

Retribution by Burning in Cauldrons in the Underworld Books during the New Kingdom

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Abstract

Retribution in its linguistic meaning is the imposition of punishment for an offense. In Ancient Egypt, there were two types of punishment either for criminals during the lifetime or for the religious enemies and the political enemies in the netherworld. Ancient Egyptian underworld books represented different ways of divine retribution especially burning in cauldrons by using fire. The current study was undertaken to spotlight on the word fire and its religious function in Ancient Egyptian conception; To focus on retribution by burning and boiling particularly in cauldrons as represented in Ancient Egyptian underworld books especially, book of what is in the underworld, book of the caverns, book of the earth as well as book of the night dating back to the New Kingdom; To spotlight on the different terms of cauldron in hieroglyphs; To focus on the function of cauldrons in Ancient Egypt; To spotlight on the gods of torture in cauldrons; To describe the scenes of retribution for the sinners in cauldrons that represented on the walls of the New Kingdom tombs like that of Ramses the ٦th and to interpret the religious significance of the forms, colors as well as numbers of punished people in cauldrons. The preliminary results revealed that there were physical and psychological retribution in the netherworld. There were various ways of retribution by burning such as fire lakes, fire gates, cauldrons, etc. Ancient Egyptian religious books included many gods and goddesses of torture in cauldrons such as Horus.

Key Words

Retribution – Punishment -Cauldrons – Burning in Cauldrons - Underworld Books - New Kingdom - Ancient Egypt