



Awakening Osiris: A New Translation of the Egyptian Book of the Dead

By Normandi Ellis

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Awakening Osiris: A New Translation of the Egyptian Book of the Dead By Normandi Ellis

Osiris, the god of the dead, is an image of renewal, a seed waiting to erupt into life. His death at the hands of his brother, Set, the god of destruction---who hacked him into 14 pieces---and his regeneration through the hands of his wife, the goddess Isis, illuminates the spiritual path from unconsciousness to enlightenment. In psychological terms, Osiris represents the recollection of the diverse aspects of oneself into a unified whole. These issues are as pertinent today as they were when these texts were compiled millennia ago from pyramid walls and coffin inscriptions. The "Book of Coming Forth by Day," as it was called in ancient Egypt, is lovingly re-rendered here by Normandi Ellis in her celebrated 1988 translation of a work that took over 4,000 years to evolve. This is a beautifully poetic tome extrapolated from hieroglyphics--the translator attempts to revive the sense of literature and song lost in literal translations and through devolution to phonetic hieratics (simplified hieroglyphs that represent sound units). Words such as these melt time, "Mine is a heart of carnelian, crimson as murder on a holy day--I am I. I will what I will. Mine is a heart of carnelian, blood red as the crest of a phoenix." --P. Randall Cohan is one of the oldest and greatest classics of Western spirituality. Until now the available translations have treated these writings as historical curiosities with little relevance to our contemporary situation. This new translation made from the hieroglyphs approaches this text as a profound spiritual document capable of speaking to us today.

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