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## **Introduction**

### **Foundations of Ancient Egyptian Ritual**

For literally thousands of years western occultists have considered Egypt to be the primary source of magical and esoteric wisdom. Clement of Alexandria had written “Egypt was the mother of magicians.” The Greeks credited much of their knowledge as coming from Egypt. Throughout renaissance Europe into the Victorian era occultists styled their vision of magical ritual on an idealized portrayal of the images and themes of Ancient Egypt.

However, it wasn’t until 1822, when French linguist Jean Francois Champollion first published his letter describing his hypothesis on hieroglyphic translation, that actual texts and inscriptions from Egypt could begin to be interpreted. Even then translations were very slow to come to public knowledge. Except for a few rare cases it is safe to say that it has only been within the past 75 years that quality interpretations have become available. To this day the translation of Ancient Egyptian texts continues. Egyptologists estimate that only 30% of the material from Egypt has been discovered. Of this, much of the texts found to date have not yet been translated.

As such we are living in an exciting epoch. For the first time in more than two thousand years the actual inscriptions left behind by the priesthood of Egypt are being interpreted. With each passing day Egyptologists are translating and researching texts that previously were only mysterious glyphs that stared back at us across eons of time. Finally the words from this ancient spiritual legacy are revealing their message.

This book is the culmination of close to twenty years of research. Drawing from academically recognized sources I have reconstructed many of the most important magical and religious rites from Ancient Egypt. To use the rituals described in this book you will need to have a fundamental knowledge of basic Ancient Egyptian spiritual concepts. A thorough understanding of the information contained in my previous work, “Eye of the Sun: The Sacred Legacy of Egypt,” will give the reader the foundation from which to perform the rituals given here. However, recognizing that not all readers may have access to this early text some basic concepts need to be addressed in order to receive the full benefit of the rituals provided here.

Perhaps first and most fundamental to this is an understanding of the way in which the Egyptians viewed their gods and goddesses. These were termed the ‘Neteru.’ It is important to note that the ancients viewed the Neteru as separate, unique individual beings who are complete in themselves, yet, at the same time divinity was seen as a unified whole emerging from a single source which was usually referred to as “Nun.” To be sure, for most modern thinkers, this may seem to be a paradox yet for the Egyptians this was completely acceptable and understandable. In his classic work “The Search for God in Ancient Egypt” Dr. Jan Assmann elaborates on this concept:

*"They [the Egyptians] held on to both truths, the unity of god and the differentiated plurality of gods, until Akhenaten, who would not tolerate this tension and made an attempt to found a new religion that knew only a single god. That such an attempt could be made, along with its immediate failure, shows how indispensably both realities were anchored in the complexity of Egyptian polytheism and its experience of the world." (1)*

This is a critically important statement for it shows that both before and after Akhenaten (2), the concept of divinity as one source yet separate deities had been a vital part of Egyptian thinking. With this we find two complimentary functions, rather than opposing ideologies. For those of you familiar with physics Dr. Assmann makes a wonderful observation, "We have here a genuine complementarity, two equally valid but mutually exclusive points of view, like the wave and particle theories of light" (3).

For the Egyptians also, the Neteru were not seen as beings removed from their lives existing far off in some other dimension. To be sure, the Neteru were seen as having existence in other realms other than the material however they were also seen as being intimately part of the environment in which the people lived here in the temporal world. For the term Neter not only can be translated as 'god' it also can be interpreted as 'force of nature.' Yet the ancient's conception of nature was far different that held by most modern westerners today. Once again I would like to refer to the observations of Dr. Assmann:

*"Nature was not something distinct from the gods, something they created, over which they exerted influence, of which they had charge. Although statements to this effect abound, inextricably connected with them, and sometimes in the very same texts, we find the concept that deities were themselves these natural elements and phenomena. The Egyptians did not view their gods and goddesses as beyond nature, but rather in nature and thus as nature. The deities were 'natural' - that is, cosmic - to the same extent that nature or the cosmos was divine." (4)*

This is a fundamental difference from most modern western concepts of nature. Influenced by the later Abrahamic religious and cultural doctrines, most people today tend to view nature as something placed here for their disposal. Many today see nature as something to be dominated. Yet the older spiritual tradition of Egypt had a different view. They saw the divine in nature, and nature as divine. This is an essential element of the Egyptian spiritual path that needs to be understood when performing the rituals found in this book.

A good understanding of the characteristics, symbols, and customs associated with the various Neteru themselves is vital. Each is a unique, individual, living being. In this author's opinion it is a grave mistake to think of them as 'archetypes' or 'names' for some other force. They are as alive and aware as you or I. While I don't like to think or speak in linear terms, when trying to convey an understanding of the Neteru the best way that I can express the nature of these beings is to think of them as being of a 'higher' or more 'advanced' order with abilities and responsibilities that are barely comprehensible to most human beings. As such it is important to learn about these various beings before calling on them in ritual. My previous work 'Eye of the Sun' devotes two