



Amenhotep III

Perspectives on His Reign

Edited by

David O'Connor and Eric H. Cline

Ann Arbor

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

stances could apply to riverine Nubians as well, who raised crops and also herded cattle, and who might also have been dispersed because of the needs of the harvest.

The prisoners recorded, relatively small in number as they are, might also indicate that the Egyptian strategy was not only to attack when the population was dispersed but also to target a particular group within the society of Ithet. The list of prisoners is unusually circumstantial, as well as peculiar in its proportions. About 20 percent were Nehasyu, that is, Nubians; almost 15 percent some kind of soldier;²⁰⁶ about 34 percent Nehasyu women; 7.4 percent servants of the Nehasyu; and almost 24 percent children. Normally, one might expect males (as more desirable, more easily exploitable prisoners) to outnumber women and children. The opposite circumstance in this case and the presence of specialist warriors (a bodyguard?) and servants (rarely referred to with regard to Nubians) suggest that we might have here an elite group (men, women, and children) and their attendants. No ruler is identified (and surely would have been), but perhaps the Egyptians had captured some of his close relatives or at least a group of such a high status that their capture provided valuable hostages and encouraged the Egyptians to withdraw to negotiate from a position of strength. However, these circumstances could apply to a riverine population as much as to a desert one.

The record of military activity in and around Nubia under Amenhotep III raises some intriguing possibilities. Perhaps, once the conquest of the Nubian province had stabilized, the policies of later Eighteenth Dynasty rulers like Amenhotep III, and after them the Ramessides, were principally focused on increased exploitation of the eastern gold mines, on the one hand, and on the inherently volatile relationship with politics in independent southern Nubia, on the other.²⁰⁷ However, while the available evidence permits some speculation, it as yet provides no conclusive confirmation.

²⁰⁶ For this list, see Helck (1957b) 1660.11–19; Zibohus-Chen (1988) 120 identifies the *mgy* included in the list as "jungskriegen."

²⁰⁷ On these, see O'Connor (1987) 124–35.

Chapter 8

The Dawn of the Amarna Age

John Baines

The late Eighteenth Dynasty as a whole has aroused great controversy among ancient historians and students of religion, centering around the reign of Akhenaten (generally known as the Amarna period). Without going into detail over chronology, one can place the events of that period around 1350 B.C., a time when there was also great change in the Near East. Rather little is certain about the revolutionary episode in Egypt, even though the later Eighteenth Dynasty is one of the best-known periods of Egyptian history. There is no consensus over the historical interpretation of the events of the time. Since the Amarna period followed the reign of Amenhotep III, which forms the subject of this book, it is desirable to explore the connections between these two phases for the light each may be able to shed on the other.

The Reforms of Akhenaten

The essential features of the Amarna episode can be outlined briefly.¹ Amenhotep IV, probably a younger son of Amenhotep III, succeeded his father. I

¹ This chapter was first presented at a seminar in the Oriental Faculty in Oxford and subsequently at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and at the University of Michigan. I am grateful for the points raised in discussion at those places. I am much indebted to Mariamne Eaton-Krauss and Rolf Krauss for detailed comments on a rough draft and to Betsy Bryan for making her research on the reign (esp. in Kozloff and Bryan 1992) available to me ahead of publication; we have arrived at several conclusions independently. I owe knowledge of some of Dr. Bryan's conclusions that go beyond those presented in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) to a paper she presented in Cambridge (Bryan [1992]), of which she most kindly gave me a copy. A number of suggestions on specific points are due in particular to Mariamne Eaton-Krauss.

Much of the material and many of the issues I mention, especially those relating to the reign of Akhenaten itself, have been discussed repeatedly. It is not possible to give more than selected references here. For many topics, other chapters in the present book will be the best sources of information.

² No full and satisfactory historical outline of the period is available, partly because there is little consensus over its events and their interpretation. Apart from Hornung's brief work (1995), Redford (1984) is probably the most reliable. For valuable criticism and comparison, see Eaton-Krauss (1990). See also Berman in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 33–66. For a

believe, with the majority of Egyptologists, that the succession occurred at Amenhotep III's death and that there was no chronologically or historically significant phase of coregency between them. Within a year or so of his accession, Amenhotep IV started to modify religious beliefs and practices together with the artistic styles in which they were embodied. At Karnak he began a temple in a somewhat unusual but still traditional style for the sun god, whose name and essence were defined in a new formula. By his third year at the latest, the architecture and style were radically transformed and the god's name had crystallized into a complex dogmatic form enclosed in a pair of royal cartouches (fig. 8.1). The god's principal abbreviation and appellation was "Aten" or "the Aten," that is, "the Solar Disk." He was represented not in human form but as a disk with rays emanating from it that bestowed the blessing of life in particular on the royal couple or family beneath. Probably in his fourth year, Amenhotep IV planned a move to a new capital city at a site now known as Amarna, midway between the civil capital of Memphis and the religious capital of Thebes. He named the site Akhetaten, "Horizon of the Solar Disk." In his sixth year, he changed his name to Akhenaten, "Beneficent for the Disk (?)," in honor of his god,² establishing his principal residence in the new city between then and year 8.

A revised dogmatic name for the god followed around year 9, and perhaps from that time dates the erasure of the name and representations of the dynastic god of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Amon or Amon-Ra, from the monuments. The word "gods" was also attacked, notably but not exclusively where it occurred in the epithet "king of the gods" attached to the name of Amon.³

Akhenaten's reforms affected most areas of Egyptian public and monumental culture, ranging from the houses of the city of Akhetaten to tombs and beliefs about the next life. In the aftermath of his seventeen-year reign, the reforms were dismantled. No later than the time of Horemheb, the last king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who came to the throne nearly twenty years after Akhenaten's death,⁴ there was an active persecution of the name of Akhenaten, his monuments were being torn down, and his essential religious

broader history, devoting considerable space to the late Eighteenth Dynasty, see Vandier-Jasen (1995).

2. For a summary of these dating issues, see Krauss (1991) 12 (context not relevant here).

3. For these phenomena, see Saad (1972); Hart (1984) 1039–41; Munro (1987), with a valuable summary of the Russian work of Perepelkin on the general chronology of developments; Hornung (1995) 95–97; Manuélian (in press).

4. The earlier date emerges from Marianne Eaton-Krauss's research in progress on the reign of Tutankhamun.

The Dawn of the Amarna Age 273

ideas abandoned. This movement of reaction continued in the early Nineteenth Dynasty.

Because Akhenaten's reforms were so pervasive and were rejected so soon and so comprehensively, the abandonment of the desert city of Amarna and reuse of materials from his Karnak temples and other monuments in the fill of later buildings preserved vast amounts of evidence from his reign. The unique cuneiform archive from Amarna, known as the Amarna Letters, supplies vital evidence for relations between Egypt, its possessions in the Levant, and the Near East. Much of what it contains may not be especially distinctive for Akhenaten but rather a sample of typical international diplomatic and administrative exchange of the period.⁵

The Egyptians did not find it as easy to suppress the influence of the episode of Akhenaten and Akhetaten as it was to obliterate Akhenaten's presence on monuments or restore the earlier structures that had been damaged under his orders. Such influence can be seen in survivals throughout the late New Kingdom and probably later. In effect, some aspects of the Amarna reforms became part of the culture of late New Kingdom Egypt, while others survived in the broader stream of tradition and were on occasion revived at much later dates.⁶

The Historical and Cultural Context: Problems of Method

An assessment of the Amarna episode's significance should be set in the larger historical and cultural context into which Akhenaten was born and against which he reacted. Much has been written about the motivation for the changes of his reign, and there is no sign that the flood of speculation will lessen. People generally assume that the prime mover was the king. For religious matters, in particular, antecedents to many elements have been identified.⁷ Similarly, some stylistic and representational developments in mid-Eighteenth Dynasty art offer points of departure for Akhenaten's forms.

Because the record is fragmentary, parallels or antecedents for features of Amarna can be missed. Many Amarna developments were artistic, but whole areas of artistic production of Amenhotep III's reign that could have had a major influence on Amarna, such as metalwork, secular furniture, and the

5. Authoritative translation: Moran (1992). For a summation of research on the social and diplomatic context, see Liverani (1990). Liverani is preparing a new translation that is likely to bring significant changes in interpretation.

6. E.g., Assmann (1971).

7. Esp. Redford (1976), (1980).

decoration of dwellings, are largely unknown. It may not, therefore, be fruitful to establish lists of traits or features that were adopted or developed from much earlier or even immediately preceding times. What is distinctive for this period and stimulates some of people's continuing fascination with it is that rejection of inherited forms, change, and unconventionality provided the norm for the king's ideas, whatever may have been the precise source of the new forms, and however they may have been legitimized. Those ideas went through major transformations during the reign, whether or not these were planned from the beginning.⁸ Naturally, certain aspects of the development aspired to create new rigidities. The orientation toward change needs to be interpreted in its historical context. In the background are the cyclically oriented Egyptian view of the cosmos⁹ and the issue of whether Akhenaten's changes sought to replace the cycle with a vision of something like linear progress. Although a notion of linear progress may be anachronistic, the continuation of developments through the reign makes the point worth investigating.

To approach these issues, two broad questions should be asked. How far can we see generalized antecedents for the Amarna changes, as well as specific motifs, in the preceding period? And what constitutes a valid approach to interpreting changes of this sort and their antecedents? These are interrelated formulations of the issues in pragmatic and theoretical terms. At the end of this chapter, I return to the problem of method implicit in the second question. Ultimately, I address the same problems as does existing literature, but I study the preceding period rather more than the reign of Akhenaten itself, examining the general social and historical context as well as detailed features.

I focus on the reign of Amenhotep III, but there is no sharp distinction between his time and that of his father and predecessor Thutmose IV. In terms of artistic style, which is the most accessible part of the tradition, the main changes seem to have begun after the reign of Amenhotep II, so that Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III form a largely incremental continuum. Amenhotep III ruled longer than any previous Eighteenth Dynasty monarch—Thutmose III being displaced for nearly twenty years by Hatshepsut—and he inherited a generally peaceful realm. Since his reign encompassed more than one elite career generation, it was long enough to encompass major changes, and it is seldom necessary to look farther back for a context

for Amarna. The mass of surviving evidence is so great that I can only select themes and examples.

The Amarna period poses a classic historical problem. There can be no doubt that what Akhenaten introduced and attempted to institutionalize was extremely radical—surely more radical than any other changes within Egyptian history. It is possible to attempt a study of the stimuli for his actions—their administrative and institutional basis and the support of or opposition to them—as well as reasons for the success or failure of particular aspects. These questions, which relate to the motivations and interplay of the elite group and their beliefs, are too fine-grained to be approached directly through archaeological methods. There is no significant evidence as to whether the people as a whole were involved in or could have influenced the changes, but the changes do not have the appearance of a broadly based phenomenon. Although archaeological work provides the evidence of what Akhenaten did and for his vital capital city, my principal question is not archaeological. Broad social analyses that are undertaken with archaeological and social-scientific methods are only partly applicable, even though the status of the elite and its relation with the wider society are crucial background questions.¹⁰ So I attempt a primarily religious and historical-cultural study.

A discussion of the “dawn” of the Amarna age is teleological. It is unlikely that scholars would examine the reign of Akhenaten's predecessor for hints of radical change if such change were not known to have followed. This obvious point does not help us to establish whether people of the time thought they were living in a period of accelerated change. In an ancient perspective, “accelerated change” could encompass rates much slower than those of the Amarna period or of periods with which the reign of Amenhotep III might be compared. His reign could have experienced accelerated change in relation to the general pace of ancient development. An important question is whether there was, or ideally was perceived to be, such accelerated change.

A contrasting approach is to see Akhenaten's actions as deliberately “revolutionary”—as being aimed at overturning or reversing traditional attitudes or practices. Such change is not “accelerated” but is aimed at a different order of transformation of society or of social institutions. Revolutions cannot affect all of life, but they carry over into their new framework traditional practices that are unmarked and unattended to. They may turn what

8. Hornung has argued that the whole process was foreseen (see Hornung [1982] 244–45). There is, however, no clear means of assessing this matter.

9. E.g., Assmann (1975b); Hornung (1982) *passim*.

10. For a stimulating analysis of the composition of Egyptian society (not specifically for this period) and a valuable discussion of Amarna as a city, see Kemp (1989).

was taken for granted into a serious issue, or they may dismiss serious matters as trivial or meaningless.

Some scholars who have seen Akhenaten's changes as revolutionary have remarked that their style or specific features of them were conventional or traditional,¹¹ and hence that they might have been very selective. An important argument against this reading is that numerous small changes of the reign have the appearance of innovation for its own sake rather than of alteration motivated for a specific purpose in a particular context. A good example is the use of a new term for "chief vintner" in the latter part of the reign: the old term returned after its end,¹² and the change can have had little deep import. Some apparent "conservatism" is to be expected in any case, because total change is beyond human capacity; the conservative cast may come from matters that were not the subject of attention. Akhenaten seems to have been a prime mover in the changes—and probably their instigator. Since the changes emanated from the center, they might not have detailed implications for all of society, because Akhenaten's concerns might not have extended so far. In political terms, they appear, like changes imposed from the center in other societies, to have intensified the centralization of power.

In this chapter I review evidence from the reign of Amenhotep III that may relate to "accelerated change" and to elements in general culture that might have favored Amarna developments. Those developments encompassed all areas of high culture—other aspects of society can hardly be compared between Amarna and the decades on either side—and a search for antecedents should be wide-ranging. It is best to begin with religion, even if, as has often been suggested, Akhenaten's focus on religion might have been meant to hide political interests or to overcome them by reference to more portentous concerns. To distinguish between religion and politics may be misleading in any case, because the politically powerful king continued to be integral to religion.

Religious Aspects: Diversity and Solar Beliefs

Akhenaten's religion was proclaimed in his god's dogmatic names and in the hymns addressed to the god—and probably in other, lost categories of text.¹³ Another valuable source is a fragmentary speech on a block from one of his

Karnak buildings that appears to present in argumentative form the contrast between the traditional creator or sun god and Akhenaten's own vision.¹⁴ The persecution of Amon and the traditional gods is itself an important pointer to the evolution of his ideas, probably in the later phases of his reforms. If nothing else, destruction of traditional religious names and iconography is eloquent testimony to intolerance—and possibly to fear of the deities and other supernatural beings who were anathematized.

Traditional Egyptian religion was tolerant in several senses. There was a diversity of gods and beliefs, many of them overlapping; much in them might be seen as being contradictory—if no more so than precepts we may ourselves adopt. This tolerance is in part encapsulated in what Henri Frankfort saw as the fundamental "multiplicity of approaches" characteristic of Egyptian and many other religions.¹⁵ Diversity did not stimulate much polemical literature arguing the merits of one deity or religious conception specifically against another. Possible examples from other periods include the "Admonitions," whose focus is in part on the religious dimensions of social collapse.¹⁶ This literary text illustrates indirectly how religious controversy might appear in Egyptian terms, but it has no clear Eighteenth Dynasty analogue before Amarna.

In the Eighteenth Dynasty, the principal focus of religious discussion inscribed outside the inner parts of temples was solar. Solar hymns were produced in large numbers.¹⁷ Those preserved were carved mainly in tombs but also on stelae and statues. They vary greatly, and many were probably new compositions created for the contexts from which we know them, rather than copies of texts originally disseminated elsewhere (some, however, were standard).¹⁸

These hymns do not relate to any single religious tendency or concern. Most are addressed to Amon-Ra rather than to the sun god Ra alone and thus may have a specifically Theban orientation—although this need not follow, because Amon-Ra was the widely worshipped "state god" and similar hymns could be used in the cult of different gods.¹⁹ Little is known about the character of related texts from outside the Theban area, but such examples as the major texts in the Memphite tomb of Horemheb²⁰ from the post-

14. Redford (1981).

15. Frankfort et al. (1949); Frankfort (1948a) 3–4.

16. E.g., Lechtzin (1973); Assmann (1991) 260–65.

17. Assmann (1983a) = idem (1995); idem (1983b).

18. See Assmann (1983b) xviii–xxxiv.

19. E.g., Assmann (1975a) 322–46; the examples translated there are later than Amenhotep III.

20. Martin (1989a) 29–31, no. 7; 33–35, no. 11; 92–93, no. 73.

11. E.g., Hornung (1982) 244–45; this overall interpretation does not see Akhenaten as conventional; see also Hornung (1995).

12. Krauss (1978) 177–79, with references.

13. No "instruction" text is preserved from the reign, but scotching of the sort seems to have existed; see Assmann (1980).

Amarna period are close to Theban hymns, so that there may not have been much variation across the country. The Theban nonroyal hymns seem to occupy a middle ground among the following types occurring in other material: (1) traditional and probably archaic hymns of "hourly ritual" for the sun god;²¹ (2) less archaic liturgical hymns, reflected in compositions preserved in chapter 15 of the Book of the Dead, which have the most in common with the hymns in tombs;²² (3) hymns of the "new solar religion,"²³ a simplified form of solar worship not so far attested before the reign of Amenhotep III; and (4) hymns incorporating the idea of a "supreme being," associated primarily with the Ramesside period, but appearing by the reign of Amenhotep III.²⁴

This material seemingly arrests to intense discussion of religious issues, including advocacy of positions that could be mutually exclusive. Such a reading should not, however, be pressed too far, and the material's general character must be borne in mind. Modern studies of comparable issues with cognitive implications often focus on contradiction and give insufficient weight to the fact that the sources are poetic and celebratory imaginative works, not rigorous discourse. As noted, discussions that deliberately exposed underlying conflicts are hardly attested. We do not know whether they were written down, but it is unlikely that they did not take place. A discussion might not, however, lead to a sharp rejection of one view in favor of another unless notions of contradiction and resolution were prominent. Such notions seem to have been present in some sense under Akhenaten, but it is not clear whether that was the case earlier.

Hymns inscribed in relatively accessible places, such as nonroyal tombs and stela in the outer parts of temples, partake of all the religious tendencies enumerated earlier except that of the hourly ritual, which was inscribed in inner areas of temples and was probably used in a restricted cult that may have been known in detail only to direct participants.²⁵ Major "literary" hymns of the same general date—compositions that constitute belles lettres rather than cult materials—are known from papyrus copies and can be

linked with types 3 and 4. These are the Cairo hymn to Amon,²⁶ which relates indirectly to the new solar religion, and the Leiden hymn to Amon, connected with the notion of the supreme being.²⁷ The Cairo hymn is attested from before the Amarna period, as is part of another Leiden hymn (see n. 24). It is unlikely that papyrus finds, in particular, are representative of the period's range of texts, and otherwise unattested literary hymns may be represented in excerpt but unidentifiable among texts inscribed on stone.²⁸

This point is relevant especially for the Cairo hymn. This text is "universalistic," showing the god's concern for all aspects of creation, including ones normally outside the Egyptians' moral universe, such as lower orders of being and people outside Egypt. This hymn has mostly been dated to the Eighteenth Dynasty, but part of it is preserved on a Second Intermediate Period stela. The text must therefore either be earlier or fuse different compositions, some of them pre-New Kingdom.

There is a generalized kinship between the Cairo hymn and the new solar religion, but in moral orientation rather than in the vision of the god himself; the latter tendency remains separate and distinctive. The new solar religion is generally thought to have originated in the reign of Amenhotep III and to have led straight to Amarna ideas. While this may be so, the Cairo and Leiden hymns show that other tendencies best attested from the later New Kingdom existed in earlier "literary" discourse and are reflected in hymns on stone. Thus, a dating of the emergence of the new solar religion to Amenhotep III is based almost solely on lack of attestation. Like the other tendencies, this one may have been expressed more fully in literary texts on which the preserved hymns may have drawn. The Amarna texts,²⁹ among which the "Great Hymn to the Aten" is far longer than most unitary solar hymns, may have taken inspiration in part from such a forerunner as well as from very recent texts (such as that on the stela of Suty and Hor, discussed later in this section).

This range of solar compositions suggests that in the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty there was diverse and active religious discussion in an elite forum. Tombs were the freest available context for inscribing such material and demonstrate the importance of the religious issues, but it would be unwise to

21. Not all are preserved. See Assmann (1969) 113–64; Gräfe (1995).
22. Assmann (1969) 15–112.
23. Assmann terms this "new solar theology"; see Assmann (1983a), esp. 97–98 = idem (1995) 67–68 (see also idem [1995] xi). I prefer the more neutral term *religion*; see Baines (1984) 48.

24. Zandee (1987) 127, referring to Assmann (1983b) no. 180; Epigraphic Survey (1980) 30–32, pl. 7.

25. Papyrus copies must have secured its transmission. See Assmann (1983a) 22–39 = idem (1995) 16–30; for broader implications, see Baines (1990).

26. P. Boulaq 17, Cairo CG 58038; Grébaud (1874/1875); Hassan (1930) 157–93; Assmann (1975a) no. 87. There is no recent treatment.

27. For the hymn, see Zandee (1948); Assmann (1975a) nos. 132–42. For the supreme being, see Assmann (1979); idem (1983a) 189–286 = idem (1995) 156–210.

28. See further Baines 1996.
29. E.g., Lichtheim (1976) 89–100; for another selection, see Assmann (1975a) 209–25.

overstress the hymns' significance either for tombs or for society. Hymns occupy a small, if prominent, position, and they have a limited role in relation to a tomb's primary purpose. The inscribed hymns do not show that the discussion influencing them was popular except among the very small elite; others had little access to the tombs, and the nonliterate had still less access to writings in them, even if material could be read out to them—if the purpose of inscription was reading out, which it may often not have been. We have simply no means of studying solar beliefs in the broader population. Despite these reservations, the New Kingdom is the only period when there was such intense preoccupation with a religious topic in the discursive form of texts inscribed in public places.

This elite discussion, which culminated in the reign of Amenhotep III and reached its crisis under Akhenaten,³⁰ may have intensified pressure on solar religion's tolerance of diverging views, perhaps to the breaking point. Although the whole development should be seen in a wider context in which solar beliefs were one—albeit dominant—strand among many, the fact that the hymns of the new solar religion effectively ignored the rest of the world of the gods remains vital.

Was this situation one of "pluralism" rather than tolerance? In a plural context, alternative and competing beliefs coexist ideally without violent conflict. But if the beliefs focus on the same sets of concerns, the potential for conflict is evident, and pluralism will then be maintained only with difficulty. It may be easier for Christians and Buddhists to agree to respect each other's positions than it is for different Christian sects to do so. Such a parallel, however, highlights differences between what are generally perceived as the Egyptian and Christian contexts: Egyptian religion scarcely had dogmas, whereas Christianity uses the definitions or dogmas of a creed. In their divergences, Christian sects often focus ostensibly—whatever may be the underlying issues—on distinctions in dogma, whether of creed or of other constituent elements. Rigorous and disputable definitions sharpen conflict.

How far did the religious tendencies around the reign of Amenhotep III compete in the same area and tend toward definitions or dogmas? With hindsight, such a goal is visible in the religion of Akhenaten, which centered around a few essential definitions, notably the names of the god, which scholars have always termed "dogmatic." Also approaching dogma is the high degree of fixity in epithets describing Akhenaten himself, as well as the concentration of texts and images around a limited repertory. That does not,

30. Compare the subtitle of Assmann (1983a), rendered in English for Assmann (1995) as "Re, Amun, and the Crisis of Polytheism." That work focuses on the Ramessid period more than on the time of Akhenaten.

however, settle the issue, because Akhenaten's dogmatism could have descended fairly directly from preceding developments or could have arisen in reaction against them.

Two additional factors should be considered. First—but logically second—the dogmatic names of Akhenaten's god and the whole thrust of the new belief affected the kingship and the king's relations with his god as strongly as they did conceptions of the god himself. Amarna religion was a religion of god and king, or even of king first and then god.

Second, a dominant characteristic of the new solar religion is its eschewing of the mythical, or, in Jan Assmann's terminology, of the "constellations" of figures surrounding the sun god in his perpetual and daily cycle.³¹ Traditional solar beliefs encompassed the sun god's entourage and the context of the solar cycle as well as the deity, who appeared in multiple manifestations relating to the time of day or night and to other factors. By contrast, the new movement ignored the entourage, concentrating on him and on the demythologized world of creation. The only significant element retained was the uraeus, the cobra pendant from the solar disk that symbolized the solar eye; uraei occur both on the disk of the Aten itself and on the crowns of the king and queen. The movement's universalism is seen in its focus on the everyday world of creation, while its descriptions of nature and of the creator's care for all life derive from the tradition of such texts as the Cairo hymn to Amon and from other sources going back as far as the mid-third millennium.³² The eschewing of myth, however, created a new context for the creator's care and for his sole responsibility. There was no longer the basic organization of beliefs in which creation and its maintenance were a collaboration of gods, humanity, and others in face of the forces of disorder.

Traditional solar religion, and even of that of Akhenaten, may appear paradoxical to the outsider, because the sun god was acted on as much as acting. Although he had created the world, he had withdrawn from it into the sky, rather like the aloof creator gods of some other religions. He was surrounded by beings who propelled him, repulsed his enemies, and in other ways supported his existence, while the king, as the protagonist of humanity, assisted the whole process. Akhenaten's god was even less evidently active. He sustained and cared for all of creation, but no specific action was credited to him, and no myth of creation is attested from the Amarna period. Jan Assmann has adopted from astrophysics the notion of "continuous cre-

31. On traditional solar religion versus the "new solar religion," see Assmann (1969) on traditional religion, *idem* (1972a) and (1983a) = *idem* (1995) *passim* on "new solar religion."

32. References: Builes (1991) 186–88.

ation" (now discredited among astrophysicists) to describe the god's role, which he sees essentially as the dispensing of life-giving light.³³ The king was the person who knew this and worshiped the light—which, with the solar disk, was all of the god that was visually represented—but without the royal-divine reciprocity in the face of chaos that characterized the earlier system. The rest of creation spontaneously recognized and acknowledged the god but played no other direct part in sustaining the world.

The implications of these points can be explored initially through monuments of the reign of Amenhotep III. The principal surviving text of the new solar religion is on the stela of the twin brothers *Sury* and *Hor* (in the British Museum; fig. 8.2),³⁴ who were the architects of the Luxor temple and were thus people of high elite status. Their monument is traditional in form and iconography; it includes funerary formulas as well as a hymn to the sun god. The hymn is of a novel character and is striking especially in that it does not mention the beings who accompanied the god in traditional compositions. The imagery with which it treats the god himself nonetheless remains rich in implied manifestations and iconography, an example being the god's form as a falcon. Thus, despite its evidently radical character, it moves only part of the way to the focus of Akhenaten's hymns.

The distribution of subject matter on *Sury* and *Hor*'s stela suggests that the contrast between traditional and new modes of worshiping and understanding the sun god was not very sharp and that different tendencies—notably the inclusion of other deities in the offering formulas and their near absence in the hymn—were not seen as mutually exclusive. This perception, which may seem improbable to the outsider, could relate to a general tolerance of contradiction or to a more explicit pluralism, that is, to the acceptance of different, closely focused approaches to the same subject. The monument is eloquent evidence both for plural religious conceptions and for the significance and diversity of discussion around solar religion. Its juxtaposition of ideas is more suggestive of pluralism than of tolerance, but such a notion is clearly alien to Western thinking where it relates to the beliefs of a single person (which the twins were for this purpose; see n. 34).

The different styles of text on this monument probably draw on alterna-

33. Assmann (1983a) 113–23 = idem (1995) 80–87.

34. Fecht (1967), with references; Assmann (1973a) no. 89. For their status as twins, see Baines (1983a). For a brief history of relevant discussions, see Delange in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 26–27. Assmann has argued that this hymn depends on an archetype preserved indirectly in Twenty-sixth Dynasty Theban tombs (see Assmann [1971]; idem [1983b] xxxv). The age of such an archetype is very difficult to gauge.

tive groups of sources. Whether the novel hymn was copied from a source or composed in a style, it is unlikely to have been the earliest composition of its type; its perfection argues against extreme novelty. The date of the stela—generally placed near the end of the reign of Amenhotep III, but without specific evidence—is thus probably not that of the new solar religion's origin, which cannot easily be established; purely linguistic criteria do not help. Much changed during the reign of Amenhotep III, and the religious movement could have appeared then, but it could be older. If it was older, the inscription of a hymn incorporating its ideas was still a radical innovation, not so much because of the circumscribed nature of what could traditionally be displayed as because the hymn's content was discordant with other texts in an area of vital concern and, more generally, because decisions to present topics on monuments were not lightly taken. Many hymns survive from earlier in the dynasty, and if there had been earlier examples on comparable monuments, some evidence for them might well survive. If the *Sury* and *Hor* text brings something latent into view, this need not imply that the new solar religion was a secret countercurrent, although this is possible; it could just have been an alternative espoused by few.

The pluralism seen on this stela may have opened the way to new possibilities, but Akhenaten's developments were anything but plural. His drastic restriction of possibilities has many parallels among major changes in beliefs and in social and political organization in other societies. Because of the marked division between Akhenaten and the time of his predecessor, it is not fruitful to look for detailed antecedents for all his innovations. The connection between the conceptions of *Sury* and *Hor*'s hymn and those of Akhenaten's "Great Hymn to the Aten" is, however, close enough for the appearance of the *Sury* and *Hor* hymn in a public context during the preceding years to be significant both for its content and for its demonstration of possibilities; yet their hymn also illustrates the chasm separating Akhenaten from his predecessors.

The reduced and restricted focus of Amarna religion and reform is central to its character, while it contrasts with the reign's generally high level of innovation. In the broader religious sphere, Akhenaten's changes tended in the opposite direction to those of Amenhotep III. Apart from variety within solar religion, the latter's reign saw, for example, major development in animal worship at the Sarapieion in Memphis, where his probable eldest son

35. See in general Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 73–120, with references.

Thutmose was high priest of Prah,³⁶ as well as construction in the temple complex of Prah,³⁷ building works including colossal quartzite statues of baboons at Hermopolis,³⁸ among other major work there,³⁹ and a temple to Horus of Hebenu to the north of Hermopolis,⁴⁰ construction of a temple to Sobek near Rizeiqat south of Thebes,⁴¹ one to Khnum at Elephantine,⁴² and the major temples of Soleb and Sedeinga in Upper Nubia,⁴³ and no doubt many projects now unknown. In Thebes, as discussed by David O'Connor in chapter 5 in this book, he built in the area of the complex of Montu⁴⁴ and possibly that of Mut⁴⁵ at Karnak, in addition to his work in the central complex of Amon-Ra, construction of the Luxor temple, and his vast mortuary temple and other constructions on the West Bank.⁴⁶ He appears to have imported some Memphite cults to complement the traditional ones of Thebes, as if Thebes was to become a microcosm of all the country's cults in its function of cosmic representation—as it was for the solar cult by the common designation of Thebes as "Upper Egyptian Heliopolis."⁴⁷ Despite the preeminence of the sun god, the general religious orientation of Amenhotep III's reign was in no way toward uniformity or focus on a single deity.

Interchanges between god and king were presented in various forms. The most striking instance is in three stelae from Amenhotep III's mortuary temple. These mainly narrate the king's constructions in the Theban area. One

36. For Thutmose, see Porter and Moss (1981) 780–81, 851; Dodson (1991); Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 75.

37. Not archaeologically attested, but see the text of the high steward of Memphis cited by Berman in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 54, and see Morkot (1990).

38. Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 75, with n. 6 and references.

39. Spencer et al. (1989) 63–64.

40. Discussed by Bryan in Kozloff and Bryan (1992), esp. 118–20.

41. See Romano (1979) 82–84; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 75, with nn. 7–8.

42. Destroyed in the nineteenth century; see Porter and Moss (1937) 227–29; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 75, with n. 9.

43. Ibid. 106–10, with references.

44. Porter and Moss (1974) 1–20, passing; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 99–102. The temple is named *Khaemnat*—identical with the king's Horus name—in a dedicatory inscription running around the wall bases. It is not clear whether Amenhotep III built structures dedicated to Montu or only to Amon and Maat.

45. There is no direct evidence for his having built there (see Fazzini [1985] 294–95), but the creation in his reign of the Tenth Pylon of the main precinct, angled toward the Mut complex, is suggestive; see Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 94–95, figs. IV.17–18. It is generally thought that the hundreds of granite statues of Sakhmet from his reign that were found in the Mut temple were transported there at a later date from his mortuary temple; for brief treatment, see Haery (1981) 90–99.

46. Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 82–104. For his work at Thebes, see esp. O'Connor's discussion in chap. 5 in the present book. See also Mumane (1993).

47. Van Dijk (1988); see also Trautwiler (1988). For "Upper Egyptian Heliopolis," see, e.g., Kees (1949). See further Kozloff and Bryan (1992).

concentrates almost exclusively on the mortuary temple itself;⁴⁸ a second, very fragmentary stela presents the king's construction of monuments in relation to the Memphite god Prah-Sokar-Osiris;⁴⁹ and the third describes a wide range of buildings and implies much about the modeling of the city into a sacred cosmos.⁵⁰ The first stela is a new composition written in a difficult and recherché style, and the second too uses very unusual and probably novel phraseology. The third is much more conventional and is repetitive in structure and formulation, probably adopting standard phraseology, but including a description of the hitherto unknown temple type of a *m3rw*; another *m3rw* was built at Amarna, but the word is not attested again until texts from Greco-Roman times.⁵¹ This stela's presentation of the city as an environment is important also for the texts and representations of Akhenaten, many of which address similar subjects. The idea of praise of the city, which is probably related to cosmic notions, is known from earlier in the Eighteenth Dynasty⁵² and lived on after the Amarna period, notably in the Leiden hymn to Amon (see n. 27). The presence of stelae relating to the gods of both Thebes and Memphis may incorporate cosmic associations of both the country's capital cities within the environment of the king's mortuary temple. This last feature of temples has not been explored for Akhenaten's temples at Amarna, and it is perhaps unlikely that they had all the cosmological meanings of traditional structures, whereas the city of Amarna clearly embodied such notions.

The texts of the three stelae conclude with speeches from the god to the king. Here, the first stela is the most interesting, including both an address of Amon-Ra and a speech of the ennead; together these two speeches form about half the stela's extent. Although many earlier speeches of deity to king are preserved,⁵³ this degree of reciprocity is unusual, and the presence of an extensive address by the ennead actualizes the significance of much in temple

48. The "Stela behind the Memnon Colossi." Text: Heick (1957a) 1671–77. Translation: Heick (1961) 206–8.

49. This stela also celebrates the king's relationship with Prah. Text: Heick (1959) 1955–58. Translation: Heick (1961) 333–34. Rewriting: Heick (1993).

50. The stela is Cairo CG 34025. Text: Lacau (1909) 47–52; Heick (1957a) 1646–57. Translations: Heick (1961) 194–99; Lichtheim (1976) 43–48. This stela is used extensively by Bryan in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 82–104. For the concluding speech of Amon-Ra, with parallels, see Grimal (1986) 449–66. The reverse of the stela is the Israel inscription of Merneptah.

51. Erman and Grapow (1928) 30, 6–8.

52. See Gutsch (1994).

53. Grimal (1986) 445–72. The Poetical Stela of Thutmose III (e.g., Lichtheim [1976] 35–39) is a prime example and a forerunner of these texts. On the important category of divine speeches, see Assmann (1975b).

relief and emphasizes the plurality of the gods. The presence of three stela is significant, because strongly divergent texts dealing with essentially similar subject matter were set up close to one another. This way of proceeding is pluralistic, and since two texts were new compositions, the pluralism was deliberate and not just the product of converging traditions—but it did not tend to focus on a single deity. The heightened dialogue between king and gods is in complete contrast to Akhenaten's relations with his god. Akhenaten addressed his god and presented his exclusive knowledge of him to others, but the god did not respond in words. Neither the traditional short utterances captioning figures of deities nor more extensive speeches by the god are known. Unlike traditional gods, the new deity was not represented figuratively in human or other, animal form, at least on developed monuments in the new style; and in the later form of the dogmatic name he was as nonfigural an entity as deities in almost any tradition.⁵⁴ The rich, if often stereotyped, iconography of traditional religion was replaced by a single image, while the god interacted with royalty by offering the signs of life and power from the ends of his rays. This exclusivism built on features of traditional decorum, such as the presence of the winged disk above figures of the king but not above figures of nonroyal individuals.⁵⁵ Its restriction of permitted forms focused them far more closely on the king.

This aspect of religious development relates to another major feature of traditional religion. Central elements of the solar cult were secret, and the king and a few others seem to have been initiated into the true meaning of the solar cycle, which was not otherwise disseminated. This secrecy appears to have been maintained under Amenhotep III and is epitomized in a pair of treatises on the king's role in the solar cult inscribed by the windows in the innermost main hall of the Luxor temple.⁵⁶ Although this stela could be seen as negating the point of the cult's secrecy, this is not the case, because the hall was virtually inaccessible, and because the crucial daytime text alludes to but does not divulge the knowledge it mentions. Dialogue of the king with the gods and the diversity of religious phenomena contrast with the idea of secrecy, especially since the dialogues were inscribed on stela placed in the outside areas of temples. This possible tension between secrecy and public

54. Hornung has drawn an analogy between the dogma of Akhenaten in relation to his god and Muhammad's relation to God in the aniconic religion of Islam (see Hornung [1982] 248). The point is perhaps deliberately overstressed but is nevertheless illuminating.

55. This rule, for which I know of no published discussion, was not rigid; it allowed, e.g., the presence of emblematic royal-divine compositions above nonroyal texts. It seems to have disappeared after the Amarna period.

56. Assmann (1970); idem (1995) 17–26; Betto (1990). For general discussion, see Bailes (1990) 10–15.

forms is also visible in the stela of *Sury* and *Hor*, which was evidently set up in a temple—for official religion a more important location than the tombs, where most solar hymns were inscribed. As the royal stela carried the king's dialogue with the gods into the open, so *Sury* and *Hor* took discussion of the creator god's nature visibly into his cult place.

These tensions were followed by a single resolution under Akhenaten, who propounded his god in an ostensibly public fashion—although his ideas may not have been disseminated very widely—while claiming for himself alone full knowledge of who and what the god was. This claim is a remarkable arrogation to the king of a religious domain that had been rather more open, and it restricted radically the evolution of religious knowledge, which had been focused on a small group but not dogmatically controlled. While the “Great Hymn to the Aten,”⁵⁷ which must have been close to the core of Akhenaten's religion, develops and purifies the presentation of the creator god's nature found in the hymn of *Sury* and *Hor*, it does not depart completely from it, the principal difference being in its radically simplified imagery surrounding the god himself, who no longer had multiple manifestations. Since *Sury* and *Hor*'s text was “public,” Akhenaten's knowledge could also have been, and there is no clear sign of his having kept it secret. In contrast, the treatises on the king's role hint at his having still more arcane knowledge that has no parallel in Amarna solar beliefs or in the new solar religion, but they do not confine the knowledge only to him, instead stating simply that he knows it. Some people would have been privy to the knowledge, notably those who provided the guarantee of its continuity and imparted it to him, for he could not have relied only on his predecessor as king. Thus, the new solar religion appears to have been part of a discussion in the time of Amenhotep III, however small the relevant group may have been, and Akhenaten adopted this theoretically open stance.

Nonetheless, the “Great Hymn” states that no one knows his god except for his son Akhenaten. The king's phenomenon is regularly accompanied by the epithet *w'-n-r'u*, “the Unique One of Ra,” by means of which epithets of other members of the royal family referred to Akhenaten. Thus Akhenaten's self-designation and imposition of its terminology on others appears to have restricted the idea of religious knowledge and its transmission, making it into a kind of revelation, even though he disseminated the message of that revelation relatively widely. It is hard to see how the king's own insights can have enlarged greatly on what is said in hymns from his reign and in the god's titles and epithets. The statement that the king alone knows the god therefore

57. Translations and references: Assmann (1975a) no. 92; Lichtheim (1976) 96–100.

appears to be an expression more of his relationship with the god than of something arcane. Such a claim has no real parallel from earlier times except among magical and mortuary texts.

Akhenaten appears, then, to have built on existing ideas of the god but to have transformed their content by subtraction—as he would have seen it, elimination of the wrong and inessential—and to have related them in a new way to the complex of royal knowledge and of the king's relations with the god. The subtraction is the feature most closely related to dogma. Here, the analogy between kingship and the new god is most potent, because the royal titulary, on which the god's cartouches were modeled, was as close as traditional religion (in the broadest sense) came to a dogma. That "dogma," however, related to the king and to multiple manifestations of deities on earth, as well as being different for each successive king. The transformation involved in creating a completely fixed quasi-royal definition of a god out of royal rather than divine forms was enormous and was no more than marginally prepared for by the application of royal epithets and the occasional cartouche to gods from the Middle Kingdom on.⁵⁸ Moreover, the fully evolved Amarna religion attested from year 9 of Akhenaten and later was far removed indeed from the forms current only a decade earlier, whereas those forms had developed over vastly longer periods.

Akhenaten's restriction to himself of his core religious insights and emphasis on the centrality of the ruler have evident political corollaries. In the formation of Egyptian civilization during the late fourth millennium, the newly enriched and separate elite arrogated to itself religious as well as political powers that had earlier been more broadly spread in society, while making the king the dominant figure both in politics and in general ideology and religion.⁵⁹ This parallel between Akhenaten and much earlier times may suggest why scholars have often claimed to identify archaizing features in his reforms, something that seems unlikely in the face of the large amount of innovation in his reign. It may be best to see this centralizing tendency instead as one possible—and in general history rather common—way in which a reformer seeks to assert the power and ideological dominance that he requires in order to impose his ideas.

Kingship, Its Ideology and Expression

The god's essential counterpart was the king. The god was a king, and the king aspired to be a god—the new god's divine partner. This analogy be-

58. See Homung (1982) 231–37.
59. Bates (1995).

tween god and king had existed for centuries,⁶⁰ but in the Amarna period it was taken to altogether greater lengths than before. The central terrestrial social institution of Egypt became a more explicit model than hitherto for Akhenaten's sole deity.

The presentation of the god's kingly nature was specific to the new artistic style together with its complex of related changes, including the cartouches for the god's name. This presentation need not therefore have been so closely connected with more generalized developments in religion and in the conception of the king as were other aspects of the reforms. Texts with a version of the god's dogmatic name but without its characteristic iconography make this point plain. A number of these date to the beginning of the reign, showing that the god's name or nature was formulated before the artistic changes began. Most cases are on fragments from the first constructions of Amenhotep IV, the later Akhenaten, at Karnak,⁶¹ and one is on a private stela that is not in the new style.⁶² It is conceivable that the core of the dogmatic name was created before Akhenaten's reign.

For the position of Akhenaten himself, the reforms raised an issue that is evident to the observer, in that a single kingly god was promoted and also related to the king with his unique status on earth. The king sacrificed none of his status and little, if anything, of his divinity. But he did not have such a pivotal position as he had had in the traditional order, where he was the protagonist of humanity before the gods and of the gods before the rest of creation, so that he was single while the two principal other groups in creation, the gods and people, were plural. Akhenaten may have mobilized his status in this new context in similar ways to his father's projection of his status and creation of a cosmic spatial stage. But whereas Akhenaten's principal theater of kingship, Amarna, is quite well preserved, there is comparable evidence for Amenhotep III from the religious capital of Thebes but relatively little from the civil capital of Memphis. The Theban evidence is more fragmentary than that from Amarna.⁶³

Throughout this period kingship remained central to continuing discourse about the nature of the social world, relations of power among humanity—perhaps rather less with other states abroad⁶⁴—and with the cosmos and the divine world. The period before Amarna appears to have been especially

60. See Homung (1982) 135–42; in general see O'Connor and Silverman (1995).
61. See, e.g., Redford (1976) 54, with n. 122.

62. Munro (1981). For the dating of this object, see Munro (1987) 143.

63. On these questions, see further O'Connor's discussion in chap. 5 in the present book.
64. For comprehensive treatment of this aspect from a Near Eastern perspective, see Liverani (1990).

productive in this respect and to have offered at least a foil for Amarna itself. There was a discernible change in emphasis in the way the king was presented between Thutmose III and Amenhotep III about forty years later.

Developments under Amenhotep III have been seen in several aspects of kingship. The changes did not concentrate near its end and so cannot simply have created a rising trajectory toward Amarna. They encompassed solar associations of the king, the king's divinity and presentation in iconography, the king and his family, the transformation of the royal city and its temples as a "stage" for kingship, and the uses and legitimations of royal ceremonial. I survey them here in this order, which corresponds very roughly to their temporal distribution among the evidence.

For more than a millennium the king had been closely connected with the sun god and had been conceived as a manifestation of him or as his son. The Eighteenth Dynasty saw a great proliferation of these ideas, notably in iconography, while notions of divine "manifestation," focusing especially around the word *ḥprw*, were elaborated in numerous royal epithets and eulogies. The king's first cartouche name, or praenomen, was the prime example of this. With the exceptions of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III, from Thutmose I all kings of the dynasty had praenomens including the root *ḥpr*. Scholars once translated these names as statements about the sun god, but they have more recently been interpreted as concerning the king.⁶⁵ On this preferable view, names terminating in *-ḥprw-ṯw* state that the king relates to the manifestations of Ra in a certain way: he is "the great one of the manifestations of Ra" (*3-ḥprw-ṯw*; Amenhotep II) or the "perfect one" (*nḥ-ḥprw-ṯw*; Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten). Amenhotep III was the "possessor of maat of Ra" (*nḥ-mḥt-ṯw*), a designation possibly implying a greater divine status than the *ḥprw* forms, because maat, "order," was the prerogative of the sun god. Although the case of Akhenaten shows that great claims to royal divinity could be made by a king who retained a *ḥprw*-based statement in his cartouche name, the design of Amenhotep III's titulary from the beginning of his reign may signify a desire to raise the king's status.

In addition to these terms and identifications, which connected the king principally with the sun god, the king had long been associated metaphorically with other divine roles, as in instruction texts, which present him as a "destiny" or "inundation" for his subjects.⁶⁶ Related features may have been

65. Krauss (1978) 122–32. This reading is supported by writings of the royal praenomen with royal figures as hieroglyphs; see Krauss (1990) 206–10.

66. *Instruction of Amenemhat I*; see, e.g., Lichtman (1973) 135–39. *Instruction of a Man for His Son*; see Fecht (1978) and the new edition in preparation by Fischer-Elert; see further Baines (1994a).

realized in the iconography of Amenhotep III,⁶⁷ and Amarna texts maintained such identifications to some extent, in apparent contradiction of Akhenaten's demythologizing tendencies. Here, he seems to have evoked traditional attributes of the king in relation to his subjects; this is one of a small number of ways in which he proclaimed his care for humanity, as against his knowledge of, and intimacy with, his god. Whereas the king's mediating position in traditional religion between the gods and humanity gave him a clearly central role, this was less true for Akhenaten, and there is an apparent paradox between the god's broad concern for all of creation and the general indifference to such concern in the role of the king, even though he was the only person who fully comprehended the god's nature. Such paradoxes inhere in the ruler's position in many more or less monotheistic religious systems.

Among developments of Amenhotep III that foreshadow Amarna, a set of "commemorative scarabs" issued during Amenhotep III's first eleven years gives him a new epithet that took him closer to the sun god and became characteristic of him as a ruler. The text of the "lake scarab" describes a ritual apparently performed in relation to the opening of an irrigation basin.⁶⁸ At the climax, the narrative states that *ḥn-ṯn*, "the Dazzling Sun Disk," was in the celebratory bark on the irrigation basin. This new epithet⁶⁹ both equated the king closely with the sun god and raised the term *Aten* to a prominent position. The king's sailing in the bark was a clear analogy with the sun god's progression across the sky and underworld, further reinforcing the king's status. Gerhard Fecht⁷⁰ has pointed out an important association of the word *Aten*, pronounced *yāti* (or with an indistinct final vowel), with Egyptian *ḥt*, "father," perhaps pronounced *yāta*. Thus Amenhotep III aspired indirectly to "fatherhood," perhaps of his country as quasi creator. This connection was probably exploited in both principal versions of the dogmatic names of Akhenaten's god, while many texts of his reign invoke the god's status as the king's "father."

The texts always present Akhenaten himself as his god's "son," and he was even represented in statuary as a child;⁷¹ as king he does not seem to

67. Bryan (1992) discusses these questions; see further Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 125–214, passing; for proposals that are more limited, see Baines (1985b) 320–21, with references to texts and other discussions; see further Assmann (1980) 2–19.

68. Blankenberg-van der Linden (1969) cat. E; Yoyotte (1959); Berman in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 67–72.

69. Used by Kozloff and Bryan (1992) as the title of their exhibition: *Egypt's Dazzling Sun*. 70. Fecht (1960), esp. 114.

71. Eaton-Krauss (1983). See also the comparable relief representation of Akhenaten and Nefertiti on a faience knob; Harris (1977).

have adopted Amenhotep III's claim to divine fatherly status. But Amenhotep III himself had a privileged status at Amarna. He was represented in reliefs throughout his son's reign—as was his queen, Tiye, who survived him by many years—and he was evoked in a positive light in crucial texts, such as the early version of the boundary stela.⁷² As a kingly and fatherly god associated with Akhenaten's father, the Aten in a sense embodied the idea of descent in kingship and formed its point of departure.⁷³ Here, Akhenaten seems to have transformed a recent motif, perhaps partly in legitimizing homage to his father. These ideas could have extended further: as Akhenaten's father, the "Dazzling Sun Disk" Amenhotep III, was the earthly parallel for his symbolic "father," the Aten/Sun Disk. In continuing the cult of Amenhotep III (under the ideologically neutral double praenomen *Nebmadra Nebmatiria*), Akhenaten demonstrated on earth that he was true to principles of descent, while nonetheless transforming and rejecting most of what Amenhotep had stood for. Since Amenhotep III's mortuary temple was probably becoming ruined because of its unfavorable siting on the floodplain, it is possible that some of his mortuary cult was transferred to Amarna.⁷⁴

The temples of Luxor and Deir el-Bahri in Thebes provide indirect evidence for the significance of the symbolic descent of the king from the sun god. At Deir el-Bahri, the relief cycle showing Amon-Ra begetting the king—here Hatshepsut—was the only part of the relief decoration to be erased almost completely under Akhenaten.⁷⁵ The parallel cycle of Amenhotep III at Luxor was not so severely damaged, but it too was attacked, as was much of the decoration of the whole temple. Next to Amenhotep III's mortuary temple, this was the largest recent temple in the Theban area, and its function seems to have focused on the king's relationship with Amon-Ra and on the Opet Festival, at which it was celebrated.⁷⁶ The closeness of king and Amon-

72. Helck (1959) 1975 = idem (1961) 342; Murnane and Van Siclen (1993) 26, 41.

73. See n. 70; Redford notes these points (see Redford [1984] 234) but does not pursue their implications.

74. Bryan (1992). In Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 90–93, Bryan proposes that the temple was intended to be partially flooded by the annual inundation, and that this occurrence was vital to its iconography and meaning. Whether this was so or not, the failure of the Birket Habu lake to its south and the withdrawal of resources for maintenance in favor of Amarna are likely to have led to its rapid decay. This might have been one reason for transferring the funerary cult of Amenhotep III to the new capital, as is suggested, e.g., by statues of him, and probably of queen Tiye, in temples (e.g., Davies [1903–8] 3: pl. X) and by a small stela from Amarna showing him and Tiye before a table of offerings (Aldred [1973] 10, fig. 3). Another reason would no doubt have been the close and inextricable association of the mortuary temple with Amon.

75. Brunner (1964) 3–5.

76. Bell (1985a).

Ra evident at Deir el-Bahri and Luxor may have been especially abhorrent to Akhenaten because he rejected Amon-Ra and perhaps conceived relations between divine fathers and sons on a different model. The clear if discreet depiction of sexual intercourse between the god and the king's mother in the birth cycles⁷⁷ could have had no parallel in the nonhuman iconography of the Aten.

Instead of this vision of a corporeal descent from god to king, Akhenaten offered one of the royal family, all of them dwelling on earth and in that sense "human" rather than divine (fig. 8.3).⁷⁸ That family included himself, his queen, Nefertiti, and a variable number of their daughters; another wife, Kiya, was occasionally shown in similar contexts. The group of king, queen, and daughters was presented as a family communicating within itself under the sun disk's protection. The function of these reliefs remains controversial, but they are probably the nearest Akhenaten's iconography approached to something that could be worshiped by the nonroyal. This is a significant reversal of the practice of Amenhotep III, or at the least a very radical development away from it. While the latter celebrated his relations with the gods in the secluded interior of temples, the lives of Akhenaten and his family were prominent in the new capital city. Amenhotep's transformation of Thebes into a ceremonial arena was in some ways less significant for the public role of kingship, perhaps implying more the city's nature as cosmos: Akhenaten publicly displayed his exclusive relations with the divine. It is striking that one of the clearest prefigurings of these developments is in the lake scarab of Amenhotep III, which uses the *ḥw* *ḥn* epithet and thus points toward Amarna developments in ways already discussed.

The new royal icon had few antecedents, but developments under Amenhotep III prefigure it in certain ways. Amenhotep's queen, Tiye, was more prominent in iconography than any predecessor. Her role is strikingly displayed in a colossal family statue group, now in the Cairo Museum, showing Amenhotep III and Tiye at equal scale, with three daughters at a smaller scale around the base.⁷⁹ The still larger Colossi of Memnon were family groups showing the king with Tiye and his mother, Mutemwia.⁸⁰ In relief, Tiye was shown with female captives in subjection,⁸¹ a motif that is paralleled for Akhenaten's queen, Nefertiti.⁸² The Cairo group was found

77. Naville (1894–1908) 4: pl. XLVII; Brunner (1964) pl. 4.

78. For a full study of this crucial example, see Kraus (1991).

79. Müller (1988) IV—21–22, pl. 5.

80. Porter and Moss (1972) 449–50.

81. Lange and Humer (1968) pl. 154; Epigraphic Survey (1980) pls. 48–49.

82. E.g., Cooney (1965) 82–93, no. 51a.

out of context at Medinet Habu, so that its original orientation, and whether it was meant primarily to address people outside the temple, cannot be reconstructed.⁸³

Perhaps following Thutmose IV, Amenhotep III promoted his kingly role through colossal statuary.⁸⁴ A number of statues had unique epithets that characterized them as "Ruler of Rulers" or similarly.⁸⁵ The statues in front of temple pylons faced toward the outside world, and ostensibly addressed the temple visitor. Most of them depicted the king or the king with his family—the best-known instance being the Colossi of Memnon in front of his mortuary temple—but some showed him carrying standards, a statue type that developed greatly in the late New Kingdom,⁸⁶ one pair of such statues, outside the temple complex of Mont to the north of Karnak, had been smashed into small fragments and buried near where it had probably once stood.⁸⁷ Colossal and standard-bearing statues projected the king's divinity and his intermediary role with the gods—the latter aspect being attested explicitly under Thutmose IV.

Amenhotep III's divinity can be seen also in his self-dedication at the Nubian temple of Soleb, where he became a lunar deity to whom he himself offered the cult.⁸⁸ Like the Soleb cult, however, the Nubian cult did not contribute to a unified deification of the king's living person. Rather, together with exalting epithets, such as *im-*thn**, "Dazzling Sun Disk," the Nubian statues formed part of a diverse range of royal manifestations. Some statues may have been intended as the focus of semipopular cults, as evidently happened in the Ramesside period.⁸⁹ In addition, under both Amenhotep III and Ramesses II, one effect of this colossal statuary and the architecture among which it stood was to integrate the temples with their cities by projecting the king's presence beyond temple enclosures and thus to map kingship into the

83. As Mariamne Eaton-Krauss points out (personal communication), the whole area between the mortuary temple and Malqata may have held constructions of Amenhotep III.

84. See Bryan (1987) 10–13; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 129–31.

85. The salient example is the pair of the Colossi of Memnon; see Hérel (1957a) 1746–47 (south colossus). For the much better attested comparable names on statues of Ramesses II, see Wildung (1973) 558, with references.

86. Wildung (1973); Eaton-Krauss (1976), esp. 72; Chadeaud (1982); Müller (1988) IV–4, with references.

87. Müller (1988) IV–51–52, with references; Robichon and Varille (1956), esp. 47–48; Vandesteven et al. (1975) pl. 186; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 141, figs. V.2.1–2.2. This destruction cannot be dated but is in any case likely to indicate that the ideas associated with the statues were particularly abhorrent to whoever ordered it. The excavators proposed that the destruction was due to fire, but I would suggest that it was in any case deliberate. Some Roman period coins were found with the fragments, but it was not possible to date the deposit.

88. Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 106–10, esp. 108, fig. IV.28.

89. See, e.g., Habachi (1969).

space and structure of human society, particularly within the royal city. It is uncertain how far this idea was taken and its implications were disseminated because the degree of "public" access to the statues is unknown. Works as large as the Colossi of Memnon must have been visible throughout much of Thebes and will have spread their message in that way. Apart from such statues, Amenhotep transformed and sacralized the whole city with processional ways running between the principal temple complexes, among other means.⁹⁰

The same cosmic conception was probably significant in the regions under Egyptian domination. The idea is not securely attested from Egyptian possessions in the Near East (where something of the sort can be seen for the earlier Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties), but in the south the remote temple of Soleb between the Second and Third Cataracts of the Nile makes the point clearly.⁹¹ Soleb, which was the largest temple so far constructed in Nubia, was related to a temple especially dedicated to Tiyi some kilometers away at Sedeinga.⁹² Together, these temples formed a marker for royal and divine possession of Nubia and thus incorporated a region outside a narrowly defined Egypt within its sacred cosmos.⁹³ Since that region has never been heavily populated, it is unlikely to have formed an urban focus, so a broader role for the temples in the Egyptian state or cosmos is more plausible.

Despite this increase in Amenhotep III's display of his and the gods' presence in the physical and social world, few temples seem to have changed radically in design during his reign. The exceptions to traditional forms are his mortuary temple, the *m3rw* temples, the structure named Khaemmaat in north Karnak (see n. 44), and the solar shrine in the eastern part of Karnak.⁹⁴ This last dated back at least to Thutmose III and so was not closely related to recent developments, but it was important in providing a model of a shrine that, like other solar constructions, was in the open air and hence, except for the physical protection offered by the walls of the sacred enclosure, was not concealed from view. Akhenaten constructed temples that were, like traditional temples, protected from the outside by pylons, entrance gateways, and multiple courts. Unlike their predecessors, however, their entire structure

90. Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 103–4.

91. Largely unpublished; see Schiff Giorgini, Robichon, and Leclant (1965); Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 106–10.

92. Almost entirely unpublished; see Porter and Moss (1951) 166; Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 110, with fig. IV.31 and n. 97.

93. For more detailed arguments, see O'Connor's discussion in chap. 5 in the present book.

94. See Kees (1949).

and furnishings were in principle depicted in numerous representations set up in non-"sacred" places, notably nonroyal tombs. Anyone could in theory know the character and constitution of the god's sanctuary. Yet there is no suggestion that they were public places of worship. The principal reason for their accessibility may have been that as solar sanctuaries they were open to the sky, but the way they were depicted is characteristic of the dichotomy between Akhenaten's openness in display and his absolute claims for exclusive knowledge in his religion. The world of nature was otherwise shown responding to its creator's provision of sunshine, but from outside the temple.⁹⁵ In Akhenaten's architecture a pervasive feature, which remained in use for as long as Egyptian temples were built, was the "broken lintel," a door surround truncated to leave its center open to the sky, affirming that the sun should penetrate even at a point where access was obstructed by a door.⁹⁶ This has traditionally been considered an innovation of Akhenaten, but it turns out to be one of the many elements from the preceding period that he adopted and increased enormously in significance. The earliest broken lintel known to me is a doorway depicted, together with a caption naming the materials from which it was made, among the offerings of Thutmose IV to Amon-Ra in the reliefs of his court at Karnak; these were dismantled and buried in the time of Thutmose's son Amenhotep III. It is unlikely that this was the only such structure of its time, and it should not be assumed that it was otherwise unknown just because this particular representation of the form was buried soon after it was carved. Rather, this form was probably introduced in the Theban area in the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty but had not become widespread (it could have had a Heliopolitan origin).

Associated with the change in visibility of temples is a change in the decorum of decorated monuments. Reliefs in Amarna temples—known principally from the Karnak structures rather than from Amarna itself—have a great variety of subject matter, ranging from rituals in which the whole royal family is frequently shown to detailed representation of cult structures, including their storehouses and other less prestigious elements. Reliefs in nonroyal tombs include representations of temple interiors, something that would be unthinkable in earlier times, when the pylon was the most that could be shown. There is a degree of overlap in content between

95. Martin (1989b) pls. 34–35. Similar scenes are preserved on unpublished blocks from the Karnak temples of the first years of the reign (Christian Loeben [personal communication]).

96. This well-known feature has hardly been discussed explicitly; see, e.g., Arnold (1994) 268–69. The wall of Thutmose IV with a representation of a broken lintel is on view in the Open-air Museum at Karnak; for the caption to the doorway with the broken lintel, see Lestellier (1979) 57–58 (does not mention lintel).

temple and tomb that goes altogether beyond what occurred earlier. Thus, the temple interiors open to the sky have analogies in the loosening of decorative conventions. These changes have implications for the king's role and for how we view the purpose of the whole development of Amarna (see also the conclusion of this chapter).

Apart from the enormous numbers of altars shown in the Amarna temples, their other salient feature is depiction of numerous statues of the king and queen.⁹⁷ Except in the shrines of the first few years of the reign at Karnak and in the so-called Great Aten Temple, which appears to have been some sort of reception area,⁹⁸ these statues were not very large, though their form was similar to that of colossal statues. Especially at Karnak, sphinxes also formed part of Akhenaten and Nefertiti's depicted and sculptural repertory. Unlike the colossal statues of Amenhotep III, which addressed the world outside, many of those of Akhenaten and Nefertiti faced toward the sanctuary and thus were focused on the cult as symbolic participants or officiants. They presented the rulers to the god and formed part of the reign's typical interchange between god and king, ignoring the world here as did many of Akhenaten's monuments.

The sculptural groups at the boundary stelae of Amarna provide an analogy for these statues.⁹⁹ Like the temples of the Theban area, these demarcated the sacred space of the capital city—in this case explicitly, for the stela text focused on this topic. Nonetheless, the audience for the stela was the god rather than the people. Although people could have read the text and could see the monument from a considerable distance, the staturary showed the king and his family adoring his god and dedicating the stela to him. In the presentation of god, temples, and capital city, there were thus paradoxes between the openness of what was shown, the slight involvement of anyone other than the king, and the small degree to which he disseminated knowledge of the god.

As under Amenhotep III, Akhenaten's demarcation of the god's world may have extended to the limit of Egyptian possessions. There is again no evidence from Syria-Palestine, but the temple of Kawa near modern Dongola, farther south than any New Kingdom temple except the lost one of Napata (Gebel Barkal), may have been founded or reconfirmed under Akhenaten. The datable buildings on the site are no earlier than Turankhamun, but the ancient name Gematen (*gm-(j)37-jm*) can hardly have be-

97. E.g., Davies (1903–8) 1: pl. XI; 2: pl. XIX; 3: pls. X–XI; conveniently gathered in Müller (1988) III—125–30, figs. 25–30.

98. Assmann (1972b).

99. Davies (1903–8) 5: pls. 36–44; Murnane and Van Stien (1993).

longed to any time except the reign of Akhenaten.¹⁰⁰ Although phrases compounded with Aten, such as Amenhotep III's epithet *im-ḥm* ("Dazzling Sun Disk"), were used outside the reign of Akhenaten, this is hardly true of ones including the definite article *p3*, which are confined to his time. I therefore suggest that Kawa was at least planned to have a temple that encompassed the southernmost reaches of the Aten's possessions, as Soleb and Sedeinga did for Amenhotep III and Tyti.

Royal iconography in relief and in statuary diversified under Amenhotep III. Apart from the increase in large-scale statuary, new forms were introduced at smaller scales. Notable among these are two statues showing the king wearing a cloaklike garment and a miniature statue with a *died*-pillar at the back.¹⁰¹ In statuary and relief iconography, the principal development was in the variety of insignia worn, including numerous multiple headresses that combined attributes in an unwearable form that was meaningful in a scene or complex relief composition.

This freeing of relief images from constraints of "realism" may have helped to open the way for the extravagances of Akhenaten's style and compositions. An additional aspect of diversity was the range of physical forms of the king. Amenhotep III was represented in various types—youngful or even childlike, youthfully mature and strong, older and obese—and in artistic styles ranging from the plain to the highly mannered (figs. 8.4 and 8.5). There have been attempts to link this variety to the phases of his reign and to ideological or iconographic factors. Some of these points must be valid, but the variation probably related also to the unprecedented level of artistic activity in the reign and to the simultaneous existence of numerous ateliers and styles.¹⁰² Similar variations can be observed for the early Nineteenth Dynasty. The alternative that has been proposed, that variation and the presence of analogous trends under Akhenaten are evidence for a coregency of Amenhotep III and his son,¹⁰³ seems implausible to me.¹⁰⁴

The diversification of the king's divine role and of the imagery and

100. Macadam (1955) 1:12–14, building on work of E.L. Griffith, assumed that Kawa had been founded under Amenhotep III and that there had been no construction there under Akhenaten; this ignores the *p3* in the place-name.

101. See, respectively, Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 146, fig. V.28; *ibid.* 204–6, no. 23 (miniature statue). Kozloff and Bryan treat the miniature statue as an image of "Amenhotep III as a fertility god."

102. For a collection of the material, see Müller (1988). See also the papers in Berman (1990); Kozloff and Bryan (1992).

103. See, e.g., Johnson (1990) and his discussion in chap. 3 in the present book. See the historical presentation of Delange in Kozloff and Bryan (1992) 23–34.

104. Cf. Romano (1990).

iconography used to project it fit not so much with the style of Akhenaten's reign as with possibilities that he exploited in presenting his own role and that his artists used in presenting him and his family. The clearest ways in which Amenhotep III anticipated Akhenaten are in the features mentioned earlier of the role of Queen Tyti and the inclusion of his daughters in statuary.

Finally, I review religious ceremonial and the legitimization it offered in temples and in kingship rituals. In his building of temples and other ceremonial structures, Amenhotep III seems to have gone far beyond his predecessors,¹⁰⁵ even if this appearance may be due in part to the exceptional preservation of buildings of his reign. His urban projects had a ritual meaning as well as a general symbolic one: among other functions, the city was a stage for enacting kingship. Moreover, his three elaborately prepared Sed Festivals can be contrasted with the absence of evidence for such festivals from the reign of Thutmose III, the earlier king in the dynasty who reigned long enough to celebrate them. Perhaps there are special reasons why Thutmose might not have had Sed Festivals, or they were not on a scale that would have left much evidence for them. The first would have come rather early in his sole reign, when he was involved in military campaigns outside Egypt and might not have wished to present his rule as having already lasted for decades. The festivals could also have been held in Memphis, where evidence is unlikely to survive. Nonetheless, Amenhotep III may have been a true innovator here.

The palace of Malkata in western Thebes seems to have been built around the time of the first Sed Festival and to have been used primarily for those celebrations. Along the low desert nearby were structures related to the festival.¹⁰⁶ The buildings in this area were constructed in mud brick, as was normal for all but major temples, and they were probably temporary, as in a sense was any particular dwelling for the living. Despite this ephemeral celebratory character, their location near the king's monumental funerary temple and the lake now known as Birket Habu integrated them into the city's ceremonial space and so seems to give them a prominence comparable with the demarcation of the city of Akhetaten by royal dwellings at its edge and center.¹⁰⁷ Amenhotep III as well as Akhenaten may thus have emphasized to an unwonted degree the ritualization of the king's daily life and periodic festivals.

105. For Sed Festivals and the range of evidence for Amenhotep III, see Hornung et al. (1974) 33–36; this material could now be extended.

106. Korn el-Sanaik: Wasela (1983); Korn el-Abd: Kemp (1977).

107. O'Connor has furthered greatly the understanding of these aspects of the city. See O'Connor (1989) and his discussion in chap. 5 in the present book.

An additional aspect of the Sed Festival was its manner of enactment. All kings aspired to celebrate this festival, which was as ancient as kingship, or to have a perpetual series of celebrations, mostly in the next life.¹⁰⁸ Amenhotep III used ancient models for his celebration, as is recorded in the Theban tomb of Khernuf (their precise period is not stated).¹⁰⁹ The tomb also contains depictions of parts of the festival. These present it in the most contemporary artistic style, showing no clear debt to the remote past, but analogies can be drawn with Old Kingdom relief motifs.¹¹⁰ They offer no immediate comparison with the Old Kingdom reliefs of Neuserre, the fullest available earlier source.¹¹¹ The search for past records belonged to an old tradition, best exemplified by the Thirteenth Dynasty stela of King Neferhotep about the temple of Osiris at Abydos.¹¹² This use of the past can be compared with the variety of royal and nonroyal sculptural types known from the reign; the statuary of Amenhotep son of Hapu, the most prominent nonroyal individual of the reign, looks to the Middle Kingdom for stylistic models.¹¹³ The most remarkable attested revival of an ancient object is a fragmentary late predynastic palette on whose back was carved a relief showing Amenhotep III and Tiye.¹¹⁴ Such evidence suggests that under his reign the increased diversity of religious approaches and artistic forms may have been accentuated by use of past models, in addition to the continued development of new types.

A significant feature of the Sed Festival reliefs in the tomb of Khernuf is the presence of Queen Tiye and of royal daughters.¹¹⁵ As discussed by Edward F. Wente, the presence of the goddess Hathor in one relief offers a commentary on the role of the king and queen, enhancing his status toward that of the sun god.¹¹⁶ This and the underlying meaning of the Luxor temple are ritual elements in the reign that converge with the part played by the city and by royal statuary to bring the king as close as possible to being a god; I do not believe that he was ever completely a god.

All these points have parallels under Akhenaten. Ancient ritual and cult elements that he retained after the move to Amarna were the Mnevis Bull and

the *bnbn* stone of Heliopolis,¹¹⁷ which led some scholars to suggest that he was seeking in part to revive the "original" solar cult.¹¹⁸ The Sed Festival was a central theme of his Karnak shrines and remained significant in epiphrases after the move to Amarna.¹¹⁹ His god celebrated Sed Festivals that reinforced both his kingly character and the analogy between Akhenaten and his father the Aten. The presence of the king's female relatives in reliefs in almost all contexts is analogous with the treatment of Amenhotep III's queen and daughters in statuary and in the reliefs of Khernuf (where they may reinterpret old models).¹²⁰ Despite these analogies, Akhenaten transformed the meaning of motifs; he could not have adopted past elements in any literal fashion. Amenhotep III used the past and ritual within a developing tradition, however much change he may have introduced. Akhenaten's legitimizing purpose in exploiting and adapting these motifs was different. Perhaps the most striking example of how past materials might be used in his context, paralleling the ancient palette revived by Amenhotep III, is a fragment of a stone bowl from Akhenaten's tomb inscribed with the name of Khéphren, the builder of the Second Pyramid at Giza.¹²¹

The Significance of Art, Styles in Statuary, Relief, and Painting

The changes Akhenaten introduced that affected his god and his person form a single, interconnected complex. The other developments of his time are not so neatly defined and circumscribed, but the available record focuses on art and architecture and thus is comparable with that of Amenhotep III.

The prominence of artistic forms throughout this period—and in much of Egyptian history—is itself significant.¹²² Both traditional elite civilization and Akhenaten's reforms centered around high culture.¹²³ In a sense, to look for a popular base for reform is irrelevant, except insofar as many people were needed to implement Amenhotep III's and Akhenaten's grandiose schemes. The contribution of labor extracted from most people was no doubt largely taken for granted by king and elite. Ultimately, legitimization of

108. Martin (1982), for early manifestations, see Baines (1995) 128–35. There is no general study of the Sed Festival.

109. Epigraphic Survey (1980) 43, pl. 28.

110. Wente (1969) 86–89.

111. Bessing et al. (1908–28); Kaiser (1971), (1983).

112. Helek (1975d) 21–22; Amhes (1974) 16–17.

113. Gathered in Vanille (1968).

114. Bothmer (1969–70); provenance unknown.

115. Epigraphic Survey (1980) pls. 24–26, 41–46.

116. Wente (1969).

117. On the *bnbn*, see Barguet (1976); on the image of the *bnbn*, see Davies (1903–8) 1; pl. XI.

118. E.g., Gardiner (1961) 218—arguing a rather different point.

119. Gohary (1976), (1992).

120. Note the ritual relief of Thutmose IV with his mother Tiaz: Letellier (1991) 37, fig. 1. Several possible queens of Thutmose IV are known, the principal one being Neferity, who is also frequently represented in relief; see Bryan (1991) 93–141.

121. Martin (1974) 96, no. 414.

122. Surprisingly, the specific importance of art in the reforms has hardly been a focus of discussion (but see n. 152 in this chapter); for a more general discussion, see Baines (1994b).

123. Baines and Yoffee (in press).

these exactions was available in the underlying belief that king and elite maintained the cosmos on behalf of society as a whole.¹²⁴ Most elites in history have not been unduly troubled by the exactions and inequalities they impose on others, but if such impositions are to be accepted, it is necessary for the ideology to permeate society at least to some extent.

Artistic activity created an aestheticized world that enacted and celebrated the king's role as protagonist of human society in the cosmos and dedicated it to the gods or god. Art constituted the world it celebrated and was not a separate domain of meaning; if Thebes and Amarna had not had an artistic form, they would not have served their purpose.

Within this prominence of art were foci on specific architectural and artistic forms, styles, and iconographies. This is where the reign of Amenhotep III shows marked development, in diversity and in the scale, form, and meaning of works. His reign contrasts with the evolution of that of Akhenaten, during which diversity of styles was rapidly reduced, although it may have increased again in his last years.

The vast scale of building activities under Amenhotep III and the many types for which evidence is preserved render evaluation of their diversity and innovations difficult, because little comparable evidence from earlier in the dynasty is available. Since architecture supplied the context for other art and was, with hard-stone statuary, the activity that used the largest amount of resources,¹²⁵ it is likely to have been the principal locus of new ideas, as was evidently the case under Akhenaten, with his building of numerous shrines at Karnak in his earlier years and the subsequent creation of his new city at Amarna. The obvious development under Amenhotep III was in the scale of building, both at Karnak and at Luxor, but some of this may have been anticipated by his father, Thutmose IV.¹²⁶ The remodeling of Thebes (see n. 90) and probably Memphis (see texts cited in nn. 37 and 41), as cosmic cities, and possibly of Egyptian territories as a broader cosmos, appears to be an innovation of the reign, but is unlikely to have had no antecedents. The most innovative structure appears to have been his mortuary temple—a focus that contrasts with the relatively modest “Small Aten Temple” at Amarna, which has been suggested to be Akhenaten's mortuary temple.¹²⁷

124. For a royal legitimation in terms of the cult, see Assmann (1970).

125. Extraction and utilization of precious metals could have been as important but cannot now be assessed.

126. First remarked by Hornung (1965) 95. Here, Amenhotep's building at less well known centers should be borne in mind.

127. See Eaton-Krauss (1990) 550, with references; for the temple itself, see Mallinson

Thus, Amenhotep III's works in architecture appear innovative in numerous ways, and their grand scale formed part of the period's focus on the artistic. For representational art, the question of innovation is relatively easily investigated, because works comparable to those of Amenhotep III are available from earlier in the dynasty. The principal genres involved are tomb paintings and reliefs, on the one hand, and statuary, on the other. Temple reliefs cannot be compared straightforwardly with their precursors, while decorative and minor arts reached an almost unparalleled peak of production, in quality and quantity.¹²⁸ It is not possible to treat more than one genre properly in this essay, and I confine my comments to styles in nonroyal tombs.¹²⁹

Tomb paintings saw the most original developments in Eighteenth Dynasty two-dimensional art,¹³⁰ and they departed increasingly from the rigid figurative and compositional schemata inherited from earlier epochs.¹³¹ These paintings can be compared with the “secular” wall paintings of the royal palace at Malkata,¹³² with which they share stylistic and technical features while treating different themes. Whereas painting was the dominant medium among mid-Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs, including the richest, the late reign of Amenhotep III saw a return to relief for the finest tombs, notably those of Khneruf and Ramose (the choice of relief or painting is partly determined by the quality of the rock, which may in its turn have influenced the choice of location).¹³³ The style of these tombs is very elaborate, with complex and refined detailing that exploits the potential of fine limestone to the full. Some writers have seen the developments in relief as conservative in comparison with paintings, but this is probably a misreading. Rather, they constitute new development analogous to those of painting but realized in a very different way; the tomb of Khneruf in particular shows

(1989). It is also possible that Akhenaten did not plan a mortuary cult of the traditional type for himself, or that a mortuary temple planned for a different location has not been identified or excavated.

128. For these genres, see Kozloff and Bryan (1992). For the broader period, see Bravatski, Doll, and Freed (1982).

129. For the contrast between the treatment of Amenhotep III and of Akhenaten, see Müller (1988) II—122–25.

130. For excellent color photographs, principally of details, see Michalczuk (1954).

131. A study with some important observations is Groenewegen-Frankfort (1951); an outline for a single tomb is provided in Kozloff (1979a); see also idem (1990).

132. See Michalczuk (1992), with references.

133. See also, e.g., the tomb of Kha (tomb, no. 57) (Porter and Moss [1960] 113–19); Lange and Hünner (1968) pl. 179.

features that are both "fussy" in their detail and remarkably free and imaginative in general style.¹³⁴

The contrast between style and content is most marked in the Sed Festival scenes of Kheruef, where the lively and intricate presentation of the dances in a contemporary style contrasts with their learned content, which may transform Old Kingdom and still older models, as in figures like the dwarf god Bes.¹³⁵ Under Akhenaten, the Sed Festival as represented at Karnak had unique features, notably scenes where the royal couple's bed was shown; in one they are next to it and no doubt implicitly occupy it.¹³⁶ These may have been built on such associations as that of Queen Tiye with Hathor, in which the queen's sexual role was evoked; under Akhenaten this association was made more explicit, perhaps in part for lack of a deity through whose representation it could be indicated discreetly.¹³⁷ It is quite likely, however, that such details had an ancient source and hence were part of a general revival of the past. Thus, an ancient festival song with erotic overtones connecting the king and Hathor is inscribed in the Luxor temple in a section begun under Amenhotep III and completed under Horemheb.¹³⁸

The tomb of Ramose illustrates the complex relations of painting, relief, and artistic styles in each.¹³⁹ Its largest areas of decoration are in relief. Their style is comparable with that of Kheruef, and they date a little later, covering the end of Amenhotep III's reign and the beginning of Akhenaten's (when he was still called Amenhotep). The east wall has an elaborate composition of figures at a banquet, together with offering bearers.¹⁴⁰ Not all of this was completed, and only the eyes of the figures, which were not carved in relief, were ever painted. The relief style of the west wall is very different, as is its subject matter, and the styles of its south and north halves also differ radically.¹⁴¹ Their dates may, however, not be far apart, and the difference may be one of subject matter as much as style. The south is apparently conserva-

134. There is still a remarkable contrast between these tombs and the altogether more mannered and adventurous post-Amarna relief tombs of the Memphite necropolis (see, e.g., Martin 1989a).

135. Epigraphic Survey (1980) pls. 24–63.

136. Traunecker (1986), esp. 36, fig. 11; apparently not included in Gohary (1992).

137. Traunecker argues strongly for an assumption by Nefertiti of the solar aspects of the role of Hathor; see Traunecker (1986) 40–41, Cf. Wente (1969).

138. See Sethe (1929); Epigraphic Survey (1994) 12, with n. 33 and pls. 26, 97.

139. For full publication, without photographs, see Davies (1941); for bibliography to 1960, see Porter and Moss (1960) 105–11; for excellent photographs of details, see Lange and Hirmer (1968) pls. XXIX, 171–79; for dating, see Nims (1973).

140. Davies (1941) pls. VII–XXI.

141. *Ibid.* (1941) pls. XXIX–XXXVIII.

tive, while the unfinished north shows the solar disk with rays, with the new motif of the king and queen in the window of appearances beneath, rewarding the deeply bowing figure of Ramose. This scene is in the new style.

Ramose must have died at about this time, and the vital additional decoration was then executed, perhaps in the seventy-day period of mummification (as was technically possible).¹⁴² This is the painting of the funerary cortege, with its mourning figures on the south cross wall of the hall.¹⁴³ Its style owes little, if anything, to the new artistic tendencies and is not even very advanced in terms of painting styles under Amenhotep III. It also contains traditional religious elements that soon became anathematized. The painting looks like a traditional composition but is not a makeshift: the work is of the highest quality, with telling individual touches.

The diversity of styles in this tomb shows the rapid evolution of relief carving and modes of composition, while the differences between the east wall and the south half of the west wall suggest that varying relief styles may have coexisted. The painting, as the latest part of the decoration, shows further that separate styles survived in paint contemporaneously with very different styles in other contexts, such as the palace of Malkata—quite apart from differences between painting and relief.

Hardly any monument offers such a diversity of artistic media and styles. The mixing of relief and painting may have been due to Ramose's sudden death, and some of the diversity relates to the accession of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten; nevertheless, the result must also bear witness to the range of artistic tendencies coexisting at the end of the reign of Amenhotep III, as well as the different purposes of the scenes in the tomb. In some respects, however, Ramose's tomb looks forward to the late Eighteenth Dynasty at Memphis and to the great Theban nonroyal tombs of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., rather than to the more tightly structured and less expansive tombs of Amarna. Even its stylistic eclecticism can be compared better with such monuments as the tomb of Montuemhat¹⁴⁴ in the Asasif than with other New Kingdom tombs. Its scale and diversity exhibit both grandiose expenditure on a nonroyal mortuary monument and the pluralism and tolerance of leading two-dimensional artists of the time.

Artistic developments such as these could be paralleled in other contexts and media, and they have a clear analogy in the great diversity of royal statuary from Amenhotep III's reign, mentioned earlier. In painting, another

142. Baines et al. (1989), with references.

143. Davies (1941) pls. XXIII–XXVII; for a color photograph, see Lange and Hirmer (1968) pl. XXX.

144. No. 34; see Porter and Moss (1960) 56–61.

significant area of change is in representational forms. Some specifically painted innovations, and others focused on the rendering of the single figure, are evident in the reigns of both Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III, whereas the most striking changes in composition occurred in the Amarna period itself. The first group of changes may have helped to set the scene for what followed, but the Amarna developments, which encompass a different canon of proportion for the single figure as well as striking compositional changes, are more radical and cannot be seen as being prefigured under Amenhotep III.

Conclusions; Language

Much of my discussion inevitably focuses on details rather than trends. It should now be asked how far the material reviewed contributes toward a general understanding of the changes introduced by Akhenaten and their relation with the immediate past.

Three features that appear to characterize the reign of Amenhotep III are an increased rate of cultural change, an accentuated diversity or plurality, and a further intensified direction of material resources into art and "public" display. While these are impossible to quantify or prove, the number of new elements seems to exceed what might be spared by chances of preservation. There is also a diversity in points of reference, notably to more remote past periods; in all but literary material (which happens to be unattested), the evidence relates to a wide range of dates and types. This broad and complex exploitation of the past might imply a concern to legitimize policy, but I prefer to see it, at least in part, as having a more general significance in the development of high culture.¹⁴⁵

In combination with the high level of wealth and the probable increased size of the elite under Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III, these tendencies may have created a sense of potential for change at a further enhanced rate, but there is no reason to believe that they required it. The principal novelty—and the most relevant one for Akhenaten—is the new solar religion. I have argued here that this could have originated before Amenhotep III and was one of several current conceptions of the sun god. Nonetheless, its radical turning away from the paraphernalia of solar religion, in the plural context of Amenhotep III's reign, may have provided a context for subsequent change, even though it coexisted with other possibilities. Pluralism is perhaps the dominant issue arising from this coexistence: the starkness and simpler new solar religion may have thrown the normal divergent harmony of beliefs

145. Baines (1989).

more strongly into relief than ever before. The absence of an explicit alternative to the very hegemonic Egyptian cultural framework may have militated against developing a more open pluralism—as was found, for example, in Greco-Roman and late antique Egypt.¹⁴⁶

None of the features I have discussed can account for Akhenaten's changes, either separately or together. They may have provided a context in which more radical change could occur, but they did not require such change. His transformation may have been motivated by a mixture of religious and political factors, but his intention was clearly to revolutionize both beliefs about the sun god and that god's relation with the king and with the world. The revolution acquired a momentum that made it almost an end in itself, spreading far wider than the issues at the core of the changes. The integrated character of Egyptian civilization may have made this breadth of approach necessary; religion was simply not separable from politics and art.

Change extended to most aspects of high culture. Here, it is worth singling out the treatment of the written language. The traditional written form was far from what was spoken but could record considerably changed forms that would still be comprehensible in terms of the existing written norm.¹⁴⁷ The language of hieroglyphic inscriptions had evolved far from the conservative forms of the reign of Hatshepsut a century earlier, but the development was uneven and did not tend toward a reform. Inscriptions from the Amarna period show far more change, extending to some of the hieroglyphs used. What was written there was still far from the spoken language, as is shown by the speed at which written Late Egyptian developed thereafter, but a move straight to writing the vernacular—so far as such a thing is possible—was perhaps not conceivable. Written language may have been an area where change was introduced almost for its own sake, without an intent that related closely to religious and political ideas.¹⁴⁸

This integration of revolutionary change with cultural forms that were not at the revolution's center has many parallels, not least because a "revolution" needs to legitimize itself and persuade others. The creation of "revolutionary" artistic styles is almost a diagnostic feature of revolutions that see and proclaim themselves as such. Often the forms of the new art are conserv-

146. E.g. Bagnall (1993).

147. Behnk (1931) studied the language of Amarna in outline, but this issue has not been investigated in detail. See also Silverman (1991).

148. Behnk (1931) 1, § 1 followed a view that was then common, that the new language was part of a search for "truth" (*mt*). Arcton (1952) showed that this interpretation could not be adequate.

active—twentieth-century socialist realism is an obvious example—but this was not at all the case with Akhenaten.

Revolutionary change aims at a level of transformation that may leave the analyst studying motives of individuals rather than general historical causes or contributory factors, because nothing in immediately preceding conditions positively determined what happened next. Human intention and motivation retain a central role. For the case of Akhenaten, I suggest that his motivation aimed specifically to reverse existing conventions and hence can rightly be termed revolutionary. The details of personal motivation, are, however, virtually inaccessible for such a remote period—which is one reason for the flood of published speculation about Akhenaten.

Writers on this period have often not considered its widespread reversal of conventions, which is most evident in artistic forms. Some Amarna depatures, especially in style and in iconography, evidently intended to reject convention almost before all else. One instance is the traditional rule of temple decorum in which the concrete gifts of food ranked lower than the abstract ones of "life and power" (*ḥtj wj3s*).¹⁴⁹ This was reversed notably in the decoration of columns, where food offerings such as swatches of birds were shown above the frieze of symbols of life and power.¹⁵⁰ This change probably had a representational or cosmographic symbolism, because the positioning of the offerings on the columns was more "realistic" than the one it replaced, which related to the rule that elements like food had to be shown in connection with human or divine figures manipulating or receiving them. The swatch of food was a more direct symbol of provision for or by the deity. At the same time, the rearrangement was shocking in traditional terms, because life and power were qualities deriving from the gods that were inherently divine; to set them below food might seem to negate fundamental symbolic hierarchies—in a way that would be surprising even under Akhenaten, since he too conceived of life as his god's most important gift to him. The awkward relation between material and symbolic well-being is, however, also apparent in representations of temples, where the sole major motif remaining in central areas is the altar piled with food, which is repeated endlessly (see n. 97).

In the case of artistic style, the essential constraint on the new forms was that they had to be different from their predecessors. Their point of departure was the most mannered style of the reign of Amenhotep III, but they went further, exaggerating manner above much else, probably including con-

149. E.g., Baines (1985b).

150. *Ibid.* 280, with references.

ventions of "beauty." There may have been iconographic meaning in some of the new extreme forms of the human body and physiognomy—although attempts to define such meanings have generally failed.¹⁵¹—but I believe that a principal motivation was the desire to reject and transform existing styles. In this process, certain current tendencies were vastly exaggerated, probably by artists who had been trained in those tendencies. With the rejection went a dismissal of fifteen hundred years of more or less consistent artistic development. But changes in representation and composition did not produce a new rendering of nature, even if they may have taken existing forms to the brink of one.¹⁵² Some developments in the treatment of the single figure in particular built on existing tendencies,¹⁵³ while others may have gone as far as was imaginable toward abrogating these tendencies.

Since Akhenaten's religious beliefs took their point of departure in the new solar religion and essentially "purified" them by subtraction, it is difficult to see the beliefs themselves as motivating his changes, unless—as is possible—his comprehension of their implications was very different from that of their originators. What was new was twofold: the status of the beliefs as dogmas, which is seen most clearly in the later form of the new god's name; and the role of the king. It is not appropriate to see the treatment of the king's position as resulting purely from his wishing to arrogate more power to himself—Amenhotep III had wielded enormous power, as had Thutmose III—but that desire was surely still important. Different, mutually reinforcing factors were probably at work. The king wished to impose the dogmas, and his conceiving of them as such was essential in the change. To impose them, he needed to enhance his status. Since that was vital to the whole conception, he may not have seen ideas about his god and himself as separable, but insofar as he merged them he transformed the position of the king in traditional religion. In this process, his vision of his role may have altered inherited elements so much that kingship, which was as vital to his god as to himself, became almost the principal driving force in development.

151. See Bryan (1992) and Bryan in Kozloff and Bryan (1992). Bryan's work provides a more valid approach than earlier studies, but I remain uncertain whether the emphasis on bodily weight and the middle body area carries the implications of creation and fertility that she proposes, either for the statuary of Amenhotep III or for that of Akhenaten.

152. Many writers have mentioned representational developments, but there has been no systematic study. For an historical analysis of the changes, see Schäfer (1931); Frankfort (1932); Goenewegen-Frankfort (1951). More recent analyses, such as Aldred (1973), have not covered the same ground.

153. For an excellent analysis of the foot and toes, see Rasmann (1980). For similar possibilities with the palm of the hand, see briefly Baines (1992).

The other probable driving forces are the dogma and the revolution themselves. For at least the first half of Akhenaten's reign, the dogma evolved in stages, and its revolutionary implications, of which the most characteristic expression is perhaps the erasure of the name of Amon and of the word *gods* from the monuments (see n. 3), were explored and put into effect.

In all of this, the idea of revolution—for which, as is to be expected, no Egyptian word is known—and the desire for total cultural transformation are the most striking innovations. Although such movements have occurred in many cultures and contexts, Akhenaten's revolution is one of the clearest and oldest identifiable instances.

For reasons outlined earlier, a search for the components of revolution in its antecedents is inevitably problematic. The contrast between the periods on either side of the reign of Akhenaten, however, suggests that Amenhotep III's reign set the scene in vital ways. The diversity of primarily religious and artistic activity in his reign, the level of resources devoted to them, and the scale of innovation may have created a context that called for a strong response. Such responses are, however, more often adaptive or conservative than revolutionary, so that the personal role of Akhenaten as well as his and his group's decisions about the directions of change remain fundamental. Amenhotep III's reign is an indispensable but partial pointer to the revolution's nature and direction.

To say that the reign of Akhenaten throws light on that of Amenhotep III is to use hindsight perhaps too freely; nevertheless, without Akhenaten, scholars would hardly have comprehended how wide-ranging the changes in the preceding decades were. Many of them may have originated earlier and may have drawn inspiration from much older times, but the diversity and dynamism of Amenhotep III's reign is brought out, rather than diminished, by the altogether more radical changes of his successor.

Finally, I should return to another question of method posed near the beginning of this chapter—that of the validity of interpretations of such changes as those of Akhenaten. The principal issues that have emerged in the discussion are three. In order of increasing generality, these are problems of dating, the status of change in various cultural manifestations, and the attempt to validate an overall interpretation in terms of "revolution."

In the case of dating, my argument has been cautious, in the context of the fragmentary record from antiquity: hardly any identifiable trend necessarily originated at its first date of attestation, and the recovery and interpretation of increasing quantities of texts shows that some developments of Amenhotep III's time were anticipated by centuries or more. It seems, however, either that the diversity of religious currents, especially in the solar cult, was

distinctive for his reign or that his reign was the culmination of a trend, one of whose principal contributory factors may have been a long period of peace, increasing wealth, and wide-ranging contacts among the elite. The result was something like an "international style," of a type that had hardly existed before.

The radical changes in many and various cultural forms under Akhenaten provide a principal argument for saying that his changes were revolutionary. It is more difficult to say whether there was change on such a broad front under Amenhotep III, and his changes appear not to be revolutionary but to enhance existing developments and trends—as I have noted for the solar cult. Instead of any direct assessment, my argument here focuses on the diversity of types, notably in art and in the use of the past. These cases seem to document an intensive discourse with and through cultural forms that might allow them to be put into question. This discourse may in part have enabled or set the scene for revolution. But it did not in itself tend toward revolution.

I suggest that the concept of revolution can usefully be applied to Akhenaten's reforms, principally because of their deliberate attack on existing culture and, in some cases, their espousal of change more or less for its own sake. In the terminology of Thomas Kuhn, writing of the very different area of natural science,¹⁵⁴ Akhenaten's changes sought to create a new "paradigm." Despite the difference of context, Kuhn's approach is useful here, because the religious focus of Akhenaten may have been rather like some scientific changes, with its originator seeing it in part as resolving an anomaly in existing beliefs. Those who have seen that change as "conservative" have, I think, missed its general thrust. Unlike scientists, Akhenaten had the power to enact his revolutions at least among the elite and to create some of the dislocations attendant on any revolution. Subsequent periods looked back to the reign of Amenhotep III as the preceding time of order and legitimacy. This perspective may evoke a genuine difference between the two reigns and between the changes that occurred in them. From that point of view, Amenhotep III's reign was the predawn, rather than the dawn, of the Amarna age. That it could be viewed in such a light is an indication of how sudden the changes of Amarna were.

But another approach is possible here. One may ask to what extent the developments of this period were more than changes of belief and had general cognitive implications. The co-occurrence of changes in a number of domains can be read either as demonstrating the all-pervasive nature of

¹⁵⁴ Kuhn (1970).

