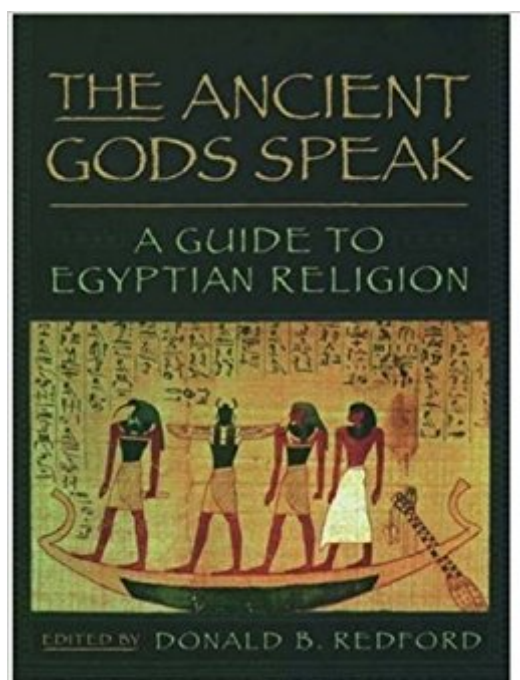


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# The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide To Egyptian Religion



## Synopsis

Incorporating the latest and best scholarship in the area, *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* provides over 90 in-depth articles ranging from Anubis, the dog-headed god of the underworld, to the Opening of the Mouth, the cultic ceremony of reanimation. Readers will find informative and fascinating entries on deities, burial practices, cults, demons, fantastic animals, magic, oracles, sacred writings, festivals, and other facets of Egyptian belief and practice. Each entry is written by a noted Egyptologist and contains the most up-to-date information gathered from years of study and research. The guide includes 35 photographs and illustrations, a detailed index, and a further reading section for those wanting to explore in more detail. With an insightful introduction by world-renowned Egyptologist Donald B. Redford, this definitive resource is essential for anyone interested in ancient Egyptians and the world they inhabited. It is the guide for the student, the scholar, and the general reader.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Derived from the Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, Donald Redford's *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* offers more than 90 articles explaining various features of ancient Egyptian beliefs, including ideas about death and the afterlife, the role of cultic animals and the pantheon of deities. The tone can be dry at times, and one wishes for more illustrations, but serious readers will learn a great deal about this ancient religion. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt (LJ 12/00) has quickly become the authoritative reference work on ancient Egyptian archaeology, culture, and religion. Now its editor, Redford (classical and ancient Mediterranean studies, Pennsylvania State Univ.), has gathered the cream of the crop from that three-volume work into an affordable one-volume guide to ancient Egyptian religion. In this collection of nearly 100 signed (and very readable) articles by noted Egyptologists (vs. 600 in the original), Redford gives the reader a tour of the key elements of Egyptian religion, from belief in the afterlife and burial practices to articles distinguishing the ba, the ka, and the akh from one another. Entries on deities, demons, magic, sacred writings, and legends show that Egyptian religion is one of the chief reasons that everyone from children to scholars are fascinated with ancient Egyptian culture. Moreover, the new introduction for this collection is one of the finest general summaries of Egyptian religion this reviewer has encountered during 30 years as an ancient studies librarian. Move over E.A. Wallis Budge, Adolf Erman, Henri Frankfort, Siegfried Morenz, W.M. Flinders Petrie, and Jan Zandee: a new 21st-century standard reference for Egyptian religion is now available. Highly recommended for both academic and public libraries of all sizes. Gary P. Gillum, Brigham Young Univ. Lib., Provo, UT Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

I teach ancient near eastern Bible context to kids and Egypt is my favorite subject - this book has been indispensable. Great information about the priesthood, offerings, cult - it's just a good all around resource for anyone who can't spring for the full encyclopedia set.

Low on photos and illustrations, but definitely high on densely packed information. I know it's a book I'll refer to often.

This is one of my favourite and most referred-to books in the Egyptological section of my personal library, hands-down. The articles on demons, offerings, and heka are exceptionally useful, as those topics in particular are seldom explained in-depth or accurately in the more popularly-available texts. The articles have been written and organized meticulously, and no subject represented in the tome is left wanting for detail. Another benefit of this text is the broad sampling of scholars, among them Meeks, Silverman, and Manniche. No scholar is an expert in absolutely every aspect of his/her field, after all. Such exposure to a wide array of scholars offers much more than a simple bibliography, and encourages further exploration on the part of the reader -- which is what any good text should

inspire. I would not recommend this book to the casual reader, however. The academic language of the articles can be cumbersome and dry to the unversed (though not wholly inaccessible), unlike a whitewashed Egyptian Mythology survey text written for popular consumption. Some basic understanding of Ancient Egyptian Theology, History, and culture beyond the grossly misinterpreted and highly abused "Contendings of Heru and Set" satire would be ideal intellectual possessions before any prospective reader attempts to properly utilize and appreciate such a reference text on Egyptian religion. For those well-versed in all things Ancient Egyptian, "The Ancient Gods Speak" is a priceless, comprehensive reference text that will be used often, and shall swiftly become a well-loved addition to one's library.

clear, detailed descriptions of many aspects of Egyptian culture and spirituality!

I purchased this book here through , and I have to say that I cannot knock the contents of the book per se only that it was a difficult read. I would say more for a University Setting. This one will take time to finish

This book, which has also been published as *The Oxford Essential Guide to Egyptian Mythology*, consists of articles on religious subjects culled from *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. The article selection casts a broad net, extending even to particular types of ritual objects like offering tables, funerary cones, and masks. It's far less cumbersome than the parent book, but the selection of articles is haphazard. It seems to have been based on the religion section of the encyclopedia's table of contents. For instance, this book is missing the articles on mythological texts and hymns (because they're listed in the literature section of the table of contents) and temples (because that article is listed under architecture *–* even though tombs, which are also listed there, are included!). The worst omission is the article on religion in general, left out for no reason I can discern, though Redford wrote an introduction specifically for this volume that discusses some of the basics and gives the context for the articles themselves. The lengthy lists of further reading that come with each article in the full encyclopedia are reduced to a more general further reading list at the end of the book. The articles on individual deities are nearly all here, and this book may work best as a source for discussions of the major gods. Obviously the full book is preferable if available, though for most people it's not, owing to its price and size.

It's separated out for each subject, for example "Orsiris" is a sub-section under "O", and "Afterlife" is

a sub-section is under "A", this makes it very easy to use as a reference tool. The "Further Reading" section impressed me as well, and is a great tool within the book I plan to take advantage of. Again, as with most books I have read on Egyptian Mythology there is a lack of stories or "legends" within the book, containing more opinions on the subjects rather than the "whole" stories themselves. I'd rather read the COMPLETE STORIES of myths and legends of the gods and obtain my own opinion from it with a summary or hypothetical explanation at the end, yes I know this is never gonna happen but a girl can dream now can't she!! ;) Don't get me wrong I'm not dawging the book, it's wonderful in educating what type of artifacts egyptians used in thier religion, and summaries of why they use them. But my preference is to have the FULL story of the legend that goes with the use of the artifacts.

This is an excellent collection of articles. However, potential purchasers should be advised that the articles are pulled from Donald Redford's Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, but without the extensive bibliographies, and with fewer illustrations. (The Introduction by Redford is, I believe, original to this volume.) If you already own the Encyclopedia, you might want to think twice before purchasing this book. If you don't already have the Encylclopedia, The Ancient Gods Speak will be an important addition to your shelf on Egyptian religion.

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