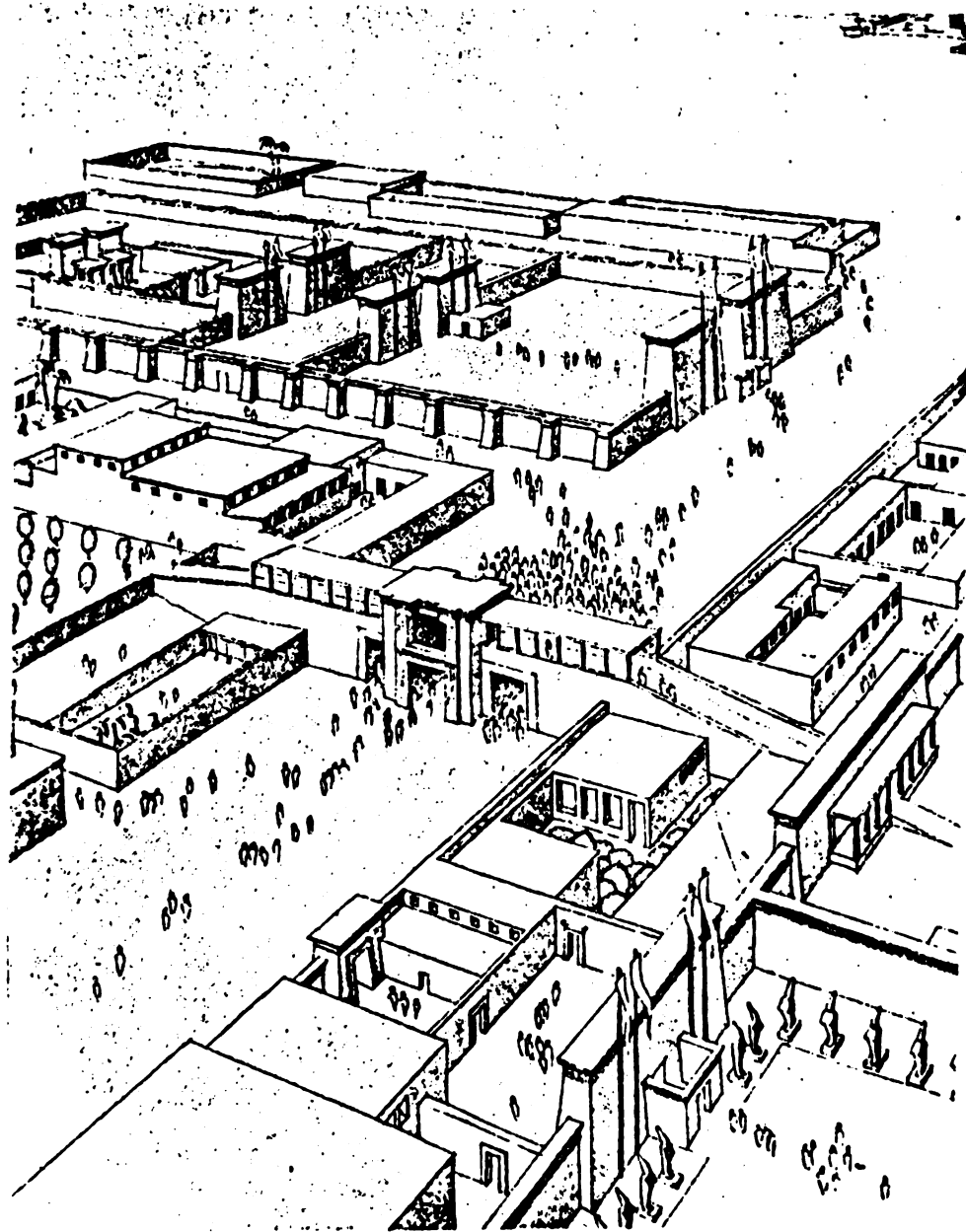
²J. D. S. Pendlebury, Tel El-Amarna (London: Lovat Dickson and Thompson, Ltd., 1935), pp. 34-145, 89.

³William C. Hayes, The Scepter of Egypt II (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p, 281.



City of Akhetaton

Source: F. G. Bratton. The First Heretic (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 93.



Reconstruction of Central Quarter at Amarna

Source: W. Stevenson Smith. The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt (1st ed. London: Penguin Books, 1958), p. 127.

Abdulaziz Salah offers much data about the art in Akhetaton during the days of Akhnaton. He divides the arts into stages. The first stage of the art of Akhetaton began when his artists carved a statue of Akhnaton himself with all the abnormalities of his body. The next stage began after the settlement of Akhnaton and his family; the art became more beautiful than during the first stage. The faces of Akhnaton and his wife possessed more gentleness and sensitivity.¹

In the Amarna period, there were famous artists who still bring to life for us much data concerning the city of Akhetaton. Bek, son of Man, the overseer of sculptors, was one of the famous architects and sculptors in the new capital. He left us a large commemorative tablet of Assuan. This tablet shows Bek to the right of an altar and the inscription above him indicates that the figure of Akhnaton stood to the left of the altar. However, the figure of Akhnaton was effaced probably right after his death. The inscription reads:

Giving praise to the Lord of the two Lands,
obeisance to Wanre [Akhnaton], by the chief of works
in the Red Mountain, the assistant whom his majesty
himself taught, chief of sculptors on the great and
mighty monuments of the king, in the house of Aton,
in Akhetaton, . . .²

¹Salah, op. cit., p. 254.

²James H. Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt II
(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), p. 401.

Another important scene comes from the tomb of the architect Merire, "High Priest of Aton". The reliefs show the king proceeding to the temple of Aton, riding in his chariot with his daughters, soldiers and officials. In front of the temple's door, the priests stand greeting him.

Three scenes from the Tomb of Merire may indicate the loyalty of the priests to the new faith. A lady of Merire's household named Tenr--probably his wife--sings praise of Aton:

The rising is beautiful, O Living Sun . . .
O Living Aton, beside whom there is no other,
who heals the eyes with his rays, the maker of
all things that are. . . . Grant thou thy beloved
son, living in truth, . . . [Ikhnaton] that he may
live with thee forever.¹

The appointment of Merire by Akhnaton as the High Priest of Aton is recorded as follows:

Behold, I am appointing thee for myself, to be great seer, of the Aton in the temple of Aton in Akhetaton, . . . As for any commission with which thou are charged, my heart is satisfied herewith, I give to thee the office saying: 'Thou shalt eat the food of Pharaoh, the lord of the house of Aton.'²

And in another scene Merire is rewarded as he collects the dues of the temple from the farms successfully.³

¹Breasted, op. cit., pp. 405-406.

²Ibid., p. 406.

³Ibid., p. 407.

Another who enjoyed Akhnaton's favor was the architect, Thutmose. He kept in his house a collection of statues of Akhnaton and his wife and daughters. Others sculpted Akhnaton while he was playing with his wife and daughters, and while he was eating his meals. They portrayed his daughters embracing or jesting with each other.¹

One of the important personalities, who played a very significant role in the art in Akhetaton, was Eye. On the walls of his tomb he left a scene showing the royal family on a balcony, throwing collars and vessels of gold to himself and his wife. In another scene, he and his wife were depicted bowing down and chanting the famous hymn of Aton--the hymn which was considered the foundation of the new faith. This magnificent poem represents a form of religious literature in ancient Egypt and manifests clearly the nature of this new state religion. For one studying "Akhnaton and Monotheism" this hymn from the Tomb of Eye shows a significant religious intensity comparable to the Psalms of the Hebrews. Breasted compared some of its verses with that of the 104th Psalm of the Hebrews:

¹Salah, op. cit., p. 255.

The Splendour of Aton

The dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,
 O living Aton, Beginning of life!
 When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,
 Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;
 For thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;
 Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all thou hast made.
 Thou art Re, and thou hast carried them all away captive;
 Thou bindest them by thy love.
 Though thou art afar, thy rays are on earth;
 Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.

Night.

When thou settest in the western
 horizon of heaven
 The world is in darkness like
 the dead
 They sleep in their chambers
 Their heads are wrapt up,
 Their nostrils stopped, and
 none seeth the other.
 Stolen are all their things,
 that are under their heads,
 While they know it not.
 Every lion cometh forth his den,
 All serpents, they sting.
 Darkness reigns (?),
 The world is in silence,
 He that made them has gone to rest
 in his horizon.

Day and Man

Bright is the earth,

*Thou makest darkness and it is
 night
 Wherein all the beasts of the
 forest do creep forth.
 The young lions after their
 prey;
 They seek their meat from God
 (Psalm 104, 20-21)*

*The sun ariseth, they get
 them away,*

When thou risest in the horizon,
 When thou shinest as Aton by day
 The darkness is banished,
 When thou sendest forth thy rays,
 The two lands (Egypt) are in

Daily festivity

Awake and standing upon their feet,
 For thou has raised them up.
 Their limbs bathed, they take their
 clothing;
 Their arms uplifted in adoration
 to the dawning.
 Then in all the world, they do
 their work.

*And lay them down in their dens
 Man goeth forth unto his work,
 And to his labour unit the
 evening.*

(Psalm 104, 22-23)

Day and The Animals and Plants

All cattle rest upon their herbage
 All trees and plants flourish,
 The birds flutter in their marshes,
 Their wings uplifted in adoration
 to thee,
 All the sheep dance upon their feet,
 All winged things fly,
 They live when thou hast shone upon
 them,

Day and The Waters

The barques sail up-stream and
 down-stream alike.
 Every highway is open because
 thou has dawned.
 The fish in the river leap up
 before thee,
 And thy rays are in the midst
 of the great sea.

*Yonder is the sea, great and
 wide,
 Wherein are things creeping
 innumerable
 Both small and great beasts.
 There go the ships;
 There is leviathan, whom thou
 hast formed to sport with
 him.*

Creation of Man.

Thou art he who createst the man-child in woman,
 Who makest seed in man,
 Who giveth life to the son in the body of his mother,
 Who sootheth him that he may not weep,
 A nurse (even) in the womb

Who giveth breath to animate every one that he maketh.
 When he cometh forth from the body, . . . on the day of his birth,
 Thou openest his mouth in speech,
 Thou suppliest his necessities.

Creation of Animals

When the chicklet crieth in the egg-shell,
 Thou givest him breath therein, to preserve him alive.
 When thou hast perfected him,
 That he may pierce the egg,
 He cometh forth from the egg,
 To chirp with all his might;
 He runneth about upon his two feet,
 When he hath come forth therefore.

The Whole Creation

How manifold are all thy works!
 They are hidden from before us,
 O thou sole god, whose powers
 no other monarch possesseth.
 Thou didst create the earth
 according to they desire.
 While thou wast alone;
 Men, all cattle large and small,
 All that are upon the earth,
 That go about upon their feet;
 All that are on high,
 That fly with their wings.
 The countries of Syria and Nubia,
 The land of Egypt;
 Thou settest every man in his
 place,
 Thou suppliest their necessities.
 Every one has his possessions,
 And his days are reckoned.
 Their tongues are divers in
 speech.

*O Lord, how manifold are
 they works!
 In wisdom hast thou made
 them all;
 The earth is full of thy
 creatures
 (Psalm 104.24.)*

Watering the Earth

Thou makest the Nile in the nether world,
 Thou bringest it at thy desire, to preserve the people alive.

O lord of them all, when feebleness is in them,
 O lord of every house, who risest for them,
 O sun of day, the fear of every distant land,
 Thou makest (also) their life.
 Thou hast set a Nile in heaven,
 That it may fall for them,
 Making floods upon the mountains, like the great sea;
 And watering their fields among their towns.
 How excellent are the designs, O lord of eternity!
 The Nile in heaven is for the strangers,
 And for the cattle of every land, that go upon feet;
 But the Nile, it cometh from the nether world for Egypt.
 Thus thy rays nourish every garden,
 When thou risest they live, and grow by thee.

The Seasons

Thou makest the seasons, in order to create all thy works;
 Winter bringing them coolness,
 And the heat (of summer likewise),
 Thou hast made the distant heaven to rise therein,
 In order to behold all that thou didst make,
 While thou wast alone,
 Rising in they form as living Aton,
 Dawning, shining afar off and returning.

Beauty Due to Light

Thou makest the beauty of form, through myself alone.
 Cities, towns and settlements,
 On highway or river,
 All eyes see thee before them,
 For thou art Aton of the day over the earth.

Revelation to the King

Thou art in my heart,
 There is no other that knoweth thee,
 Save thy son Ikhnaton.
 Thou hast made him wise in thy designs.
 And in thy might.
 The world is in thy hand,
 Even as thou hast made them.

When thou hast risen, they live;
 When thou settest, they die.
 For thou are duration, beyond thy mere limbs,
 By thee man liveth,
 And their eyes look upon thy beauty,
 Until thou settest.
 All labour is laid aside
 When thou settest in the west;
 When thou risest, they are made to grow . . . for the king,
 Since thou didst establish the earth,
 Thou has raised them up for thy son,
 Who came forth from thy limbs,
 The king, living in truth,
 The lord of the Two Lands Nefer-khepru-Re, Wan-Re,
 The son of Re, living in truth, lord of diadems,
 Ikhnaton, whose life is long;
 (And for) the great royal wife, his beloved,
 Mistress of the Two Lands, Nefer nefru aton, Nofretete,
 Living and flourishing for ever and ever.¹

¹Breasted, A History of Egypt, pp. 371-376.

CHAPTER V

AKHNATON AND MONOTHEISM

The Hymns of Aton mentioned in the preceding chapter are unique in their nature. They contain monotheistic beliefs quite contrary to many of the similar hymns of other Egyptian gods. Their importance from the historians' point of view is their content; the ideas of monotheistic belief. But this does not mean that the idea of monotheism did not exist before the time of Akhnaton. This idea appeared in Egypt as early as the first dynasties. The concept of belief in one god can be seen in the early thought of the Egyptians, especially in the period between the Old Kingdom and the beginning of the Middle Kingdom when they worshiped the sun as the greatest god of earth. They looked to the sun as the creator of everything. He was the father of other gods, so in essence he created them also, and he was represented in many forms. In the New Kingdom, after Amon's fusion with Ra, the Egyptian people started to describe their god as a single, an absolute god with complete knowledge. They conceived of him, also, as the greatest one,

and imagined him in different forms.¹ The thing that prevented the Egyptians from being truly monotheistic was that they were convinced of the existence of other gods, although they believed in a supreme god, what we call henotheism. The abstract nature of true monotheistic belief cannot be characterized with a concrete nature or affective attributes which characterized the godhead of ancient gods. Smith explains this by comparing the natures of Aton and Amon-Ra:

Ra of the Pyramid age had pursued a carnal life in the solar heavens, drinking wine, stealing women, killing other gods and eating their vitals in order to obtain the Red and Green; and he had in time grown senile and had been forced to abdicate by Isis's theft of his magic power. Not even Amen, god of wind, had escaped anthropomorphic materialization and had perforce been identified with Ra in order to justify his claims. But abruptly in Akhanaten's hands the carnal aspects of the deity disappear entirely; Aten possesses only the intangible, immaterial qualities of light, heat or radiance, he has not even an image apart from the disk with radiating arms of light.²

Can the revised faith of Akhnaton be considered as true monotheism? In trying to answer this question I will elaborate on the points of view of some of the historians.

Breasted believes that the expanding of the Egyptian empire before Akhnaton's time was accompanied by an intellectual awakening which shook traditional beliefs. This intellectual awakening can be seen in the fact that

¹Jack Finegan. Light from the Ancient Past (2nd ed. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 95.

²Homer W. Smith, Man and His Gods (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956), p. 60.

Akhnaton's new faith and his strong belief in Aton motivated him to efface from the monuments not only the names of Amon and other gods, wherever he found them, but also the word god in its plural form--gods. The hymn of Akhnaton's new faith, as Breasted points out, had an inspirational universalism not found before, in Egypt or in other places. He wrote:

He [Aton] is the universal creator who brought forth all races of men and distinguished them in speech and color of skin. His creative power still goes on calling forth life, even from the inanimate egg. . . . Akhnaton's thought passes beyond a purely materialistic recognition of the sun's activity on earth, and discerns the fatherly solicitude of Aton for all creatures. It is the thought which lifts the movement of Akhnaton far above all that had before been attained in the religion of Egypt or of the whole East before this time. . . .¹

To affirm the spirit and powerfully emotional forces of Akhnaton's movement, Breasted centers not only on the hymn, but also on art. The simplicity of Tel El-Amarna art, where Akhnaton is depicted kissing his little girl or sitting her on his knee as a normal father would, "illustrates Ikhnaton's (Akhnaton's) powerful individuality and his fearless readiness to throw off the shackles of tradition without hesitation in the endeavour to establish the world of things as they are, in wholesome naturalness."² The epithet

¹James H. Breasted, The Dawn of Conscience (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), pp. 291-292.

²Ibid., pp. 295-296.

of Maat¹ which Akhnaton adopted, as "Living on Truth", Breasted points out was appended to Akhnaton's royal name, and by doing so, ". . . he [Akhnaton] intended to extend the old national moral order to exercise sway over the greater international world of which he was lord."² In brief, these two aspects, wholesome naturalness and truth were incorporated as part of Akhnaton's religion. Breasted does not hesitate to say:

. . . that this whole monotheistic movement is the culmination of the ancient recognition of a moral order by the Egyptian thinkers of the Pyramid Age, and their creation of a realm of universal ethical values, represented by the inclusive term Maat, brought forth by the sun-god at Heliopolis.³

Freud gives us an interesting opinion on Akhnaton's monotheism. He argues that Akhnaton worshiped the sun not as a material form, but as a symbol of divine being whose energy was manifested in its rays. He considers Akhnaton's doctrine as the first and purest monotheistic religion to develop in history. He writes:

He added the something new that turned into monotheism the doctrine of universal god: the quality of exclusive. In one of his hymns it is stated in so

¹Maat, is truth and justice personified and signifies order and law, moral and physical. M. Brodrick, Concise Dictionary of Egyptian Archaeology (3rd ed. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1924), p. 94.

²Breasted, op. cit., p. 299.

³Ibid., p. 296.

many words:¹ 'O Thou only God, there is no other god than Thou'.

Wilson doubts the real existence of the idea of monotheism in Akhnaton's faith. He emphasizes that the phrase "sole god" was used for some gods prior to Akhnaton's time, and that Aton was Akhnaton's personal god. He writes:

The hymn is entitled the worship of the Aton . . . by the king Akhen-Aton and the queen Neferti-ti, and pharaoh says explicitly: Thou art in my heart, and there is no other that knows thee except the son [Akhen-Aton], whom thou hast initiated into thy plans and into thy power.²

The appearance of the phrase "sole god" can be taken as a flattering exaggeration meaning the only important god, sometimes in order to focus the worshiper's attention upon one god. Wilson's view of our modern Jewish, Christian, and Moslems faiths as monotheistic and his view of Aton as non-monotheistic conflict with the view of most historians like Breasted, and Gardiner. To him, in the Amarna age there were at least two gods: Aton was concerned strictly with creating and maintaining life, and the ethics and the religion were derived from Akhnaton, both being regarded as gods.³

¹Sigmund Freud, Moses and Monotheism (2nd ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 30.

²John A. Wilson, The Culture of Ancient Egypt (13th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 224-225.

³Ibid., p. 224.

Gardiner supports the theory which says that Atonism was a true monotheism. He based his idea on the unique character of Aton who was not represented in human form, or animal form, but in an abstract form. Akhnaton's sweeping away of the vast accumulation of mythological rubbish inherited from the past was a marvelous achievement.¹

Albright points out that the Aton cult became a true monotheism a few years into the reign of Akhnaton. He bases his idea on the obliteration of other gods' names and on the hymn of Aton, both happening some years into Akhnaton's reign. In the famous Hymn to Aton, he (Aton) is explicitly addressed as "the only god, beside whom there is no other". The Aton cult was accordingly a true monotheism, Albright asserts, and yet it was not suited to become the national religion of Egypt because of some weak points. The "Truth" which the king emphasized that "he lives in", is represented in reality, by materialistic hedonism rather than by ethical idealism. The religion itself had a materialistic character. An absence of the character of social justice or concern for the well-being of the masses was inherent in the religion. All of these points effectively prevented the nationalism of the religion. The latter point seems to

¹Sir Alan Gardiner, Egypt of the Pharaohs (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 227.

have been most important as shown in the immediate reaction of hatred and violence after Akhnaton's death. This indicates that the King and the Courtiers were apparently quite without interest in the improvement of the lot of their subjects.¹

To sum up these theories: Breasted, in his positive statement of the true monotheism of Akhnaton's new faith, gave Akhnaton the distinction of being a true monotheist. He put Akhnaton on the same level as the prophets. One of his statements says: "It is important to notice, therefore, that Akhnaton was a prophet both of nature and of human life."² But as far as we know there is no real evidence of Akhnaton's teachings of Aton's being inspired in the way in which other prophets had received inspiration. In the Bible, and in the Holy Book of Islam (Koran), there is mention of some names prior to Akhnaton's time like Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, but they were identified as prophets (in the Koran) and patriarchs (in the Old Testament) of God; not of "nature and human life".

As I pointed out, Breasted mentions the simplicity of Amarna art and the appending of the word Maat in the royal

¹W. F. Albright, From the Stone Age to Christianity (2nd ed. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), p. 222.

²Breasted, op. cit., p. 296.

name to create a moral order, as indications of Akhnaton's reformation. This is discussable. In my opinion, the 'art' and the use of 'Maat' show a meaning of 'candor or sincerity', as opposed to a meaning of 'ethics'. The increase of emotional content in the Amarna art, and the use of 'Maat' support the idea of his materialistic hedonism rather than a moral order. This example from Albright illustrates my point.

Only cheerful and pleasant things could be described in hymns portrayed in art. The beautiful family life of the King, with his young queen and three little daughters, absorbed the whole attention of the artists, and the duties of Pharaoh as King and commander,¹ as magistrate and administrator were disregarded.

Thus these points made by Breasted as indications of Akhnaton's religious reformation cannot be taken as valid indications of Akhnaton's true monotheistic ideals.

Freud, in his account of Akhnaton's monotheistic character, follows closely Breasted's ideas, but some scholars such as Wilson underestimate Akhnaton as much as Breasted and Freud admire him. Wilson represents the opposite view that Akhnaton's monotheism falls short of the worship of one god. However, his statement that the Egyptians worshiped Akhnaton and Aton simultaneously can be accepted considering the tradition of worship of the pharaoh as god, and some of

¹Albright, op. cit., p. 222.

the verses of Aton's hymns in which Akhnaton was the son of god and sometimes a god himself. In some portraits of Akhnaton's courtiers, they (the courtiers) are depicted as inclining, offering their prayers directly to Akhnaton. The traditions underlying the worship of Akhnaton as another god by his subjects do not prevent us from giving credence to Akhnaton's teaching of Aton as an approach toward monotheism. Even Wilson, in the following words, lends credence to my contention. "One could say that it was the closest approach to monotheism possible within the thought of the day."¹ As for Aton's being only Akhnaton's personal god, as Wilson contends, it is unlikely. If Aton were only Akhnaton's personal god, his subjects should have worshiped other ones, and Akhnaton would not have had to order the obliteration of the names of other gods. Also, according to Aton's hymn, Aton was a god of animals, trees, water, mankind, near land and distant land; not just of Akhnaton.

The countries of Syria and Nubia
 The land of Egypt,
 Thou settest every man in his place,
 For thou divider, hast divided the peoples.
 Thou lord of every house, who risest for them,
 O sun of day, the fear of every distant land,
 Cities, towns and settlement,
 On highway or River,
 All eyes see thee before them.
 The cattle rest upon their herbage,

¹Wilson, op. cit., p. 225.



Courtier Before the Royal Pair

Source: Bille-De Mot. Age of Akhenaten (London: Adam & Mackay, Ltd., 1966), p. 74.

All trees and plants flourish,
The birds flutter in their marshes.¹

Albright is concerned with Akhnaton's doctrine as having a feeble character for a monotheistic belief. To me his underestimation of Akhnaton's monotheism lies in his concern with national religion rather than monotheism itself.

It seems, then, that we are still a long way from final judgment. Because the certain information that we do have on Akhnaton's doctrine is that obtained from fragments of hymns and art, through studying their nature we can understand the concept of monotheism which was coming into being. Aton is called the eternal, creator, regulator and governor by the hymns, not only for Egypt, but the whole world. Accordingly, he was king of the universe, and his light and heat were the source of all life, and no concrete embodiment was given to his image. Yet, according to the art, the courtiers bowed and commoners kissed the dust before Akhnaton² and worshiped him as a god. This worship, of course, was bound up in the tradition of worshiping the pharaoh himself as a distinct god. This points out that Akhnaton and his god were not one. Therefore, there remains

¹James H. Breasted, A History of Egypt (2nd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), pp. 371-375.

²Supra, p. 93.

little doubt that Akhnaton's new faith was not monotheism, in the most literal sense of the word. But because of the proscription of the old gods and his giving Aton the single-minded devotion of his entire being, I believe that Akhnaton's approach to a new faith can be taken as a kind of monotheism--even though it was not like the pure monotheism of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. But to underestimate Akhnaton's reform is a critical mistake. His career was completely unique and different from that of other pharaohs. He tried to sweep away, in twenty years, a traditional life of two thousand years. If, then, he was not the producer of a 'pure' monotheism, his sensitive mind, his strong motives, his individualism made him the first to try to make his god universal, beside whom there would exist no other gods.

Breasted said of Akhnaton,

. . . Ikhnaton was the first individual in history, . . . consciously and deliberately, by intellectual process, he gained his position and then placed himself squarely in the face of tradition and swept it aside.¹

¹Breasted, The Dawn of Conscience, p. 296.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have traced changes that Egypt went through in political and religious issues after the Hyksos invasion. I have concentrated on the factors which came to bear on Akhnaton's religious reform: the relationship between gods and the pharaohs, the nature of Egyptian gods, the power of the priesthoods of the gods (notably Amon and Ra), and finally, the nature and development of Akhnaton's religion (Aton) itself.

In my opinion, after the death of Amenhotep III, Egypt was in need of a king of strong leadership, but Egypt found itself under the control of Akhnaton, the pacifist and philosopher king whose main preoccupation was with religion. During his reign the vast program of imperial expansion effected by his predecessors was lost. The first responsibility of the head of any government is keeping its existence politically, economically, socially, and religiously. Thus, Akhnaton has been blamed for placing all of his attention on one side, the religious, and neglecting the external

affairs of his country. This deterioration of concern for and, consequently, control of the Egyptian empire began with Amenhotep III, and continued with Akhnaton. At the closest borders and even inside the country dissolution began as Akhnaton continued in his ideological meditation with his religion.

Nevertheless, with his deep belief in the truth of his doctrine, Akhnaton succeeded somewhat in freeing Egyptian thought from inherited traditions and petrified opinions. His great city of Ahketaton left undubitable evidence of a new and creative spirit and provided a great revolution in art and religion in the world at that time. But Akhnaton's achievements, his new religion, and his great city, died with him. Thirteen years after Akhnaton's proclamation of his great religious revolution, his descendents returned to the worship of Amon. The temples of Aton were closed and the name was chiseled out of inscriptions. The capital was returned to Thebes, the place in which the worship of Amon flourished.

But why did not this great religious reformation take hold and continue? Why did it fail to attract a following? First, the religious doctrine presented new concepts, alien to most of the people. During its short duration, the people could not grasp the ideology, and they kept traditional worship. Second, his disregard for foreign policy

could have created an animosity towards Akhnaton himself, whatever he did. Third, there was not a strong priesthood of Aton to give the worship of Aton the support it needed to continue. Finally, the fact that Akhnaton was worshiped and that he did not completely discourage this weakened his doctrine. These factors contributed to the inability and/or unwillingness of the people to commit themselves to the kind of monotheism which was the basis of Akhnaton's religious reform.

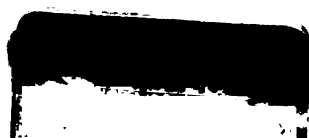
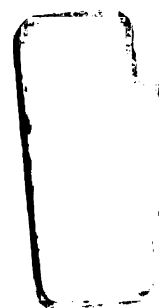
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