

# Ancient Egyptian Book of the Earth – Tomb of Ramesses VI

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Entry tags: Ancient Egyptian Religion, Ancient Egyptian Text, Cosmology, Text, African Religions, Egyptian Religions, Religious Group

The sarcophagus chamber of Ramesses VI (Dynasty 20, c. 1145–1139 BCE) in the Valley of the Kings, west of modern Luxor, was decorated from floor to ceiling, on all finished wall surfaces and three column faces, with scenes and texts from an ancient Egyptian cosmological work known today as the “Book of the Earth” (ancient title unknown). This “book” was in fact one ad hoc collection drawn from a stock pool of imagery relating to the subterranean regions of the Duat, where gods and the dead were believed to reside. In total, eight royal monuments from the later New Kingdom (Dynasties 19–20) included elements from the Book of the Earth, of which the version of Ramesses VI is by far the largest and most elaborate. After the New Kingdom, elements from the Book of the Earth began to appear on non-royal papyri and other mortuary equipment. Scenes belonging to the Book of the Earth depict a wide variety of chthonic entities, whom the sun god – and by extension, the deceased king – was believed to encounter during the nocturnal portion of his cyclical journey through the cosmos. The Book of the Earth divided its scenes of the divine realm into two large halves, designated by convention as “A” on the left (when facing the rear of the tomb) and “B” on the right. The Book of the Earth was paired typically with images of the sky on the ceiling directly overhead, which might depict either anthropomorphized constellations or the cosmos-spanning sky goddess. Such celestial images were inherently directional: In the tomb of Ramesses VI, the sky goddess appears with her day- and night-time forms back to back, with her head in the west and her feet in the east. Extending the directionality of the ceiling to the Book of the Earth scenes on the walls below it permits us to identify the “A” group, on the left, as the western half of the underworld, where the sun initially sets at dusk, while the “B” group, on the right, corresponds to the eastern half of the underworld, from which the sun ultimately rises at dawn. Other important themes include the union of the sun god with his counterpart Osiris, the punishment of the Damned, and the transit of the solar barque through the underworld, personified as a double lion or sphinx.



Date Range: 1145 BCE - 1139 BCE

Region: The Valley of the Kings

Region tags: Africa, Northern Africa, Egypt

Valley of the Kings, Egypt, west of modern Luxor (ancient Thebes)

## Status of Readership:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists

## Sources and Corpora

### Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

– Source 1: J.A. Roberson, *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Earth*, Wilbour Studies 1 (Atlanta: Lockwood press, 2012).

– Source 2: J.A. Roberson, "The Royal Funerary Books," in R. Wilkinson and K.R. Weeks, *The Oxford Handbook of the Valley of the Kings* (Oxford: University Press, 2015), p. 316–332.

– Source 3: J.C. Darnell and C.M. Darnell, *The Ancient Egyptian Netherworld Books, Writings from the Ancient World 39* (Atlanta: SBL, 2018), p. 457–522.

Reference: Joshua Roberson A. *The Royal Funerary Books*. (Richard Wilkinson , Kent Weeks), *The Oxford Handbook of the Valley of the Kings*. Oxford University Press.

Reference: Joshua Roberson A. *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Earth*. Lockwood press.

## Online Sources

Online sources used for understanding this subject:

– Source 1 URL: <https://thebanmappingproject.com/>

– Source 1 Description: The Theban Mapping Project

– Source 2 URL: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/manna4u/albums/72157689775992191>

– Source 2 Description: Professional, high resolution photographs from the tomb of Ramesses VI, by kairoinfo4u

## General Variables

### Materiality

#### Methods of Composition

– Incised or Inscribed



#### Method of inscription

– Other [specify]: Carved and painted plaster on limestone

#### Medium upon which the text is written/incised

– Stone

Notes: The sarcophagus chamber of Ramesses VI (Dynasty 20, c. 1145–139 BCE) in the Valley of the Kings, west of modern Luxor, was decorated from floor to ceiling, on all finished wall surfaces and three column faces, with scenes and texts from an ancient Egyptian cosmological work known today as the "Book of the Earth" (ancient title unknown).

#### Was the material modified before the writing or incising process?

– Other [specify]: Cartoon draft painted on plaster, then carved and, in places, altered; final carved version painted in polychrome.

#### Was the text modified before the writing or incising process?

– Physical preparation

## Location

Is the text stored in a specific location?

[Note at which point in time, for reference, if known; select all that apply]

– Yes

↳ Tomb

– Yes

Notes: The text comes from the walls of the sarcophagus chamber in the tomb of Ramesses VI (tomb number: KV9) from the Valley of the Kings.

↳ Cemetery

– Yes

Notes: The tomb of Ramesses VI is located in the cemetery referred to now as the Valley of the Kings.

↳ Temple

– No

↳ Shrine

– No

↳ Altar

– No

↳ Devotional marker

– No

↳ Cenotaph

– No

↳ Church

– No

↳ Mosque

– No

↳ Synagogue

– No

↳ Triumphal Arch

– No

↳ Monument

– No

↳ Mass Gathering Point

– No

↳ Cave(s)

– No

↳ Hilltops

– No

↳ Other natural sanctuaries

– No

↳ Boundary markers or lines

– No

↳ Domestic contexts

– No

↳ Library/archive

– No

Is the location where the text stored accompanied by iconography or images?

– Yes

↳ Where is iconography or imagery present?

Select all that apply

– Religious space with restricted access

Notes: The version of the text comes from the tomb of Ramesses VI, and these sorts of compositions were likely extremely limited with regard to their audience.

↳ Are there distinct or notable features or attributes in the religious group's iconography or images?

– Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not)

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic)

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic)

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic)

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract symbol)

– Yes

↳ Portrayals of afterlife

– Yes

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

– Yes

↳ Status objects (tools, weapons, mounts, throne, etc.)

– Yes

↳ Humans

– Yes

↳ Supernatural narratives

– Yes

↳ Human narratives

– Yes

↳ Specify

–Specify: Cosmological knowledge concerning the course of the sun through the underworld

Is the area where the text is stored accompanied by an-iconic images?

– No

## Production & Intended Audience

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### Production

Is the production of the text funded by the polity?

– Yes

↳ Are the authors/copyists/engravers paid by the polity?

– Yes

Notes: Non-monetary economy (wages calculated by grain-measure)

↳ Does the polity provide financial support to religious infrastructure involved with textual production?

– Yes

Notes: Non-monetary economy (wages calculated by grain-measure)

↳ Are the leaders of the polity and the religion the same figure?

– Yes

Notes: The king is the high priest of every cult in principle; in practice, duties are assigned to local priesthoods

↳ Are political officials involved in the support of textual production?

– Yes

↳ Are political officials and religious officials otherwise overlapping institutional networks?

– Yes

↳ Does the polity enforce religious observance according to text or texts?

– No

↳ Is the polity legal code derived from religious text(s) in question?

– No

Notes: No formal legal code.

↳ Is preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax exemption) present in the polity to support the text(s)...

– Yes

Notes: A full-time professional work force was employed in the construction of royal tombs in the period and location under consideration. The workers, their families, and livestock lived in a state-planned and funded community constructed specifically and exclusively to support this labor force.

↳ Production

– Yes

↳ Storage

– Yes

↳ Study

– Yes

Notes: Training for trades, including labor techniques related to tomb construction (et al.) and literacy, was conducted via an apprenticeship system.

↳ Are religious specialists present/in charge of the production of the text or copies of the text?

– Yes

↳ Present full-time?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The texts and images would be created and edited exclusively by religious specialists, who would have worked from temple scriptoria at the nearby capital of Thebes, or elsewhere. The extent to which those specialists were present on site to oversee decoration of the king's tomb, or in the workman's village is not known.

↳ Present part-time?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are the religious specialists of a specific sex/gender?

– Yes

Notes: Male

↳ Are the religious specialists of a specific ethnicity?

– Yes

Notes: In theory, exclusively Egyptian.

↳ Are the religious specialists of a specific class/caste?

– No

↳ Are the religious specialists dedicated to the place for life?

– No

↳ Are the religious specialists stratified in a hierarchical system?

– Yes

↳ Is access within the space segregated by this hierarchy?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there regulations/provisions for living spaces of religious specialists?

– Yes

↳ Are there regulations/provisions for training spaces of religious specialists?

– Yes

↳ Are there formal institutions for the maintenance of a body of religious specialists?

– Yes

Is the text considered official religious scripture?

– Yes

↳ Is there a culture of oral recitation?

– No

Notes: Not, so far as we know, with regard to the Book of the Earth.



↳ Is there a story associated with the origins of scripture?

– No

↳ Are the scriptures alterable?

– Yes

↳ Are there formal institutions (i.e. institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders) for interpreting scriptures?

– Yes

↳ Can interpretation also take place outside these institutions?

– Yes

↳ Interpretation is only allowed by official sanctioned figures?

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there common disagreements? (such as two or more different schools of interpretation?)

– No

Notes: Different versions of creation myths, descriptions of regions of the cosmos, etc., are exceedingly common. However, these are not considered to be in disagreement, but rather complementary descriptions of the same phenomena from different points of view.

↳ Are there methods of permanently tabling or resolving debates amongst groups of interpreters?

– No

↳ Is there a select group of people trained in transmitting the scriptures?

– Yes

↳ Is the select group of people defined by any specific gender designation?

– Yes

Notes: Male

↳ Is the select group of people defined by any age designation?

– No

↳ Is the select group of people defined by any form of linguistic designation?

– Yes

Notes: Exclusively Egyptian.

↳ Is there a codified canon of scriptures?

– No

Written in distinctly religious/sacred language?

– Yes

↳ Archaic ritual language?

– Yes

↳ Considered endogenous by the group itself?

– Yes

↳ Considered exogenous by the group itself?

– No

↳ Blended languages/creolizations/specific dialects?

– No

↳ Possess its own distinct written language?

– No

↳ If known: which authority (authorities) describe(s) the language as sacred?

[Select all that apply]

– Institutions

↳ Are non-religious institutions involved with the support of teaching religious language(s) for this text?

– No

↳ Are non-religious written languages used by the group's adherents to support religious study of text?

– No

↳ Are oral traditions used to support the religious study of the text?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Probably, but the evidence is scanty and sometimes difficult to trace.

## Intended Audience

What is the estimated number of people considered to be the audience of the text

This should be the total number of people who would serve as the intended audience for the text.

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is difficult to estimate to what extent the cosmological speculations of the highest elite among the priesthood (thus, also royalty) were available or otherwise known to the Egyptian population at large, but it seems likely that these sorts of compositions were extremely limited with regard to their primary audience – the tomb owner – even though the core elements of the cosmology (e.g. the daily rejuvenation of the sun, the role of the dead god Osiris) were shared by most, if not all of the Egyptian populace.

Does the Religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members?

– No

Are there clear reformist movements?

(Reformism, as in not proselytizing to potential new conservative, but "conversion" - or rather, reform - to the "correct interpretation"?)

– Yes

Notes: The Book of the Earth belongs to a tradition of late New Kingdom (Dynasty 19–20) cosmology and cosmography that developed as part of a counter-reformation, following a period of religious and social upheaval and iconoclasm, which was fomented by the late Eighteenth Dynasty king Akhenaten. The iconography of the later new Kingdom cosmological works clearly expands upon traditions in place prior to Akhenaten's reign, but also incorporates a new emphasis on images of the solar disc, arising presumably in response to that king's iconoclastic reforms.

Is the text in question employed in ritual practice?

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is no obvious ritual component to the Book of the Earth specifically, which is more or less entirely cosmological in nature. However, the cosmological books themselves were placed on the walls of the royal tombs to "activate" them magically, thereby transforming the inert space of the monument into a functional microcosm from which the king hoped to effect his apotheosis. The extent, if any, to which this magical activation was integrated with well-attested funerary rituals, such as the Opening of the Mouth, is not known.

Is there material significance to the text?

– Yes

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↳ Is it visible?

– Yes

Notes: Visible within the space of the tomb, and therefore visible to those present during the burial itself, but sealed thereafter and visible only to the deceased tomb owner and the gods. However, in the case of Ramesses VI, it is known that his tomb had been open and visited by Egyptian, Greek, and Roman religious tourists since antiquity, although this was certainly not the king's original intent for his monument.

↳ Is it hidden?

– Yes

Notes: Visible within the space of the tomb, and therefore visible to those present during the burial itself, but sealed thereafter and visible only to the deceased tomb owner and the gods. However, in the case of Ramesses VI, it is known that his tomb had been open and visited by Egyptian, Greek, and Roman religious tourists since antiquity, although this was certainly not the king's original intent for his monument.

↳ Can it be touched?

– No

Notes: The walls are exposed, but the texts and images were not intended to be touched.

↳ Does touching the text during ritual have a specific function?

– No

↳ Does the material significance have an esoteric function?

– No

↳ Does the text serve a protective function?

– Yes

↳ Does the text serve a healing function?

– No

↳ Does the text serve a cleansing function?

– No

↳ Does the text serve as a form of expiation?

– No

↳ Does the text serve as an incantation?

– No

↳ Has the materiality of the text been altered?

– No

↳ Are there debates about whether or not altering the materiality of the text is acceptable?

– No

Notes: Egyptian religious texts rarely if ever received a canonical status and could be edited, added to, or reduced, to suit the need at hand.

↳ Other important aspects of materiality with regard to the text?

– No

↳ Are there material substance that commonly accompany the text?

Please specify the substances in the sub-questions

– No

## Context and Content of the Text (Beliefs and Practices)

### Context

Is the text itself accompanied by art?

– Yes

Notes: Scenes from the Book of the Earth depict numerous subterranean locales, sometimes described specifically as "caverns," through which the sun god passes on his nocturnal journey. These images typically include the sun god himself, who appears as a ram-headed humanoid figure, along with the denizens of the locale in question. These denizens might include other deities, both major and minor; the justified dead; or the damned in the midst of their punishment. Occasionally, the locales themselves might also be personified as anthropomorphic deities, with whom the sun god might interact. The beings who inhabit the chthonic locales are shown frequently rising up from an inert state to greet the sun god, when he appears; the accompanying texts explain that they sink back into slumber after he departs.

↳ Calligraphy?

– No

↳ Illustrations?

– Yes

↳ Illuminations?

– No

Are there multiple versions of the text?

– Yes

↳ Are multiple versions viewed as proper?

– Yes

↳ If multiple versions are proper, is there a differentiation among versions by any means?

– Yes

↳ Age of extant version of text?

– Yes

↳ Content of text?

– Yes

↳ Ritual purpose of text?

– No

↳ Is there debate about which version is proper?

– No

Notes: No canonical version. Ad hoc assemblages of scenes and their annotations could be assembled and edited for individual tomb owners, as they saw fit.

Is the text part of a collection of texts?

– Yes

↳ Is there a sense of canonization?

– No

↳ Is the text part of a series of volumes?

– No

If the text is not explicitly scripture, is it part of another important literary tradition?

– Yes

↳ Cultural with religious implications?

– Yes

Notes: Cosmological and, to a certain extent, cosmographic.

↳ Behavioral literature?

– No

## Content

Are there lineages or a single lineage established by the text?

– No

Does the text express a formal legal code?

– No

Formulating a specifically religious calendar?

– No

## Beliefs

Is a spirit-body distinction present in the text?

– Yes

↳ Spirit-Mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other parts?

– Yes

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

– Yes

↳ Other spirit-body relationship?

– Yes

Notes: Spirit-body is not a sufficiently nuanced description for Egyptian beliefs. The individual consisted of multiple, integrated components with greater or lesser levels of materiality, including: a body/corpse and its constituent parts, a shadow, a name or identity, a life-force that required sustenance, and a mobile spirit capable of traveling the cosmos and effecting

numerous divine transformations, or of effecting change in the material world after bodily death.

↳ Within conceptions of the mind: are there distinct notions of psychological states or aggregates?

– No

↳ Do practitioners engage in debates about mind-body dualism?

– No

↳ Are debates framed in other ways?

– Yes

Notes: The only certain instance of a "debate" occurs in the literary sphere, from a much earlier period, and a very different context.

↳ Do practitioners distinguish between a corporeal body and an incorporeal soul or spirit?

– Yes

Notes: Soul vs. body is not a sufficiently nuanced description for Egyptian beliefs. The individual consisted of multiple, integrated components with greater or lesser levels of materiality, including: a body/corpse and its constituent parts, a shadow, a name or identity, a life-force that required sustenance, and a mobile spirit capable of traveling the cosmos and effecting numerous divine transformations, or of effecting change in the material world after bodily death.

↳ Are there other sides or features of the debate?

– Field doesn't know

↳ What are historical mainstream and minority positions?

– Yes

Notes: From the later Eighteenth Dynasty, in the reign of Akhenaten, the reality of Egyptian cosmological and cosmographic speculation appears to have been questioned, or at least sidelined in favor of a materialistic iconoclasm focused exclusively on the visible phenomenon of the day-time sun. This period of reformation did not survive the reign of Akhenaten himself, and the cosmological tradition from the subsequent Dynasties (19–20) can be viewed as a return to more "orthodox" Egyptian belief, albeit with influence from Akhenaten in the form of greater iconographic emphasis on the solar disc.

Is belief in an afterlife indicated in the text?

– Yes

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

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in specified realm of space beyond this world?

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in "other" space?

– Yes

Notes: The regions of the cosmos, both celestial and chthonic – known collectively as the Duat – are described and depicted in highly specific and elaborately detailed terms. The Duat was simultaneously the divine realm, the afterlife, and the locality for the annihilation of the damned.

↳ Is the temporality of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group?

– Yes

Notes: The afterlife was described variously as series of twenty four time-space regions known as "hours," corresponding to the twelve hours of the night and day, or as a bi-partite structure divided into various subterranean caverns. These seemingly different divisions were complementary to each other, not in conflict.

↳ Is there debate in the interpretation of the language of the afterlife?

– No

Is belief in reincarnation in this world specified in the text?

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses dicated in the text?

– No

Does the text indicate if co-sacrifices should be present in burials?

– No

Does the text specify grave goods for burial?

– No

Are formal burials present in the text?

– Yes

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↳ As cenotaphs?

– No

↳ In cemetery?

– Yes

Notes: The book includes numerous depictions of tumuli which serve as the grave sites for various divine beings.

↳ Family tomb-crypt?

– No

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

– No

↳ Other formal burial type?

– No

Are there practices that have funerary associations presented in the text?

– Yes

↳ Do these practices take place at tombs/burial sites?

– Yes

↳ Do these practices take place for the veneration OR worship of the dead?

– Yes

↳ For the worship of a deceased person(s)?

– Yes

↳ For the worship of a deified human?

– Yes

↳ For the worship of a deceased hero?

– No

↳ For the veneration of a deceased person(s)?

– Yes

↳ For the veneration of a deified human?

– Yes

↳ For the veneration of a deceased hero?

– No

Are supernatural beings present in the text?

– Yes

Notes: Supernatural beings described in the texts might include minor deities, who possess no known cults (so-called "demons"); major deities, with state or cosmic significance (e.g., Hathor, Isis, Osiris, Horus, Khepry, Seth, the sun god Atum, plus many others); punishing figures, who inflict tortures upon the Damned; and personifications of cosmic locales within the divine realm, such as Aker (a double lion, signifying the entrance and exit of the Underworld), Hetemyt / "She-who-Annihilates" (probably equivalent to the realm of punishment), and Shetayt / "The Mysterious Lady" (equivalent to the entirety of the divine realm).

↳ A supreme high-god is present

– Yes

Notes: The supreme deity in the Book of the Earth is the sun god, Re-Atum, who appears either in the form of a solar disc or, more often, an anthropomorphic male figure with a ram's head. The ram's head evokes the Egyptian word *ba*, meaning literally "ram" (probably onomatopoeic), which image serves as a visual pun on an etymologically unrelated word *ba*, meaning the mobile and powerful "soul" of the god. The sun god appears with a ram's head typically when he is in the nocturnal phase of his journey, as opposed to the falcon head he exhibits during the diurnal phase. The nocturnal form, as found in the Book of the Earth, is usually referred to simply as Atum, meaning something like "He-who-is-and-who-is-not" or "He-who-is-complete." In addition to his cosmological role as a the personified sun, Re-Atum is the creator of the cosmos and all the deities and other beings who dwell within it, the ultimate authority by whom the Damned are punished, and one half of the super-deity Re-Osiris, whose cosmos-spanning union in the deepest cavern of the netherworld functions as a sort of axis mundi for all of creation.

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic or described in anthropomorphic terms

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld)

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god)

– Yes

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites

– No

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good

– Yes

↳ Other features of the supreme high god

– Specify: The supreme deity in the Book of the Earth has a dual nature: He is the sun (Atum) and he is the god of the dead (Osiris).

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world

– Yes

↳ Knowledge is restricted to a particular domain of human affairs

– No

↳ Knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region

– No

↳ Knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region

– Yes

↳ Knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region

– Yes

- ↳ Can see you everywhere normally visible (in public)
  - Yes
- ↳ Can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home)
  - Yes
- ↳ Can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives)
  - Yes
- ↳ Knows basic character (personal essence)
  - Yes
- ↳ Knows what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight)
  - No
- ↳ Has other knowledge of this world
  - Yes
- ↳ Has deliberate causal efficacy in the world
  - Yes
- ↳ Can reward
  - Yes
- ↳ Can punish
  - Yes
- ↳ Indirect causal efficacy in the world
  - Yes
- ↳ Exhibits positive emotion
  - Yes
- ↳ Exhibits negative emotion
  - Yes

- ↳ Possesses Hunger?
  - Yes
- ↳ Can be hurt?
  - No
- ↳ Can be tricked?
  - Yes
- ↳ Can be imprisoned?
  - No
- ↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural being other than the high god?
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living
  - Yes
    - ↳ In waking, everyday life
      - Yes
    - ↳ In dreams
      - Yes
    - ↳ In trance possession
      - Field doesn't know
    - ↳ Through divination practices
      - Yes
    - ↳ Only through religious specialists
      - No
    - ↳ Only through monarch
      - No

- ↳ Other form of communication with living
  - Field doesn't know

Previously human spirits are present

– Yes

- ↳ Human spirits can be seen
  - No

- ↳ Human spirits can be physically felt
  - Yes

- ↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world
  - Yes

- ↳ Knowledge is restricted to a particular domain of human affairs
  - Yes

- ↳ Knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region
  - Yes

- ↳ Knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region
  - No

- ↳ Knowledge is unrestrict outside of sample region
  - No

- ↳ Can see you everywhere normally visible (in public)
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home)
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives)
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Know basic character (personal essence)
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight)
  - No
- ↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits can reward
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits can punish
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world
  - No
- ↳ Human spirits have memory of life
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits communicate with the living
  - Yes
- ↳ In waking, everyday life
  - Yes
- ↳ In dreams
  - Yes



- ↳ In trance possession
  - I don't know
- ↳ Through divination practices
  - Yes
- ↳ Only through religious specialists
  - No
- ↳ Only through monarch
  - No
- ↳ Communicate through other means
  - Specify: Material responses to requests made in letters to the dead (punishment of enemies, healing of illness, etc.)

Non-human supernatural beings are present

– Yes

- ↳ Supernatural beings can be seen
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings can be physically felt
  - Yes
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world
  - Yes
  - ↳ Knowledge is restricted to a particular domain of human affairs
    - No
  - ↳ Knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region
    - No
  - ↳ Knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region
    - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see you everywhere normally visible (in public)
  - Yes
- ↳ Can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home)
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives)
  - Yes
- ↳ Know basic character (personal essence)
  - Yes
- ↳ Know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight)
  - Yes
- ↳ Have other knowledge of this world
  - Yes
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings can reward
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings can punish
  - Yes
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings communicate with the living according to the text?
  - No
- ↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world
  - Yes

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion  
– Yes

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion  
– No

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger  
– No

Does the text attest to a pantheon of supernatural beings?

– Yes

↳ Organized by kinship based on a family model?  
– Yes

↳ Organized hierarchically?  
– Yes

↳ Power of beings is domain specific?  
– Yes

Are mixed human-divine beings present according to the text?

– No

Is there a supernatural being that is physically present in the/as a result of the text?

– Yes

↳ Is the aspect of the supernatural being/high god visible to anyone in the text?  
– Yes

↳ Is the aspect of the supernatural being/high god hidden from anyone in the text?  
– No

Are other categories of beings present?

–Other [specify]: Personified / anthropomorphized cosmic locales

Does the text guide divination practices?

– No

### Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present in the text?

– I don't know

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment in the text?

– Yes

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known?

– Yes

↳ Done only by high god

– No

↳ Done by many supernatural beings

– Yes

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle

– No

↳ Done by other entities or through other means

– No

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known?

– Yes

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence?

– No

↳ Done to enforce group norms?

– Yes

↳ Done to inhibit selfishness?

– No

↳ Done randomly

– No

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife?

– Yes

↳ Highly emphasized by the religious group

– Yes

↳ Punishments in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure

– No

Notes: Punishment consists of dismemberment and incineration of dismembered pieces, culminating in total annihilation of the individual, their identity, the memory of them, and their capacity to have an afterlife.

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure?

– Yes

Notes: Punishment consists of dismemberment and incineration of dismembered pieces, culminating in total annihilation of the individual, their identity, the memory of them, and their capacity to have an afterlife.

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form?

– No

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm?

– Yes

Notes: Individuals punished in the afterlife are consigned to a realm of annihilation, which is literally inferior (i.e. below) the regions inhabited by the gods and the blessed dead.

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime?

– Yes

↳ Highly emphasized by the religious group?

– No

- ↳ Consists of bad luck?  
– Yes
- ↳ Political failure?  
– Yes
- ↳ Defeat in battle?  
– Yes
- ↳ Crop failure or bad weather?  
– Yes
- ↳ Disaster on journeys?  
– Yes
- ↳ Mild sensory displeasure?  
– No
- ↳ Extreme sensory displeasure?  
– Yes
- ↳ Sickness or illness?  
– Yes
- ↳ Impaired reproduction?  
– Yes
- ↳ Back luck visited on descendants?  
– Yes

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards in the text?

– No

### **Messianism/Eschatology**

Are messianic beliefs present in the text?

– No

Is an eschatology present in the text?

– No

### **Norms & Moral Realism**

Are general social norms prescribed by the text?

– No

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious text?

– No

Are there centrally important virtues advocated by the text?

– No

### **Advocacy of Practices**

Does the text require celibacy (full sexual abstinence)?

– No

Does the text require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence)?

– No

Does the text require castration?

– No

Does the text require fasting?

– No

Does the text require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods)?

– No

Does the text require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations?

– No

Does the text require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of adults?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of children?

– No

Does the text require self-sacrifice (suicide)?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of property/valuable items?

– No

Does the text require sacrifice of time (e.g. attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.)?

– No

Does the text require physical risk taking?

– No

Does the text require accepting ethical precepts?

– Yes

Notes: Adherence to the Egyptian ethical and moral principles known as Ma'at are implicit in all aspects of the text. Failure to adhere to these principles will result in annihilation, as shown explicitly in accompanying images of the Damned.

Does the text require marginalization by out-group members?

– Yes

Notes: The Damned are, by definition, out-group and face segregation in the realm of annihilation and ultimate destruction.

Does the text require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household)?

– No

Does the text require participation in large-scale rituals?

– No



Are extra-ritual in-group markers present as indicated in the text?

– Yes

↳ Tattoos/scarification?

– No

↳ Circumcision?

– No

↳ Food taboos?

– No

↳ Hair?

– Yes

↳ Dress?

– Yes

↳ Ornaments?

– Yes

↳ Archaic ritual language?

– Yes

Does the text employ fictive kinship terminology?

– No

Does the text include elements that are intended to be entertaining?

– No

Does the text specify sacrifices, offerings, and maintenance of a sacred space?

– No

## Institutions & Production Environment of Text

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### Society & Institutions

Society of religious group that produced the text is best characterized as:

– A state

Are there specific elements of society that have controlled the reproduction of the text?

– A state

Are there specific elements of society involved with the destruction of the text?

– Other

## Welfare

Does the text specify institutionalized famine relief?

– No

Does the text specify institutionalized poverty relief?

– No

Does the text specify institutionalized care for elderly & infirm?

– No

Other forms of welfare?

– No

## Education

Are there formal educational institutions available for teaching the text?

– No

Are there formal educational institutions specified according to the text?

– No

Does the text make provisions for non-religious education?

– No

Does the text restrict education to religious professionals?

– No

Does the text restrict education among religious professionals?

– No

Is education gendered according to the text?

– No

Is education gendered with respect to this text and larger textual tradition?

– Yes

Notes: Literacy is almost exclusively a male occupation in ancient Egypt.

Does the text specify teaching relationships or ratios? (i.e.: 1:20; 1:1)

– No

Are there specific relationships to teachers that are advocated by the text?

– No

Are there worldly rewards/benefits to education according to the text specified by the text itself?

– No

### **Bureaucracy**

Is bureaucracy regulated by this text?

– No

### **Public Works**

Does the text detail interaction with public works?

– No

### **Taxation**

Does the text specify forms of taxation?

– No

### **Warfare**

Does the text mention warfare?

– No

### Food Production

Does the text mentioned food production/disbursement?

– No

### Bibliography

#### Entry/Answer References

Reference: Joshua Roberson A. The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Earth. Lockwood press.

Reference: Joshua Roberson A.. The Royal Funerary Books. (Richard Wilkinson , Kent Weeks), The Oxford Handbook of the Valley of the Kings. Oxford University Press.