What is the Initiatic Narrative of Ancient Egyptian Religion Temple Mysteries Philosophy & What are its Implications for Psychology Practitioners and Counselors?

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The following is an introduction to the Ancient Egyptian concept called “Initiatic Narrative.” In order to have a working understanding of the concept of what is meant by the term “Initiatic Narrative” we will present some working definitions to help explicate the Ancient Egyptian wisdom concepts in order to promote better understanding.

The term “Initiatic” refers to the concept of “Initiation” whereby a person, considered as an “initiate” may undergo certain trials and training in order to gain knowledge and experience of a group or area of awareness and realization. In the context of the Ancient Egyptian Temple, the initiation process is into the temple mysteries.

The term “Temple Mysteries” includes special teachings about the mysterious nature of existence, the soul and about the universe and the consciousness that sustains it. The knowledge of those mysteries, of a hidden area of knowledge and experience, constitutes the teaching of what is referred to commonly as the Shetaut Neter or “Egyptian Mysteries.”

The “Egyptian Mysteries” teaching is prescribed as a “Spiritual Path” that is to be followed in order to achieve the goal, of the Initiatic Narrative, to progress along succeeding levels of higher initiation, gaining greater wisdom and experience until the highest knowledge and experience are achieved. The spiritual path prescribed by the Temple Mysteries is based on an “Initiatic Narrative,” which is the subject of this essay. The Initiatic Narrative of the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries is a coherent rendition of what the goals and objectives of a hidden area of existence, the soul and about the universe and the consciousness that sustains it. This state of awareness may be termed Nehast” or enlightenment.

The goal of the Initiatic Narrative, the Egyptian Mysteries and the Initiations of the Temple Mysteries, is to achieve a state of conscious experience, the depth and breadth of which transcends ordinary human cognitive and perceptive, time and space, sensory understanding of existence beyond egoism and the reality that it has been evolved and socialized to perceive, accept and understand; That state is an expansive and transcendental experience of being, beyond time and space, while encompassing the fullness of consciousness with all-encompassing presence with infinite immaterial lucidness. This state of awareness may be termed Nehast” or enlightenment.

The implications of the transformation from ordinary maladjusted psychological states to what society accepts as the “well-adjusted” and/or “normal” state to the Ancient Egyptian “enlightened” state hold much interest for Psychology Practitioners and Counselors who are interested in incorporating and or implementing and or personally practicing the teachings of the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries. The goal of the practice of the Ancient Egyptian Mystery teachings is for promoting improved personal and professional understanding of ancient psychology and its importance for understanding human psychology prior to the emergence of western dominating paradigms and or western or modern cultures. These studies would be pursued in order to better understand normalcy and the ideal states of human experience as well as how to best help themselves and their clients/patients to achieve higher levels of mental health. Therefore, the researches into Ancient Egyptian Mental Health should seek out how that wisdom compares and applies to present day human life and how those applicable features promote insight into healing and health in our times.
INTRODUCTION TO THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN INITIATIC NARRATIVE CONCEPT

The following Ancient Egyptian Proverb contains and describes the Ancient Egyptian Initiatic Narrative in one concise statement:

“Men and women are to become God-like through a life of virtue and cultivation of the spirit through scientific knowledge, practice, and bodily discipline.”

An Initiatic Narrative is an explanation of the procedure, stages, and type(s) of training that are required in order to reach a goal set forth through an initiatic process. The proverb above states the goal, “becoming Godlike”; it states the method, “scientific knowledge and practice”; it states who is to engage the process, “men and women”; it states a regulation regime, “discipline” and “cultivation” and “life of virtue”; and it states what is to be cultivated, “the Spirit.” All that constitutes the Ancient Egyptian Initiatic Narrative; the narrative is the whole statement that has outlined the subject matter and the procedure for its pursuit. What follows below is an expansion on the proverb, using the confirmation and additional instructive wisdom of the teachings discovered at the Ancient Egyptian Temple of Asar (Osiris) at Abydos, Egypt, by Dr. Muata Ashby, relating to the path admonished by the teachings of Ancient Egyptian wisdom, as inscribed in the temple, that are consistent with Ancient Egyptian Myth and mystery scriptures inscribed on other temples and hieroglyphic texts such as the PertemHeru or Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead.

The Temple of Asar contains many types of texts that fill different functions that work together in a harmonious manner to bring forth the wisdom teaching of the temple. Some texts form an honorific role of honoring and displaying the characters of the temple, the royal personalities/initiates, divinities, priests and priestesses. Other texts are informational and or historical documents such as the “Temple Building Text” located inside the Hypostyle #2 east wall. Other texts are instructional as relates to the goals and procedures of the temple, such as the Summary/Rubric text of Open Court #1. Other texts are worship and offering related, such as texts containing or listing offerings or displaying adorations for royal personalities and or divinities. Other texts contain conversations between the royal personality of the temple and divinities and or statements by divinities that coupled with their iconographical elements such as posture, garb, headdress, and actions constitute mythic and mystic insights and or metaphysical operations relating to thoughts, feelings and experiences that constitute integral parts of what we may term “Initiatic Narrative”, which describes those relevant aspects of the initiatic path.

“narrative”, in the context of initiation, is a coherent description or account of a situation, state, occurrence, paths and transformations along with their relevant wisdom and with its required judiciousness, acumen, prudence necessary to achieve the desired progress. The “Initiatic Narrative is an account relating the journey from the state of ordinary human conscious
awareness through a path leading to the discovery of Higher Consciousness. In Ancient Egyptian 
writing, iconographies and architecture, these sets of text/icons and architectural environments 
we can find those certain kinds of texts that we may term “KEY”, or crucial, vital, essential 
directives, insights or philosophical connections, associations, relationships, correlations and 
contexts contributing to a coherent, sequential pathway for moving through succeeding higher 
levels of initiation into greater and greater mystery teachings and mystic experiences of higher 
consciousness. In the Temple of Asar, this process is setup, through the temple architecture and 
iconographies, as the initiate moves and progresses through the horizontal axis of the temple 
while at the same time traversing the wisdom teachings located on the vertical and diagonal axes 
of the temple. This horizontal and vertical movement produces, as if on a sailboat, seeking the 
winds that allow a sailboat to TACK from one end to the other of a journey while going in one 
direction but never directly. Human unconscious content (Ancient Egyptian aryu), or sum total 
of a human being’s experiences throughout their lifetimes, does not allow a direct path and 
requires a circuitous path that facilitates redressing past psychological issues that may be 
preventing forward movement. In this manner the personality is eventually enabled to arrive at 
the desired destination, the goal of enlightenment. This process is aided and inspired by 
identification with the characters of the temple, which represent aspects of universal human 
psychology that are to be explored, purified and cultivated in order to have above normal mental 
and emotional health. The continuing positive progress on the path is sanctioned by the 
successful completion of the stages of the journey and vested with the growing power 
accumulated from each successful engagement at each initiatic station(stop) on the path of 
initiation.

What is being referred to here as “the Initiatic Narrative” is essentially a term used to describe the 
general purpose and stages common to all mystery schools and initiatic philosophies of Ancient 
Egypt. It covers some fundamental and essential spiritual changes that the human personality 
goes through in order to transform from strictly human and ignorant of the underlying expanded 
nature of Spirit Being to a full human with Spirit Consciousness. The person who treads this path 
may be referred to as a Royal Person because they are traversing a royal road to spiritual 
enlightenment. The stages of spiritual evolution begin with an ordinary ignorant human being 
and end with an enlightened human being, a Royal Personality possessing dual consciousness, 
one aware of the higher nature of Self and at the same time mastering over the temporal 
existence, called Heru; the other aware of the lower nature while abiding in Higher 
Consciousness called Zokar/Asar.

In conclusion, the Initiatic Narrative is a connected series of wisdom teachings embedded in the 
text, iconography images and architectural forms of the temple that is discernible in certain 
referential architectural and hieroglyphic panel sections of the temple. The Initiatic Narrative of 
the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries, as inscribed in the Temple of Osiris at Abydos, is documented 
in this volume. The initiatic narrative can serve as a guide or framework for understanding and 
proper inclusion of rituals, artifacts, teachings and their functions within the initiatic context, as 
the narrative informs of the value and explains the presence and usage of the rituals, artifacts, 
and teachings that may be found within the culture and or society of the narrative. The 
philosophical writings, iconographies, artefacts, architecture, customs, legends and histories of 
Ancient Egypt have aspects that reflect elements of the Initiatic Narrative. The initiatic narrative 
lets us know which elements are a part of the narrative, their role in the narrative and value in the
narrative. Thus, the initiatic narrative is a guide that informs us about the nature of the spiritual journey, how to embark on it and what the desired destination is.

The stages of evolution recognized in the Initiatic Path or Royal Path include:

- Ignorant human being
- Working to purify the personality through ethical living
- Worship of and offering objects and finally the very personality to The Divine
- Renewal of the physical nature, a rebirth of the physical nature and physical conscience in the light of the gods and goddesses and a move away from physical human birth and its mundane and limited, fleeting and mortal characteristics.
- Re-alignment to be in harmony with Divine cosmic forces and principles.
- Mastery of the lower self, control of the physical personality
- Rediscovery of source Self- communing with the Higher Self-direct experience of The Divine
- Death of the lower self idea and adoption of idea of a higher vision of existence
- Restoration and resurrection of of the Higher Self
- Establishment in that Divine essence through ritual devotional work that resets the personality and attunes it to the source of Spirit Being.
- Giving birth to that Spirit Being from the depths of the unconscious into the awareness of conscious mind and thereby attaining unitary awareness of Lower human existence and Higher Divine existence at the same time. This is referred to as Nehast or enlightenment.