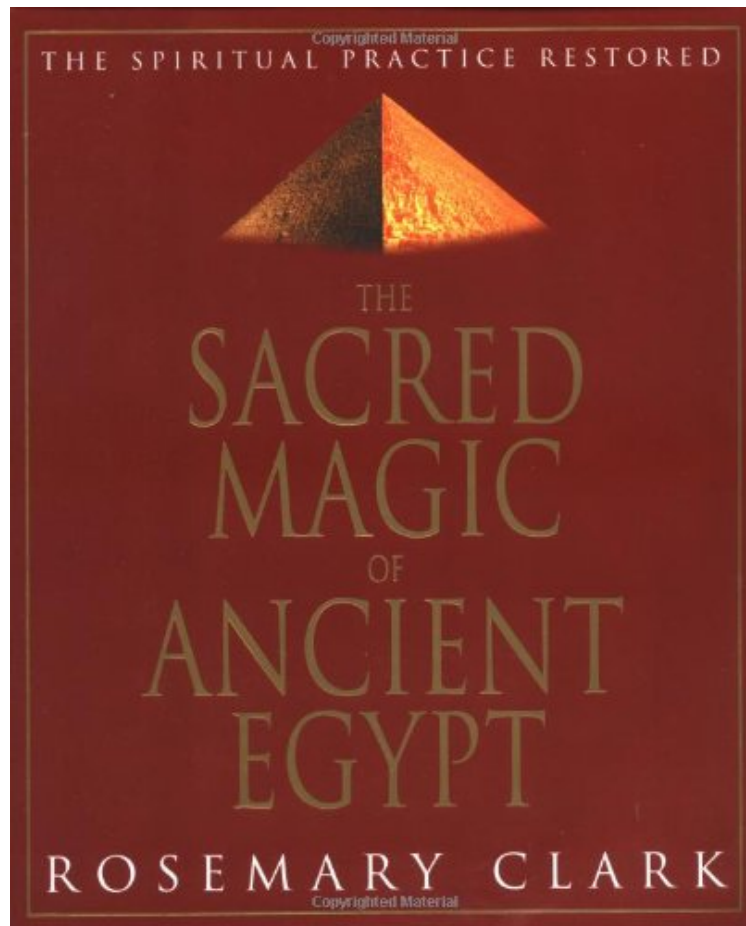


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Sacred Magic Of Ancient Egypt: The Spiritual Practice Restored

Rosemary Clark

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In *The Sacred Magic of Ancient Egypt*, Rosemary Clark presents a comprehensive guide to a modern practice of ancient Egyptian theurgy. Included are daily rituals, annual ceremonies, and the founding of a temple tradition for either the sole practitioner or a gathering of celebrants. The dimensions of Sacred Science-esoteric architecture, cosmic resonance, and magical practice-are outlined in detail and demonstrated in a program for practical, everyday use. Authentic and richly detailed, this guidebook also: - Presents beautiful rituals patterned on ancient Egyptian texts for modern initiates - Serves as an excellent reference on many aspects of the Egyptian mysteries that have not been accessible elsewhere - Contains a complete repertoire of ancient hymns, litanies, spells, and ceremonies that allows for reading in the ancient tongue Enter the timeless realm of Egyptian sacred ritual. Experience for yourself the ultimate realization of ancient Egyptian spirituality-the assumption of divine knowledge and grace.

"The...[illustrations], the translated invocations, and, above all, the how-to approach to making connections with transcended beings make this book a metaphysical marvel." -- Dell Horoscope magazine "Dell Horoscope magazine" About the Author Rosemary Clark is a writer and lecturer on the esoteric tradition of ancient Egypt and its religious, philosophical, and metaphysical legacy in modern times. Her continuing study in this field derives from a thirty-year background in historical research, travel throughout the Middle East, and the development of a repertoire of unique skills in recreating Egyptian ceremony and rituals. She has been a featured speaker on several tours of Egypt, and has acted as coordinator for on-site devotional temple activities. Ms. Clark served as exhibit leader for the Tutankhamun tour when it came to Chicago in 1977, and illustrated *The Travelers Key to Ancient Egypt* (New York: Knopf, 1985). She has appeared on NBC television in a feature broadcast on her work as founder of Temple Harakhte, a group of men and women devoted to the experiential religious practices of Egypt's Old Kingdom. Above and beyond offering a thorough knowledge of Egyptian history and mythology, Clark is well versed in the hieroglyphic script, its transliteration and the translation of ancient texts, and in the nuances of Hermetic philosophy and Sacred Science. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter One The Legacy of Ancient Egypt We shall omit from our history the stories invented by Herodotus and certain other writers on the affairs of Egypt, who deliberately prefer fables to facts, and who spin yarns merely for the purpose of amusement. We shall, however, set forth the things written by the priests of Egypt in their sacred records, which we have examined diligently and minutely. Diodorus Siculus: *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book I: 69 The story of Khaemwas, though written of events more than 3,000 years ago, still evokes our fascination with the mystic legacy of Egypt. It speaks of an arcane doctrine believed to be lost, of mysteries buried by time. We know that in ancient times, despite hardships we can only imagine, the established spiritual traditions endowed people with the guidance and skills needed to understand the powers of their environment and live in harmony with them. But we seem not to be so equipped in the modern age, despite the advances of science and industry. This is undoubtedly why we look to past cultures like Egypt for the elusive powers and insights we miss. We are in many ways the same as Khaemwas we desire to know our sacred heritage, to understand the secrets that everyday life conceals from us, and to discover the source of all wisdom. For these reasons, Egypt's mystic legacy continues to summon our interest. What is this legacy of which so many ancients spoke? The Egyptians freely passed their legends on to travelers, as the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (60 b.c.e.) noted. And similar narratives were consistently repeated in the literature and monumental writing of the temples and tombs. The legends pertained to their gods, royal persons, sages, and adventurers beings who embodied the natural and supernatural forces of the world around them. Most were chronicles of metaphysical events, handed down from antiquity. But they differed from the myths of other cultures, including the Greeks, who viewed this heritage as symbolic or metaphorical imagery of natural phenomena and the universe, not factual events. The ancient Egyptians were not so philosophically rigid; they made no distinctions between legend and myth. The chronicles they inherited from antiquity were believed to be real occurrences, taking place either at an historical time when their gods inhabited the Earth or in a dimension they called timeless time, when divine powers are directly accessible by human beings. By virtue of this, their legends were both vital and practical, because they infused past, present, and future with meaning and purpose. Moreover, Egypt's narrative legacy embraces far more than the exploits of the gods and the acts they performed to create the manifest world. Within them are contained the canons of their art, architecture, language, and ritual the foundations of a tradition that sustained their cultural existence for thousands of years. 1 This is probably the most powerful dimension of Egypt's legacy, because it appears to have defined the overall goals and mandates of her society from the farm worker and fisherman to the scribe and temple priestess, and ultimately, to the seat of all temporal power, the Royal House. In all these realms, spirituality and science coalesced to produce a body of metaphysical knowledge that formed the underpinnings of Egyptian civilization. Is it possible to retrieve this wisdom? Many have posed this question over the ages, and some of the answers have been discovered in the literary heritage of the Egyptians. Firstly, the ancient Egyptians did not see a rift between the workings of the divine and mundane spheres. The sacred encompassed the secular in their world view; the physical world including natural phenomena and the plant and animal kingdoms was seen as a reflection of the divine world, and everything in it possessed a divine nature. The gods manifested through the visible human beings, trees, stars, wind and storm, even though these living things possessed an identity of their own as well. If we could express the essence of Egyptian philosophy over the thousands of years it

existed, it would indisputably reflect this doctrine. A sacred text from the time of Rameses II describes this immanence of divinity in nature: The soul of Shu is the air, the soul of Neheh is the rain, The soul of Ra is the primeval ocean. The soul of Asar is the ram of Mendes, The soul of Sobekh is the crocodile. The soul of every god resides in serpents, The soul of Ra is found throughout the land. The Book of the Celestial Cow, Dynasty 19 Secondly, the unity of the lifestreams, drawn together by divine vitality, is also described in many of the sacred texts at temples, tombs, and on ancient papyri and they disclose more than a glimpse of this doctrine. Unification of the soul with the gods and natural life was a vital approach to ones spiritual identity. An early funerary inscription delineates these associations succinctly: If I live or pass on, I am Asar. I enter you and appear through you, I decay in you, I spring forth from you, I descend in you, I repose on my side. The gods are living in me, As I live and grow in the emmer that sustains the exalted ones. Coffin Text #330 These beliefs were fundamental in their world view, but the mandate that arose from them was just as essential. Maintenance of the unity created by these relationships occupied the time and resources of all members of Egyptian society in a form that we most associate with Egyptsacred ritual. This activity was performed in a clearly prescribed canon on all levels of society, and generally unaltered over the course of thousands of years of recorded history. Its consistency and continuity was based on another important beliefthat their rituals were recreations of the acts of divine beings when life arose in the beginning of time. And the performance of rites was regarded not only as a high calling, but a spiritual exchange that offered countless benefits to the participant: To the prophets, divine fathers, priests, and lectors And all who enter Amuns temple of Ipet Sout: By performing the rites and making the offerings, By doing the service of the month priest, The great god will give you life. You will be flawless in his presence, You will be fortified with his blessings. Inscription on the statue of Harwa, Dynasty 25 The Worlds of Creation In Egyptian cosmology, the forces of creation are mirrored in naturethey are both transcendent and cyclic. In this view, all of the lifestreams, including human beings, nature, and the gods, partake of a process that ordains a return to the creative source and a reappearance in the phenomenal world, in a perpetual cycle of renewal, called Neheh (forever, eternity). Returning to the world of creation was a theme continually emphasized in the liturgies of the temple and tomb. The powers that brought the deity into the temple were believed to originate even beyond the sway of divine beings, yet they could be harnessed to bring human beings into the realm of the gods. This return was not only possible, but an inevitability of mortal existence because humans, natural forces, and even the gods were subject to the cyclic forces that operate in the creative realms. In the temple, the worlds of creation were ever present. On approaching the holy precinct, a temenos wall emulated the primeval ocean, from which life arose in the beginning of time. Passing through the portals to the house of the god, entry into the sphere of creative powers was indicated by forests of soaring columns that mirrored the initial appearance of life in the form of aquatic plants. And on entering the temple proper, the foundation of the material world was depicted in artistic representations of divine beings manifesting their nature through acts of creation in the physical worldthe birth of royal persons, the initiation of natural laws and cycles, and the establishment of order in society. Photo 2The colonnade of the Temple of Auset in Philae, emulating the primeval marshes of creation (Graeco-Roman ca. 250 b.c.e.). In the tomb, the deceased returned to the creative powers in nature and the universe with scenes of hunting in the primeval marsh, where life proliferates and renews the soul. But this new phase of existence was not limited to those who passed from mortal life to new life in the immortal worlds. The living were bonded and renewed by these powers as well, and were welcomed into the field of creation by participating in the same ritual processes that inaugurated the new existence for their departed ones. In the Egyptian universe, the cosmogenesis was not defined by one episode. Rather, it was seen as a cyclic process in rhythmic phases, where four dimensions exist, interpenetrate, and interact through time and space. In the first phase, the world of Manu (horizon of waters) comes into being as the macrocosm or celestial sphere, from which the elements of creation emerge. Its image is a watery mass of undefined powers, where all possibilities are articulated, but not manifest. In the second phase, the world of Aakhut (luminous horizon) appears, in the fiery form of light that illuminates the primeval waters and impels patterns or forms to come into being. In the third phase, the world of Rostau (horizon of spirits) comes into being, symbolized as a mound upon which the forces of the upper worlds come to rest. This phase expresses the containment of the sacred fire in matter, the genesis of material life in microcosmic form. The last phase of creation, the world of Ament (horizon of the west) represents the phenomenal world that we experience, where cyclic forces govern the conditions of existencebirth and death. Here, the return to the upper worlds becomes possible, as this realm expresses the fulfillment of the creative forces as well as their predestination for cyclic renewal. This world also possesses the mechanisms for the mutation of the physical form, which make possible the conscious experience of moving through several phases of existence. Manu (Water) Horizon of the waters Rostau (Earth) Horizon of spirits Ament (Air) Horizon of the west Aakhut (Fire) Luminous horizon Figure 2The Names of the Worlds of Creation The four creative realms embody the elemental forms of the ancient universe: Water (Manu), Fire (Aakhut), Earth (Rostau), and Air (Ament). As such, they do not represent conflicting or alternate themes of the cosmogenesis, but stages of manifest reality that exist interdependently. Each world possesses a creator who proliferates particular functions that interact with the others, and each has an equally significant influence on the world of human life. In these four worlds of creation, the Egyptians saw certain universal functions come into being as divinities, the Neteru (gods or divine principles, the Neter being the individual deity of a place or action).2

The Neteru represent universal forces that organize and maintain the life of creation. They also perform specific functions both in their natural realms and in the world that we experience. Hence, families of gods are depicted who govern processes in nature, in the human body, and in the phenomena of the sky much of which brought confusion to many observers of Egyptian culture in ancient times. But each group of divinities conveys a comprehensive view of a reality that has both cosmological and mundane wisdom. The principles that each creative family represents were articulated in distinctive philosophical schools that possessed unique imagery and temple traditions in ancient Egypt. The cosmogony of Hermopolis in Middle Egypt was one of the earliest, expressing the creative powers in the world of Manu as an ogdoad, or group of eight divinities (Nun and Naunet, Huh and Hauhet, Kuk and Kauket, Maat and Djehuti) who bring the elemental forms of life into being. Here, the creator is Nun, the primeval waters, who brings forth life from the darkness by stirring and speaking the creative utterance. Another group of divine powers, the Solar Triad (Ra, Khepri, and Sopdet), stems from archaic times. It is associated with the world of Manu by its imagery of creative beings in barques that cross the primeval ocean cyclically. These powers circulate the elemental forms of life through the universal landscape in epochs of time. In this family, the creator is Ra, the Sun god, who precipitates life via light or illumination into the dark waters of Nun. The world of Aakhut is represented by the triad of Memphis (Ptah, Sekhmet- Bast, and Nefertum) where the creator is Ptah, the artificer who fabricates life forms through thought. In this world also operates the triad of Esna (Khnum, Neit, and Heka), who fuse the light of creation to these thought forms, evoking the patterns of life that come into being in the material world. The creatrix of this family is Neit, the androgynous mother-father of the gods who infuses elemental substance with vitality. Of Khnum, he is depicted as the fashioner of the material form, and his powers extend from the immaterial world of fire into the visible realms: He fashioned mankind and engendered the gods, All live by that which emanates from him. . . . his manifestations are hidden among people, They constitute all beings, since the time of the gods. Temple of Khnum, Ptolemaic Dynasty

Figure 3 The World of Manu The Hermopolitan Ogdoad Nun Naunet Sopdet Ra Khepri Kuk Kauket Huh Hauhet Maat Djehuti Figure 4 The World of Aakhut The world of Rostau represents the organic world of creation, where the ennead (group of nine) of Heliopolis govern the processes of physical manifestation (Atum, Shu and Tefnut, Nut and Geb, Asar and Auset, Set and Nebt-Het). Atum is the creator who proliferates by spitting or ejaculating to bring forth his divine progeny. They are followed by the triad of Dendera, which rouses the creative powers within the manifest form (Het-Her, Heru, and Ihy). They are completed by the Funerary Quaternary (Imset, Daumutef, Qebsenuf, and Haapi), which transmits the creative impulse from one form to another. And in the world of Ament, the triad of Thebes governs the processes that mature and complete physical life (Amun, Mut, and Khons). The head in this realm is Amun, the invisible breath of creation. They share their functions with the Initiatory Triad (Heru Ur, Sokar, and Anpu), who refine the cosmic elements in the corporeal body, and the Cyclic Triad (Taurt, Hapi, and Apep), which brings completion to periodic processes and renewal in new realms. Altogether, the four worlds of creation are constituted by ten families of Neteru, who represent the principles of creative manifestation and embody the functions of the phenomenal world. Forty-two divinities inhabit this landscape, and express the mystic forces of Egypt's religious pantheon. The Memphite Triad The Esna Triad Ptah Sekhmet-Bast Neit Nefertum Heka Khnum 1. See Appendix 1: Chronology of Ancient Egypt. 2. The t in the word is pronounced as a soft "tch."