

these facets are embodied in Osiris: he who embraces life and death, birth and rebirth, is archetypal cosmic man, also reflected in Adam Kadmon of the *Kabbalah*, in Purusha of the *Rig Veda*.

Osiris, entombed in a coffin astray over the Nile, reached a tree that expanded around the coffin, was doubly entombed, until found by Isis who released the body, brought it back sufficiently to life to conceive a son, Horus. Seth, the adversary, represents matter's (illusory) fixity, its tendency to confusion and disruption; he stands for storm forces and those forces of involution, resistance, friction, constriction that imprison the human soul. The symbols give away the meaning of the story. Seth finds the body and fragments it into 14 pieces which Isis and Nephthys find and reassemble. This sacrifice of the man-god, the fragmentation of his body, recalls the Purusha's fragmentation, in the *Rig Veda*, that all might be. Osiris and Seth represent the polarities of the human being, spirit and matter; the sacrifice of divine life through embodiment in matter brings about the conquest of matter; a death and a becoming through matter and the ultimate triumph of the spirit. Osiris's death shows the way to self-fulfilment, Osiris is man's hope or resurrection, hence Osiris becomes the judge of human souls in the beyond and with him every justified soul must be identified. Through the gateway of the Still-Heart (Osiris) the soul must pass, divesting itself of veil after veil for thus only can it awaken to the higher consciousness. So the justified soul exclaims: "I have come to see him that dwelleth in his divine uraeus face to face. / Thou art in me and I am in thee and thy attributes are my attributes" (*Book of the Dead*. Ch. LXIV. 19, 20)

The ultimate end of Osiris, hence of all justified souls, is described in *the Book of the Dead*. "How long shall I live?" asks Osiris of Atum: the answer is: "You will live more than millions of years, an era of millions, but in the end I will destroy everything that I have created, the earth will become again part of the Primeval Ocean, like the Abyss of waters in their original state. Then I will be what will remain, just I and Osiris, when I will have changed myself back into the Old Serpent who knew no man and saw no god. (*Book of the Dead*, ch. 175)" — back to the primordial changelessness and oneness of the Absolute. To this Rundle Clark, in his *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt*, remarks perceptively: "When all differences have disappeared, he (Atum) and Osiris, the transcendent and the emergent forms of deity, will be reunited in the