




What is Egyptian Mysticism

By Sunnu Khepera Ankh (*)

THIS IOK Public Monograph is a short essay will give some insight into the meaning and practice of Egyptian Mysticism. As many already know, Egypt is not the original name for the country that is situated on the North East corner of the continent of Africa. This country, in ancient times (10,000BCE-450AD) was known by the original inhabitants as Kemet. Kemet is a term that means black land. The implication being that Kemet  is the land of undifferentiated

consciousness. This will be explained in more detail later in this writing.

In reviewing the nature and content of the olden civilization, it is discerned that the terminology chosen for the moniker of the country had very little to do with the skin color of the early settlers which were dark skinned African people. The term was used, on a mundane level, to describe the phenomenon of the yearly inundation of the Nile River which caused the rich silt that settled on the river bed to overflow the banks. This was a very fortunate occurrence to the olden peoples because this rich black silt made it possible for agriculture, live stock grazing and other day to day activities that were necessary to support a spiritual civilization. In other words, the term Kemet was used to label the black silt that was essential to the general welfare of the populace.

Additionally, when the spiritual, religious practices and metaphysics of the country are studied, again, it is discerned that the term Kemet denoted the phenomenon of undifferentiated consciousness. This is made clear when the hymn teachings of Sage Akhunaton are reviewed from a mystical perspective. Further the Shabaka Stone Inscription, whose teachings have now come to be called Memphite Theology, also gives an inference to undifferentiated consciousness. So the ancient country was the place of understanding the black stillness of the transcendent. In other words, the country occupied itself with research into the hidden un-manifest realms of being. This is called **Shtai** which means, the secret one who is hidden.

All of the religious teachings from Ancient Kemet approached the problem of nature in relation to the transcendent reality. Therefore, although Kemet had a well established bureaucracy for the sake of running a spiritual empire, it was concerned with matters of an otherworldly nature. The best example, because of its popularity, but there are thousands of others, that illustrates the ancient


Kemites (Nubians) search for the ultimate answer to things can be seen in the construction of the great pyramids at the Giza Plateau in the modern city of Cairo. Further evidence that the name of Kemet was of a mystical nature comes from the original name for the Giza Plateau, which was called **Restau**. This term Restau appears in the Papyrus of Ani, commonly referred to as the Egyptian Book of the Dead, and denotes the passageway into the Neterworld, what would be called the astral plane. The mystic scribes identified four major aspects of the Neterworld which are the Restau, Sekhet Hetep, Sekhet Yaru and Yanrutef. The passageway into the astral plane is called Manu.

The point being that the ancient peoples were in the habit of naming locals either after a deity, a dimension of the astral plane, or a mystical concept. The term Kemet can also refer to the actual physical skin color of the people, but in the earliest times when the country was first named, it was to name it after the realm of being that is transcendent of all human reason.

Mysticism is the practice of uniting oneself with this transcendent reality. Therefore, mysticism is the pursuit and perfection of the disciplines that allow one to achieve union with the highest reality that transcends human empirical reasoning or thought. It comes about through direct experience and intuitional realization of the ultimate reality of all things; direct intuitional insight. Hence, a mystic is one who is in the practice of disintegrating his or her mental boundaries to achieve a perfect state of enlightenment, which is an abiding state of communion with the ultimate reality of all things. This higher reality does not have name and form in the common idea of naming an object because it is transcendent of cognition and therefore it trespasses the boundaries of space, time and everlastingness. For this reason, it is called Shtai and is alluded to as Kemet. Undifferentiated consciousness is called Kami



which means to be black; In other words the hidden

recesses of the primal source. This idea is expressed through the sun disc with the dot in the middle or, its infinite nature is expressed through the Shen symbol  .

When the transcendent is experienced one can then say that they have experienced reality or the way things really are. This experience has the effect of disintegrating all mental limitations such as prejudice, good and evil, and right and wrong. One then sees all of the happenings of the world as a movement of events within time and that is all. In essence one loses prejudice and judgment and views the world as a play of illusion within the realm of phenomenal nature. This is a very precarious state of existence if the individual does not develop dual consciousness; that is being able to live within the realms of the transcendent reality as an abiding state of being while at the same time being able to live in the world without confusing the illusion of the world as a realm of no consequence. In other words one must also be able to have keen insight into **ari** (karma). In particular, how the three modes of action of body, speech and mind can have on future events and internal feelings and moods. This aspect of the teachings on the higher levels allows the initiate to manipulate the cosmic forces of **Shai** (destiny) and **Renent** (fortune); therefore the initiate would be able to create a more harmonious predicament for himself/herself, and the world.

There are special disciplines that are performed to achieve this highest state of consciousness that has been alluded to in the ancient Kemetic scriptures. One of the most potent disciplines to achieve higher states of being is meditation. There are many types of meditation practices that were espoused. However, they are all related to or have an underlying relationship to **Arat Sekhem**. Arat Sekhem means, Serpent Power Goddess. This is called Kundalini Yoga by the Indian Hindu tradition and Kalachakra by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.



The Kemetic Ancient Egyptian depiction of the seven psycho spiritual energy centers.

In the ancient Kemetic form of the practice there are special techniques within the overall teaching of the Arat Sekhem itself such as, heliotropic worship and stellar infusion. However, the first aspect of the teachings which can go on for months or even years is the cleansing of the subtle energy channels. These channels are called **Mettu** in the Kemetic tradition and Chakras in the Hindu tradition. (For more on the teachings of Arat Sekhem please see the book Arat Sekhem: The Ancient Egyptian Mystery Meditation for Transcendence by Khepera Ankh) The temples and some of the pyramids were used as a tool to harness and utilize the cosmic energy that is called Arat Sekhem.

Also, in the Kemetic tradition, the giving of offerings and propitiation of divinities is very prevalent and is as much practiced as meditation. The offering ritual in essence is a type of moving meditation. Generally, meditation and propitiation are used in synchronicity to develop a good meditative environment, internally within the practitioner.

These two together allow the individual practitioner to gain keen insight into the nature of cosmic powers that lead to deepening meditative experiences upon the less phenomenal planes of existence. However, the goal of meditation is not to make communion with the Gods and Goddesses (**Neteru**), but it can happen and when it does, it is a good development within the psyche of the practitioner.

Upon trespassing into less phenomenal planes of being the practitioner is developing the cosmic power as well as the lucidity of mind necessary to make meditative union with the transcendent reality. This is the goal of meditation, to dissolve one's ego principle into the ocean of bliss. This sea of consciousness is called **Yanrutef**, which means a place where nothing grows, nothing becomes generated, and is the inner most reality of the human heart. In the Buddhist tradition this is called emptiness. Within emptiness there are planes or dimensions of discernable magnitude and as such have created much debate among the differing schools of the Buddhist and Hindu traditions. However, it can be postulated with a high probability of certainty that such debate may have taken place in ancient Kemet as well, although there is no evidence of such debate. In a review of the literature, it seems that the ancient Kemites were unanimous in their description of the less phenomenal planes, such as the Sekhet Yaru and Sekhet Hetep; but there is no evidence of a debate or differing of opinion on the planes transcendent of the lower astral regions.

All that is known from the ancient literature is that there is consensus that there is a Yanrutef, however, how that region is experienced by differing mystics is not given. It seems that this debate that has taken hold in the Buddhist community, if it was also present among the ancient Kemetic hierophants, was not written about. Therefore, it could be that the experiences and nature of the Yanrutef were left within the realm of the oral tradition. However, since the ancient scribes gave clear detailed description of the less phenomenal planes antecedent of the Yanrutef, it is not outside the realm of possibility that the Yanrutef was left up to individual interpretation. What is left for us to do now as a continuing Kemetic community is for individual practitioners of the disciplines to record their meditative experiences within the realm of the empty reality so that a body of work may be generated. This would further the philosophy of the

ancient Kemetic teachings and gives more credence to the ancient techniques that are not so well practiced today.

The ancient practices are as much needed today as they were a few thousand years ago and reveal the power of the inherent cosmic potential that exists within the heart of every human being. As the world continues in its debilitating condition, those so inclined must seek out the teachings that will help them to transcend and experience things as they really are and in this way relieve themselves from the burden of earthy living.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:



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Sunnu Khepera Ankh has engaged in extensive study, research and practice in the Ancient Egyptian teachings of Memphite Theology, Amunian Theology, Anunian Theology, Asarian Theology, Maat Philosophy, Kybalion Philosophy, Ab Amon Philosophy, The Egyptian Book of the Dead, Serpent Power Yoga, Glorious Light Meditation Yoga, Witnessing Consciousness Meditation Yoga, Christian Yoga, Djef Paut Neteru Yoga, Egyptian Mysticism, Egyptian Tantricism, Hermeticism, Ancient Egyptian Medicine and Kemetic Diet . He has also studied and researched Tibetan Buddhism and Hinduism and has a BS degree in Exercise Science from Barry University.

He is the founder and developer of the Kemetic Yoga Association and the Temple of Arat Sekhem, in St. Croix United States Virgin Islands where classes in the Egyptian Book of the Dead are held twice per week. The text is recited in the ancient Kemetic (Egyptian) language and the mystical discourse that follows is spoken in English. He has given over 700 lectures on ancient Egyptian religion, philosophy, mysticism and culture. He is the author of four books on the esoteric teachings of Kemetic (Egyptian) religion and philosophy. The organization which he founded is used to research and disseminate the philosophic teachings and culture of olden Egyptian Civilization. He continues to research, teach and espouse the mystical philosophies of Ancient Egypt.

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**Published by Illuminates Of Kemet (IOK)
on May 1st, 6247 AFK – Built by Mandriva Linux**

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