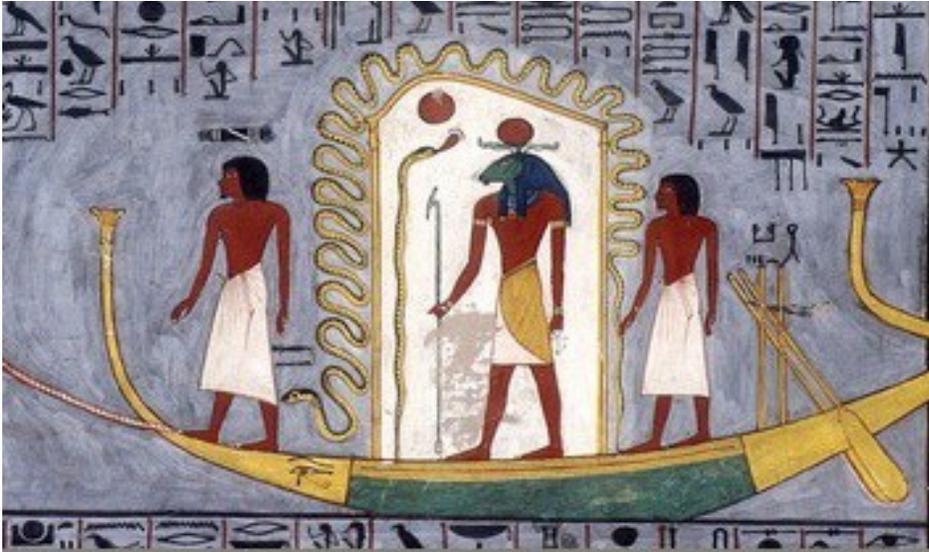


CHAPTER 22

BOOK OF WHAT IS IN THE DUAT



107:Ra in his solar barque, Valley of the Kings

The most well known Egyptian funerary text is the Book of the Dead. Though popular, it is far from the most important of the Egyptian religious literature. Long before the Book of the Dead (properly titled the Book of Becoming Light) was written on papyrus scrolls and left in the tombs were the famed Pyramid Texts. These long rows of hieroglyphs, likely the oldest religious writings in the world, were placed in pyramids of the Old Kingdom at Sakkara. By the Middle Kingdom the Book of the Dead, and a number of other texts, were found in tombs in the Valley of the Kings and Queens. These texts included the Book of What is in the Duat, Book of Caverns, Book of Gates, Book of Day, Book of Night, Book of Aker and the Litany of Ra. While these pictorial texts may seem to be far removed from the all-hieroglyphic Pyramid Texts, they are not. John Anthony West has compared the connection of a medieval stained glass window with the related Gospel text that inspired it.

Thankfully for the student of the ancient mystical tradition these pictorial adaptations of the Pyramid Texts are of great help. As no one as yet can satisfactorily translate the texts, we get only a partial idea of what they are concealing from any translation. With a picture the hidden wisdom is much more penetrable, more able to be compared and understood from similar imagery from around the world. For this reason I have decided to concentrate on a text that has not been properly explored by the modern Egyptologists.

The Book of What is in the Duat was placed on tomb walls in the Valley of the Kings. The Duat is usually translated as the Underworld but this is not correct. It is more likened to the astral realm, a real world beyond the physical. It is the place we will have to go upon our death, thus it becomes imperative for the mystical initiate to learn the hows and whys of such a place prior to death. The text was painted and carved as though a huge papyrus was unrolled across the walls of a tomb. It is divided into twelve registers or hours. Many Egyptologists believe this text describes the travels of the sun through the twelve hours of the night, showing a complete lack of understanding of what the Duat is. This is not a text of what the sun does at night but is rather a tool that describes the process of spiritual illumination that begins in darkness and ends with the scarab Khepera as the rising sun.

The first version of the book was found in the tomb of Thuthmoses 1, 1504-1492 BC. This version is a fragment and complete versions appear later in such tombs as Rameses VI. Each of the texts, while almost identical, have slight alterations. Later versions of the book from the last eras of Egypt no longer have the same perfect proportions of the golden section as the early tomb books. This shows the later artists were not versed in

the ancient art of sacred number and geometry. That the text first appeared for a Pharaoh named after Tehuti is a clue to the information that may be provided by the Egyptian priests. The hidden Hermetic wisdom of Tehuti in the text is easily found when applying a new focus to the drawings and glyphs.

The text, except for the first division/chapter, is usually divided into three registers. The middle is said to be the celestial river where the solar barque (the boat that carries the sun) travels, while the upper and lower are the two banks of the river. This has led scholars to interpret the text as a metaphor of the sun's travels along the Milky Way. While many elements are incorporated into the drawings and glyphs, the key teaching is to explain the flow of kundalini.

This text should not be investigated independently but used in connection with the other texts of the period, especially the Book of Gates and Caverns. All three of these texts are about the control of our energy and power in our body. The understanding of this energy system, allows us to awaken our inner power and reach the realm of mystical enlightenment. From the teachings of the Orient, especially Taoist Qi Gong, the same ideas are present. The Taoists teach of the gates of the body, usually along the spine, that need to be opened in order for the Qi to flow properly. The Caverns very well could be the pools of energy (associated with the physical organs) that get clogged with blocks due to our bad thoughts, actions and karma. Thus the texts of Ancient Egypt are describing the path of Qi Gong and Yoga in pictorial form (showing the origin of Egypt as the source for these systems of wisdom) to teach the understanding of the energy body and how to unblock it.

Entering the Tomb of Rameses VI, a solar disk containing the scarab and a ram headed solar deity on the left wall while Isis and Nephthys are on the right. The Egyptians, as did the Hindu, Buddhists, Taoists and Maya, understood that the body was made up of male and female principles. These principles were symbolized by the eyes. The right eye is the male principle represented by the sun, and the left eye is the feminine energy represented by the moon. The Eye of Horus is the combination of the two energies into one harmonious being. This being was called a Hermaphrodite by the Greeks for being a perfect blend of the male Hermes and the female Aphrodite. When looking out of the tomb the male solar disk is on the right, and the feminine gods on the left. The understanding of the placement of these symbols may help us understand the texts. The Book of What is in the Duat (which contains references to the journey of the sun) is on the same wall as the solar disk, while the Book of Caverns, which is recognized by its oval cocoons (the oval a world-wide feminine symbol) is on the opposite wall. The connection between the two texts and the symbols at the entrance is far from a coincidence. It is thus quite likely that the Book of Caverns is the text relating the feminine energy of the body, while the Book of What is in the Duat is the masculine energy. That would leave the Book of Gates to represent the middle channel of the spine.

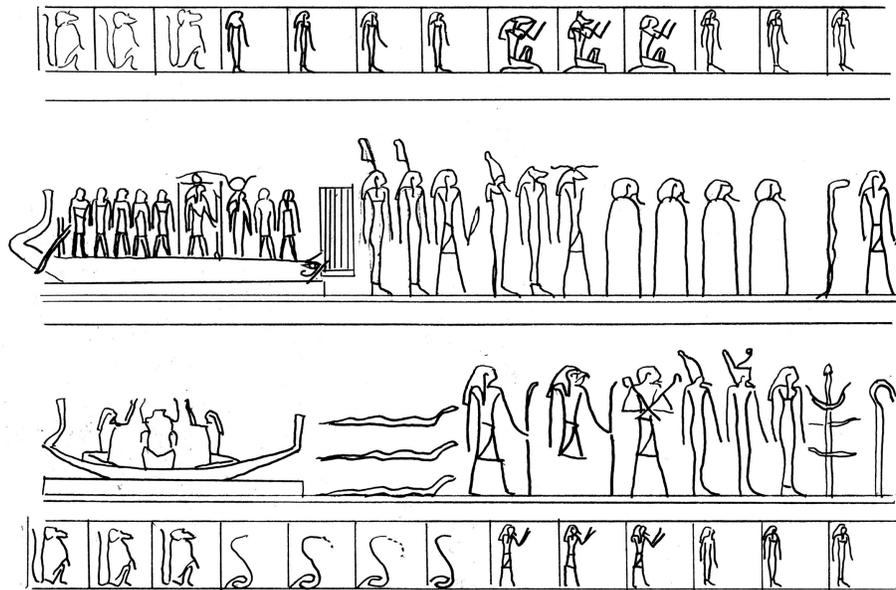
Bearing these concepts in mind we can now further examine the Book of What is in the Duat. This is not an easy text to decipher because there are so many symbolic references placed into a very small section, along with a number of hieroglyphic texts. To try and make some sense of it, the text will be examined division by division. Due to the wealth of information only key parts of each division will be examined. Please take this chapter as a guide to look more closely at the text yourself to find the wisdom it contains. To aid in your understanding two illustrations, of the first and fourth divisions are included (see illustration 19 and 20).

Interpretationⁱ

An introductory series of hieroglyphs precedes the first division and is without any drawings. The introduction talks about "writings and drawings of the hidden palace." This inner palace would be the inner part of our being. The concepts of soul and akh (perfected/illuminated ones) are the focus. The introduction claims the following texts will offer information of "knowledge of souls...doors...and the ways through which the great god journeyeth." It also claims to provide knowledge of gods, divisions, speeches and praisings. There is no surprise that John Anthony West claims the introduction seems to suggest a manual or encyclopedia of the Duat will follow.ⁱⁱ

Looking at the line of glyphs mystically it can be noted some key themes (glyphs) are repeated. The first are the birds that represent the ba, the ibis and the akh. All are connected with Tehuti which helps to explain further that this is a book of wisdom. The sign of sma (union) appears as if explaining the union of the above and below will be set forth in these teachings. Thirteen papyrus scrolls, which represent hidden wisdom, appear in just six lines of text.

First Division



108:First Division sketch from KV 34 Tomb of Thutmose III

The first division is always depicted with four registers, while the other divisions have three. No writer has ever explained why. Some have suggested the middle register was divided in two to show the twin principles of Ra. More likely it has been divided in two in order to focus the reader's attention that the text begins in the realm of duality. By the stage an initiate was reading a text such as this, they would be aware that the world that we view as reality is a dual world. In fact the entire first division is laid out to express the dual world that we live in, and offer the suggestions as to how to break free of this duality.

The upper middle register depicts the solar barque on its journey. The boat is representative of our body where the spiritual journey will take place. The main figure on the boat is a ram headed deity with horns and the solar disk claimed to be Ra. We should perhaps not be so hasty to claim this figure is the Neteru of the sun. During this period (of Aries) Amun held sway as the main deity at Luxor/Karnak. The text of the first division claims, "The god cometh to this court, he passeth through it in the form of a ram and he maketh his transformations therein." Aries is the first sign of the zodiac and is well-known as the best time of the year to begin the process of alchemy, to begin working with the body and mind to purify it and allow the transformation to the astral gold.

The ram figure stands beneath a nous or tabernacle. He is identified by the name Afu, meaning flesh. Some translate Afu as dead body believing that one needs to die to enter the Duat. Mystery School initiates need to experience and prepare for the realm of death while alive. The text claims, "it is useful to him who is on earth." Thus the Book of What is in the Duat is a text to teach us how to rid ourselves of our humanness (flesh) and the duality symbolized by the dual register, to become a scarab and transform into light. The fact that he stands beneath a tabernacle reminds us of the hermetic axiom, that the human body is an earthly temple. As above so below, thus the entire universe is contained in ourselves, so we need to fully "know thyself." By knowing every aspect of what we are, we will know everything in the rest of the cosmos.

No greater tie to the world of duality exists than the physical body, which we believe to be "us." The flesh, and the ways of, must be understood as only a part of this world. We are merely inhabiting this particular body as we inhabit the car we drive. The body is a tool and should be respected, but not given our greatest focus. Afu holds the uas scepter in his left hand. The uas is the symbol of control over Set (the conscious mind) and by having it in the left shows that he is being receptive to the learning that will allow him that control. He does not yet have this control or he would be holding it in his right hand, representing action.

Along with Afu in the boat are the Opener of the Ways, Mind (perception, consciousness), Lady of the Barque (who resembles Hathor), Horus the Praiser (in red letters to show key significance), Bull of Truth, the

Watchful One, Will (sometimes translated as word) and She Who Guides the Barque. Some of the texts refer also to Ka-Shu instead of the bull (the ka energy of breath or space). These figures are within the boat thus are important navigators for Afu to go beyond the flesh. Horus is that which we are all aspiring to become. Hathor was the counterpart of Horus, the feminine energy that was needed to reach enlightenment. The Mind is our true mind that we must regain and connect with. The bull is a symbol of sexual energy that must be tamed and controlled to lead us to truth. The will is our direct inner energy, power and focus that we will need to decide that the outcome of the texts (illumination) is what is most important in our life.

Hanging over the front of the boat is what has been described as a rug or carpet. Looking at it more closely it resembles the Veil of Isis from Tarot Card 2. This is the veil that all of us have had placed in front of us, not allowing true sight, symbolized by the eye that appears on the side of the boat. To push forward on this journey one will have to lift the veil from the boat (ourselves) in order to reach the light.

A number of deities lead the barque. Directly in front of the boat are the Double Maat (the power of truth and cosmic order that one needs to live constantly in order to go past the duality of the veil). Next is Sekhmet called in the text "the Great Illuminator." Sekhmet represents the power of Qi/Prana that must be brought into the body and stored to be used later to raise the kundalini to reach enlightenment. Next are four tablets with heads that proclaim them to be the orders of Ra, Atum, Khepera and Osiris. The text is written in red, signifying importance, and it may relate to the four priesthoods teaching the key components for the work to begin the journey. A single serpent stands upright, perhaps to signify that the kundalini fire will need to be raised. The procession is led by He Who Passes Through the Hours and holds a stick or serpent.

The hieroglyphic text of this section begins in mid-section "...the gate. The passing of this god into the form of a man." Starting the text in mid-sentence was done intentionally and signifies that the start of these teachings will take place one day in the middle of our lives. One day we are not interested, then something will occur to make us turn to texts like the Book of What is in the Duat and start the possibility of our transformation.

The lower middle register also has a boat, this one carrying the scarab Khepera. The scarab represents transformation from darkness into light, what all of us will have to do on our journey. A key part is to honestly look at and understand our own personal darkness. Khepera teaches not to be afraid of our faults, but to embrace them for they can be transformed into power. With him are two Osiris figures that are looking behind, a Hermetic symbol that in the beginning of the process we need to turn back and look at our own thoughts. Usually our thoughts are never questioned and for the first time we must examine our conscious mind. The first question that will be asked from such an exercise is 'if I am observing my own thoughts, the thoughts can not be me.' Thus we must be more than our thoughts. Three serpents (the number of the Hermetic process) and a number of beings that carry serpent sticks lead the boat. As explained, the serpent refers to either kundalini, wisdom or the conscious mind. A snake that is on the ground refers to the conscious mind as it hovers close to the earth (below) and is constantly moving like the mind. A snake that represents kundalini or wisdom will be either standing upright or will have wings to show it is in the above and no longer on the ground.

In front of all this are two Neiths. Neith was the goddess of weaving and some say war because of her symbol of crossed arrows. Neith actually represents the web of life, depicted by the weaving. Every strand in a weave can be accessed by every other one, just as all things in life are connected to each other. This is a very important teaching in the initial stages for the initiate, leading to the famous saying of "do unto others as they would unto you." This statement actually means that all are connected, and in fact the same. To harm something else in the universe means you are also harming yourself, as you are all that actually exists. Leading the way is the goddess Nephtys (in red), a horned pole with two serpents, and on top is a god that is called The Divider of the Waters. Nephtys and the pole are both representations of water, the cleansing properties that will have to be brought forth in the journey.

The top register is divided into boxes of nine baboons, twelve goddesses, nine gods and twelve goddesses. The bottom register has nine baboons, twelve serpents, nine gods and twelve goddesses. The number nine is the cycle of Osiris (the cycle of nature) and twelve is the cycle of the zodiac. The baboons (wisdom of Tehuti) open the doors, the serpents (kundalini) illuminate the darkness. The goddesses lead, representing intuitive feminine energy, and the gods sing praises using the power of sound.

The hieroglyphic text also helps to provide some answers. "If copies of these things are made according to the ordinances of the hidden home...they shall act as magical protectors to the man who maketh them."ⁱⁱⁱ This line is a reference that appears often in the texts, meaning that one is supposed to copy the Duat. How exactly does one copy it? Do you make a copy of the text for your home? Is the area to be built, as some believe the Giza

pyramid complex is the copy of the Duat? Is this area supposed to be built inside yourself? It may be a combination of all of these possibilities.

When Afu enters the Duat, he asks for light and guidance from the gods and bids them to open doors and others to welcome him. "Illuminate thus the darkness of night." The final text of this section calls for one to "shut your doors by your bolts...come ye to me, advance to me, make ye your way to me and ye shall abide in your place."^{iv} This text is about the sublimation of sexual energy, a key component of the early part of the path. Actually there is nothing wrong with sex, for if it is done properly the creative energy is what stirs the kundalini and allows for mystical moments of the light. Unfortunately most have no idea how to have sex properly, thus most mystery traditions advise to control the sexual energy at the beginning. This concept became understood by the Catholic Church that it is wrong to have sex unless you are making babies. The mystery traditions teach that sex is wonderful, and when one has learned the proper methods, leads to great power and wisdom. Until initiates were taught these techniques they were advised to not lose their precious energy from orgasms. They taught instead to keep it inside and build up inner power and strength. Shutting the doors by the bolts refers to not allowing the sexual energy (in the form of sperm) to be lost but kept inside.

The text in the Tomb of Rameses VI has parts of the diagrams defaced. Egyptologists may say this was a random act of defacement but there were no random acts in Egypt. All of the hieroglyphs and reliefs contained the power and magic of what they depicted. When something was defaced it was in order to stop the power and energy of the drawing being used. In this case what was defaced was the scarab (halting the transformative purpose), Afu (that who is on their journey) and Osiris (the cycles of transformation). This of course could have been done signifying that Rameses VI was no longer on his journey (he was dead) and no longer needed to transform or return in the cycle of rebirth (for he had become enlightened and needed no more lives on earth).

Second Division

This division is divided into three registers that will be common for the rest of the text. The upper two are placed on water and the lower is on sand. The middle register now contains five boats. Afu is still under his tabernacle in the first boat along with his crew. Two cobras are added to the front of the boat, and magic is now at the stern. This register is a division of feminine energy, initially signified by the naming of the cobras Isis and Nephthys.

The fifth boat has two human heads at the end, an eye upon the body and inside is a deity holding a feather of Maat and a disk between horns of the crescent moon. The feather of Maat infers that this is a stage of inner truth, while the moon is another symbol of feminine energy. The third boat has a Hathor symbol (the queen of feminine energy) and a scarab, reminding one of the transformation to come through the work.

The first boat is flanked by cobra heads, three armless deities and two stalks of grain. The registers above and below also have to do with fields, seed and planting. All of these symbols are suggesting the Osirian cycle of growth. It is a message describing that what we sow we will reap. Plant your crops properly and with care, and the result in time will be food. This is a much needed analogy for the initial stages of the initiate. The early stages will be hard work, and it may seem like a waste of time. It is a suggestion that by doing the work, even though the results can not be seen now, they will bloom and blossom like the growth in the fields if they are tended to properly.

The second boat has a crown of the north and south, two scepters and a head coming out of a crocodile. This picture describes that our conscious mind (head) is what creates the crocodiles in our life. With the division concentrating on feminine energy and Osirian cycles it will be one of being receptive, asking questions, and examining emotions and feelings. The main reflection of this stage will be to look at ourselves and our patterns, routines, negative thoughts and actions. These patterns and beliefs are our past and our history that makes us who we believe we are and what we can achieve. One believes they are a failure because they have failed in the past. The crocodile represents these patterns because the negative thoughts lie unseen in our subconscious mind, just as the crocodile lies unseen in the Nile. In an instant, the unseen crocodile strikes to obtain its prey, just as without warning the patterns strike and lead us to a problem.

The upper register has a number of gods having a penis as a knife, showing they are cutting off their sexual desires. Behind them is a deity called "Overcomer of the Power of the Enemy," the enemy being sexual energy not used properly. There is also information of the battle that will occur. Here is a famous picture of Horus that has Set coming out of a side of Horus. Set is the Neteru of destruction, he who killed Osiris. This important carving shows that the parts we will be battling are actually parts of ourselves. The battle is not out there,

it is within. Also of note is that all of the figures in the upper level hold their objects in their left (feminine) hand, further showing the focus of the teachings of the division.

The lower register has gods with corn in their hair, and others with ear of wheat in the left hand. Three mummified figures sit on blocks in the classic Egyptian meditative posture signifying the starting of the meditative process at this stage. The first mummy has a knife for a phallus and is called "Eater of the Phallus." The next two have an ankh instead of a knife showing that they have already controlled their sexual life force. Another two headed god called Horus-Set appears in the lower register, symbolizing the same ideas as in the upper. Two gods appear holding the ankh upside down. The ankh is rarely depicted this way, perhaps a further example of the turmoil that one will face when beginning this journey as we must overturn all that we have thought and done. The last figure in the line is one holding the symbol of the year, perhaps meaning that one will be given a full year to complete the work of this stage.

The text of the upper register says, "Their work consists of performing the overthrow of enemies at this hour...that ye may not be destroyed and overcome by your own foul odour, and that ye may not be choked by your own dung." The text also calls for the doors to be open to receive fresh air, fresh food and fresh water.^v All of these texts are suggestions that purification is needed. Few truly understand just in how bad of shape they are in. Every negative action and thought is stored somewhere in our body. Those who have taken a few workshops or lectures have done little. Purification is a lifetime process, to clean away all the junk we have acquired.

There is also talk of Apop, the serpent that Ra must battle each night and cut to pieces. Apop is the conscious mind that must be battled with in order to allow for the stillness and inner silence. "May ye hack into pieces the enemies of Osiris."^{vi} This statement coincides with the meditative figures and the need for inner silence that will connect us with our true mind that can lead us towards the Light.

Third Division

In the early version of the text the space for Afu in the boat is empty. The later texts, like appear in Rameses VI, have Afu in his usual place. In the next boat is a mummified figure with ram's horns. This may suggest that Afu has transformed not only boats but also forms. In later divisions of all versions the figure is back in place. Once again there are two sections of water and one of sand, and the Division is called "She Who Cuts Up Souls." The main boat now includes fewer figures. Added is Horus tying loops of rope around the oars. It is possible that Horus here is trying to slow down the ability of the boat (our journey) to be controlled and now it is time to allow the feminine intuition that was gained in the previous division for guidance. A Native shaman would suggest this is the stage of leaning to connect with spirit and the let the forces of the universe be our guide.

Three boats lead the barque. The closest boat is the Boat of Branch with the head of a lion, containing a mummified Osiris with ram horns, another mummified figure and a god. An upright serpent is called Set-em-Maat-f (his Maat of Set). The second boat has an eye, ends in baboon heads and is called the Boat of Rest. It has an Osiris mummified figure, and is steered by two beings one who is "He Whose Face is a Knife." Another upright serpent is here and a headless bent over figure. In the tomb of Rameses VI one figure does not have a head. The last boat "Which Capsizeth" has an eye and seems to end in a lotus. Mummified forms of Horus are staring at each other, holding a uas and ankh while standing on a serpent. There is also a serpent known as "Fiery Face." Meeting the boats are four forms of Osiris without lower arms.

The upraised serpents reflect the upward rise of the kundalini energy that is beginning to flow. The figure without a head is a constant one in the texts. This idea is still practiced in Buddhist traditions where they want you to take a photograph of yourself and cut the head off. You are to then look at the photograph constantly. The idea is to begin to think of yourself as headless, for without a head we lose connection to our conscious mind and move to our heart (our true mind). We will then interact with the world through feeling and love and not the ego and what the 'I' wants. The mummies (with no arms appearing) and the four beings at the end without arms are an example of not being able to feel things with the senses, thus we are learning how to feel with the heart. The connection one makes in this way helps take us to the feeling of oneness with the All and a connection to our true self.

The upper and lower registers have a number of depictions of Osiris and Anubis. There are many symbolic references here but of note is the male and female who bring the pupil or eye, again reference to the usual senses that must be diminished so we can focus on the heart. Anubis appears standing on top of a pylon, a form repeated in the tomb of Tutankhamun.

The lower register has some interesting figures including a number of seated forms of Osiris, and five goose-headed beings with knives. At the far end are two goddesses who hold the uas in both hands and bend while looking behind. Following them are three figures bent over. The text of this register reads, "... the work which they do is to hack souls in pieces...and to destroy such doomed beings...which blazeth fire. They send forth flames and they cause fires to spring up, and the enemies are these who have their knives on their heads. Whoever knows this will have dominion over his legs."^{vii} The fire is linked to the alchemic fire that is needed to purify the body, of which the kundalini will also be doing as it rises. As one goes farther in the work of Qi Gong they will experience great heat while doing the exercises, the heat turns the blocks of the body into steam by the moving Qi. The Egyptian text claims by doing so one will have dominion over his legs. This is a bit baffling, but Carlos Castaneda wrote that our memories are actually stored in our legs. If this is true then the purifying fire will help us lead to our deepest memories. Unlocking the memories that are hidden will allow us to unlock everything about ourselves. This is often done through the process of recapitulation, reliving every event of our life. Doing so we can see the repetition of our patterns and routines that can be eliminated, see the parts of events we missed that are causing us to act poorly now, and see the truth in a situation we failed to do at the time. With this done one can then move on in the work without the past holding us back.

Fourth Division

The fourth division of the Book of What is in the Duat is a tremendous change from the previous three. The most noticeable feature is a passageway (or road) called Restau, part of the Kingdom of Sokar. It is also referred in the texts as the "road of the secret things of Restau." It was this and the following division that has led Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval to link the text to the pyramids and sphinx at Giza. Both words, "Restau" and "Sokar", appear in stela inscriptions at Giza. The passageway, sphinx and pyramid that appear in the fifth division make this connection a real possibility.

Without examining the connection in great detail, the pyramid complex at Giza was one of the earliest centers of initiation in the world. The Book of What is in the Duat was derived from the Pyramid Texts at Sakkara, religious documents to help with the path to enlightenment of the Shem-Shu-Hor (Followers of Horus) who were the initiates of Egypt. Some of that training would have happened in the chambers and passages of the Giza complex. An inscription in the lower part of the road says that one entereth the body of Sokar "who is on his sand, the image which is hidden and is neither seen nor perceived." The terms hidden and mysterious are emphasized.

In the fourth division there are more additions besides the passageway. The first gate or door is called Mates-sma-ta, incorporating the sma sign (union of lungs) along with a knife. The second door is the Metes-mau-at. The third door is upright and called Metes-en-neheh.

In the middle register the boat has a serpent head at each end, thus it is a new and different boat than has appeared in the previous three divisions. Four gods tow the boat. Of the boat, it is said, "The flames which the mouth of his boat emit guide him through these pools, he seeth not their forms, but he crieth to them...and they hear his voice." The fire obviously comes from the serpent heads. The fire comes from the mouth, and the use of the voice is key to make the boat move. An important stage in learning the ancient wisdom is to understand sacred sound and how the human voice can be used to heal, for magic or for manifestation.

On the other side of the middle door are a number of the key Neteru of Egypt. First is a mummified Osiris and a leaning crook. The crook is the process of controlling the wandering sheep of the mind. Tehuti "Raiser" and Horus "Wide of Hands" face each other with outstretched arms with an utchat (eye) above them. Another being appears with no head but with what appears to be snakes/worms coming out. Hotep carries the crook in right hand. The text of the middle register says, "These bodies are hidden, whose secret things are hidden. They are the guardians on the way of the holy."

The middle register is very important. Hotep is the Egyptian word for peace, not peace in the world but peace of mind. Since the entire world is nothing but a projection of our conscious mind, by learning to have the mind at peace will create the world around us to be at peace. The crook is the symbol that to obtain peace of mind, the moving thoughts (symbolized by wandering sheep) must be corralled by the crook. Tehuti (wisdom) and Horus (the power of our inner being) must be used to raise ourselves to a new state or vibration in order to

make these changes long lasting.

The upper register is most known for its serpents. One snake has a human head with two pairs of feet and legs. Three serpents move “upon their bellies” and of them it says “those who are in this picture make their passage to every place each day.” Next is the scorpion (Ankhet) and a large uraeus serpent who “stand in Restau at the head of the way.” Restau may then be place of the true mind, one that must be reached by killing the conscious mind with the poisonous bite of the scorpion. A three-headed serpent with hawk’s wings and two sets of human legs and feet is the “warder of the holy way to Restau and lives upon abundance which comes from his wings, his body and heads.” Facing is the serpent Nebkau (serpent at creation) with two heads and a head instead of a tail who lives on “abundance that issues forth from his mouth.” One god holds the curved (spiral) wand in his right hand. The spiral or labyrinth is a constant symbol of the mystical journey and the need to go inside ourselves, and then come out the same way working on the same material.

The lower register also contains a number of serpents including a three-headed one who is the “hidden image of the Aheth chamber which is illuminated daily at the birth of Khepera...” Appearing in this lower register is Sekhmet, Maat, and a figure performing a Qi Gong or Yoga pose. As well are fourteen stars, heads and the winged disk of Khepera (Horus) appear here. Most importantly many of the figures on the bottom have two right hands, while on the upper have two left hands. The figures with two right hands, shows the lower register is a place of action and doing. Thus the figures of Sekhmet (Qi energy), the Qi Gong posture and Maat appear. All are the way we must be living, with cosmic truth, and movement and understanding of our energy or power. The upper register with the two left hands is about being receptive, in this case to the kundalini serpent power beginning to rise and take wings. The lower register shows what must be done to help this process and the upper is explaining that one will need to allow the experience to occur when it does begin to rise. By doing so one can follow the Path of Horus and open the way.

Fifth Division

The fifth division of the text is perhaps the most examined, and for good reason. It, like the division before it, is totally dissimilar to original three divisions. In the middle register the boat is now called the “Power of Life,” and is towed by seven gods and seven goddesses, representing the chakras. The kundalini begins to rise in the previous division and now will begin its ascent through the chakras. It is known to rise along two channels, one male and the other female depicted by the gods and goddesses. The boat is serpent headed, giving a further indication of what exactly is being towed. The tow rope end is a spiral, a further indication that the kundalini is flowing up in its spiraling form. The four gods in front are referred to as “the great sovereign chiefs who provide food in this circle.” These are likely the four lower bodies (lower chakras) that must be first controlled and purified to ease our connection to this world, and to allow the potential of being grounded in the further worlds.

The text says, “come to Khepera, O Ra! Come to Khepera! Work ye with the cord, O ye who make Khepera to advance so that he may give the hand to Ra.” Another text says, “Let Ra advance on the road in the boat which is in the earth, in his own body, and let his enemies be destroyed.”^{viii} Khepera is the scarab that represents the transformation of darkness to light, and here the initiate is calling for Khepera (representing the kundalini that will make the transformation possible) to continue. The cord referred to in the text may represent the spinal cord of the human body. There can be no doubt now to what the fifth division is referring to. The advance is within the body (spinal cord) and the enemies are the aspects of our person that need to be purified.

The scarab and the head that appears on the mound below is referred to, “when this god (Khepera) standeth on the head of the goddess he speakth words to Sokar every day.”^{ix} This quotation could explain that once the kundalini can reach the head, thus cleaning all the seven chakras, it will flow out above the head and allow connection to the All, including being able to speak to God directly. To obtain Gnosis directly was the key teaching of the Hermetic literature.

In the middle of the scene the ground swells up into something resembling a pyramid with a human head. Beneath it is the oval “Egg of Sokar” which guardeth “the hidden body” or the astral golden body of alchemy. At each end rests a sphinx, “his work is to keep ward over his image.” Inside of the oval is a two (sometimes three as in the Tomb of Rameses VI) headed serpent with a human head for a tail. It has two large hawk wings that are held apart by the hawk-headed Sokar. The text says the hawk-headed deity’s mission is to “protect his own form.” Everything in the oval is said to be in “thick darkness...who is on his own sand, his own

image.”^x Many have looked at the imagery and combined the text (sand, pyramid and sphinxes) with similar designs at Giza. It is quite possible that this division is not only telling on the rise of the kundalini to the chakra system, but that perhaps that the main work of this stage took place at the Giza complex.

On the lower register to the left of the egg is a serpent without wings who “lives by the voice of the primeval gods of earth” and is “unseen.” This figure is likely Apop, the serpent of the conscious mind that we must battle. Four “Blazing Heads” precede Apop and sit upon boiling water (perhaps the burning water of the alchemic Mexicans). Four seated gods follow a serpent to the right of the oval. The constant reminder of the number four informs us to focus the beginning of our work of the four lower chakras.

In the upper register is Maat with her arm at a 90 degree angle. Nine large Neter symbols appear, followed by five “Guardians of the Net,” the net being the snares and traps of the mind that must be overcome. What is said to be a chamber or door above has the sign for darkness or night. On the side of it are two Horus falcons. This depiction may be the doorway to the inner (true) mind that has been kept in darkness by the conscious mind. We need the power of Horus to open this doorway. Next comes a serpent who “is in opposition to the scarab,” or transformation. This serpent has two heads and crawls along the ground, thus must be the conscious mind of duality. It would oppose the transformation that would lead to the true mind.

The final figure of the upper register may be the most important, yet is almost overlooked. It is a female goddess standing with her hands outstretched to the top of the head of a man who is clearly just a man and not a god. He is naked and has no apparel of the Neteru. He is placing an axe into his own forehead. This man is the human being who is traveling this path. This is now the stage as the kundalini begins the rise that one must take the hatchet to themselves and attack their conscious mind directly. Only by doing so will one make it to the sixth division.

Sixth Division

The sixth division returns to the more familiar look of the first three. In the middle register the solar barque is back to the form in the first three divisions (with lotus ends and crew of beings). Something has happened in division four and five that changed everything, but things are back to normal here. Why? On the mystical journey there comes a period of total hell. Hell is not something you experience after you die but right here while you are on the path. Divisions four and five were showing that everything one thought was getting wiped away. It is a terrible time, one where it seems there is almost no reason to going on living; all has come apart. But by making it through, one comes to division six where a normalcy seems to return but not without new found power. The Buddhist saying is that before training a mountain is just a mountain. With training it is no longer a mountain. After the first stage of work, it is a mountain again. One now will have to move to the second stage and realize that the mountain is only there because we want it to be so.

Directly in front of the boat is a seated baboon with an ibis on his arm. These are the two forms of Tehuti, which shows that it is wisdom that will now be our guide. Our old ways (that were destroyed in divisions four and five) are going to be of no use to us here. The wisdom we have gained will be our only tool. Facing Tehuti is a goddess called “She Who Hides the Images.” She is likely a representation of Isis that hides the veil from our sight as the figure is holding two pupils in her hands. At the end of the middle register is a man on his back “Khepera in his own Flesh” surrounded by a five-headed serpent called “Many Faces.” The serpent is swallowing its own tail, the alchemic Ouroboros that represents the cyclic nature of time. Thus the figure is within the confines of endless time, and faced with the understanding that time does not exist. He is thrown off his feet representing the loss of his previous beliefs and limitations. The number five is the number of Horus, the spiral, love and growth which are all aspects that will be happening at this stage.

Of note in the upper register are the eyes of Horus (the origin of the eyes of Buddha and Krishna). The upper level also has Isis of Weaving (the interconnectedness of things), and serpents spitting fire into chests or castles. This is the transformative alchemic fire of the kundalini moving farther up the spine. The bottom register has four heads on the back of the serpent called “He Who Swallows the Forms.” These four heads are the four sons of Horus (four lower bodies/elements) that have now been swallowed up by the flow of kundalini. We are now able to move past a totally physical existence and be allowed to move into the higher spiritual realm.

Seventh-Twelfth Divisions

The final six divisions of the Duat represent the very advanced work of the initiate so I will only point out a few key details in the rest of the text.

Showing that by the seventh division the initiate is now at another level, Afu is no longer under a shrine but a winding serpent. So high has the kundalini grown, cleansing as it moves, that the initiate is at a level where teachings will change. Powerful forces and energies will now be able to be personally experienced. At the bottom is Horus on the throne, showing that we are now able to work on crowning ourselves as a Horus (Buddha/Christ). The hard work now begins.

The ninth division is filled with the colour green, especially in the trees. This is a stage of getting by the green of the heart, to be one of living with the heart. In the tenth division the two eyes (male and female) are reborn, as they are ready to be joined as one. The eleventh division has two important symbols. The first is the flying serpent with the person riding its back. The kundalini has finally reached the head and is able to fly to the sky, and we are able to fly with it. The second is a similar symbol to the fifth division with Horus holding the wings of a legged serpent. Here however, the eyes appear again that signify the kundalini has reached the eyes and the male and female energies have been combined, the Eye of Horus has been opened. The other realms are now available to our "sight." The twelfth hour is the culmination of the work, with the final image on the middle register the scarab (transformation) and a head (signifying a new person, one who is transformed). At this stage one could now be deemed a high initiate and one who understands the secret mysteries of the universe.

Conclusion

The Book of What is in the Duat is a magnificent text for the modern spiritual initiate. While no book (*New Testament, Bhagavad-Gita, Popol Vuh*) is better than any other, the fact that the Egyptian texts of the Middle Kingdom include so many pictorial references is of great help. By using texts such as these to help understand what is needed to be done on the spiritual path, one can then go to the above-mentioned texts that contain no pictures. The information in the religious texts of the world is incredibly powerful if you can understand the symbolism properly. They are not to be taken literally. They contain hidden wisdom and it is your job to unlock the esoteric secrets in them. The Egyptian texts are a wonderful starting place because all of the further texts evolve from the Egyptian wisdom. In time one will likely find that all of the great religious texts are telling us the same ideas, that humans have the divine right to be magical and live a life of wonder. They also help to explain what is causing us to not live this magical life, and how to take steps to open ourselves to it.

ⁱ The texts used to examine the Book of What is in the Duat are: Budge AE Wallis *Egyptian Heaven and Hell* (Dover Publications 1905); West, John Anthony *Traveler's Key to Ancient Egypt* (Quest Books 1995); Piankoff, Alexandre *Tomb of Rameses VI* (Pantheon Books 1954)

ⁱⁱ West *Key* p.284; Budge *Heaven* p.1

ⁱⁱⁱ Budge *Heaven* p.9

^{iv} Budge *Heaven* pp.19-20

^v Budge *Heaven* p.41

^{vi} Budge *Heaven* p.41

^{vii} Budge *Heaven* p.60

^{viii} Budge *Heaven* p.86

^{ix} Budge *Heaven* p.86

^x Budge *Heaven* p.90

NORTH AMERICA