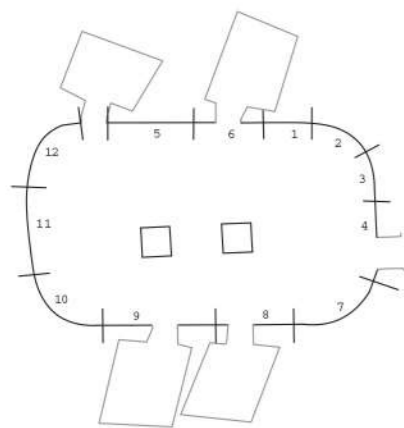


## THE AMDUAT

The ancient Egyptian **Amduat** focuses on two central questions asked by mankind since time immemorial: what happens to the sun between sunrise and sunset? What happens when we die?

The term **Amduat**, that which is in the **Netherworld**, generally characterises all illustrated books describing the **sun god's** nocturnal journey and his rejuvenation each morning. Its actual title is the **Treatise of the Hidden Room** and it is the earliest book of this kind which served as the model for an entire literary genre, to which the **Book of Gates** and the **Book of Caverns** also belong. The lengthy introductory passage emphasises the knowledge that the text will transmit, providing an overview of the contents. The text describes the **sun god's** journey through the twelve hours of the night. The words and deeds of the god are at the centre of the **Amduat** along with descriptions of all the beings in the netherworld, their functions and the magic spells required for a safe trip. The actual location of the underworld is inside the body of **Nut, the goddess of the sky**. She gives birth to the sun each morning. It travels along her body by day entering her mouth at sunset. The sun then travels back through the inside of her body to be born again the next morning.

It is an illustrated text written in cursive hieroglyphs with line drawings. It is almost all in red and black, with the red used for emphasis, but pink bands represent the desert and blue strips represent the water.



A plan of the burial chamber of Thutmose III showing the location of each hour.

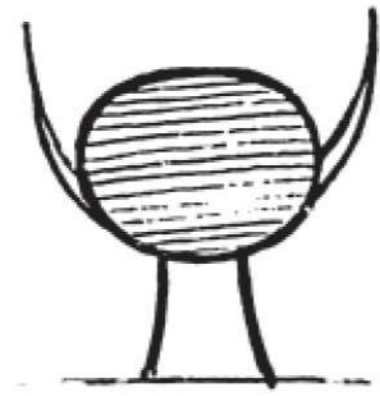


## THE FIRST HOUR

The Smiter of the foreheads of the enemies of Re

Entry into the underworld

The journey of the **sun god Re** begins at sunset, when the sun disappears into the western horizon and passes through **the gate that swallows all**. Waiting for him are **the gods of the night, solar baboons** and **uraeus-serpents** represented in the upper and lower registers (horizontal bands that divide the wall). The baboons **who open to the great ba-soul and those who make music for Re** greet him and make merry. The central sections are reserved for the **solar barque**, called in the text the **barque of the millions**. This boat has to carry all the deceased along with the **retinue of the sun god Re**, who appears with the head of a ram. He is descending into the depths of the netherworld as a **ba-soul** in order to rejuvenate his body. The caption written beside **Re** reads **Flesh** to emphasise his physicality and mortality. Another boat carries a scarab, representing **Khepri, the resurrected form of the sun**, placed in this hour to remind all present that the objective of the journey is rebirth and immortality, both for the individual and the state. The deities **Hathor, Maat** and **Osiris** walk in front of the boat. They will be present, in body or spirit, through the twelve hours of the night. In this opening hour **Re** is the king of the cosmos, providing his followers with the physical means of sustenance; **barley for bread and beer and flax for clothing**.



## THE SECOND HOUR

The wise one who protects her lord Wernes and the fields of reeds

The second hour depicts a fertile region called **Wernes**. A rich land irrigated by the **primeval waters of Nun from which all life emerged**. **Nun** stands for the world before creation and will appear in human form at the end of the sixth hour. **Re**, guided by the goddess **Hathor** and accompanied by the goddesses **Isis** and **Nephthys**, in the form of serpents, navigates the boat over the waters of the afterlife. In the two middle registers four boats accompany the **solar barque** each loaded with symbols, divinities and provisions. The most important of these is the presence of **Maat**. She is **the divine order of things**, the equilibrium of everything that exists within the universe, the balance against which the hearts of all mankind are judged. **Maat** is therefore seen as an incarnation of truth and justice. **Thoth**, accompanies **Maat**. He is the god of wisdom associated with the moon, depicted as both full and crescent. He is also **the healer of the divine eye**. The moon is identified with the left eye of the **sun god Re** while **Hathor**, whose symbol is seen in another boat, is his right eye. In the lower register deities are carrying ears of corn in their hands or in their head dresses. They are the **peasants of Wernes, the workers in the fields of the other world and the providers of fresh plants for the blessed dead**. Other divinities of the underworld are also present to provide for the deceased.



## THE THIRD HOUR

She who cuts ba-souls

The waters of Osiris

The abundance of water continues but it is now referred to as the **waters of Osiris**. **Osiris** appears several times in this hour. He is always in a passive state, never speaking or acting. After his death at the hands of his brother **Seth, Osiris** is represented wrapped in bandages, the original mummy. He was cut into small pieces by his brother but they were collected and literally re-membered by his sister and wife **Isis** before being bound in bandages by **Anubis** to hold his body together and ensure immortality. The threat posed by **Seth** is present and many of the figures carry knives, but his presence is not entirely negative. The forces of danger must be identified and defeated by the retinue of **Re** for the safe conduct of the journey. The long text that accompanies this hour is a dialogue between **Re** and the inhabitants of the afterlife. **He is the interpreter who fills the hour with the sound of his voice**. Inundation is an important theme. In Egypt the Nile floods swept away the old order every year and brought the conditions for new life. The same happened in the afterlife as the promise of a new life that will follow death. The elements and the senses are promised good things but the presence of the threat is growing.

**May your noses breathe air, may your faces see, may your ears hear, uncovering for your covers, release for your wrappers!**

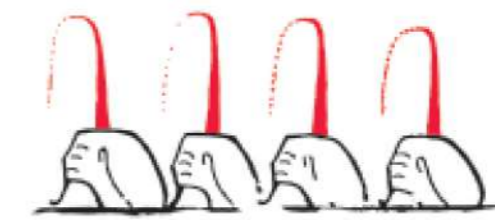


## THE FOURTH HOUR

Great in her powers

The land of Sokar who is upon the sand

The fertile valley is interrupted abruptly and the entourage of **Re** finds itself in the **desert of Rosetau, the land of the god Sokar**, another form of the god of the underworld **Osiris**. This is a hostile, uninhabited, sandy kingdom of darkness plagued by snakes. The snakes **move in strange ways**, and are depicted with legs and wings. **Re** fills the air with sound, **taking care of everyone with his voice without seeing them**. He acts in blind faith, sight is impossible in the absolute darkness. Nobody responds in the **land of silence**. The real obstacles to the journey of the sun begin at this time. A zig-zag path appears from **the mouth of Isis** and blocks the way with **fire and doors**. There is no way around, the only way is through and magic plays an important role. The **solar barque** must be towed across the sand and mutates into a double-headed serpent whose **fiery breath pierces the impenetrable darkness**. The sceptre in the hand of **Re** also transforms into a snake. In the middle register the disembodied solar eye is protected by **Thoth** and **Sokar**. **The eye has been injured and must be healed** for the journey to be successful. At the end of the hour the stars move out into the sky under **the guidance of Maat**. The text indicates that the pharaoh abandons this lonely and sandy place to seek refuge alongside **Re**.



## THE FIFTH HOUR

The guide in the midst of her boat The cave of Sokar

The three horizontal divisions become a pictorial device in this hour containing all the essential elements of the **Kingdom of the Dead**. In the middle of the upper register, the hill, with two birds, **Isis** and **Nephthys**, represents the **tomb of Osiris**, from which **Khepri**, the scarab form of the rejuvenated sun, emerges. All beings in the central register, even the scarab who crosses the division, join together to tow the **solar barque**, still in the form of a serpent, across the sand and through the narrow pass between the top of the pyramid, formed by the head and arms of **Isis**, and the bottom of the **burial mound of Osiris**. Beneath the pyramid is the oval shaped **cave of Sokar**. This enclosure, mimicking the shape of the burial chamber of Thutmose III, lies between two outward-facing bearded heads denoting **Aker, the primeval earth god**. In the sanctuary of the cave **falcon-headed Sokar grasps the wings of a multi-headed serpent**, a form of the **sun god**. It is an important moment representing the **union of Sokar-Osiris with Re**. The text states that the whole of the cavern is **filled with flames of fire from the mouth of Isis**. Below the cave is a **Lake of Fire**. This lake provides cool water for the blessed souls but is a place of **punishment and burning fire for the condemned**.



## THE SIXTH HOUR

The watery depths, lady of the Underworld-dwellers

The union of Re and Osiris

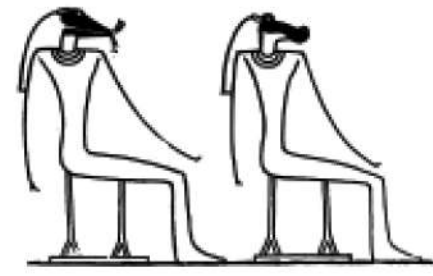
This hour of the **Amduat** is the deepest level that can be represented. It is a critical point for the regeneration of the **sun god**. The **union of the ba-soul of Re and the flesh of Osiris** kindles the first light of the new sun. This scene takes place at the right hand end of the central register and is protected by a five headed serpent called **tail in mouth**. From this moment on the sun appears protected by a serpent named **Mehen, the coiled**, a symbol of eternity. The many inhabitants of the underworld present in this hour include rows of mummiform figures representing previous kings. They are depicted with their symbols of power; crowns, sceptres and **uraeus-serpents**. They are accompanied by the **blessed dead**, reinforcing the Pharaoh as the representative of all men. In the centre of the upper register is a lying lion called **Bull with roaring voice**. This is an aspect of **Osiris** and is represented with a pair of eyes named **the divine eye of Re**. This is the first reference to the **restoration of the eyes** and the other senses that are an important part of the re-birth of the **sun god**. The eyes appear again in the central register where the god **Thoth** is seen offering an **Ibis**, another aspect of himself, to a goddess **who shields the eyes behind her body**. While the mood of regeneration dominates this hour the presence of many knives hints at the danger that will come in the seventh hour when the decisive battle over **Apophis** takes place.



### THE SEVENTH HOUR

She who repels the forces of chaos, and decapitates the savage-faced Apophis, the archenemy of the Sun

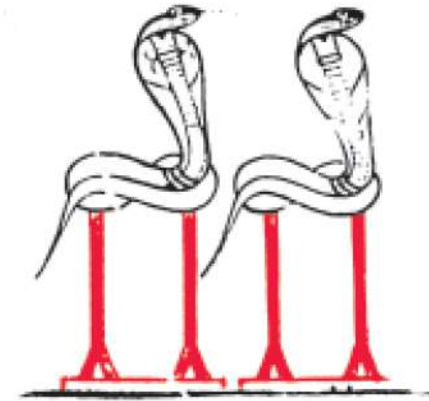
After the positive moment of conception in the previous hour the sun god again faces real danger, this time in the form of his archenemy Apophis. In this hour, despite the fact that he is protected by the cavern of Osiris and the Mehen-serpent, the sun god must rely on the magic of Isis, the original sorcerer. Isis stands at the prow of the boat casting her spells while the scorpion goddess Selkis attempts to bind the body of Apophis, horrible face and lacking ears. While the dismembering of Apophis is taking place in the central register the enemies of Osiris are bound and decapitated in front of the seated god. He is the judge, protected by a Mehen-serpent forming an arch over his head. Those found guilty are condemned to oblivion. In the lower register the sun god sits on a throne in the form of Horus of the Netherworld. His task is to assure the correct movement of the stellar bodies. Twelve stars and twelve star goddesses form his divine host indicating the sun god's absolute control over time. The hour closes with the help of the crocodile who returns the head of Osiris that has been rescued from the waters.



### THE EIGHTH HOUR

The coffer of her deities  
The Cavern-dwellers

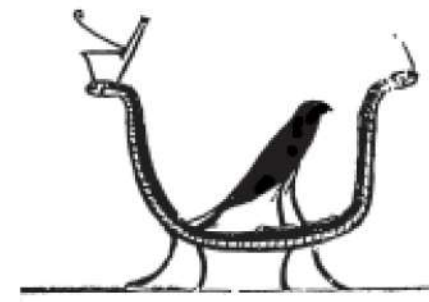
After the action of the seventh hour the eighth has a very passive and ordered structure. The upper and lower registers are each divided into five enclosures separated by wooden doors, called knives. The sun god can open the doors with a magical incantation. The central topic of this hour is the provision of clothes and the material trappings of power. While less dramatic than the protection of the body and soul, or the overcoming of evil and disorder, material things are an equally important aspect of the re-birth of the sun and Pharaoh. The text describes how the souls of the gods and the dead respond with jubilation as the sun god arrives at this point in time. The journey is not over but it is leading to its inevitable conclusion. The sun god stands in the middle of the solar barque protected by a beneficent Mehen-serpent. The boat is towed by eight towing gods and the text declaims the triumph of Re, lord of towing. The four rams with different head dresses are manifestations of Tatjenen, the god of the depths of the earth. In the lower left corner the world encircling serpent makes its first appearance. It is spitting fire and has an Ankh by its mouth. The figure holding its coiled body is called the Maiden. The text states that a sound emerges from this cavern like the cry of a tomcat.



### THE NINTH HOUR

Protector of her lord  
The determined rowing of Re

The figures all face in the same direction as if marching towards the east where the sunrise will take place in three hours time. The theme of rowing continues and dominates the hour. The twelve oarsmen tow Re to this place day after day. Each is very clearly named; the one who knows no obstruction, the one who knows no return, etc. Their task is to ensure that the sun gets to the right place at the right time. In other versions of the Amduat this scene takes place in the middle register but in the tomb of Thutmose III the solar barque, on its square of water, is at the top and the oarsmen, each carrying a paddle, are depicted spread across the three registers. The other important theme of this hour is the provision of food and clothes. A group of nine field gods carry long stalks of grain and cause all the trees and all the plants to be created. Three idols sit on top of baskets. Their task is to provide the dead with beer and bread. Twelve goddesses and twelve uraeus-serpents dominate the lower register sitting on the hieroglyph for cloth. The snakes spit fire for Osiris with flame in their mouth. They are the ones who illuminate the darkness.



### THE TENTH HOUR

The ranging one, who boils alive the rebels  
Deep waters and high banks

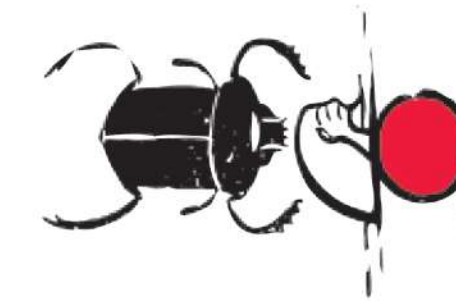
The text describes a region with deep waters and high banks filled with the healing waters of Nun. This rectangular block of water, in the bottom register, contains the bodies of those who died without proper burial. Horus helps them struggle ashore and prevents them from decomposing. They are thus assured their place in the afterlife along with all the other blessed dead. Four goddesses with cobras on their heads illuminate the scene. In the upper register the main topic is the cure of the solar eyes depicted as two red circles each cared for by two goddesses. In front of the eyes are eight forms of Sekhmet, four lion headed and four human headed. Sekhmet is a paradoxical goddess capable of inflicting disease but here her role is to cure the eye. Thoth, the god of wisdom, sits facing Sekhmet holding the restored eye. In the middle register, in front of the boat are two enigmatic images, one is the ba-soul of Sokar as a hawk sitting on a double headed serpent with legs and the other is Osiris as a falcon headed snake in a boat. In front of them twelve guardians, four solar headed carrying arrows, four with spears and four with bows whose task is to guard against Apophis who is still a threat. The text says they guard the sun god in the twelve hours of the night and during the hours of light.



### THE ELEVENTH HOUR

The lady of the sacred boat  
The seeing eyes come out

The preparations for the imminent sunrise have begun. A new member of solar barque appears on the prow of the boat as a solar-disk with uraeus-serpent. In front of the boat twelve deities carry a serpent referred to as the world encircler. This snake must not touch the ground until the appointed time in the final hour. In the upper register time and the birth of the hours are the central topics. Two double headed figures, one a form of the sun god, are called the Master of time. Egypt had two expressions for time, Neheh (dynamic, flow) and Djet (static, duration). They stand either side of the balanced but still disembodied eyes. The figure of Atum grasps the wings of a four legged serpent while time adopts the form of a snake that gives birth to the hours, represented as stars. When the time is right she eats the stars and holds them safe in her belly until the following night. In the lower register the serpent who burns millions and several goddesses with knives in their hands stand guard over fiery pits. These pits are filled with the bodies of the unfortunate damned whose slaughter is decreed day after day.. The long text, attributed to Horus, accuses them of having damaged its father, Osiris, thereby justifying a destructive imagination that knows no bounds. ...annihilation for your ba-souls, trampling down for your shadows, severing for your heads! You have not come into being, you are upside down...



### THE TWELFTH HOUR

Who sees the perfection of Re  
The sun god passes through the body of the snake

This last hour completes the cycle of rebirth and general regeneration. The sky is gold, the water lapis lazuli, the earth is strewn with turquoise. The sun disk has regained his full power. The sundisk on his head is re-united with the uraeus-serpent and the scarab Khepri appears at the prow of the boat. All the gods and the millions of dead enter into the body of the world encircler by the tail. They go in as old ones, travel along the spine, and emerge from his mouth as rejuvenated souls. In the process Re has become Khepri and he is lifted above the eastern horizon by the god of the air, Shu. The primeval gods of the Ogdoad are present along with eight gods carrying oars to fend off Apophis. Mummiform Osiris is surrounded by adoring figures. The mood is one of general celebration and the deceased, together with the mummy of Osiris, remain in the darkness of the underworld, waiting for the sun to return. In the top right hand corner of the hour, part of the fifth hour that borders the twelfth, stands the goddess of the West, the deity that opened the gates to let the king enter. The cycle of the hours ends with a short sentence; Thutmose III knows it. Whoever knows these mysterious images is a well provided Akh-spirit. Always this person can enter and leave the afterlife. Always speaking to the living ones. Proven to be true, a million times.

# IMMORTAL PHARAOH

## THE TOMB OF THUTMOSE III