

The Myth of Isis and Osiris

Renee Ramsden

Abstract

The search for wholeness in Jung is symbolised as the harmonious relationship between opposites. Jung draws the analogy between this problem of the opposites in alchemy with the reality, in the therapeutic setting, of 'dissociation of the personality brought about by the conflict of incompatible tendencies'. The myth of Isis and Osiris describes a cooperative relationship between man and woman, and between humans and the forces of nature, through an acceptance of death, dismemberment and rebirth. As such, it can offer a guide through the dark night of the soul which is part of every deep psychological transformation.

Introduction

I have divided this material into three parts: first, I will talk about Jung's earliest dream from childhood, which had an astonishing Egyptian motif in it; second, I will describe the myth of Isis and Osiris, and offer some amplifications; third, I will give a brief description of the Egyptian underworld, the Duat.

Jung's passion was to discover the secret of the personality, and this search took him from a deep personal reflection on his own shadow and his loss of soul, to the discovery of the ancient tradition of alchemy which described the process of transformation of the personality from an immature, leaden state, to a mature, golden state, from a state of dissociation or chaos, to a state of harmony and integration. Alchemy grew out of the agricultural religion of the mother-goddess and her son-lover, which over time evolved into the complex religious system of ancient Egypt, and centred around the love story of Isis and Osiris from about 3000BC. We need to remember that religion was the earliest form of psychology and therapy, as Jung says:

Religions are psychotherapeutic systems in the truest sense of the word... They express the whole range of the psychic problem in powerful images; they are the avowal and recognition of the soul, and at the same time the revelation of the soul's nature.' (Jung, CW10, pp.106)

Through alchemy, Jung found historical confirmation for his discovery of the structure and dynamic of the psyche and its tendency to dissolve (to use the alchemical term for dissociation, or disintegration) in order to coagulate (or re-integrate into a new wholeness or unity). This circular process of death and renewal is described in the sun's journey through the Egyptian underworld, where the beginning and end is the same place. The function of the Duat as a whole is regeneration through a union with the original source of our being, the Great Mother. Through his own encounter with the depth of his psyche Jung realised that the individual is deeply rooted in the collective, and that through an in-depth dialectical relationship such as analysis, one will meet up with both the collective culture and its archetypal background. He also discovered that this archetypal background gives access to the Spirit of the Deep, the original source of our being, which leads to a profound renewal of the personality. The first dream from Jung's childhood prefigured his later encounter with ancient Egyptian religion and alchemy.

Jung's Dream

In this dream he sees himself standing before a dark, rectangular, stone-lined hole which he finds in a large meadow not far from his parents' house. Jung relates in his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (Jung, 1983):

I ran forward and peered down into it. Then I saw a stone stairway leading down. Hesitantly and fearfully, I descended. At the bottom was a doorway with a round arch, closed off by a green curtain. It was a big, heavy curtain of worked stuff like brocade, and it looked very sumptuous. Curious to see what might be hidden behind, I pushed it aside. I saw before me in the dim light a rectangular chamber about thirty feet long. The ceiling was arched and of hewn stone. The floor was laid with flagstones, and in the center a red carpet ran from the entrance to a low platform. On this platform stood a wonderfully rich golden throne. I am not certain, but perhaps a red cushion lay on the seat. It was a magnificent throne, a real king's throne in a fairy tale. Something was standing on it which I thought at first was a tree trunk twelve to fifteen feet high and about one and a half to two feet thick. It was a huge thing, reaching almost to the ceiling. But it was of a curious composition: it was made of skin and naked flesh, and on top there was something like a rounded head with no face and no hair. On the very top of the head was a single eye, gazing motionlessly upward. (Jung, 1977, pp. 26-27)

It was only after decades that Jung began to discover that this terrifying, numinously tinged event must involve a ritual phallus, a mystery object to be kept hidden, like those that played a central role in the mystery places of antiquity. That it could not have come from a mere fragment of memory from within the child's experience is obvious. Hence what is seen in the dream picture goes beyond memory, and as such is of a suprapersonal character. (Wehr, 2001, pp. 25-26)

Von Franz amplifies:

The ancient Etruscans, Romans and Greeks used to erect such things over a man's grave; they served as symbols of the dead person's continued existence and guarantors of his resurrection. In Jung's dream the deceased clearly becomes a king, who now awaits resurrection in the form of a grave-phallus. In the same way the dead sun-king in ancient Egypt was worshiped as Osiris and represented as a pillar of Djed. Setting up this pillar in the burial chamber signified the arising of the dead, or rather the god Osiris, the green or black god of the lower world who also embodied the spirit of vegetation.

This symbolizes the stability and continuation of his power and may represent his spine. The pillar is sometimes decorated with the Atef crown or has two wedjat-eyes, and it has been decorated with the flail and crook at times as well. (Wehr, 2001, pp. 27-28)

This dream of Jung's, which he had at the age of 3-4, is an example of the reality and autonomy of the objective psyche, the collective unconscious. In his MDR, he says: 'At all events, the phallus of this dream seems to be a subterranean God not to be named, and as such it remained throughout my youth...' It was dreams like this that eventually led to the split between Jung and Freud. His deep disagreement with Freud about the nature of the contents of the unconscious culminated in his writing *Symbols of Transformation*, which cost him his friendship with Freud, and led him to undertake his personal exploration of the depths of his own psyche. He says in MDR:

...I alone pursued the two problems which most interested Freud: the problem of 'archaic vestiges' and that of sexuality... Sexuality is of the greatest importance as the expression of

the chthonic spirit. That spirit is the 'other face of God,' the dark side of the God-image. The question of the chthonic spirit has occupied me ever since I began to delve into the world of alchemy.

At the age of forty, he surrendered to his own images, a process that took four years, from 1913 to 1917, and which he painstakingly recorded, reflected on and wrote up in 'The Red Book'. During this process he named the depth of the unconscious the Spirit of the Deep, while the collective culture that he lived in, he called the Spirit of the Time. This process that Jung went through, was in itself a process of initiation into the mysteries of the psyche, a process which mirrored the old vegetation mysteries of ancient Egypt reflected in the myth of Isis and Osiris.

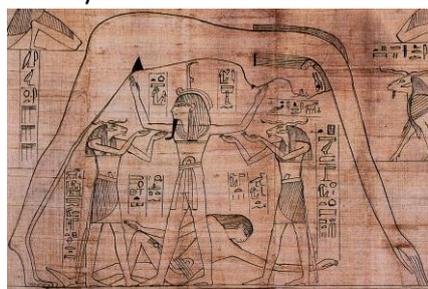
Jung is an example of an individual who was deeply affected by the Spirit of the Deep, through his dreams, and who responded to these dreams in such a way that it had a profound influence on the culture, the Spirit of our Time. Dreams like this one illustrate the compensatory action of the objective psyche – the Spirit of our Time is characterized by patriarchy and rationality, while this ancient culture points to a time when the goddess was honoured alongside the god, and magic was considered a legitimate belief system. His biographer, Gerard Wehr says:

'... we must not overlook the time at which the childhood dream appeared to Jung. It was the moment when the cry 'God is dead' was ringing out. If we can locate Jung's dream in the year 1879-80, then there is barely a year between it and this famous proclamation of Friedrich Nietzsche.'

Jung experienced the death of the god through his father's loss of faith. Wehr suggests that this dream... 'is an announcement that in the midst of a time of God-is-dead consciousness, new life is stirring from the depths of the psyche, struggling toward the light of consciousness in the form of an obscure, yet-unbroken code.' (Wehr (2001) pp. 27-28)

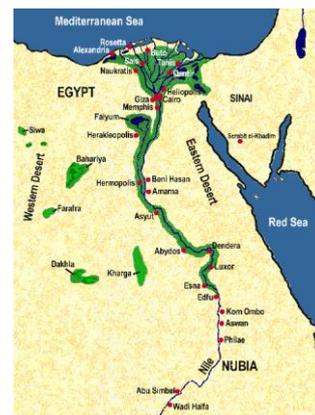
Reading the Myth

The myth of Isis and Osiris has its origin in ancient agricultural myths, centred around the seasons of planting and harvesting, which in turn grew out of the hunter-gather shamanic cultures of Paleolithic times. In these early times, the Great Goddess was worshiped as a source of life and creativity, and she was associated with the moon and the horns of the cow or bull. Goddesses like Nut, Hathor and Isis are her offspring in Egyptian mythology, as well as the god Thoth, who is a moon god. This image (left) depicts Nut, the goddess of the Sky, who is also identified with Hathor, the cow goddess, who shelters the world with her body and nourishes all with her rain-milk. The earliest inhabitants of this region were Stone-Age hunter-gatherers who roamed an immense area rich in wildlife, which is now a desert. With radical changes in climate, rain became less abundant and these people gradually replaced their nomadic culture with the settled life of agriculturalists. Agriculture began from about 8 000BC, when people gravitated towards the Nile. So immense is the significance of the Nile River to the development of Egyptian civilization, that we cannot separate the history or culture of Egypt from its geography and other natural aspects. Baring and Cashford say:



Ancient Egypt took its orientation from the Nile, flowing north towards the sea, bringing water for the whole world to drink; where it did not reach there was death, for on either side of the black fertile soil lay the arid desert: rocky wastes of dry sands, burnt bare by the sun, where nothing grew. Yet the sands were always moving, moving towards the wet land,

ready to encroach on the cultivated fields. The contrast between life and death was ever-present. It was a dynamic drama of conflicting forces, and life was poised as an art between contraries: too great an inundation and the canals and dams capsized; too little, and the people went hungry. Every year the Nile dies and is reborn, and the whole of Egypt with it. In mid-June, around the summer solstice, the Nile appears to be going away forever, evaporated into earth and air, shrunk to half its size. But just as life reaches its lowest ebb, the fields dusty and dry, the cattle thin and thirsty, and the people wasting with hunger, then the Nile begins to stir and swell, slowly at first but gathering force until it races along with tumbling waters and suddenly bursts its banks and water spills over the miles of flat and shriveled land lying on each side of the river. From July to October all things sink into the state of the beginning of the world from which all life came and will come forth again. In the autumn the waters drop, the inundation recedes and the fertilized fields are pregnant with life, ready for seeding in November... This feeling of the waters as the origin of life, mirrored in the constantly flowing Nile, was common to all stories of creation in Egypt. ... (Baring & Cashford, 1991, p. 227)



This description is a summary of the whole of the myth of Isis and Osiris, as I hope to show in this paper. The Nile is the life force, which is sometimes seen as the tears of Isis, and sometimes as the fructifying power of Osiris, as he fertilises the dark earth. However, Osiris is primarily seen as the god of the corn, and the life cycle of the corn is described as the death, dismemberment and underworld journey of the god, who is resurrected in the spring. His brother Seth is the hostile desert which threatens the life of the corn. Isis is the faithful and loving sister-wife who searches, gathers and puts together the lost god, and assists his rebirth.

The earliest worship of Osiris dates from 6000BC, when he was a fertility god, a son-lover of the great goddess, who was sacrificed to fructify the crops. Over time, the image of Osiris evolved into brother-consort to Isis, the sister-mother to the king, and human sacrifice was substituted by animal sacrifice. By about 3000BC, the creation myth had changed from a mother-goddess birthing creation, to the Egyptian creation story:

In the beginning everywhere was water and water was everywhere, and the name of the waters was Nun. And out of the primordial waters of the dark abyss a hill began to rise up; it was the 'mound of the first time', and it was the first time of light. And the name of the High Hill was Atum, the 'Complete One'. Atum, who comes into being as risen land and light, generates the male Shu (Air, Life, Space, Light) and the female Tefnut (Moisture, Order), who gives birth to Nut (Sky, female) and Geb (Earth, male). Shu then lifts his daughter Nut (Sky goddess) away from his son, Geb (the earth god), supporting her so that she can give birth to the stars and, 'taking them up into her', let them sail across her watery body as the sky... (Baring and Cashford, pp. 228)



In the above image we see the sky-goddess Nut, arching over her brother-husband Geb, the earth god. Shu is the figure in the boat with the feather, presumably sailing on the waters of his wife, Tefnut. Nut and Geb gave birth to Osiris, Seth, Isis and Nephtys. Nephtys and Seth became husband and wife, while Isis and Osiris are said to have loved each other from before birth. What is striking is

me about this mythology is that the deities are all in partnerships, opposites are in relationship to each other.

Osiris is said to have become the first king of Egypt and the creator of civilization, abolishing cannibalism and substituting this with the agricultural practice of cultivation of corn and barley, and the making of bread and beer. When he travelled to other nations to spread his civilization, Isis ruled efficiently and peacefully in his absence.



The story goes that Seth was jealous of Osiris, and conspired to kill him. He therefore constructed a richly decorated sarcophagus the size of his brother, which he presented at a palace feast. Amidst the feasting, he promised to give the sarcophagus to the one it would fit. Osiris lay himself in the chest (see image left), and was betrayed by the seventy-two conspirators, who nailed the lid shut, sealed it with molten lead and flung it into the Nile, where it floated down to the sea.

When Isis heard of this, she went into mourning and began her relentless search for him. She found direction from some children playing by the river, who had seen which mouth of the Nile had carried it out to sea, and thus she tracked the chest to Byblos in Phoenicia. In the meantime, the chest became lodged in an Erica tree, which grew around it, enclosing it so that it could not be seen. The tree bearing the god, was so beautiful and fragrant that the local king and queen felled the tree and made it into a pillar at the palace.

When Isis arrived in Byblos, she disguised herself as a woman veiled and in mourning, and sat quietly at the local well. When the queen's maidens came to the well, she engaged with them, offering to braid their hair. When they returned to the palace, their hair emitted such a wonderful fragrance that the queen sent for Isis, welcomed her into her house and appointed her as the nurse of her child. In time, Isis revealed her true nature and asked that the pillar that held up the roof be given to her. She took it down and, cutting away the wood of the tree, revealed the sarcophagus of Osiris hidden inside. She returned to her land with the sarcophagus.

On her way back, when she arrived at a desert place where she was alone, she opened up the chest and laying her face on the face of her brother, she kissed him and wept...(and) she conceived their child. In time she returned home where she hid the chest enclosing the body of Osiris in the remote marshes of the delta, while she went to Buto to take care of her son, Horus. (Baring and Cashford, pp. 229)



Time passed, until one night Seth was hunting wild boar in the light of the full moon when he discovered the chest hidden among the reeds. He furiously tore the body into fourteen pieces and scattered them up and down the country, each in a different place, and he may even have thrown the phallus of Osiris into the Nile.

Isis, on learning of this new attack, enlisted the help of her sister Nephthys, her son, Anubis, the jackal-god, her own son Horus, the hawk-god, and lastly, Thoth, the moon-god, often depicted as an ibis. Together they managed to find all his parts, except for his phallus, which had been swallowed by a fish. Isis reassembled all his parts as a mummy, and then fanned the dead body with her wings, thus reviving him to become the Ruler of Eternity. The helplessness of Osiris in his dismembered state, and the call of Isis to enliven him with the help of Nephthys, is movingly expressed in the following poem:

Ah Helpless One!
 Ah Helpless One asleep!
 Ah Helpless One in this Place
 which you know not – yet I know it!
 Behold I have found you (lying) on your side-
 the great Listless One.
 ‘Ah, Sister!’ says Isis to Nephthys,
 ‘This is our brother,
 Come let us lift up his head,
 Come, let us (rejoin) his bones,
 Come let us reassemble all his limbs,
 Come, let us put an end to all his woe,
 that, as far as we can help, he will weary no more.
 May the moisture begin to mount for his spirit!
 May the canals be filled through you!
 May the names of the rivers be created through you!
 Osiris, Live!
 Osiris, let the great Listless One arise!
 I am Isis. (Baring and Cashford, pp. 235)

After this resurrection, he sits in the Hall of Two Truths, presiding over the judgement of the souls of the dead, where the heart of the deceased is weighed against the feather of Maat, the goddess of truth and justice. If the heart is found to be as light as a feather, the soul can proceed to eternal life in the presence of Osiris. If the heart is heavier than the feather, the soul is condemned to a second death, one of eternal oblivion, of being forgotten.

As Horus grows up to take his father’s place and to avenge his death, the conflict between Seth and Horus continues, and is known as ‘Contendings of Horus and Seth’.

Their battles took place over three days and three nights, the figure of gestation as the time of the moon’s darkness, which appears in every culture when issues of life and death hang in the balance. Horus finally overcame Seth and gave him in chains to Isis to put to death, but she released him. Horus, enraged with his mother, cut off her head, but Thoth replaced it, with the head of a cow. Seth... then accused Horus of being illegitimate, and the issue between them changed as to which one had the right of inheritance. Formerly inheritance came through the mother, which would have given Seth, as brother to Isis, precedence over Horus; but now, the council ruled, it was to be through the father. Horus was judged the rightful heir, the patrilineal principle was assured and Horus was crowned the new king. The time of confusion was past, and Seth was made to serve the new order: the unregulated, chaotic powers of the universe were now mastered and further, brought into relation with the new order by being required to help sustain it. In the festivals of Osiris along the Nile, Seth was the boat that carried his effigy, just as he carried the sun through the watery abyss of the night. (Baring and Cashford, p. 231-232)



Horus journeyed to the underworld to tell this news to Osiris, to awaken him and ‘set his soul in motion’. He presented him with the eye that was torn out in the struggle, which restored Osiris

to eternal life and became known as the Wedjat-eye, the Eye of eternity, called the 'whole one', which protected against all harm (image right). As Osiris revived, the spirit of life and growth awakened, and the New Year began. (Baring and Cashford, pp. 232)

The mysteries of Osiris were very popular festivals which drew people from all over Egypt to participate in the ritual and was therefore central to the ordering of the culture of the time. These mysteries recounted the life, death, mummification, resurrection, and ascension of Osiris, much like the Christian festivals of today. Dramas were staged with the major roles given to prominent members of the community and the local priests who enacted the story of the Osiris myth. The emergence of the god from the darkness of his temple to participation in the joys of the living symbolized Osiris' return to life from death.

The myth also illustrates the intimate relationship between humans and nature. The cycle of the Nile was timed through observing Sirius, the Dog Star, or Sothis, associated with Isis. By its annual appearance at dawn, i.e. together with the Sun, Sirius heralded the inundation of the Nile. Egyptian farmers divided their year into three seasons, based on the cycles of the Nile River:

- 1) Akhet – the inundation (June- September): The Flooding Season. No farming was done at this time, as all the fields were flooded.
- 2) Peret (October to February): The Growing Season. In October the floodwaters receded, leaving behind a layer of rich, black soil. This fertile soil was then ploughed and seeded.
- 3) Shemu (March – May): The Harvesting Season. The fully grown crops had to be cut down (harvested) and removed before the Nile flooded again.

The Passion Plays were held in the last month of the inundation, coinciding with Spring and taking place at Abydos, which was the traditional place that the body of Osiris drifted ashore after having been drowned in the Nile. The relationship between Isis and Osiris was mirrored in the relationship between the ebb and flow of the Nile.



Pausanias says: 'The Egyptians say that Isis bewails Osiris when the river begins to rise; and when it inundates the fields they say that it is the tears of Isis. She was manifest as the star, Sothis, also called Sirius and the Dog Star, whose rising on the eastern horizon brought Osiris back to life and freed the inundation. The image unites the human and the natural world, for it is Isis's compassion, her continual searching for and then finding Osiris that restores him to

life and swells the waters. According to Plutarch, Sothis in Egyptian signifies 'pregnancy', so Isis is pregnant with the rebirth of Osiris, which is Horus, his son, the New Year: 'Osiris is yesterday; Horus is today.' (Baring and Cashford, pp. 233)

Amplifications of the Myth

The myth embodied some of the most important values of Egyptian culture: harmony, order, eternal life, and gratitude. Set's resentment of Osiris, even before the affair with Nephthys, grew from a lack of gratitude and an envy for someone else's good fortune. In Egypt, ingratitude was a kind of "gateway sin" which opened the individual up to all others. The story dramatically illustrated how even a god could fall prey to ingratitude and the consequences which could follow. Just as importantly, the myth told the story of the victory of order over chaos and the establishment of harmony in the land; a central value of Egyptian culture. (Mark, 2016)

The beauty of this myth, for me, is in the relationship between opposites that is described between Isis and Osiris, which includes the relationship between human and nature. Their bond symbolizes

the natural growth process of life, in which death is a necessary component. When Osiris is the flooding of the Nile, then Isis is the receptive earth, who incubates the grain and births Horus. Thus Osiris is renewed through Isis. Baring and Cashford say:

'The phases in the life of the corn were also understood as the god in the grain dying and coming to life again. When the first ears of corn were cut, there was weeping and wailing, as though the body of the god in the corn were being dismembered, and the reapers invoked Isis to lament with them. For as the oxen threshed the barley, so Osiris was 'beaten' by Seth, 'hacked to pieces'. "The death of the grain and the death of the god were one and the same: the cereal was identified with the god who came from heaven; he was the bread by which man lives. The resurrection of the God symbolized the rebirth of the grain." This overt relationship between the fertility of the soil and the god's death and rebirth was most potently demonstrated in artifacts known as "Osiris Beds": stone or wood constructs in the form of Osiris, which were filled with soil, sown with seed, and (in many cases) wrapped as mummies. The germinating seed symbolized Osiris rising from the dead.' (Baring and Cashford, 1991, pp. 238)

The mourning and searching of Isis is also likened to the phases of the moon. Osiris was aged 28 when he was killed by Seth, and the fourteen parts into which he was later dismembered refers to the days of the waning of the moon from full moon to the new moon. Another cosmic connection to the myth, is the star Orion, identified as Osiris, who is faithfully being tracked by Isis as the star Sothis. 'On a Ptolemaic text Isis addresses Osiris: 'Thy sacred image, Orion in heaven, rises and sets every day; I am Sothis following after him, and I will not forsake him.' (Baring and Cashford, 1991, pp. 239)



In this myth, Isis is the mediator, and she plays an active role in the grieving and searching for her lost love. But at the same time, she also keeps the scales in balance: when Horus is winning, she assists Seth. In this way she allows for a creative equilibrium between opposites, she 'reconciles the opposites without dissolving their opposition.' (Baring and Cashford, 1991, pp. 232)



The character of Isis is very complex, and she takes on many different guises. In this myth, Nephtys is her partner in the seeking, finding and resurrection of Osiris. 'Symbolically, Isis is the dawn and Nephtys is the dark moon, or in a solar image, Isis is the dawn and Nephtys is the twilight, or Isis is the morning star and Nephtys is the evening star; or more widely, in Plutarch's terms, Isis is the visible part of the world and Nephtys is the invisible. Together they form a completeness, complementing the duality of Osiris and Seth, their brother-husbands.' (Baring and Cashford, p. 236)

Psychologically speaking, we can say that Seth is the shadow of Osiris. Where Osiris stands for moisture, the Nile and the life-force, Seth is the dryness of the desert, the harshness of the sun, the destructiveness of the storm, and is a death-bringer. But he is not only evil, but a necessary opposite that has a role in life, as death is an essential part of the cycle of life in bringing transformation and renewal.

'He is the shadow of Osiris, who can be helpful when recognized. At first, Osiris did not know his brother's nature and fell into his trap. When Horus revived Osiris by offering him the eye, he gave him the power of knowing Seth and so creating a right relation to him. When he carries the coffin of Osiris and bears the boat of the sun god, Ra, he is an image transformed

through awareness, a model of how to relate to whatever is antagonistic in life.’ (Baring and Cashford, 1991, pp. 239)



The myth culminates in the raising of the Djed pillar (image left), which symbolizes the birth of Horus as the new Osiris, and is seen in the new growth of the grain. It also refers back to the very beginning of the world, when Atum arose from the waters of Nun, even as the sun rises daily out of night. This brings us back to Jung’s striking image in his childhood dream, that of the ritual phallus on his throne, patiently awaiting rebirth. Jung said in his MDR: ‘My whole being was seeking for something still unknown which might confer meaning upon the banality of life.’

This search took him to his commitment to a direct encounter with his psyche, and his life was reshaped by the heat of the fires of that encounter, ‘the prima materia for a lifetime of work’. (Jung, 1983, pp. 225). Jung’s journey began with reflections on what was the prevailing myth of his time. He thought that today’s myth was the Christian myth, but did not feel that he himself was living in it. He thought that we no longer had a myth. Then the question came: ‘But then what is your myth – the myth in which you live?’ From this confrontation his personal myth emerged: the mystery of transformation, which is at the core of the human psyche, as it is at the core of every living thing and the universe. He eventually found the historical counterpart of his myth in alchemy, which has at its heart the spirit Mercurius, ‘the chthonic spirit’, the central spirit of transformation in alchemy. Through his own experience he realized that growth and renewal takes place through a sacrifice of the old ego, with its one-sided perspective, to give birth to a new ego that is capable of holding and acknowledging two viewpoints, Eros and Logos, Moon and Sun.



Description of the Duat, Egyptian underworld

I will share some of the main features of the journey through the Duat, the Egyptian underworld, as described by Wim van den Dungen <http://www.sofiatopia.org/maat/amduat.htm>:

The Duat is the inner (dream) world, existing in parallel with the Earth and with the skies. It exists before life and after death. This realm is entered by everybody during the hours of sleep and at death. It is the home of the deities and the spirits of the ancestors in the retinue of Osiris. The underworld is divided into twelve hours of the night, each representing different allies and enemies for the Pharaoh/sun god to encounter. The main purpose of the *Amduat* (Book of what is in the Duat) is to give the names of these gods and monsters to the spirit of the dead Pharaoh, so he can call upon them for help or use their name to defeat them. Repeatedly, the *Amduat* states: "It is good for the dead to have this knowledge, but also for a person on Earth; a remedy - a million times proven!"



At dusk (West), the principle of movement (Ba) of the old Re is exhausted and needs to be replenished by merging with the body of Osiris in the Duat. The Ba of Re (note the red sun in the image of Nut on the left) is "swallowed" by Nut, the star-goddess whose body appears at Sunset. The "unseen" path of Re is associated with the Duat, the "underworld", starting at six pm and ending at six am. The sun renews itself by dissolving into its first matter of nothingness, and regenerating from there.

Von Franz translates this into psychological language: “Go back to the original human being within you ... and link up with the origin of your consciousness.” (Von Franz, 1980, pp.89)

Conclusion

When I reflect on Jung's journey, as recorded in 'The Red Book', I am struck by the similarities between this myth, and Jung's process. The myth of Isis and Osiris offers a map of the path of individuation and the challenges that this path holds, which is to maintain a creative relationship with the other side of being, and to keep the balance and harmony between two perspectives. In the battles between Horus and Seth, the eye is wounded. During this underworld journey, much of the focus is the restoration of both eyes, so that balance is restored. Similarly, in Jung's process, he reflects on the one-sidedness of the God he grew up with:

'The one eye of the Godhead is blind, the one ear of the Godhead is deaf, the order of its being is crossed by chaos. So be patient with the crippledness of the world and do not overvalue its beauty.' (Jung, 2009, pp. 231)

A few pages later, he is compelled by a shadow figure to kill his hero, Siegfried. This was followed by a desperate depression. When he reflected on this episode, he concluded that the hero has become too one-sided, too rational, and has outlived its usefulness. He says:

Everything that becomes too old becomes evil, the same is true of your highest. Learn from the suffering of the crucified God that one can also betray and crucify a God, namely the God of the old year. If a god ceases being the way of life, he must fall secretly. The God becomes sick if he oversteps the height of the zenith. That is why the spirit of the depths took me when the spirit of the time had led me to the summit.

When my prince had fallen, the spirit of the depths opened my vision and let me become aware of the birth of the new God. I understood that the new God would be in the relative. How can man live in the womb of the God if the Godhead himself attends only to one-half of him? (Jung, 2009)

It is a painful thing to have one's one-sided viewpoint challenged, but relatedness is only possible if we can integrate two points of view, the viewpoint of the Sun (Logos), and the viewpoint of the Moon (Eros), and hold these in a creative, dynamic balance. The result is a flexible ego that can hold through the storms of life, through acceptance of our destiny as transient and changing beings.

Bibliography

- Baring, A., & Cashford, J. (1991). *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image* New York: Viking Arcana.
- Jung, C.G. (2009). *The Red Book*. Philemon Foundation and W. W. Norton and Co.
- Jung, C.G. (1970). *Civilization in Transition*. CWV 10. Princeton University Press.
- Jung, C. G. (1983). *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. London: Fontana Paperbacks.
- Mark, J. J. (2016). *Ancient History Encyclopedia*.
- Van Den Dungen, W. (2004 – 2013). *The Book of: The Hidden Chamber ca. 1426 BCE*.
- Von Franz, M. L. (1980). *Alchemy: An introduction to the Symbolism and the Psychology*. Toronto: Inner City Books.
- Wehr, G. (2001). *Jung: A Biography* (D. M. Weeks, Trans.): Shambala.