



Egyptian Solar Religion (Studies in Egyptology)

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Revised and expanded, this volume deals with the religious traditions of ancient Egypt, which have come down to us in a state which is both extremely fragmentary and complex. New material - especially hymns collected in Theban tombs - now allows a much more precise allocation of religious texts and ideas in terms of time, place and social context. Within the field of solar religion, no less than five different traditions have to be distinguished: 1) the liturgical traditions of the royal solar cult, which for their secrecy and exclusivity are labelled the "mysteries" of the sun cult; 2) the traditional mythology of the solar course expressed in hymns and pictorial representations; 3) the revolutionary process culminating in the Amarna period, which discards the mythic images and gives a monotheistic construction of the solar course, a process which starts before Akhenaten's revolution; 4) the theology of Amun-Re, the God of Thebes, before the Amarna Period, a theology of primacy where one god acts as chief of a pantheon; and 5) the quite different theology of this same Amun-Re after Amarna, a theology which answers the monotheistic experience by developing a kind of pantheism - the concept of the hidden god - who is both cosmic god and personal saviour.

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