

Ancient Egypt - Early Dynastic Period

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Entry tags: Egyptian Religions, African Religions, Religious Group

The Early Dynastic Period in ancient Egypt includes the first and second dynasties. This covers the cultural period of Naqada IIIc-d, and approximately 2950BCE-2670BCE (though these exact dates are debated). During this period, Egypt was politically united, and we therefore have a true Egyptian state. Throughout the history of ancient Egypt, the concept of religion does not seem to have been debated. The gods were an assumed part of life, and individuals were expected to make offerings to the gods and participate in religious festivals. In this way, the entire population can be considered part of the religious group. Much of the iconography and burial practices from the previous Predynastic Period continued into the Early Dynastic, though there were a number of additional advances. While there are more numerous examples of writing than previously, largely in the form of objects inscribed with royal names, most of what we know about Egyptian society and beliefs at this time is based on interpretations of the material evidence.



Date Range: 2950 BCE - 2670 BCE

Region: Peregrine_EarlyDynasticEgypt

Region tags: Africa, Egypt

From Peter N. Peregrine's Encyclopedia of Prehistory.

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1: Bestock, Laurel 2011. "The First Kings of Egypt: The Abydos Evidence" in Before the Pyramids: the Origins of Egyptian Civilization, edited by Emily Teeter, pp. 137-144. Oriental Institute Museum Publications 33. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Reference: Laurel Bestock. The First Kings of Egypt: The Abydos Evidence. (Emily Teeter), Before the Pyramids: The Origins of Egyptian Civilization. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

— Source 1: Köhler, E. Christiana 2011. "The Rise of the Egyptian State" in Before the Pyramids: the Origins of Egyptian Civilization, edited by Emily Teeter, pp. 123-126. Oriental Institute Museum Publications 33. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

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— Source 1: Wilkinson, Toby A.H. 2005. Early Dynastic Egypt. London and New York: Routledge.

Reference: Toby Wilkinson A.H.. Early Dynastic Egypt. London and New York: Routledge.

— Source 1: Snape, Steven 2011. Ancient Egyptian Tombs: The Culture of Life and Death. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.

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– Source 1: Bard, Kathryn A. 2000 "The Emergence of the Egyptian State (c.3200-2686 BC)" in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, edited by Ian Shaw, pp. 56-82. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reference: Kathryn Bard A.. *The Emergence of the Egyptian State (c.3200-2686 BC)*. (Ian Shaw, Ian Shaw, Ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

– Source 1: Bard, Kathryn A. 2015. *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell.

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Online sources for understanding this subject:

– Source 1 URL: https://www.ancient.eu/Early_Dynastic_Period_In_Egypt/

– Source 1 Description: Early Dynastic Egypt entry by Joshua Mark from the Ancient History Encyclopedia

– Source 2 URL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/archaeegypt/index.html>

– Source 2 Description: Information on Early Dynastic Egypt from University College London

– Source 1 URL: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/the-ancient-egyptian-economy/the-early-dynastic-period-c-30002686-bce/0DB61A5A16C5DC5ABEEDEAEDEE52533/core-reader>

– Source 1 Description: The Early Dynastic Period from Brian Muhs' *The Ancient Egyptian Economy*

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: During the Early Dynastic Period in Egypt, there is clear contact between Egypt and peoples to the south in modern Sudan, and to the northeast in the Levant. From archaeological evidence at sites such as En Besor in modern Israel, contact to the northeast seems to have largely taken the form of peaceful trade, though there are a few references to more violent interactions as well. In the Levant, Egypt seems to have been able to set up administrative colonies, which oversaw the movement of goods such as copper, honey, wine, bitumen, resin, and wood into Egypt (Wilkinson 2005:129-130). By the end of the Second Dynasty, Egypt had shifted trade routes to focus more on sea than land trade routes, with clear relations between Egypt and Byblos being established (Wilkinson 2005:136). South to Sudan and beyond, a region commonly referred to as Nubia, seems to have had a much more violent relationship with Egypt. The Egyptians pushed the local communities out of the areas closest to the Egyptian border, as seen in particular by the abandonment of Qustul. Egypt seems to have wanted to secure trading routes in these areas, as an excellent source of gold, and for more exotic goods from further south (Wilkinson 2005:139-154).

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

– Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact neutral:

– No

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– No

Notes: There does not seem to have been significant violent conflict within Egypt at this time.

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Yes

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– No

Notes: In ancient Egypt, "religion" was not a debated concept - the gods were a given aspect of life, and worship of them, and the desire to join them in the afterlife, shaped many of the Egyptians' daily practices. While specific priesthoods had specific requirements for religious affiliation, there was no formal acknowledgement of membership in the religion in general.

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– No

Does the religion have official political support

– Yes

Notes: Divine kingship was a fundamental element of Egyptian religion. The king was the earthly embodiment of the god Horus, and it was his job to maintain cosmic balance. The king ensured that temples were built for the gods, that they were supplied with offerings, and is depicted receiving divine support on military expeditions (Wilkinson 2005:155-156). In general whether the gods existed does not seem to have been questioned, or least such doubt is not recorded. Much of the state's wealth seems to have been drawn from taxes, and was redistributed to temples, among other institutions (see also Muhs 2016).

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– Yes

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– Yes

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– Yes

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– No

Notes: As temples were a core system for taxation and redistribution, many administrative personnel also held religious titles, but there are other administration titles or positions that seem to be unrelated to religious positions as well.

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

– I don't know

Notes: "Religious observance" is difficult to define in ancient Egypt. The existence of the gods and the need to worship them does not seem to have been questioned. Disrespect to the gods, however, does seem to have been punished.

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

– I don't know

Notes: There is no formal legal code in ancient Egypt; however, law, order, and religious observance was all based on the concept of Maat - the Egyptian word meaning order or justice.

↳ Polity provides preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax, exemption)

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is too little evidence from this period to be certain.

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Too little evidence to be certain, but there are cemeteries from this period with tens of thousands of burials.

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Too little evidence to be certain, but there are cemeteries from this period with tens of thousands of burials.

Nature of religious group [please select one]:

– Large religious group (unknown relationship to other religious groups, or presence of other religious groups unknown)

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: The king is the head of the religion as a whole, while there are also head priests who are responsible for religious practice at specific temples.

↳ Is there a hierarchy among these leaders:

– Yes

Notes: The king is the head of the religion, the head priests are in charge of specific temples, and there are several ranks of priests below them.

↳ A single leader of a local community:

– Yes

↳ Multiple religious communities each with its own leader, no hierarchy among these leaders:

– No

↳ "Regional" leaders who oversee one or more local leader(s) (e.g. bishops):

– No

↳ A single leader for the religious group that oversees all other leaders in the sample region:

– Yes

↳ A council or group of leaders for the religious group that oversees all other leaders in the sample region:

– No

↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

– Yes

↳ Powers are acquired by individual deeds carried out in past lives:

– No

↳ Powers are acquired by individual deeds carried out in the current life:

– No

↳ Powers are inherited:

– No

↳ Powers are culturally transmitted from a supernatural being:

– Yes

Notes: The king was believed to be the earthly embodiment of the god Horus - this is clear already by this early period, thanks to images of the falcon Horus standing over the names of the kings.

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

– No

↳ Are leaders considered fallible:

– No

Notes: While nobody could challenge the king, there are moments in texts when he admits mistakes. The king was also expected to perform religious ceremonies in order to renew his powers.

↳ Are close followers or disciples of a religious leader required to obediently and unquestionably accept the leader's pronouncements on all matters:

– Yes

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: There were hieroglyphic religious texts, but during this early period, they still seem to take the form of short labels and titles, nothing that I would consider to be "scripture" (Bard 2000: 74-76).

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: The Early Dynastic Period was really the first time that monumental structures were built in ancient Egypt (Bard 2000: 66-67). Some of the most important were associated with the royal mortuary complexes at Abydos. These included massive multi-room tombs with subsidiary burials, and additional religious enclosures where cultic rituals may have been performed (see Bestock 2011).

↳ In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Too little preserved evidence to be certain.

↳ Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:

– Square meters: 6944

Notes: The royal funerary enclosure of Khasekhemwy, known as the Shunet el-Zebib, was 124 x 56m (Bard 2015:123).

↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:

– Height, meters: 11

Notes: The royal funerary enclosure of Khasekhemwy, known as the Shunet el-Zebib - walls were 10-11m high (Bard 2015:123).

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:

– I don't know

↳ Height of average monument, meters:

– I don't know

↳ In the largest settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– I don't know

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

Notes: Temples, shrines, and monumental royal tombs and associated enclosures are characteristic of the religious monuments created during the Early Dynastic Period. There were both state temples and shrines, that focused in particular on forms of the god Horus, who was associated with the divine power of the king. There was also a large collection of local gods, and local cult traditions varied

considerably. (see Wilkinson 2005: 225ff; Bard 2000: 66-73; Bestock 2011)

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

Notes: Thousands of tombs have been found in Egypt that date to this period. The most famous are the royal tombs found at Abydos, which were massive, multi-roomed burials. In the First Dynasty, these were associated with subsidiary graves of sacrificed individuals. There were also associated animal and boat burials. The elite tombs in North Saqqara were also large and made up of multiple rooms, with niched mud-brick superstructures. These are the first of the "mastaba" tombs, named for the large bench-like superstructures. These were decorated, and even included "granary-like structures, a mud-brick boat grave, and traces of a garden" (Bard 2000: 71).

↳ Cemeteries:

– Yes

Notes: Again, the royal cemetery at Abydos is the most monumental, but there were also other large cemeteries, such as the elite cemetery at North Saqqara (Bard 2000: 66).

↳ Temples:

– Yes

Notes: Both royal mortuary temples and enclosures and temples dedicated to the gods are known from this period (Wilkinson 2005: 239, 262ff).

↳ Altars:

– Yes

Notes: Temples and shrines often had altars where offerings and votive objects could be placed.

↳ Devotional markers:

– I don't know

↳ Mass gathering point [plazas, courtyard, square. Places permanently demarcated using visible objects or structures]:

– Yes

Notes: There are several enclosures that may have been used for public gatherings. The best preserved have been found at Abydos, particularly the large Shunet el-Zebib. A similar construction, now referred to as "the fort" has also been found at Hierakonpolis. These may have been used as part of a ceremony of kingship or the royal funeral (Wilkinson 2005:205, 212). In addition, local shrines in the Early Dynastic period seem to be characterized by their "openness", again suggesting the occurrence of public cult rituals (Wilkinson 2005: 263).

↳ Other type of religious monumental architecture:

– I don't know

Is iconography present:

– Yes

Notes: There is considerable religious iconography from this period. Images of the king performing rituals are particularly popular. The gods are shown in human and animal form, and human beings are depicted in different sizes to show their importance.

↳ Where is iconography present [select all that apply]:

– Some public spaces

Notes: There was a great deal of religious iconography in the Early Dynastic Period. Images of the smiting king, victory over enemies, and control of chaos from the Predynastic Period continue to be seen. Greater representation of gods, standards, and religious ceremonies are added. Iconography is found at temples, on votive offerings, local shrines, and on objects in tombs.

– On persons

Notes: Already in this early period, the king is shown wearing elements that are iconic of his kingship - such as the red and white crowns that demonstrate he is ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt.

↳ Are there distinct features in the religious group's iconography:

– Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not):

– No

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic):

– Yes

Notes: The gods were seen to have both animal and human forms, and were sometimes also depicted in a mix - with a human body and an animal head (Wilkinson 2005: 226).

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic):

– No

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic):

– Yes

Notes: Notes: The gods were seen to have both animal and human forms, and were sometimes also depicted in a mix - with a human body and an animal head (Wilkinson 2005: 226).

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract symbol):

– Yes

Notes: Some of the gods or divine presence were represented in forms that remain mysterious. A common symbol found on images of standards has been interpreted as the "royal placenta", which seems to be related to the power of the divine king (Wilkinson 2005: 258). Other gods are also represented by abstract features, such as the form of the name of the goddess Neith.

↳ Portrayals of afterlife:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The scenes depicted on objects during this period seem to show rituals performed in daily life, though it is possible that some are meant to show elements of the afterlife as well.

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols):

– I don't know

Notes: This question is a bit difficult to answer, as defining what might be considered a strict "doctrine" in ancient Egypt is difficult.

↳ Humans:

– Yes

Notes: Humans were frequently portrayed in art of the period. Size was used to convey their relative importance (Bard 2000: 76).

↳ Other features of iconography:

– Yes

Notes: There are elements of iconography that stood as symbols of power and divine presence. For instance, the carrying chair seems to have been used on its own, and votive objects have been found in this shape. Scholars believe it is a reference to the carrying chairs used in processions of divine or royal statuary (Wilkinson 2005: 232).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: There are a number of sites that become foci of different religious actions, such as at Hierakonpolis, Abydos, and Saqqara for this period.

Are pilgrimages present:

– I don't know

Notes: I don't know of any pilgrimages during this time period, but individuals may have made trips to visit the royal tombs or the festival enclosures.

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer “no” only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: In ancient Egyptian religion, there was a total of five elements that made up a person's identity: the ka and ba - which together make up what might be considered the spirit - the name, the shadow, and the body. It is difficult to be clear about which elements were conceived already by the Early Dynastic Period, but at least the Ka and the body seem to be understood as two separate elements already (Wilkinson 2005: 16).

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Yes

Notes: It is difficult to know exactly how the Egyptians thought about the spirit and the mind in this early period, but they already understood that the spirit could live on after the body, and that the king was an embodiment of the spirit of the god Horus.

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

– Yes

↳ Other spirit-body relationship:

– I don't know

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: While it is clear that there was a belief in the afterlife, the details for this period are not clear. Some tombs, like the royal tombs from Abydos, had slender passageways connecting the different sections or rooms, perhaps so the spirit could move between them. The deposit of objects used in daily life, including foodstuffs, suggest that the deceased was believed to continue to live on in the afterlife in a manner similar to what is lived on earth.

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: The Egyptians will develop a concept of different physical locations for the afterlife, but there is little evidence that this was established by the Early Dynastic Period.

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Notes: There is no human reincarnation, though the royal elements of the king's spirit were believed to be reborn in the next king (Wilkinson 2005: 236)

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: There is limited evidence for mummification from this period, but it is not as widespread as it would become in the succeeding period. The body was laid, generally in a flexed position, in the grave, often with grave goods. The warm sands in which people were buried would help to dry out the remains.

↳ Cremation:

– No

↳ Mummification:

– Yes

Notes: The only royal remains recovered from this period consisted of part of an arm from the tomb of Djer, it was found still partially covered in linen from an early form of mummification (Bard 2000: 68). The flexed burial, either in a pit or a wooden coffin is the most common from this period. The use of coffins, in particular, rose in popularity in the Second Dynasty, necessitating greater attention to mummification - since the bodies would no longer dry out in warm sands (Bard 2000: 81).

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: The flexed burial, either in a pit or a wooden coffin is the most common from this period. The use of coffins, in particular, rose in popularity in the Second Dynasty, necessitating greater attention to mummification (Bard 2000: 81).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– Yes

Notes: The flexed burial, either in a pit or a wooden coffin is the most common from this period. The use of coffins, in particular, rose in popularity in the Second Dynasty, necessitating greater attention to mummification (Bard 2000: 81).

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– Yes

Notes: While there are some graves where individuals were laid out flat, particularly in the Second Dynasty, the norm was still to place individuals in a contracted position in the tomb.

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

– No

↳ Corpse is interred some other way:

– No

Notes: While there are certainly exceptions, the flexed burial is most common for this period.

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

Notes: The flexed burial, either in a pit or a wooden coffin is the most common from this period. The use of coffins, in particular, rose in popularity in the Second Dynasty, necessitating greater attention to mummification (Bard 2000: 81). The body might be dried out in the warm sands, but it was not left exposed.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

↳ Secondary burial:

– No

↳ Re-treatment of corpse:

– No

↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse :

– No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes

Notes: Human sacrifice is practiced in the Early Dynastic period. Subsidiary graves have been found associated with the royal tombs in Abydos, dating to the First Dynasty (Wilkinson 2005: 229). Analysis suggests that at least some of these individuals were sacrificed by strangulation. King Djer had the most subsidiary burials, numbering 338 (Bard 2000: 68).

↳ Human sacrifices present:

– Yes

↳ Out-group humans are sacrificed:

– No

↳ In-group humans are sacrificed:

– Yes

↳ Other humans are sacrificed:

– No

↳ Animal co-sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: Animals do seem to have been sacrificed for the burial, particularly of kings. Aha's tomb complex, for instance, included subsidiary graves for at least seven young lions (Bard 2000: 67).

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: Grave goods largely consisted of objects and materials that would have been useful in daily life. Vessels, jewelry, and furniture are therefore frequently found. Foodstuffs, jars of beer and oil, are also common. Of course, the richest graves were those belonging to royalty, the kings at Abydos, and the elite in North Saqqara.

↳ Personal effects:

– Yes

Notes: Jewellery, clothing, food, and objects that the deceased used in life are frequently found in ancient Egyptian tombs from all periods from the Predynastic on.

↳ Valuable items:

– Yes

↳ Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):

– Yes

Notes: The wealthiest graves of course belonged to the king. While many of the grave goods had been removed, some precious objects were left behind. Bracelets made of gold, turquoise, amethyst, and lapis lazuli beads, were found in the tomb of king Djer at Abydos, for instance. The tombs of the elite also included well crafted objects of ebony and ivory (Bard 2000: 66).

↳ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):

– Yes

Notes: Copper tools and vessels have been found in the tombs of the elite (Bard 2000:66). Pots, stone vessels, copper tools, and ivory artefacts were found in the subsidiary burials associated with the royal tombs at Abydos (Bard 2000: 68).

↳ Other valuable/precious items interred:

– Yes [specify]: Dogs have been found in subsidiary graves, perhaps being personal pets of the deceased (Bard 2000: 68).

↳ Other grave goods:

– Yes

Notes: Boat burials began during this period also. They were located near the tombs of the kings, and are believed to be associated both with the need for transport in the afterlife, and perhaps to help the king on his journey to the afterlife (Bard 2000: 70). Many grave also included inscribed stele with the tomb owners name, and sometimes their positions or titles. Royal tombs were furnished with stele that included the king's name in a serekh, a symbol of the palace with a niched facade, protected by an image of the god Horus (Bard 2000: 76, 80).

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

↳ As cenotaphs:

– No

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

Notes: A number of cemeteries have been found throughout Egypt that date to this period. They tend to be separated based on the wealth and status of individuals. The Kings were buried at Abydos, and there was a very wealthy elite cemetery in North Saqqara. More humble burials, including pit burials, have been found at other sites throughout Egypt, including at the "Fort Cemetery" at Hierakonpolis, and the thousands of burials at Helwan (Bard 2000:66-72, 81).

↳ Family tomb-crypt:

– I don't know

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– I don't know

↳ Other formal burial type:

– I don't know

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: A multitude of gods were worshipped already by the Early Dynastic Period in Egypt. This included the divine king, whose cult was practiced throughout Egypt. The spirits of ancestors were also worshipped, and people left offerings of food and other goods at the graves of their family members.

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– No

Notes: This is a bit of a complicated question for ancient Egypt. During this period, the king was considered divine, and served as the intermediary between the people of Egypt, and the host of gods in which the people believed. The king was seen to be an embodiment of the god Horus, who was worshipped in all regions of Egypt. It does not seem that Horus was more powerful than other gods though, and the king was understood to be less powerful than the gods. So, perhaps the king and Horus during this time might have been viewed as more important to the lives of the Egyptian people, even if they were not more powerful than the other gods (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 236)

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

Notes: Ancestors and deceased family members are often prayed to, and it was believed that they might come back from the dead to cause mischief. There is little detailed evidence for these practices in this period, but the creation of elaborate graves, and the offering of goods at graves, suggests that it was present by this time.

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– No

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– Yes

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Human spirits' knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– No

↳ Human spirits' knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– No

↳ Human spirits' knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

– Yes

↳ Human spirits' knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The extent of the knowledge is unclear.

↳ Human spirits can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Yes

↳ Human spirits can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):

– Yes

↳ Human spirit's can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

– Yes

↳ Human spirits know your basic character (personal essence):

– Yes

↳ Human spirits know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The extent of the knowledge of ancestors is somewhat unclear - particularly during this early period.

↳ Human spirits have other form(s) of knowledge regarding this world:

– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While individuals in later periods pray for ancestral spirits to affect change in their lives, there is too little evidence for a detailed understanding of the beliefs at this time.

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While individuals in later periods pray for ancestral spirits to affect change in their lives, there is too little evidence for a detailed understanding of the beliefs at this time.

↳ Human spirits have memory of life:

– Yes

Notes: Burials included many objects used in life, which suggests they wanted them in the afterlife, and so would have retained their memories.

↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While individuals in later periods pray for ancestral spirits to affect change in their lives, there is too little evidence for a detailed understanding of the beliefs at this time.

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While individuals in later periods pray for ancestral spirits to affect change in their lives, there is too little evidence for a detailed understanding of the beliefs at this time.

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While individuals in later periods pray for ancestral spirits to affect change in their lives, there is too little evidence for a detailed understanding of the beliefs at this time.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: There are a multitude of different gods in the Egyptian pantheon, even in the Early Dynastic Period. It was believed that the gods could indwell in different animals and statues. (See further, Wilkinson 2005: 241-257).

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– No

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– No

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

– Yes

Notes: It seems like most gods were completely aware of what was going on in Egypt, though they may not have cared unless their attention was drawn to a person or event through offerings or neglect. Horus, a solar falcon god, and the god associated with the king, was also worshipped through Egypt (Wilkinson 2005: 248).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While it seems like gods probably had general knowledge about Egypt, it is unclear if their vision was truly unrestricted outside of Egypt, or if it was carried with the Egyptians through statues and votives.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Yes

Notes: Although it is a little hard to judge this during the Early Dynastic Period, it seems to be generally assumed that this is the case.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

– Yes

Notes: Although it is a little hard to judge this during the Early Dynastic Period, it seems to be generally assumed that this is the case.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know your basic character (personal essence):

– Yes

Notes: Although it is a little hard to judge this during the Early Dynastic Period, it seems to be generally assumed that this is the case. Though the Egyptian gods cared more about receiving offerings than how any individual behaved.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This level of detail is too difficult to ascertain for this period.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings can reward:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings can punish:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with

plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

– Yes

Notes: There were regular offerings of foodstuffs made to the Egyptian gods to keep them happy and comfortable.

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– Yes

↳ These mixed human-divine beings can be seen:

– Yes

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– Yes

↳ Organized hierarchically:

– Yes

↳ Power of beings is domain specific:

– Yes

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:

Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously “moral” or “ethical” norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– Yes

Notes: For this early period, it is unclear what behaviour exactly was rewarded and punished by the gods; however, people do seem to have been expected to make offerings to the gods and the cult of the divine king, and participate in festivals. What the punishment might have been for not participating is unclear. No additional details are available for this period, due to a lack of lengthy texts.

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other religions:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other polities:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about sex:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about laziness:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about sorcery:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about non-lethal fighting:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about shirking risk:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about disrespecting elders:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about gossiping:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about property crimes:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:

– Yes

Notes: It is unclear what behaviour exactly was rewarded and punished by the gods; however, people do seem to have been expected to make offerings to the gods and the cult of the divine king, and participate in festivals. What the punishment might have been for not participating is unclear. Priests were present to ensure that the rituals were carried out properly.

↳ Supernatural beings care about performance of rituals:

– Yes

Notes: It is unclear what behaviour exactly was rewarded and punished by the gods; however, people do seem to have been expected to make offerings to the gods and the cult of the divine king, and participate in festivals. What the punishment might have been for not participating is unclear. Priests were present to ensure that the rituals were carried out properly.

↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:

– No

Notes: Although there is little evidence for this from this period, this never seems to be a concern for the ancient Egyptians.

↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a lack of extensive written evidence.

↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Details of what the gods were concerned with in terms of human behaviour and practices, beyond leaving offerings for the gods, cannot be discerned for this period due to a

lack of extensive written evidence.

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: Certain gods could effect certain punishments. The details of these punishments are too poorly understood for this period. In later periods, certain gods could cause certain afflictions, while others were called to sooth these issues.

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– Yes

↳ Done by other entities or through other means [specify]

– Field doesn't know

Notes: In later periods, ancestral spirits could cause harm if they were disrespected, but it is unclear if this is true for this earlier period as well.

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– I don't know

Notes: A better answer here would be, 'sometimes'.

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– No

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While there seems to have been a need to worship, honour, and satisfy the gods in all periods, the specifics of possible punishments are not known for this period.

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Yes

Notes: The king's main responsibility on earth was to ensure that the world remained in balance, and that the gods were appeased so that they would reward Egypt with plenty and not bring about destruction (see further, Wilkinson 2005: 155-6).

↳ Is the cause/purpose of supernatural rewards known:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While there seems to have been a need to worship, honour, and satisfy the gods in all periods, the specifics of possible rewards are not known for this period.

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While there seems to have been a need to worship, honour, and satisfy the gods in all periods, the specifics of possible rewards are not known for this period.

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While there seems to have been a need to worship, honour, and satisfy the gods in all periods, the specifics of possible rewards are not known for this period.

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– No

Notes: This is a bit difficult to answer - the king was seen as an individual who brought order, justice, and balance to the cosmos, and was the mediator between the gods and mankind. In this way, he could be considered messianic, but I think this is a bit of a stretch. I could see there being disagreement on this point, however.

Is an eschatology present:

– No

Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Later in Egyptian history, the concept of "maat", which translates roughly to truth, order, or justice, is at the heart of the Egyptian belief system. While there seems to be a concept of balance and order over chaos by this period, it is unclear whether the religious concept had already been formalized, and was demanded from the religious followers in general.

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Later in Egyptian history, the concept of "maat", which translates roughly to truth, order, or justice, is at the heart of the Egyptian belief system. While there seems to be a concept of balance and order over chaos by this period, it is unclear whether the religious concept had already been formalized, and was demanded from the religious followers in general.

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Later in Egyptian history, the concept of "maat", which translates roughly to truth, order, or justice, is at the heart of the Egyptian belief system. While there seems to be a concept of balance and order over chaos by this period, it is unclear whether the religious concept had already been formalized, and was demanded from the religious followers in general.

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– No

Notes: There are references to periods of abstinence in later periods, particularly associated with temple worship, but I do not know of any reference to this practice dating to this early period.

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– No

Notes: In later periods, there are good taboos when working at the temple, but again, there is no evidence for this from this period.

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– Yes

Notes: Adults were sacrificed in the First Dynasty, and buried in subsidiary burials attached to the royal tombs. These seem to be people associated with the royal household, either elite people, or those working for the king. King Djer had the largest number of sacrificed individuals in 338 subsidiary graves (Bard 2000: 68).



Commoners:

– Yes



Elites:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Notes: The people who were sacrificed and buried in the royal complexes at Abydos seem to have been killed, though there are a few instances where the cause of death is unclear.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– Yes

Notes: Objects were often donated to temples and local shrines. While sometimes these are very well-made objects and include precious materials, other times they are rather rough (see Wilkinson 2005: 233-234).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– Yes

Notes: The ancient Egyptians participated in religious festivals, and worshipped at local shrines.

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Yes

Notes: There is a great deal of evidence for local shrines and cult practice. Whether this was required or not, is, however, debatable.



What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to small-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Yes

Notes: In addition to local rituals and worship, there were also state rituals, often related to the divine kingship. Just how many people were present at these events, however, is difficult to say. (Wilkinson 2005: 259-262).



On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is too little evidence from this period to be certain.



What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know



Are there orthodoxy checks:

Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.

– Yes

Notes: The beginnings of a professional priesthood are visible by this date. Individuals with the sem priest title, who were in charge of aspects of cultic rituals, is already evident by this time. In the First Dynasty, priests who specialized in maintaining the royal mortuary cult emerge, and those who maintained state cults can be identified by the end of the Second Dynasty (Wilkinson 2005: 235-236)

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

– Yes

Notes: The beginnings of a professional priesthood are visible by this date. Individuals with the sem priest title, who were in charge of aspects of cultic rituals, is already evident by this time. In the First Dynasty, priests who specialized in maintaining the royal mortuary cult emerge, and those who maintained state cults can be identified by the end of the Second Dynasty (Wilkinson 2005: 235-236)

↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:

– I don't know

↳ Is there use of intoxicants:

– Yes

Notes: Drinking seems to have been part of festivals, and evidence from Hierakonpolis suggests that beer drinking occurred from this early date.

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– No

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– No

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– A state

Notes: By the Early Dynastic Period, the regions of Upper and Lower Egypt had been unified as a state. The regional shrines dedicated to the divine king and local gods seem to have helped encourage and maintain this unity (see Wilkinson 2005: 263).

Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– Yes

Notes: Already by this time, there is administrative evidence of taxation of food products which would then be redistributed to the provinces. It is a bit unclear if this would be given out during periods of famine, but it seems likely.

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– No

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– No

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is too little evidence to suggest how education worked during this period. Temples seem to have worked as bastions of knowledge, and in other periods there do seem to be schools associated with temples. There is no evidence for such practices during this period, however.

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than

the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– Yes

Notes: The temples and shrines were very much a part of the state taxation system, and they seem to serve as centers for redistribution already by this period (Wilkinson 2005: 239).

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– I don't know

Notes: The temples seem to have been able to draw in taxes from the lands that they governed, while the palace and its foundations ensured the rest of the tax collection; however, it is difficult to completely separate these two bases, as the king was worshipped as a divine being, and was also seen as the head of the religion.

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– Yes

Notes: Temples seem to have had areas for food storage, and may have already been involved in the redistribution systems by this period.

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Food storage and redistribution seems to have been a major preoccupation of the Egyptian state, and there are records referencing these actions already in this early period (Muhs 2016).

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– No

Notes: The scorpion macehead from the Predynastic Period shows the king perhaps breaking ground on a state irrigation work, but no such imagery has been found dating to this later period. It does not seem that such works were generally the concern of the state or temples during this era (Wilkinson 2005: 38).

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– No

Notes: The main means of transportation at this time was by Nile boat, and Donkey. These do not seem to have been assisted by the religious group.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– Yes

Notes: Temple administration over land and production, and the taxation of goods, was a considerable part of the Egyptian economy, and there are bureaucratic records even from this early period that attest to such (Wilkinson 2005: 98-99).

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The temples seem to have been able to draw in taxes from the lands that they governed, while the palace and its foundations ensured the rest of the tax collection; however, it is difficult to completely separate these two bases, as the king was worshipped as a divine being, and was also seen as the head of the religion.

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– No

Notes: In later periods, issues could be taken to temple personnel, or to an oracle, for judgement. But there is no evidence for this in this early period.

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is possible that individuals could ask members of the bureaucracy for assistance in disputes by this point. The vizierate seems to have existed in an early form in this period, and later he was considered to be a judge, whose word could only be overturned by the king. Whether or not this role was taken up by this individual during the Early Dyanstic period is debatable (Wilkinson 2005: 118).

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear whether religious personnel could mete out judgements and enforce punishments during this time, but I do not believe this is the case in this period.

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.



Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.



Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.



Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.



Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.



Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The state with the king at the head seems to be able to mete out punishments during

this time, but it is unclear what they would have been during this early period.

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– No

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– No

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– Yes

Notes: Egyptian hieroglyphs are themselves a form of religious writing, but they could be used to express mundane matters as well, and may have developed out of the need for administrative texts (Bard 2000: 74-75).



Is use of this distinct written language confined to religious professionals:

– No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– Yes

Notes: There are references to years and dates from this early period, the best examples are preserved in the later "Palermo Stone".

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The calendar is based on the seasonal flooding of the Nile, and is based on agriculture. It likely began as part of the state taxation records, but was quickly associated with religious changes as well.

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Gathering
- Hunting (including marine animals)
- Fishing
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
- Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Notes: Temples in ancient Egypt controlled large areas of lands, and the produce was brought back to the temples, and then redistributed to the people. The extent to which the temples supported themselves is unclear in this period.

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes



Please characterize the forms/levels of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Gathering
- Hunting (including marine animals)
- Fishing
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

– Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Notes: Taxes brought into the state could also be redistributed to temples to support personnel as needed. The extent to which the temples supported themselves is unclear in this period.

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