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Some Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Social Life from the Study of the Principal Love Poem's Ostraca from Deir al-Medina

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Introduction

A considerable amount of literary ostraca were found during excavations at Deir al-Medina, the village known as the home of the royal necropolis workmen.¹ Deir al-Medina was functional from the moment the first royal tomb was begun in the Valley of the Kings under Thutmose I. The workmen and their families lived and died there, within a 7,500 m² settlement. The bulk of our evidence stems from the Ramesside period, but this does not necessarily mean that the place was less functional during the first two hundred years of its history.² The male inhabitants, who worked for ten days at a time in the necropolis on the other side of the mountain, spent the nights at an encampment overlooking the Valley of the Kings, producing tombs and funerary equipment for themselves and their colleagues during their time off work in the royal cemetery.³ The result of their work is of a most unusual dynamic character, charming and vigorous, relevant to their social superiority and high literacy rate relative to other social classes. By the reign of Thutmose IV the community was firmly established, though it is known that it reached its maximum activity peak under the Ramesside kings of the Nineteenth Dynasty. The decline of that community was already marked during the reign of Ramesses IX, due not only to the general decline of the state, but also to hostile marauding desert nomads. After the reign of Ramesses XI, at the end of the Twentieth Dynasty, most tombs were plundered and the habitation was abandoned.⁴

The whole corpus of the Egyptian love lyrics dates back from the early Nineteenth to the late Twentieth Dynasty (*terminus post quem* ca.1300 BCE), and the bibliographical references pertaining thereto are relatively rich.⁵ The love poems of ancient Egypt are a source of information concerning the relations between the sexes in antiquity, the customs appertaining to a highly-civilized society. But most important of all, they prove unequivocally the true love of the ancient Nile dwellers for life and its *plaisirs mondains*. This fact pushed them to immortalize inside their tombs liturgical scenes of daily life and love in its official familial context. The fact that most of

the love poems were found in Deir al-Medina seems significant enough, both for their dating and for the social context of their conception as well.

The love poetry of ancient Egypt could be considered as an oral reflection of those very scenes that exalt the family and the beauty of both sexes, “*r dt hn^c nh^h.*” Some of their main themes are truly universal in content;⁶ modesty versus desire, love versus detestation (cf. the ancient Hellenic *Paraklausithyra*), passion versus indifference, affection/tenderness of the brother (= male lover) for his sister (= innamorata), high society life and love of nature (cf. *Canticum Canticorum* of the Old Testament).⁷ But it must be noted that their conception and style are original, hence making these poems a purely literary genre of their own.⁸

Studying the Fragmentary Poems

A study of O. DeM 1266

This ostrakon, which is closely related to O. CG 25218 of the Cairo Museum, before it was broken, was inscribed with a large collection of poems. Three fragments of it have been known since 1897 (= O. CG 25218); 28 more fragments were found in the excavations at Deir al-Medina during 1949–1951. The 31 pieces have been published by Posener.⁹ The ostrakon is still far from complete, hence most of the poems present us with lengthy lacunae. These poems have been translated for the first time into Modern Greek from the original hieroglyphic transcription¹⁰ and are the following: 1. XX (O. DeM 1266, ll. 7–11); 2. XXI (O. DeM 1266, ll. 11–13); 3. XXII (O. DeM 1266, ll. 13–14); 4. XXIII (O. DeM 1266, ll. 15–16); 5. XXIV (O. DeM 1266, ll. 16–18); 6. XXV (O. DeM 1266, ll. 18–19); 7. XXVI (O. DeM 1266, ll. 19–20); 8. XXVII (O. DeM 1266, l. 21); 9. XLVIII (O. DeM 1266, ll. 1–3); 10. XLIX (O. DeM 1266, ll. 3–6); 11. L (O. DeM 1266, ll. 21–22); 12. LI (O. DeM 1266, ll. 22–24); and 13. LII (O. DeM 1266, ll. 24–28).

In the first poem, we read about the pleasures of a lady swimming in the river, wearing a sensual bathing-dress, while the man’s love for her is evoked by means of a metaphor; she holds a small red fish (*w3d dšr*) in her fingers, which alludes to the heart of the young man, enraptured by love. Possibly this might also denote a latent erotic connotation. The fine royal linen (*šs nsw*) is also referred to with admiration.

In the second poem, the young lover feels so powerful—because of his dulcinée—that he considers the crocodiles which here seem to be the personification of primeval chaotic evil forces (*hnty*), to be like tiny mice (*pnw*), incapable of harming him.

These thoughts continue in the third poem of this group, in which the love of the woman is compared to a magical spell cast in the water (*hsy mw*), in order to protect him from danger. It is known that the ancient Egyptians considered magic as a vital part of their own lives,¹¹ paying homage to the interwoven forces of nature. In Deir al-Medina several magic spells and tools were found¹² reinforcing this opinion.

The heart of the young man rejoices when he finally embraces his beloved, an event which takes place in the fourth poem of the cycle, so sensually that he feels like an inhabitant of the exotic land (*pwnt*), intoxicated by love.

In the fifth poem, which is the final of this thematology, the lover orders a servant to prepare the nuptial bed, using simple sheets instead of royal-linen ones; he also proposes perfect-linen or byssus garments (*p3kt, ššr-nsw*), in order that his bride may be dressed properly. Scented oils and aromatic perfumes were also to be used for the sensual excitement of the alluded marriage.

A new thematic cycle seems to begin from the sixth poem onwards. Here, paronomastic means are used, evoking mental transformations and cross-dressing of the lover, in order to meet his beloved; in this poem he disguises himself as a Nubian maid (*nhsy*), following after her to

serve her. The imagination in this poem reaches its peak when the young man fetches his girlfriend mandragora fruits (*rrmt*), and stares at her charming nudity. *Mandragora officinarum* L., besides its magical properties as an herb, was considered to also be a strong aphrodisiac.¹³ The secret of the art of ancient Egyptian love poetry is the fact that the sensual and the erotic are at the same time, presented as being so innocent and natural.

In the seventh poem, where the paronomastic transformations continue to be the main descriptive *leit-motiv*, the young lad is disguised as a maid-servant willing to wash the dresses of the young woman. Thus, by cleansing the moringa oil (*b3k*, which comes from the herbal species *moringa pterygosperma*) from her diaphanous garment, he feels as if he could touch her body. Here, also the dreaming and the magic of transformation becomes evident, and is what makes the young man approach his beloved in real life.

In the eighth poem, which is the final one of this second thematological group, the man is transformed into the signet ring (*htm*) of his beloved. As such he feels himself to be the guardian of her fine fingers, which touch her face, and as a result he finally manages to capture her heart.

The ninth poem is the first of O. DeM 1266. Here, sensuality and lyrics are amalgamated in an alloy of expressive simplicity to exalt the love desire. The woman is thinking of the pleasures of love and of the sexual delights of her friend. She is lonely late at night and thinks of her beloved man in a way reminiscent of a certain Sapphic fragment.¹⁴

In the tenth poem, we face one of the most exquisite masterpieces of ancient Egyptian love poetry. This, although presenting us with several *lacunae*, just like the previous one, reminds us of the characteristic ancient Oriental parallelism of members. In its stanzas the woman expresses her aptitude in love and the esteem in which she holds her man by comparing her feelings to various erotic symbols such as fine linen, incense, mandragora, dates, and intoxicating beer. She is sure that she will stay in the presence of her husband till the end of her life, not only as a wife but as a faithful handmaiden.

In the eleventh poem, which in the original text of O. DeM 1266 follows poem XXVII, a clever literary scheme is used in order to express the beauty of the young woman; the land of Isy (*t3 n isy*)—presumably Cyprus—which was rich in copper mines—rejoices because its copper ore, used as a mirror, reflects the beautiful countenance of the beloved lady every morning.

In the twelfth poem, the natural beauty of flowers, leaves, and trees is compared to the prettiness of the desired woman. The latent pagan symbolism of this poem is not only sensual but at the same time metaphysical. The floral wreaths (*m3hw*), evoked in l. 22 are reminiscent of the verdancy of Osirian attributes; hence of the Egyptians' belief in resurrection and eternal life. Thus, eternal life and eternal love are successfully intermingled. It is to be noted that the reference to the land of the Hittites (*ht3*) hints at a late New Kingdom origin of the poems under study.

Finally, in the thirteenth poem, which has some lacunae, a male deity without name (followed by Gardiner's determinative G7), is evoked by the lover in order to help him approach his lady-love. Unlike the female deity who is usually invoked, usually Hathor—the cosmic goddess of love and music—in other love poems (cf. P. Harris 500 r, P. Chester Beatty I v + r, *passim*), this male demigod might presumably be the deified prince Mehy, the name of whom is found in some other love poems (cf. below). This poem is also highly metaphysical in conception, and proves the deep religious feelings of ancient Egyptians, who even connected their love affairs with their deities.

A study of O. DeM 1078 (r + v) and O. DeM 1079

These poems have been published by Posener,¹⁵ Černý, and Gardiner,¹⁶ respectively. They have been translated for the first time into Modern Greek from the hieroglyphic transcription¹⁷ and

are the following: 1. LV (O. DeM 1078 r); 2. LVI (O. DeM 1078 v); and 3. LVII (O. DeM 1079).

In the first poem, the young man, using interesting literary schemes, begs the woman not to repel his love. Here, the vigorous horse of the young man seems untamed against her irresistible love.

In the second poem, intoxication is mentioned, and indirectly, the story of the *Shipwrecked Sailor*. The golden islet found before the dreamland of drunkenness, where the loved one has fled or has been mentally transported, evokes this story. Furthermore, it is to be noted that the demigod of love, Prince Mehy (*mhy*), is explicitly mentioned here. His name is written inside a cartouche with the kingship/divinity taxogram (Gardiner's G7),¹⁸ which may be a proof of his deification. The young man invokes the deity to help him meet his inamorata.

Finally, in the fragmentary third poem, the previous issues (i.e. intoxication through love and drinks) are reprised. This time on the part of the young woman, who praises the deity, hoping that he will help her to find her true peer in love.

Relationship of the Poems to Theban Tomb Paintings

Although it would be more convenient to relate and compare the scenes described in the above poems with the scenes from some ostraca and graffiti and/or wall paintings in the houses of the workforce at Deir al-Medina (which sometimes seem to be sensual and erotic), it would also be interesting to restrict the comparisons only to private nobles' tombs of the broader area around Sheikh Abd al-Qurna, al-Khokha and the Asassif, and of course Deir al-Medina. The reasons for this choice are twofold: First, although the popularity of love songs was presumably great among the educated workforce of the royal necropolis, and although it might be that some of the author(s) could probably belong to this group, the social milieu described in those poems is mainly concerned with the higher classes of ancient Egyptian society,¹⁹ thus it would be just to limit our study to nobles' tombs; on the other hand, these poems were possibly written by nobles. A rather plausible hypothesis would be to assume that some of the writers were women, in particular because there are several instances where the speaker is the beloved or "sister" (*snt*) (cf. O. DeM 1266, P. Chester Beatty I v, P. Harris 500 r, and c.), and the style of expression, as well as the psychology, seems to be female. Wouldn't it be plausible to assume a possible conception of (some of) these poems by one or more relatively wealthy and prominent inhabitants of Deir al-Medina, who were dreaming of an even richer life and of courtesan love, following the ideals of nobility? In that case the love poems might echo the inner ambitions of their writer(s), or reflect what might be considered as a popular—although precious—love literature, intended to be used as a substitute for love by young women and men who were expecting to find their significant others. Second, the



Fig. 1: A typical banqueting scene (detail) from the tomb of an Egyptian noble (TT 146). Nebamun is seated embraced by his wife, enjoying the elation of music, friends, and dancers. Part of a greater plaster painted synthesis of the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1430 BCE), from the British Museum (EA 37984). ©1992, Author's private collection and British Museum

nobles' tombs paintings present us not only with the official aspects of the ancient Egyptian concepts of love, matrimony, and sensual pleasures; but in addition they could be used as a basis for comparison with the thematology of love poems, because it is evident that the basic exalted "unit of love" in them was the couple, the fundamental cell of the Egyptian society in its familial context.

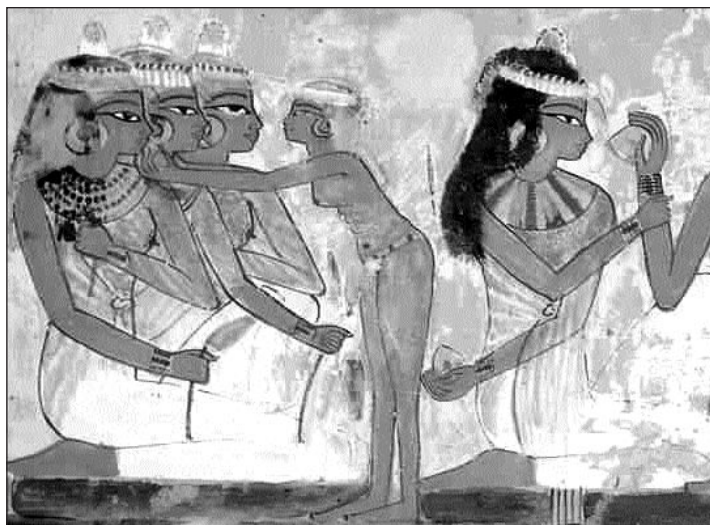
Concerning the related scenes from ostraca,²⁰ wall paintings, and graffiti, Manniche presents us with some interesting paradigms²¹; thus poem XX could be compared to illustrations 68 and 54; poems XXI and XXII could be compared to illustration 54; poem XXV could be compared to illustration 69; finally, poem LI could be easily compared to illustration 6.²²

The royal and private monuments at Thebes West have been extensively studied.²³ In this section, a selection of private monuments is briefly dealt with, including family banqueting scenes, in order to present some preliminary conclusions.

It seems highly probable that the central axis of ancient Egyptian love poetry was the concept of love inside matrimony. It might be (cf. for instance P. Chester Beatty I v) that love, according to ancient Egyptian ethics, was ideally meant to be enjoyed within the boundaries of family life, as is presently the general rule in Middle Eastern countries. Even the cult of Netherworld divinities, like Anubis, Osiris, and Hathor, was performed with the participation of both members of noble couples. TT 1, of Sennedjem (*sn-ndm*), Servant in the Place of Truth, during the Nineteenth Dynasty, and TT 217, that of Ipuy (*ipwy*), the Sculptor, which dates from the same period, present us with superb paintings, illustrating the deceased persons with their families adoring the gods of the Netherworld.

Banqueting scenes (see figs. 1-2) are abundant and symbolize the unity of the couple's love inside the family environment, even in the presence of relatives and friends. Such exquisitely-painted scenes are found in the following tombs; TT 38, that of Djoserkaresoneb (*djsr-k3-r-r-snb*), Grain Counter in the Granary of Offerings of Amun (*temp.* Thutmose IV); TT 52, that of Nakht (*nhjt*), Priest-Astronomer of Amun (*temp.* Thutmose IV?), which is one of the most beautiful tombs there; TT 55, that of Ramose (*r-r-msi*), the Vizier and Governor of the Town (*temp.* Akhenaten); TT 56, that of Userhet (*wsr-h3t*), the Royal Scribe and Child of the Royal Nursery (*temp.* Amenhotep II); TT 69, that of Menna (*mnn3*), Scribe of the Royal Fields (*temp.* Thutmose IV?); TT 78, that of Horemheb (*hr-m-hb*), the Scribe of the Recruits (*temp.* Thutmose III to Amenhotep III); TT 81, that

Fig. 2: A typical banqueting scene (detail) from the tomb of Nakht, priest-astronomer of Amun (TT 52, c. 1400 BCE, Valley of the Nobles, Thebes West), depicting noble ladies (seated) assisted by a maid-servant (standing). They bear aromatic cones of myrrh fixed on their wigs, and they are smelling flowers of lotus and mandragora. ©1996, Author's private collection



of Ineni (*inn.i*), Overseer of the Granary of Amun (*temp.* Amenhotep I to Thutmose III); TT 96, that of Sennefer (*sn-nfr*), Mayor of the Southern City and Overseer of the Granary (*temp.* Amenhotep II), where the couple Sennefer and Meryt (*mryt*) are illustrated together in official but sensual and pleasing scenes, as a family of typical Egyptian nobles, while the wife in one scene is depicted offering flowers to her deceased husband; TT 100, that of Rekhmire (*rh-mi-rꜥ*), the Vizier and Governor of Thebes (*temp.* Thutmose III); TT 181, that of Nebamun (*nb-ymn*) and Ipuky (*ipwky*) the Sculptors (*temp.* Amenhotep III and Akhenaten).

Tree-goddesses scenes, showing the refreshing and blessing of the couples under the branches of the magical trees at “*šyt-i3rw*” are encountered, among others, in the following tombs; TT 23, that of Thay (*t3y*), the Royal Scribe of Pharaoh’s Dispatches (*temp.* Merenptah); TT 49, that of Neferhotep (*nfr-htp*), the Chief Scribe of Amun (*temp.* Ay); TT 51, that of Userhet, called Neferhebef (*nfr-hb.f*), First Prophet of the Royal Ka (*k3*) of Thutmose I (*temp.* Sety I); TT 96, that of Sennefer, already mentioned above, etc. These scenes, closely related to love and nature, could be compared to love poem LI, examined above, as well as to other similar poems coming from the rest of the sources (cf. P. Turin 1966, P. Harris 500 r, and c).

Epilogue and Conclusions

From all the above, it seems that the love poems from Deir al-Medina examined here present us with high standards of lyric conceptions and sensual/metaphysical symbolism, based on the principle of beauty out of simplicity. They are as magically luminous as are the tiny golden stars depicted on the lids of the MK coffins and the roofs of the NK tombs.²⁴ Golden, shining, and bright, like the heraldic color of Hathor, the Golden One (*nbwyt*), they emphasize the ancient Egyptians’ enjoyment of life and love. They are also consistently faithful testimonials to the relatively high position that women were enjoying in Egyptian society during Pharaonic times.²⁵

The extant love songs of ancient Egypt seem closely related to several paintings in the Theban nobles’ necropolis of the NK, exalting love and family life. They echo the Egyptians’ feelings towards love, as well as their urge to attain the bliss of a happy matrimonial life. Many of these paintings constitute the plastic expressions of some of the scenes and ideas described in the love poems. A broader and deeper study of these paintings and their comparison to love poems has to be undertaken in the future, for this topic seems particularly interesting. Egyptians of antiquity, living in their *m3ꜥt*-preserving society, overshadowed the realm of death by the imperium of love, and by their irresistible quest and desire for a pleasant life. They attained it not only by religion and magic, but also through the concept of love/*mrwt*.

Notes:

- 1 For the excavations, see E. Schiaparelli, *Relazione sui lavori della missione archeologica italiana in Egitto*, II, (Torino, 1927); see also B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Médineh I–XVII*, (Le Caire, 1924–53).
- 2 L. Manniche, *City of the Dead: Thebes in Egypt*, (London, 1987a), 79 ff. For Deir al-Medina, see also A. G. MacDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs*, (Oxford, 1999), 4–8 and passim.
- 3 For the royal workers at that site, see J. Romer, *Ancient Lives: The Story of the Pharaoh's Tombmakers*, (London, 1984), and D. Valbelle: *Les ouvriers de la tombe: Deir el-Médineh à l'époque ramesside*, (Le Caire, 1985). See also M. Bierbrier, *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs*, (London, 1982), and C. A. Keller, "Royal Painters: Deir al-Medina in Dynasty Nineteen," in E. Bleiberg and R. Freed, eds., *Fragments of a Shattered Visage*, (Monographs of the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology I; Memphis, 1991), 50–86.
- 4 For a general history of the site, see N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, (Oxford, 1992), 277–87.
- 5 See for instance W. Wrezinski, *Von Altägyptischen Lyrik*, (Grenzland, 1922); "Liebeslieder," in W. Helck et al., eds., *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* III, (Wiesbaden, 1980), cols. 1048–52; M. V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs*, (Madison, 1985); S. Schott, *Les chants d'amour de l'Égypte Ancienne*, (Paris, 1992); A.–A. Maravelia, *The Love Poems of Ancient Egypt*, (Athens, 2001); B. Mathieu, *La poésie amoureuse de l'Égypte ancienne: Recherches sur un genre littéraire au Nouvel Empire*, (IFAO Bibliothèque d'Étude 115; Paris, 1996), and references therein.
- 6 For translations of these poems with short commentaries, see Schott, *Les chants d'amour*, (Paris, 1992), 1–88; P. Vernus, *Chants d'amour de l'Égypte Antique*, (Paris, 1992), 7–95; W. K. Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Stories, Instructions and Poetry*, (New Haven, 1973), 296–326; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, II, (Berkeley, 1976), 179–93.
- 7 For the relations between the Egyptian love poems and *Canticum Canticorum*, see J. B. White, *A Study of the Language of Love in the Song of Songs and Ancient Egyptian Poetry*, (Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series, 38; Missoula, 1978).
- 8 For a general discussion see A. Hermann, *Altägyptischen Liebesdichtung*, (Wiesbaden, 1959); for the originality of Egyptian love lyrics, see Mathieu, *La poésie amoureuse*, 151–9, 243–8.
- 9 G. Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques, littéraires de Deir el-Médineh, nn. 1227–1266, II³*, (IFAO; Le Caire, 1972), 43–4, pls. 74–9.
- 10 Maravelia, *The Love Poems*, 78–89, 140–6.
- 11 G. Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, (London, 1994). See also R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, (Oriental Institute, SAOC, 54; Chicago, 1993).
- 12 See for instance MacDowell, *Village Life*, 32–3, 115–7. For the love charm mentioned in pp. 32–3, see also P. C. Smither, "A Ramesside Love-Charm", *JEA* 27, (1941), 131–2. See also J.-F. Borghouts, "Magical Practices among the Villagers," in L. H. Lesko, ed., *Pharaoh's Workers: The Villagers of Deir el-Medineh*, (Ithaca and London, 1994), 119–30.
- 13 See for example P. Derchain, "Le lotus, la mandragore et le perséa", *CdE* L/99, (1975), 65–86.
- 14 A.–A. Maravelia, "Sappho's Poetry and Ancient Egyptian Love Poems: A Field of Comparative Interpretation, 1," in D. Kalamakis, K. Manafis, and P. Vlachos, eds., *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of the F.I.E.C.* I, (Athens, 2001), 527–38 (mainly § II.2). See also the completion of this study: A.–A. Maravelia, "Sappho's Poetry and Ancient Egyptian Love Poems: A Field of Comparative Interpretation, 2," in B. I. Werbart, ed., *Cultural Interactions in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age (3000–500 BCE). Papers from a Session held at the European Association of Archaeologists 6th Annual Meeting in Lisbon 2000*, (Oxford 2001), 67–84 (mainly p. 77).
- 15 G. Posener, *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques, littéraires de Deir el-Médineh, nn. 1001–1108, I1*, (IFAO; Le Caire, 1938), 20 ff, pl. 44.

- 16 J. Černý, and A. H Gardiner, *Hieratic Ostraca I*, (Oxford, 1957), 13, pl. XLIII.
- 17 Maravelia, *The Love Poems*, 150–3.
- 18 A. H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, (Oxford, 1988), 32 (fn. 1), 468.
- 19 P. Vernus, *Chants d'amour*, 19, 31.
- 20 For painted ostraca with similar scenes, see J. Vandier d'Abbadie, *Catalogue des Ostraca Figurés de Deir 'el-Medineh (nn. 2256–2722)*, (Le Caire, 1937), and E. Brunner–Traut, *Die Altägyptischen Scherbenbilder (Bildostraka) der Deutschen Museen und Sammlungen*, (Wiesbaden, 1956).
- 21 L. Manniche, *Sexual Life in Ancient Egypt*, (London, 1987b), 88, 63, 89, 16, respectively.
- 22 Maravelia, *The Love Poems*, 56–7, 78–9, 84–5, 144–5, respectively.
- 23 B. Porter and R.L.B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings: I: The Theban Necropolis Part 1: Private Tombs; Part 2: Royal Tombs and Smaller Cemeteries*, (Oxford, 1960–64).
- 24 O. Neugebauer and R. A. Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts, I: The Early Decans; II: The Ramesside Star Clocks; III: Decans, Planets, Constellations and Zodiacs; Plates*, (Brown University; Providence RI, 1960–69) [= *EAT*]. See especially *EAT*, I, 4–21, pls. 4–23.
- 25 The prominent appearances of women on monuments and literature, as well as their relative freedom and virtual social potential, which were distinctly higher in the ancient Egyptian society than in other contemporary ones, must not be falsely perceived. The gender distinctions existed as a characteristic of the Egyptian social structure, and the women's position was overall lesser than that of men. For the status of women in ancient Egypt, see: AMORC, *Women of the Nile*, (San Jose CA, 1999); A. C. Capel and G. Markoe, eds., *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*, (New York, 1996); C. Desroches–Noblecourt, *La femme au temps des pharaons*, (Paris 1986); B. Lesko, *The Remarkable Women of Ancient Egypt*, (Berkeley 1978); G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, (London, 1993); A. I. Sadek, "Aperçu général sur la femme dans l'Égypte ancienne," *Le Monde Copte* 16, 1989, 3–20; B. Watterson, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, (New York, 1991). For the latest periods see J. Rowlandson, *Women and Society in Greek and Roman Egypt: A Sourcebook*, (Cambridge, 1998).