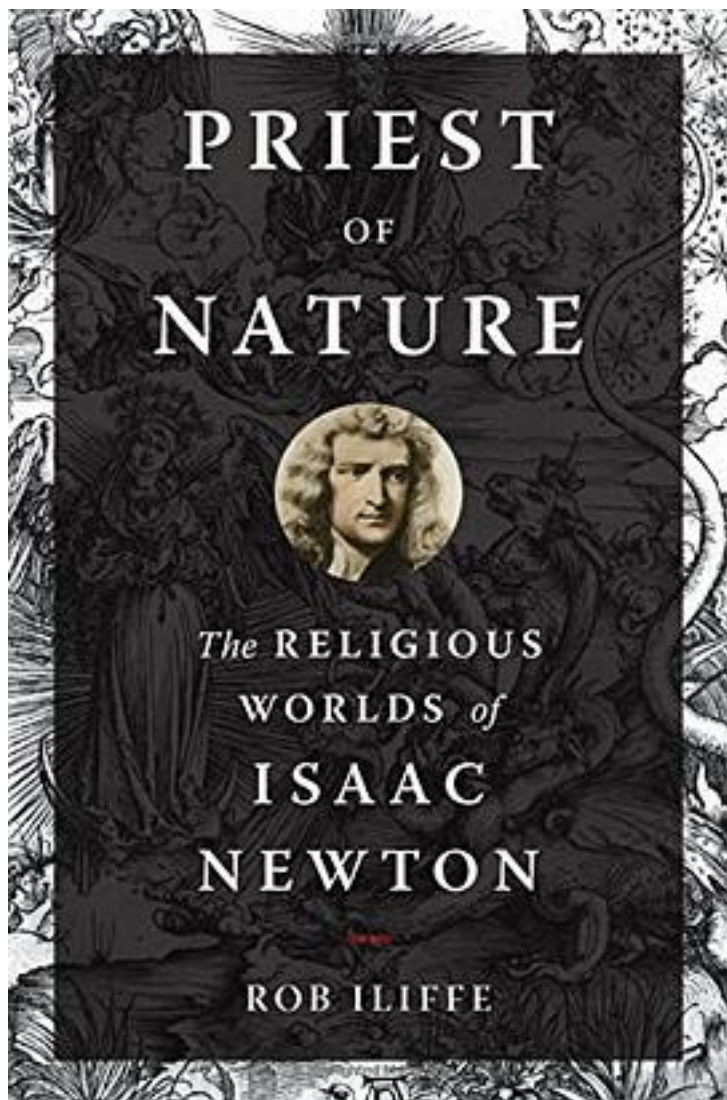


Priest of Nature



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著者:Rob Iliffe

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Newton's unusual - or even downright heretical - religious opinions were well known to a number of his contemporaries. For over two centuries the exact nature of his religious beliefs was a matter of intense debate, but by the middle of the nineteenth century it was public knowledge that he had held highly unorthodox conceptions of the Trinity. Until the early 1970s, very few of Newton's private theological researches had been made publicly available, and scholars did not determine his views with any precision. However, in the last few years millions of words from his previously unpublished religious writings have become publicly available, making it possible to offer a considered account of their content, and to assess what they tell us about the man.

In *Priest of Nature*, Newton scholar Rob Iliffe does just that. Tracing Newton's life from his birth through his years as a Cambridge don, his tenure as Warden and Master of the Mint, and his twenty-four years as President of the Royal Society, up to his death in 1727, Iliffe examines how Newton managed the complex boundaries between private and public professions of belief. While previous scholars and biographers have attempted to find coherence in his intellectual pursuits, Iliffe shows how wide-ranging and catholic Newton's views and interests in fact were, and in that takes issue with those who have attempted to underestimate their range and complexity.

Arguing that there is no simplistic coherence between Newton's philosophical and religious views, *Priest of Nature* delves into the religious writings Newton produced during his life, from his account of the sexually depraved lives of the early monks to his views about the creation of the world and the Apocalypse, and his commitment to a simple (anti-Trinitarian) doctrine that he believed had been corrupted in the first centuries of Christianity. Iliffe argues that religious commitments lay at the heart of Newton's earliest scientific research, and shows how his analysis of the techniques he used to prosecute corrupters of Christian doctrine were identical to those he used when dealing with his scientific enemies. Ultimately, *Priest of Nature* asserts, Newton's ambitious engagement with a tradition central to Western thought displays the same creative energy visible in his mathematical and scientific work, and despite his reluctance to follow any specific sect, he should be seen as a devout layman who made independence of thought a core virtue.

Offering novel insights into the spiritual life of Newton, *Priest of Nature* is both a scholarly work and a vibrant biography of one of the most influential scientists in history.

作者介绍:

Rob Iliffe is Professor of History of Science at Oxford, Co-Director of the Oxford Centre for the History of Science, Medicine and Technology, a General Editor of the online Newton Project, and the author of *Newton: A Very Short Introduction*.

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标签

科学史

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科学人文

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Newton

EarlyModernEurope

(English)

评论

十分详细的Biographical study.
前半部分可能因为牛顿的biographies已经被吃的很透了略显无聊.
历史部分和炼金术/神秘主义部分也有Frank Manuel 和 William
Newman的研究在前，加上没有脚注，感觉更像是给大众的科普读物…

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书评

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