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Academic Interpretations of the Amarna Period

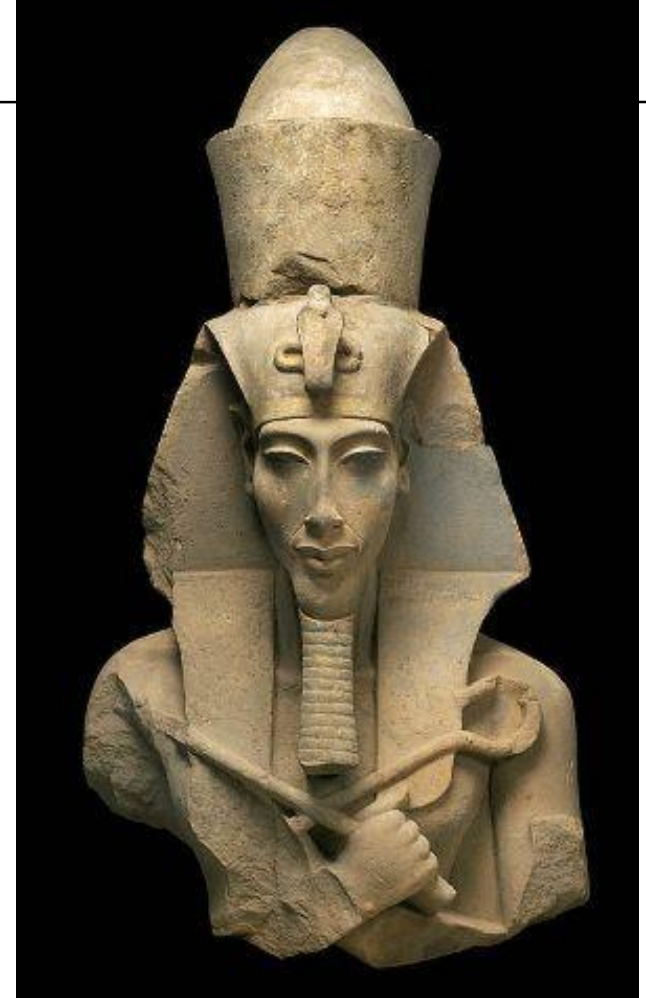
HPAH5003/6003: Amarna – Materiality of a
religious revolution

AHAR7005: Akhenaten and Amarna:
Religion, culture and people

Dr Katharina Zinn

The Popularity of The Amarna Period

- ❑ The Amarna Period (circa 1352–1323 BCE)
- ❑ Most widely discussed topic in Egyptology
- ❑ Over 3,000 titles and more than 50 books in the last 15 years
- ❑ Ironical given that Akhenaten's name was intended to be erased from history

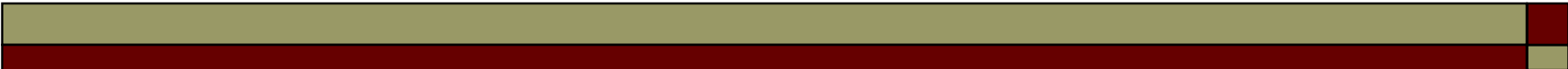


The Popularity of The Amarna Period



The Tel el-Amarna Period has had more nonsense written about it than any other period in Egyptian history, and Akhenaten is a strong rival to Cleopatra for the historical novelist. The appeal of Cleopatra is the romantic combination of love and death; Akhenaten appeals to religion and sentiment. In the case of Akhenaten the facts do not bear the construction often put on them.

MARGARET MURRAY, THE SPLENDOUR THAT WAS EGYPT (1949)

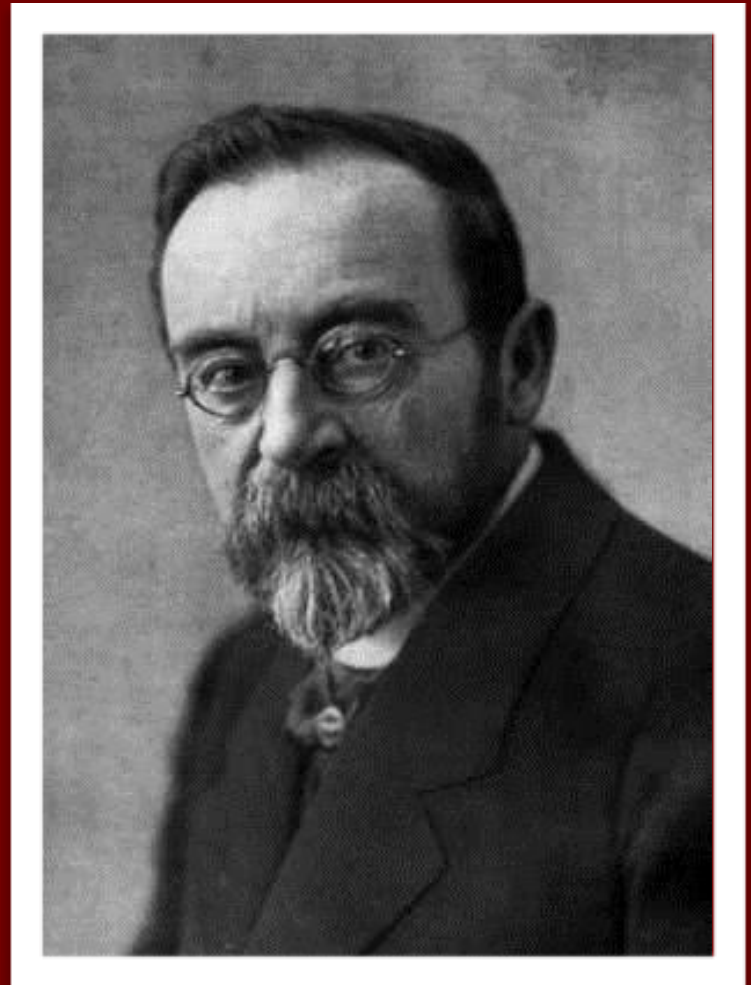


Discussing Akhenaten

- ❑ Visionary, religious genius, internationalist, pacifist, ahead of his time, brought down by small minded people, liberator
- ❑ Family man
- ❑ Revolutionary
- ❑ First monotheist
- ❑ Naive, fool, lunatic, tyrant, megalomaniac, enforcing a cruel religion
- ❑ bisexual, womaniser, incestuous paedophile
- ❑ Copyist (all ideas came from his father)
- ❑ No monotheist

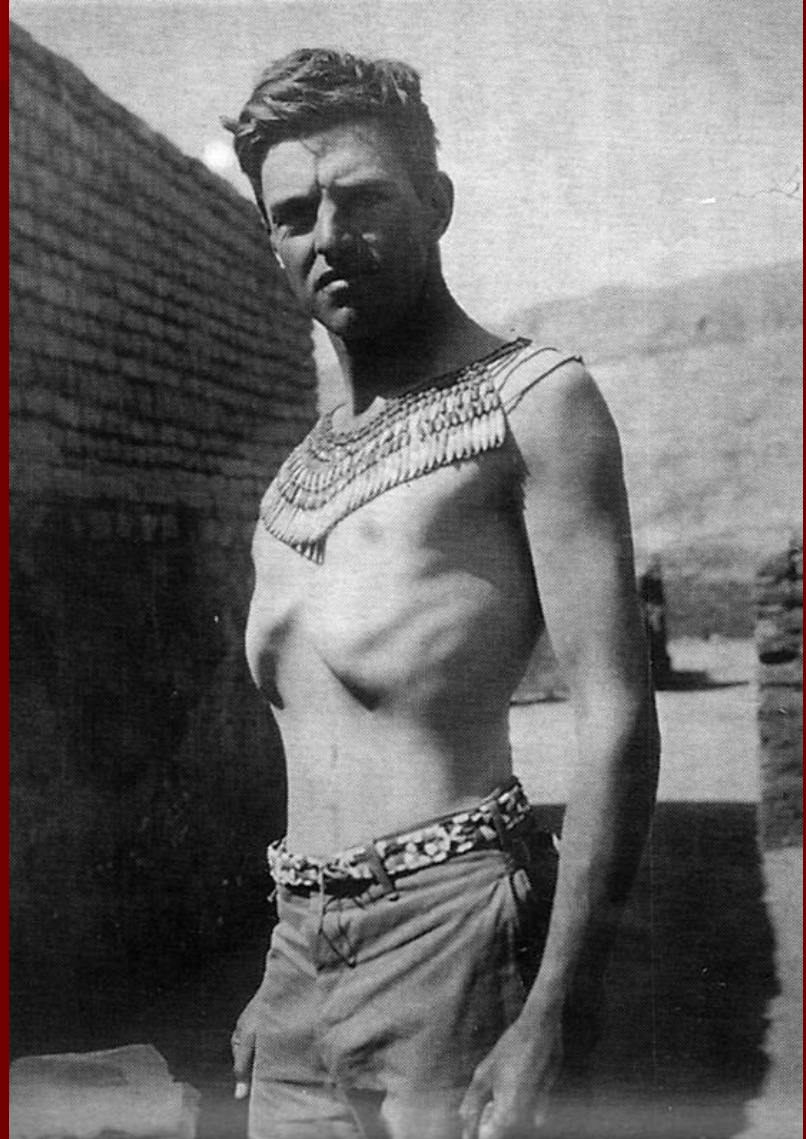
Scholarly Passions

- invokes a wide range of scholarly opinions
- Amarna as a “fair world of sunshine” (Adolf Erman)
- “time of religious intolerance, persecution, and police observation” (W. Helck)



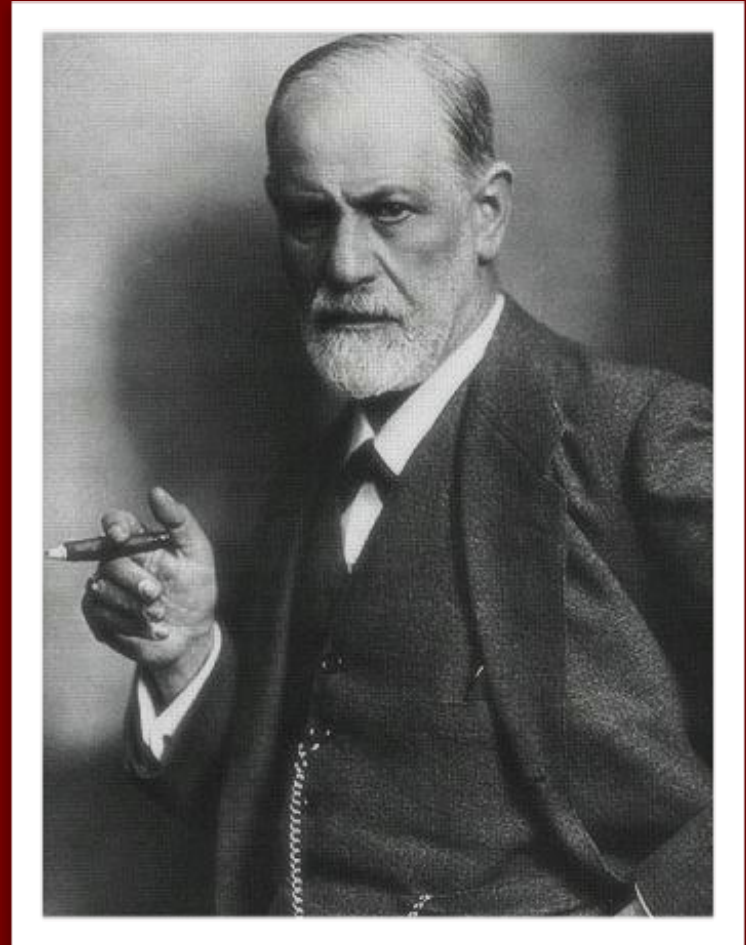
Renewed British Excavations

- Associated by his critics as overly romantic about the past



The Amarna Period in adjacent disciplines

- In addition to the scholarly Egyptological community, the Amarna period has wide public interest in many disciplines
- Sigmund Freud (1856–1939): Moses and Monotheism



MOSES AND MONOTHEISM

SIGMUND FREUD

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY
KATHERINE JONES



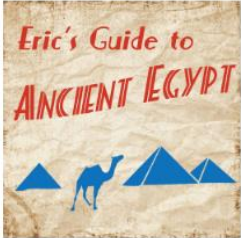
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-
- ❑ Freud described the Hebrew prophet Moses as being a member of the court of Akhenaten where he learned of Akhenaten's "monotheistic" solar religion
 - ❑ Also used Akhenaten as a case study for the Oedipus Complex

Academic discussions?



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Akhenaten. One of the most famous pharaohs—but he wasn't supposed to be. Coming to power only after the death of his brother, his reign was so traumatic that the ancient Egyptians attempted to erase any trace of his existence after his death. In this podcast we'll examine his rise to power and the extreme steps he took to gain complete control over ancient Egypt.



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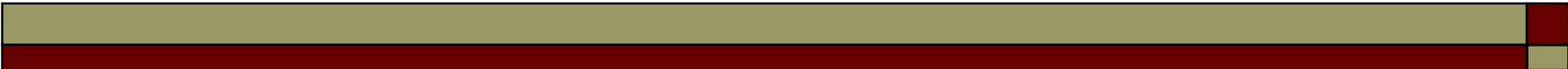
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Pseudo-academic discussions

- <http://garryvictorhill.com.au/>
 - Akhenaten and Nefertiti: The Controversy and the Evidence By Garry Victor Hill