2 Women in Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature

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This chapter presents a study of women in Ancient Egypt, and will concentrate on data provided by a discrete group of documents, known to modern scholars as Wisdom, or Didactic Literature, and to the Egyptians as Instructions. The chapter will deal only with the Pharaonic period (2900–332 BC), as changed attitudes towards women emerge with the Graeco-Roman period, as do new problems regarding the analysis of source material.

Table 2.1 Period demarcations (Hornung (1982), p. 261)

Date	Chronological divisions	Dynasties
c.2900–2628	Archaic	I and II
c.2628–2134	Old Kingdom	III–VIII
c.2134–2040	First Intermediate Period	IX–XI
c.2040–1650	Middle Kingdom	XI–XIV
c.1650–1551	Second Intermediate Period	XV and XVI Hyksos
1551–1070	New Kingdom	XVII–XX
1070–664	Third Intermediate Period	XXI–XXV
664–332	Late Period	XXVI–XXX
332 BC–AD 395	Graeco-Roman Period	

PROBLEMS OF SOURCES: WOMEN, THE SILENT SEX

Unlike the case for men, no vernacular treatise on women – guidelines as to how they should behave or their accepted place in society – survives in the body of ancient Wisdom literature. Also, there are no autobiographies by women in the Pharaonic period. The first examples derive from the Graeco-Roman period and fall outside the chronological scope of this paper. There are no examples of Didactic literature for or by women. Thus, we do not know what was expected of women, nor what rites of passage, if any, were undergone, or the major landmarks in their careers as wives and mothers. References to women within the Wisdom texts are incidental, often laconic and enigmatic. Their history has instead to be constructed from data contained within the entire cultural assemblage currently available to Egyptologists: wills and testaments; transmission deeds; depositions; depictions in temple reliefs; tomb murals, and statuary.

In spite of the variety of material, the overall picture is far from complete, and at times appears contradictory. For example, administrative documents such as those listed above show that women had a degree of economic independence and could initiate unilateral action to administer, distribute, defend, or increase their personal property.[1] On the other hand, Didactic literature, which was written by men, for men, implies dependence on the part of the females and reduces women to ancillary actors in the advancement of the male career.

A further problem is the variable survival rate of the material: one locale, genre, or era may be over-represented in the historical record because of the fortuitous survival of artifacts and texts. A notable example is Deir el-Medina, the village that housed the artisans that worked on the royal tombs at Thebes.[2] Its preservation under desert sand has offered archaeologists a rare opportunity to study an entire village and its associated archives. However, the specialised skills of the inhabitants and their unique relationship with the Crown urges caution when generalising about village life throughout Egypt. The variable survival rate of the texts means that in order to have sufficient data to study, it is necessary to consider material from a large chronological span. This carries a number of hazards. No society, no matter how conservative, remains entirely static, and comparisons of texts separated by millennia must be treated with extreme caution even if seeming to treat the same subject. Identification of trends is fraught with difficulty, and even when patterns in the material may be tentatively discerned, they are at times in turn contradicted by evidence from other archaeological and historical sources.

Additionally, analysis of textual material is often hampered by our, as yet, limited knowledge of the language. Even where translations are possible, there are still instances where the sense of the passage remains obscure. We are equally hampered by our Christian concepts of morals and theology, and the acceptance of state interference in our lives – concepts and interference which did not pertain in ancient Egyptian society where, for example, marriage was effected simply by the start of cohabitation, without religious ceremony or involvement of secular authority.[3] Moreover, and paradoxically, the very popularity of the Instructions has led to a number of problems for the modern scholar. The texts were copied over and over again, being used in scribal schools to develop literary skills as well as to promote the philosophy contained within. Large numbers of ostraca survive inscribed with school exercises which are by their very nature incomplete and distorted.[4] Most of the 'complete' texts that survive are later copies and have suffered in the course of transmission. Often textual corruptions appear to be due to incomprehension on the part of the copyist, but recognition of this fact is not necessarily of help to the modern scholar. With these problems and lacunae in mind, however, it remains the case that we can say something, however, tentatively, about women in ancient Egyptian society. We shall start by reading between the lines of the Didactic Literature.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF THE DIDACTIC LITERATURE

The writers of Didactic Literature naturally took it for granted that the readers of the Instructions would be conversant with the basic assumptions and mores of Egyptian society. Those that are relevant to this study are summarised below.

The Egyptians perceived the state, nature and religion as being completely intertwined and indivisible. This found expression in the concept of *Maat*, a word difficult to translate, partly because of the breadth of its meaning at any one time, and partly because of the subtle changes in meaning that evolved over millennia. At its most simple, *Maat* meant living in accordance with divine rule. It encompassed humanitarian aims and also order, harmony and restraint. Chaos, or *Isft*, was greatly feared by the Egyptians. *Isft* included passion, anger and recklessness as well as war, famine and natural disasters. Each member of society strove to live in *Maat*, that is, in an obedient, self-contained moral life.[5]

Another core concept or myth which informed Egyptian society was the tale of the god Osiris, his sister–wife Isis, and their son, Horus (conceived by Isis from the revivified remains of her husband). Isis ministers to the

body of her assassinated husband, and nurtures their son in secret, protecting him and seeking justice for him: this provided an image of perfect womanhood. This myth formed part of the bedrock of Egyptian life. Every king was believed to be the embodiment of Horus, and consequently, semi-divine. At death, he became Osiris.[6] The rituals which the royal household took to themselves on the basis of the myth were gradually appropriated by the people: for example, the elder son acting as a Horus figure for his parents during their funerary rites.[7] Significantly, the role of the heroic mother was lauded over and above that of loyal wife. This explains the importance of the king's mother in Egyptian society.[8] The triad, father, mother and child, was a popular feature in religious iconography and, in addition to the Osiris, Isis, Horus complex, other deities appear in the same type of relationship.[9] The divine informed, and conformed, to the ideal family unit – namely, the nuclear family.

The kinship terminology employed by the ancient Egyptians confirmed the primacy of this familial unit. Only the members of the nuclear family had specific designations: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister. Other familial relationships were expressed through compounds of these terms, for example, maternal uncle = brother of the mother, maternal grandmother = mother of the mother. The Egyptian family was constantly splitting into new units as each child married and established a household.[10] At the same time, these nuclear cells seem to have been part of an extended family system, as yet imperfectly understood but evinced by references in literary and sapiential writing such as 'Do not say my mother's brother has a house' and 'Because of his mother's father, he is assigned to the stable.'[11] It is interesting to note that it is the maternal relatives that seem to have primacy in these texts.

WISDOM LITERATURE AND LITERACY

Three media were used for the transmission of information, beliefs and ideals: oral (evinced by such phrases as 'on this day a declaration made by . . .', 'and any scribe who will read out this stela'),[12] pictorial, and documentary. While there is evidence for the oral transmissions of the principles that formed the foundation of this Wisdom genre, it is impossible to quantify the extent of that method of dissemination. This chapter will concentrate on surviving written material. In written form, 'wisdom' was presumably only accessible to a very small section of Egyptian society since it is estimated that only one per cent of the population were literate. Most of the readership would have been male, and literacy, in varying degrees, appears to have

been confined to the royal household, temple staff, scribes, workmen attached to royal tombs, and workmen employed in provincial necropoli.[13] Internal evidence argues that where women were members of the above categories, they too possessed a degree of literacy.[14] The literate classes had access to a wide variety of both entertaining and edifying literature, and the most popular genre in the latter category was Wisdom Literature – the Instructions.

It is difficult to assess how far the maxims of wisdom percolated into the illiterate sections of society. Incidental information in legal documents suggests that the broad principles inherent in living in accordance with *Maat* were acknowledged at every level of society. Members at the lowest rung of society would not have had to worry about behaviour at a banquet, but do seem to have been aware of their rights in the pursuance of justice.[15]

Wisdom Literature was known throughout the Near East from the third millennium BC to well after the second century AD.[16] Biblical Wisdom Literature includes, for example, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Wisdom Psalms.[17] Egyptian documents provide the earliest as well as some of the latest examples of the genre.

Wisdom in the ancient Near East was not an abstract concept relating to discernment or knowledge. It was rather concerned with the practicalities of daily life. Wisdom was the adherence to a series of precepts and admonitions concerning one's relationship with the gods (or God) and fellow men, whereby success in this life would be achieved and happiness in the afterlife assured. In ancient Egypt, wisdom was synonymous with obeying Divine Ordinance; a life that rejected these guidelines was associated with chaos and evil. In a broad context, therefore, Wisdom Literature can be seen as religious, though to the modern eye, much of it is concerned with material and social success rather than spiritual qualities.

The Instructions normally take the form of an elder male addressing a younger male. In the Old and Middle Kingdoms (c. 2628–1650 BC) the author is said to be a father advising his son. During the New Kingdom (1551–1070 BC), this device was modified and examples where an older scribe instructs his apprentice appear alongside the earlier form. There appear to be four exceptions to this format, (a) the Instruction to Kagemni, (b) the Loyalist Instruction, (c) the Instruction of the High Priest Amenemhet, and (d) the Onomasticon of Amenemope. In the conclusion to the Instruction of Kagemni, it appears that the father addresses all his children. However, the pronouns and verbal forms in the body of the text indicate that a single male was being addressed, and it is possible that Kagemni, as the 'eldest son', was to be responsible for the dissemination and implementa-

tion of the Instruction among his siblings.[18] The Loyalist Instruction and the Instruction of the High Priest Amenemhet are indisputably addressed to all the children of the respective authors, whilst the Onomasticon of Amenemope is said to be an Instruction to 'teach the ignorant'.[19] There is not a single extant example of an Instruction written by a father for his daughter, nor by a mother for her son, or a mother for her daughter.

The contents of the Instructions are matched by the claims in autobiographical texts inscribed on tomb walls.[20] Like the Didactic Literature, these biographies also seem to have been the sole province of men. Careers were really only open to men, and with a successful career came a number of responsibilities. These two factors were irrevocably linked and provide the subject matter for both types of textual dissemination.

While this much can be said with certainty, in other respects there is a disjunction between social experience and representation in the texts. Thus, the texts describe a society in which a young, healthy male provides and cares for the weak, including widows and the aged of both sexes, and establishes a household by which his name is perpetuated. In actuality, daughters as well as sons were expected to care for their parents, and one's maternal ancestry was as important as the paternal line.[21]

Moreover, the information contained in these Instructions reflects the opinions and aspirations of a small section of Egyptian society, namely, those of the aristocratic and wealthy males. It is assumed throughout that its audience had sufficient resources to have a son or sons educated, and to support a wife and daughters. Men were expected to provide for their families. Not only is this implicit in the Instructions, but it is also acknowledged elsewhere in Egyptian documents, for example in the tale of the Eloquent Peasant, where he and his protagonist make provision for the Peasant's wife and children.[22] Egyptian sapiential writings indicate that it was only when a man failed in his duty that his dependants were obliged to go to work. This clearly identifies the economic level of society for whom the Instructions were written and reveals the texts as ignoring the fact that women could and did earn their livings as brewers, wet nurses, clothing manufacturers and more.[23]

Within Egyptian sapiential writings, advice is given, *inter alia*, concerning the correct treatment of, and behaviour towards, women. I have identified six categories of women in the material: (a) mothers, (b) wives, (c) widows, (d) women outside the family circle, (e) maidservants, (f) 'those who give pleasure'. It is noteworthy that no advice is given *vis-à-vis* the relationship between father and daughter in Pharaonic Wisdom Literature. This omission is best understood in the context of the purpose of these

Instructions. As mentioned, Wisdom Literature provided a framework for a successful life. One of the external signs of a successful life was a successful career. Getting married and establishing a household showed wisdom and stability, while at the same time establishing one's independence in the community. In theory, the success or otherwise of a man's life depended upon informed decisions on the choice of career, friends and wife. Such 'information' was to be found within the Instructions (at least for the wealthy and educated). Daughters did not directly impinge upon the furtherance of one's career and had no explicit cultic role to play in the funerary ceremonies. Marriage does not seem to have been an instrument for career advancement, and marrying outside one's own circle was discouraged.[24] There is no evidence in Pharaonic literature that a father chose a suitable husband for his daughter. Rather, marriage was on the basis of mutual attraction and a girl's choice of partner was largely influenced by her mother's approval, rather than that of her father. Education of a female child was also the responsibility of the mother.[25] For these several reasons, the category we would expect to find of 'daughter' does not appear in the texts and we are left with the six groups listed above.

The discussion of women in Egyptian Wisdom Literature which follows has been based on a study of all the examples of the Literature known to me, including material that falls outside the chronological confines of the Pharaonic Period. The latter is included for comparative purposes. The chapter represents an initial survey of material available. In examining the data, a number of questions remain unanswered. It is hoped that these will be resolved by research at a later date. The subject matter is presented chronologically, in three sections: Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. After a brief description of each example, the relevant excerpts are quoted and analysed, with the results being summarised and synthesised in the conclusion. Standard translations are used throughout, except in cases where there are lexical difficulties, or the sense of the passage is obscure, when the translation is my own.

WOMEN IN THE OLD KINGDOM

The Old Kingdom (2628–2134 BC) was a period of relative prosperity and stability with 'no obvious challenge to, or major malfunction in, the social order'.[26] Instructions from this period are resolutely upper-class, reflecting the mores and attitudes of the wealthy Egyptian male. Three texts are traditionally assigned to the period, namely, the Instruction to Kagemni, the Instruction of Hordjedef, and the Instruction of Ptah-hotep.[27] Four groups of

women can be isolated within these texts: (a) wives, (b) women of other households, (c) mothers and (d) maidservants. The unifying themes in the Instructions are the establishment and maintenance of the household, and living in peace with the community at large. While women are generally portrayed in a positive light, they are also shown to be in need of male protection and support. What does not emerge from the Wisdom Literature of this time is that women could participate fully in some of the most essential and important activities of ancient Egyptian society. They could enjoy the same burial rites as their husbands, and benefit from priestly stipends attached to mortuary chapels.[28]

1 The Instruction of Kagemni

This is an incomplete work of which only the final portion survives. The only reference to a woman is a comparative one. The text is very corrupt at this point, but seems to use the tenderness of a mother to her child as a yardstick against which the 'harsh man's' behaviour is judged.[29] As will be seen later in this chapter, motherhood was the pinnacle of female achievement in the eyes of society. Mothers were regarded as paragons. For someone to be kinder than a mother was to be altogether quite remarkable. Unfortunately, the sentence before this one is too corrupt for translation and so we do not know the context of the statement.

2 The Instruction of Hordjedef

Only the beginning survives of this fragmentary work. It contains the earliest example of a maxim which was a recurring theme in Didactic Literature, namely the establishment of a household:

> If you are an excellent one,
> You should found your household.
> Marry a woman, Mistress of the Heart;
> A son will be born to you.[30]

References in autobiographical texts confirm the importance of this 'landmark'.[31]

There are various interpretations of the phrase 'Mistress of the Heart'. It could mean someone in control of herself (self-control being an attribute greatly admired by the Egyptians), or simply a lovable woman. Other commentators have rendered the phrase as 'a hearty wife' or a 'strong woman'.[32]

3 The Instruction of Ptah-hotep

This is the longest sapiential text attributed to an Old Kingdom figure. Several of its maxims have been the subject of recent research. The text consists of 37 maxims, of which only two deal exclusively with women, namely numbers 21 and 37. I quote maxim 21 in full:

> If you are excellent, you shall establish your household,
> And love your wife according to her standard;
> Fill her belly, clothe her back,
> Perfume is a prescription for her limbs.
> Make her happy as long as you live!
> She is a field, good for her lord.
> You shall not pass judgement on her.
> Remove her from power, suppress her;
> Her eye when she sees (anything) is her storm wind.
> This is how to make her endure in your house.
> You shall retain her. A female
> Who is in her own hands is like rain:
> She is sought for, and she has flown away.[33]

This is a very complex passage. It appears to have a bipartite form; lines 1–7 relating to a positive attitude on the part of the husband, while lines 8–13 portray a negative attitude towards a wife. Lines 1–7 expand the theme first noted in Hordjedef, namely the founding of a household. The husband is exhorted to love, provide for and protect his wife. The elements food, clothes and oil are later found as the constituents in Maintenance Deeds drawn up by men for their wives after marriage.[34] It has been suggested that line 6, 'She is a field, good for her lord', is a sexual metaphor referring to the procreation of a son, a recurring theme in Wisdom Literature. Other similes for wives found in later Wisdom texts describe them as 'stone surface' (for carving) and a 'stone quarry'.[35] Elsewhere the phrase 'open her with a chisel' is used as a metaphor for intercourse, and figures of speech comparing women to minerals and stones are generally best understood as sexual imagery.[36] The passivity of women inherent in 'stone', is reflected in the imagery of a ploughed field (line 6 of the quotation) and is confirmed by representations of women in ancient Egyptian art, where women are portrayed in static modes in contrast to the vigorous poses of their spouses.[37]

Line 7 'You shall not pass judgement on her' appears to be a concise precursor of an injunction found in Ani not to criticise one's wife, but to observe and admire her skill in managing the house.[38]

The following six lines introduce a different attitude towards women. The wife is portrayed as unpredictable, potentially violent but at the same time of great value. Consequently, she needs to be controlled and kept from wielding power outside the home. These 13 lines encapsulate the dualistic nature of women acknowledged in Egyptian society; what might be termed the conflict between the 'good' and the 'bad' woman.[39] Women who conform to the role demanded of them by society, namely (heroic) mother and loyal wife, were to be highly favoured and were deemed good. Women were not, however, suited to positions of authority outside the home because of their unpredictability and intransigence – the image of the storm wind (line 9) indicates loss of control, an attitude synonymous with *Isft* and unacceptable in a career-minded male. This may be seen as the opposite of Mistress of the Heart who represents the ideal wife, mentioned in Hordjedef.

Both sexes were seen as having dual natures. In men the tension was between natures personified as Horus and Seth (good and evil); in women the conflict is represented as being between Sakhmet and Bast.[40] Sakhmet, the lioness goddess, represented the violent and unpredictable, and Bast, also a lioness goddess but sometimes shown as a cat, was a goddess of pleasure, music, dance and healing.

It seems to me that lines 7–13 can be elucidated by reference to two myths – The Destruction of Mankind,[41] and The Myth of the Sun's Eye.[42] In the tale of The Destruction of Mankind, Re the Sun-God and the King of the gods, instructs his Eye, identified here with Sakhmet, to slay mankind in punishment for plotting against him. It appears that after the initial massacre, Re repents of his decision, but has to resort to a strategy to restrain Sakhmet since it is implied that she could not be recalled by reason. Similarly, in The Myth of the Sun's Eye, Thoth, the god of wisdom and, by extension, reason, is sent to entice the Sun's Eye back to Egypt from whence she had left to the detriment of Re and all Egypt. It is an errand fraught with danger. Thoth encounters the Sun's Eye in her docile form of cat, but her violent form of lioness is never far away. He successfully woos the Sun's Eye back and the wellbeing of Egypt and all her denizens, divine and mortal, is assured. The husband in our text can be paralleled to Re; his wife is then his Eye. Just as Sakhmet had to be controlled by Re, so the husband had to control his wife; and just as the prosperity of Egypt depended upon the return of the Sun's Eye, so the prosperity of a man's house depended on his wife's stability. The value of the wife is underlined by the reference to 'rain' – a very rare and valuable commodity in Egypt, though notoriously difficult to summon or control.

The last maxim of this work, number 37, also concerns advice about the

treatment of a wife. The verse contains a number of lexical difficulties. The latest research has produced the following translation:

If you marry a fat woman
With a happy disposition and known by her town.
If she unites these two qualities
And time with her is pleasant,
Do not put her aside, but let her eat
So that she laughs with all her heart
One will say (then) . . .
A happy woman controls [her water?][43]

Implicit in this passage are the qualities a man should seek in a wife. Good companionship seems to have been valued higher than good looks: divorce, here referred to as 'to put aside', on the grounds of physical inadequacies, is treated with derision in some texts. Despite this, fatness in women was not a desirable thing. Egyptian art presented the ideal female as thin and svelte. Representations of fat women are extremely rare. Two notable examples are known: (a) the Queen of Nubia shown in a relief in the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri and (b) fecundity figures from reliefs from the temples of Sahure and Niuserre.[44] Men, on the other hand, with the exception of the king, had two modes of representation on official monuments. Muscular, trim figures were used to symbolise the vigour of youth, while successful and comfortable old age was expressed by rendering the male with a large belly and double chin.[45]

The young man is advised therefore that while his wife may not conform visually to the feminine ideal, a happy disposition and a good reputation were not to be despised. 'Known by her town' was the figure of speech used to denote respectability. As will be seen, in the New Kingdom texts, the stranger, rootless and unknown, was anomalous in Egyptian society and a threat to its stability. This maxim confirms the xenophobic attitude of the Egyptians.

The meaning of the last word translated here as 'her water' is as yet unknown. Cannuyer has suggested that it derives from the root 'celestial waters', hence the translation here.[46] Comparison with Maxim 21 suggests this is possible. Maxim 21 warns that an unhappy and angry woman will dissipate like water, whereas Maxim 37 appears to reverse the simile to say that a happy woman will control (conserve?) her water; that is to say, she will continue to contribute to the marriage relationship. In a country whose livelihood was dependent on the successful management of water, the imagery of restrained and/or dissipated water must have been a powerful one.

As mentioned earlier, 'to put aside' is an allusion to divorce. Divorce is well-attested in ancient Egypt.[47] Objection to the dissolution of a marriage does not seem to have been for religious reasons but was linked to the desire for a stable society, the need to protect the inheritance of one's heirs and to ensure that there were successors to perform funerary rites. The underlying concern seems to have been title and usufruct of property: whereas marriage instituted new property complexes through marriage contracts, divorce could lead to communal disruption and legal disputes. Heavy fines could be imposed on a husband who divorced his wife, no doubt to act as a deterrent. A woman does not seem to have been subject to the same financial penalty. Divorce was enacted by the woman leaving the conjugal home whether or not she initiated proceedings. In essence then, divorce made a woman and her children homeless. While the community prided itself on the care given to widows, divorcees and children, divorce no doubt placed a burden on local resources which was better avoided wherever possible. Clauses assuring women of financial compensation in the event of divorce are attested in marriage contracts, but the amount varied from family to family and no doubt the poorer sections of society fared worse than those where women had inherited wealth. Even for the more wealthy, the level of compensation does not seem to have been particularly generous and most women would have faced economic difficulties after the dissolution of their marriage.[48]

There are three other maxims in Ptah-hotep that mention women, namely, numbers 1, 18 and 19. Maxim 1 states:

> Good speech is hidden more than greenstone
> yet may be found among the serving girls
> on the grindstone.

These lines can best be understood in the context of a very consciously hierarchical world and warn the addressee that intelligence was not the monopoly of the upper classes. Neither could it be assumed that men were *a priori* cleverer than women.

Maxim 18 is preserved on a number of different manuscripts and in the version from P. Prisse reads:

> If you want to make a friendship last
> in a house you enter,
> whether as lord, or brother, or friend,
> in any place you enter,
> beware of approaching the women!
> The place where this is done cannot be good;
> there can be no cleverness in revealing this.

A thousand men are turned away from their good:
a little moment, the likeness of a dream,
and death is reached by knowing them.
It is a vile thing, conceived by an enemy;
one emerges from doing it
with a heart (already) rejecting it.
As for him who ails through lusting after them, no
plan of his can ever succeed.[49]

I take the expression 'to know' in the biblical sense and understand this passage as a prohibition against unlawful intercourse. What is not clear in this version of the maxim is whether the male perpetrator of the crime was committing rape or adultery. Although many terms are known for sexual congress from ancient Egypt, the distinctions are not yet fully understood. At the present level of knowledge of the Egyptian language it is not possible to distinguish between accounts of rape and acts of intercourse with consent. This is particularly important when dealing with texts in which men are accused of having illicit intercourse with women, some married, some single.[50] Was it rape or adultery in society's eyes? As yet, there is insufficient data to be able to answer the questions.

An alternative version of the maxim intercollates two more lines between lines 8 and 9 of the quotation. They are as follows:

One is made a fool by limbs of faience
and then she turns into carnelian.[51]

This has been interpreted by some scholars as referring not only to adultery but to the dangers of wily women. The limbs of faience (green) are contrasted with the woman's temper of carnelian (red) which serve as imagery to represent the tension between the cool/good woman and the hot/bad woman. Literary texts indicate that the consequence of adultery was often death at the hands of the aggrieved party.[52] Death was not only meted out to the woman but to the guilty male as well. There is no evidence that death was a statutory penalty and we know of no cases where the cuckold husband took such violent revenge. Nevertheless, a number of later Instructions continue to warn the addressee that violation of a married woman could lead to death. The authors were either basing this on known cases, or believed that passions ran so high in such cases that death was a distinct possibility at the hands of the injured husband. Surviving legal texts show that the actual punishment for the adulterous male was usually financial, and for the woman divorce, rather than death.

Very little is known about the mechanisms employed by society to

adduce if someone was guilty of adultery. So far as can be judged, cases rested on accusations by one party against the activities of fellow villagers. These could be refuted, by the taking of oaths, or acknowledged in the presence of a local court. The President of the court seems to have been empowered to negotiate a settlement between the parties.[53]

Maxim 18 provides one of only three references to adultery in Didactic Literature from the Pharaonic Period; the other two are to be found in the Instruction of Ani, dating to the New Kingdom, and will be discussed below.

Conclusions based on this extremely limited material must be tentative, but one can postulate that the ancient Egyptians acknowledged that both sexes were capable of, and responsible for, adultery. In the Old Kingdom, the man seems to be the initiator, whereas in the New Kingdom material the woman is responsible.

The following Maxim, Number 19, is a warning against greed. The likely scenario is a dispute over property of which there are many examples from Ancient Egypt.[54] The text states:

> Beware of an occasion of rapacity.
> It is a serious disease and incurable.
> The one who enters it cannot exist.
> It makes ill-disposed fathers and mothers
> and brothers of mothers.
> It drives apart wife and husband.

Whereas elsewhere in Egyptian culture, the family norm seems to have been the nuclear family, there appears to be a reference here to an extended system in operation as well, with its reference to 'brothers of mothers'. Its full significance is unknown. Further examples of this extended kinship pattern occur in two New Kingdom texts. What is noteworthy is that it is the mother's extended family that has primacy in these texts. In the case of the Instruction of Ani the text reads.

> Buy a house, or find and buy one,
> Shun contention,
> Don't say, 'My mother's father has a house'[55]

and in P. Anastasi III we read

> Because of his mother's father he is assigned to the
> stable which has five slaves.[56]

Implicit in these examples is the fact that children could expect to inherit property from their mother. Transmission deeds and wills show that mothers

could bequeath not only property to children of either sex but also offices, for example Pesset who bequeathed her office of Overseer of Physicians to her son Akhethotep.[57] Interestingly, the most frequent parent mentioned in dedicatory inscriptions and autobiographical texts is the mother.[58]

WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

With the breakdown of centralised government in the First Intermediate Period, c. 2134 BC, probably exacerbated by natural disasters such as low Nile floods, texts appear in which the accepted order is questioned and pessimism about the future appears alongside descriptions of chaos. Although the Instructions of the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040–1650 BC) retain their prescriptive nature, they also reflect the developments around them. The treatise of kingship cited below could only have developed in an atmosphere where the supremacy of the monarchy had been challenged. Indeed, of the six sapiential texts assigned to the Middle Kingdom, two purport to be by kings for their successors.[59] One is by an aristocrat to his son, while the other three appear to be the first non-aristocratic Instructions.[60] Of the six texts, only three have references to women and these are to be found in the two 'royal' Instructions and in the non-aristocratic Satire on Trades.

A new group of women is introduced in the material from the Middle Kingdom, namely widows. This group was missing in the literature of the Old Kingdom, and its appearance in the material of the Middle Kingdom probably reflects demographic changes brought about by the natural disasters and civil unrest that characterised the First Intermediate Period. It also reflects the general mood of pessimism that pervades other forms of Egyptian literature of this period.[61]

The three references to widows in Pharaonic Wisdom Literature show them to be vulnerable to attack and abuse. Attempts to defraud widows are attested in legal documents, although theoretically a widow and her property were protected by law.[62]

1 The Instruction Addressed to King Merikare

This Instruction is preserved on three fragmentary papyri that only partly complement each other. Unfortunately, the most complete text is also the most corrupt, with numerous scribal errors and lacunae.

The opening quatrain of the verses concerned with the administration of justice includes the only reference to women in the work:

Do justice, then you endure on earth;
Calm the weeper, don't oppress the widow.[63]

Similar sentiments are expressed in autobiographical texts where, among the virtues usually listed, were the following: '[I was] a father to the orphan, a husband to the widow, brother to the divorced woman.'[64] While neither orphans, widows nor divorcees were disadvantaged in law, all fell outside the scope of the nuclear family unit. They no longer had a relationship with a pivotal male figure – father, husband or brother – and this may well have rendered them anomalous in Egyptian society.

2 Instruction of King Amenemhet I for his Son Sesostris

As in the Instruction to King Merikare, women are only mentioned once. King Amenemhet states that in spite of his beneficence to the state and the dangers he had faced on the country's borders, he had found treachery and ingratitude in the Palace. It is in the description of the attack on the King that women are mentioned:

For I had not prepared for it,
had not expected it,
had not foreseen the failings of the servants.
Had women ever marshalled troops?
Are rebels nurtured in the Palace?
Does one release water that destroys the soil,
And deprive people of their crops?[65]

Palace conspiracies occurred sporadically throughout Egyptian history. The earliest recorded example is to be found in the Autobiography of Weni from the Old Kingdom.[66] In almost every instance, female members of the royal household were active in the intrigue. The rhetorical question about women marshalling troops and the nurturing of rebels has a twofold purpose. It describes in an idiomatic form how the Palace conspiracy was formulated. It obviously involved women of the royal household and, probably, younger sons of the king. At the same time the lines are redolent of bitterness since this disloyalty was unexpected. Women and children were expected to support and defend the head of the household, not topple him from power. Untamed water referred to in the last line was a simile for unrestrained power synonymous with anarchy, and occurs elsewhere in Wisdom Literature in respect of women. This imagery of destruction may also reflect the disastrous aftermath of civil war that swept over the country following the assassination attempt on the king.

3 Satire on Trades

The third and last text to be discussed in this section, The Satire on Trades, is the earliest example of an Instruction belonging to the Scribal School. It represents a new development in sapiential writings, which had previously been the province of the aristocracy and royalty. The text is a consciously biased work, exaggerating the hardships endured in other livelihoods. There are no references to the positive side of other careers described, nor to the discomforts a scribe might face while on attachment to government offices.

All extant manuscripts of the Satire on Trades are marred by textual corruptions. Women are mentioned five times. Three references are to mothers, and two to womankind in general.

As already noted, mothers were held in high regard in ancient Egypt. Moral obligation as well as affection formed a strong bond between mothers and their offspring. In this context the statement from the beginning of the work – 'I'll make you love scribedom more than your mother'[67] – evokes a career of great dedication and satisfaction. The respect accorded to mothers is also reflected in the injunction

> Don't tell lies against your mother,
> The magistrates abhor it.[68]

Given the preeminence of the heroic mother in Egyptian mythology and the status of mothers generally, such behaviour would be tantamount to sacrilege. In autobiographies, men were at pains to list among their virtues the fact that they 'did not defame mother'.[69] The two lines quoted above seem to refer to some type of inter-family dispute. Litigation regarding inheritance rights and property are well-attested and could last generations.[70] However, I know of no surviving legal documents from the Pharaonic Period where a son takes his mother to court or vice versa.

The third reference to mothers states: 'Praise god for your father and your mother who set you on the path of life.'[71] This is evidence of the respect accorded to both parents and the joint responsibility parents had in promoting the education of their children.[72]

The pain and discomfort experienced by women in labour is acknowledged in a verse that outlines the life of a weaver or basket maker:

> The weaver in the workshop,
> He is worse off than a woman
> With knees against his chest.
> He cannot breathe air.[73]

Representations of weaving appear in a number of tombs and were most popular in the Middle Kingdom. The craft was not confined to one particular sex. Weavers are shown in profile with their knees up to their chest. Later drawings from the New Kingdom, of men in particular, show them sitting on low seats with their legs spread widely.[74] Drawings and paintings of women in childbirth provide the best parallels for the squatting position adopted by weavers. The New Kingdom variant can be seen as analogous to a woman squatting on a birth stool. The lack of breath referred to obviously recalls the discomfort of parturition. Medical texts and literary works show that men had a surprisingly good knowledge of the events of childbirth. Representations of birth were used to decorate temple walls and frequently included male deities as witnesses.[75]

Another verse in the Satire on Trades concerns the woes of a washerman and has been cited as evidence of menstrual taboo in ancient Egypt.[76] The standard translation reads:

> His food is mixed with filth and there
> is no part of him which is clean.
> He cleans the garment of a woman in menstruation.[77]

It must be said, however, that the verse abounds with lacunae and unknown words. If the original Egyptian text is consulted, it becomes apparent that a different interpretation is to be preferred. A more accurate translation would be:

> His food is mixed with filth and
> there is no part of him that is clean.
> It is in a woman's skirt that he puts himself
> and then he is in a heavy state.

Even within the context of a satirical work which consciously distorts reality, there must have been some expectation that some of the barbs would hit home and that young apprentice scribes would acknowledge the validity of the basic premise of the work, namely, that of all the careers open to a young man, scribedom provided the greatest opportunities for personal advancement. In this light there must have been something risible about a man in a woman's skirt and that could well be the import of this verse.

The orthography of the word at the end of the sentence which I have translated as a 'heavy state' is ambiguous. While the writing has some similarities with the ancient Egyptian word for menstruation, the determinative speaks against it. It could be read as 'natron' (a type of salt), 'establish', or 'heavy'. The determinative clearly indicates that the word designated a

bad state.[78] Neither 'natron' nor 'establish' provide an appropriate meaning in the circumstances. 'Heavy' in the *OED* meaning of 'hard to bear, grievous, sore, distressful' occurs in marriage contracts where compensation for divorce is arranged: 'If I repudiate the woman . . . and I make the heavy fate catch her . . . I shall give to her'.[79] In this context, 'heavy fate' is apparently synonymous with great distress, and this approximates more closely with the state of the washerman than the possible alternative meanings given above.[80] As for menstrual taboo generally in ancient Egypt, there is insufficient evidence to substantiate it.[81] The association of the word for menstruation with a bad or contaminating state is a modern interpretation not borne out by securely attested examples of context and word in Pharaonic texts. Such securely attested examples carry the sign for a liquid issuing from lips which has an entirely neutral status.[82]

WOMEN IN THE NEW KINGDOM

In the so-called Second Intermediate Period, the lead-up to the New Kingdom, a weakened centralised government (Dynasties XV and XVI) was challenged by the invasion of the Hyksos. As a result, Egypt was divided for about 100 years. Under King Ahmose of the XVIII Dynasty, the Hyksos were finally driven out and the nation reunited. Through the New Kingdom, subsequent monarchs extended their power beyond Egypt's borders northwards into Palestine and as far south as modern Sudan. It was a period of great prosperity and security. However, the second half of the XXth Dynasty (c. 1150 BC) saw a decline in the Egyptian economy, coupled with the loss of her empire. Kings of the closing years of the New Kingdom were largely ineffectual. Their weak government allowed the proliferation of independent states within the country during the Third Intermediate Period.[83]

Of the many surviving Instructions from the New Kingdom, only a few provide us with information on women. They are the Instruction of Ani and the Instruction of Amenemope, and two groups of texts designated respectively as Educational Instructions and Ancient Writings.[84]

Women in New Kingdom Wisdom Literature can be divided into two categories: those of the immediate family (wife, mother and widows) and those outside the family (women who give pleasure and potential adulteresses).

Themes first identified in the Old Kingdom, such as establishing a household, reverence for mothers and injunctions against illicit intercourse, are expanded in the New Kingdom. We learn more of what men expected

other men to do for their families, and of their broader social responsibilities, but as ever very little about a woman's duties to her family and the community at large. In the interaction between men and women, whether recommended or prohibited, it is once again the man who is pivotal. There are, however, two new aspects of womankind which are introduced into sapiential texts in this period. One is the appearance of a woman who regards herself as free to take the initiative in sexual matters; the other is a woman who gives pleasure. Very little is known about the latter. A euphemism for sexual relations was 'spending a pleasant hour together', and 'women who give pleasure' might be identified as courtesans. There is no evidence for prostitution in the modern sense.[85] There is no criticism of these women's behaviour on moral grounds. Pre-marital intercourse did not attract moral censure. These 'entertaining' ladies were to be avoided simply because they distracted a young scribe from the rigorous training required to attain a successful career. References to the women occur in contexts of drinking, eating to excess and losing control:

> Now you are seated in front of the wench, soaked in anointing oil, your wreath of *ishtepen* at your neck, and your drum on your belly. Now you stumble and fall over your belly anointed with dirt.[86]

1 The Instruction of Ani

The best-preserved copy of this work survives on a manuscript dating to the XXIst or XXIInd Dynasties.[87] Unfortunately, the beginning of the text is badly damaged, and the copy as a whole is full of lacunae and corruptions. Some of the gaps can be filled in and errors rectified by comparison with other versions. Like the Satire on Trades, this Instruction is addressed to a non-aristocratic audience. Women are mentioned as wives, mothers and women who are 'strangers'.

Wives are referred to three times in the text. The first example is as follows:

> Take a wife while you're young
> That she make a son for you;
> She should bear for you while you're youthful.
> It is proper to make people.
> Happy the man whose people are many.[88]

This first example has clear antecedents in Ptah-hotep and Hordjedef of the Old Kingdom. Later in the manuscript there are a number of lines relating to the treatment of the wife within the household:

Do not control your wife in her house,
when you know she is efficient;
Don't say to her, 'Where is it? Get it'
when she has put it in the right place.
Let your eye observe in silence
Then you recognise her skill;
It is a joy when your hand is with her.
There are many who don't know this.
If a man desists from strife at home
he will not encounter its beginning.
Every man who founds a household
should hold back the hasty heart.[89]

This maxim has two functions. It prompts the ideal of marriage and warns the man against divorce. The rest of the maxim urges a harmonious relationship, and forms the context in which advice against divorce might be given.

The third reference to a wife comes from a maxim about rank and hierarchy:

A woman is asked about her husband,
A man is asked about his rank.[90]

It is unlikely that these lines suggest that a wife's individuality was subsumed into her husband's. Rather it reflects the career structure and promotion possibilities in Egyptian society. It was perfectly possible for a man to move up from the social class in which he was born. This social mobility was one of the fruits of a scribal education, but was occasionally witnessed also in other careers like the military.[91] The weight of evidence suggests that women were rarely educated, though exceptions are known. Examples of female scribes, doctors and other administrators occur throughout the whole of Egyptian history, but in no great numbers: these posts were outside the main career structure enjoyed by men and were confined to the households of queens and other high-born ladies. Opportunities for women to move up the social scale on their own account were restricted. In these circumstances, a woman's rank was linked to her husband.[92] Rank rather than gender was the ultimate arbiter in determining who was 'head' of the house. A fragmentary ostracon preserves the line 'Do not marry a woman who is richer/greater than you, so that you do not . . .', while in the demotic Instruction of Ankhseheshonq the author advises, 'If a wife is of nobler birth than her husband he should give way to her.'[93] The majority of Egyptians seem to have married spouses from within their social circle, a practice which, among other things, would preserve the norm of a male being the household head.[94]

The Instruction of Ani contains a paean of praise for mothers, admonishing the addressee to 'double the food your mother gave you, support her as she supported you'. The verse outlines all the sacrifices the mother made for the child and her commitment to his well-being. In the closing lines, the addressee is urged to establish a household, and to show as much dedication to his own child as did his own mother towards him, 'lest she raise her hands to god and he hears her cries'. In this verse it is clear that mothers were active in promoting their sons' education: 'When she sent you to school and you were taught to write, she kept watch over you daily.'[95]

The third category of woman discussed in Ani is 'the woman who is a stranger':

> Beware a woman who is a stranger.
> One who is not known in her town.
> Don't stare at her when she goes by.
> Don't know her carnally.
> A deep water whose course is unknown
> Such is a woman away from her husband.
> 'I am pretty', she tells you daily
> when she has no witnesses;
> She is ready to ensnare you.
> A great deadly crime when it is heard . . .[96]

There are two underlying dangers implied in the passage. One is the danger of the unknown, the stranger; the other is the danger of becoming embroiled in adultery.

Ancient Egyptian villages were insular, xenophobic communities.[97] It appears that few travelled beyond the confines of their natal locality. Within the close confines of village society, a complex interaction of family relationships was established. Strangers, male or female, threatened this framework. This is tacitly acknowledged in Ankhsheshonq where a father is advised, 'Do not let your son marry a woman from another town, lest he be taken from you.'[98] If the ideal was the stable community, then its opposite, rootlessness as represented by strangers, was the embodiment of chaos and disorder. Demotic Instructions in particular warn against leaving one's village and of the dangers outside the city.[99] Being known in one's town was synonymous with respectability, as was seen in Ptah-hotep's maxim. Line 2 here underscores the disreputable nature of the wandering woman.

Adultery, like the stranger, threatened the fabric of society. Evidence of actual cases of adultery surviving from ancient Egypt are few and far between. It is clear that adultery not only undermined the complex family alliances within the village and compromised the status of a woman's

offspring, but also affected property and inheritance rights. In one particular case an adulterous couple were warned that, unless they went to court to legalise the liaison, they would receive summary justice from the community.[100] Whereas Ptah-hotep regarded the male as the instigator in illicit sexual encounters, here we see the blame placed on the woman. Extant textual evidence suggests that 'woman as temptress' was a new theme introduced during the New Kingdom. What exactly precipitated this literary development is hard to identify, but it is the case that the New Kingdom was a period of unprecedented military and economic expansion. The country experienced large-scale demographic changes, as slaves, immigrants and mercenaries converged on Egypt. No doubt interactions between these alien groups and the native residents led to tensions and feelings of unease within village communities. The 'woman as temptress', 'a stranger, not known in her town', were symptomatic of this social upheaval.

Adultery is here identified as 'a great deadly crime'. This is paralleled by legal documents from the Third Intermediate period and later which, according to the usual translation, describe adultery as 'the great crime that is found in a woman', so placing the burden of guilt upon her.[101] However, this translation ignores the wide range of the preposition *m* and the evidence of mores from other sources, and reflects a modern interpretation rather than the actual ancient practice. There is no evidence that women were regarded as intrinsically evil, as was the case, for example, in Europe in the later centuries of the Christian era. The crime was the *act* of illicit intercourse with a married woman.[102] A more accurate translation would be 'the great crime that is found with (occurs with) a married woman'. Marriage contracts state that if a woman is divorced following her adultery, she forfeits the compensation normally granted to divorcees. There is no information as to what redress a woman had against her husband if he were found committing adultery.

A second possible allusion to adultery may be seen in Column IX, lines 6–7 of Ani:

> Do not go after a woman;
> Let her not steal your heart.[103]

Contemporary love poetry, however, also describes the debilitating effects of passion and this last quotation may in fact have more in common with women being perceived as distractions rather than relating to adultery *per se*.[104]

2 Instruction of Amenemope

The Institution of Amenemope is completely preserved on a papyrus dating to the period of the XXII–XXV Dynasties. In this long text women are mentioned twice, and only as widows. The first example is as follows:

> Do not be greedy for a cubit of land
> Nor encroach on the boundaries of the widow.[105]

The person who engaged in this kind of fraud was an enemy of humankind and would incur divine retribution. In the context of an agricultural society such as Egypt, someone who moved boundary markers was depriving another of his livelihood and inheritance.[106] This maxim makes no reference to a widow's legal position, which is known to have been secure in theory.[107] The second example states,

> Do not pounce on a widow when you find her
> in the fields,
> and then fail to be patient with her reply.[108]

This sentence has been interpreted as an injunction not to prosecute a widow gleaning in fields other than her own without giving her a fair hearing. The importance of impartial justice is a regular theme in the texts.[109]

3 Educational Writings

The Satire on Trades discussed above was the precursor of a genre of writings focused on the career of a scribe and known to modern commentators as Educational Instructions. This genre had its *floruit* during the New Kingdom.[110] The corpus of careers satirised was increased to include the soldier, charioteer and stable-master, which was consistent with the increased military aspect of the New Kingdom. It is very introspective literature, giving no explicit advice regarding relationships with, or treatment of, women. However, the social responsibilities of a male to his household are implicit in the cautionary tales that form the framework for this genre. Certain other themes are carried over from earlier material. For example, in the most complete papyrus from this collection the constancy of a mother's love is extolled and used as a symbol of supreme satisfaction born of commitment to duty.[111] The sexual imagery of the 'wife as stone' discussed already in the context of Maxim 21 of Ptah-hotep, also appears in this material.[112]

4 Ancient Writings

A collection of ostraca and papyri has recently been identified as components of a work modern scholars call 'Ancient Writings'.[113] Only two of these ostraca need mention here. The first concerns the old and mothers:

> Mock not an old man nor an old woman in their infirmity
> lest they utter curses against you in your old age.
> Do not sate yourself alone if your mother is a
> have-not; it will surely be heard by . . .[114]

Earlier parallels suggest that it was the local god who would take the necessary steps to rectify this lack of filial duty. The theme of the second ostracon – 'Do not marry a woman richer than you' – concerns a subject discussed already in the section concerning the inadvisability of marrying outside one's own rank.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the writings analysed above, a woman's place was centred in the home. Men were not comfortable with the idea of women wielding power outside the domestic domain and the didactic literature presented here suggests that steps were taken to circumscribe a woman's power outside the house. The procreation and rearing of children were the wife's prime duty. Mothers were very highly regarded, to such an extent that widowed mothers took precedence over their daughters-in-law in household matters.[115] Childlessness could be grounds for divorce. It also had other legal ramifications. To circumvent the law, the husband of a childless couple adopted his wife as his daughter so that she, rather than his siblings, could inherit the estate after his death.[116]

Establishing a household had a literal as well as a metaphorical sense. Dissolution of the marriage either by death or divorce rendered the wife homeless, though not without an income.[117] If founding a household was in accordance with *Maat*, then its dissolution must have been a manifestation of *Isft*. Widows, divorcees and orphans were therefore symptoms of underlying chaos, and ministering to them would have been tantamount to restoring *Maat*. The care of the disadvantaged restored social and religious equilibrium.[118]

The recurring references to the procreation of a son did not indicate an antipathy towards daughters. It reflects a ritual necessity since a son was required to supervise the burial of his parents. This role was of vital

importance, both from a mythopoeic point of view and from the economic. The law was 'he who buries, inherits'.[119] In every other respect daughters and sons seem to have had equal status in their parents' regard.

There were no legal injunctions to curtail the activities of women, nor were they denied any cultic rites. It appears that women were free to travel without a male chaperone. In fact Ramasses III boasted that under his rule a woman could travel safely throughout Egypt.[120]

Woman as 'temptress' occurs for the first time in the New Kingdom texts, although the greatest number of references to this theme is to be found in the Graeco-Roman material.[121] It is not a major topic in Pharaonic Wisdom Literature.

Throughout the Pharaonic period, women who conformed to the social ideal as daughter, wife and mother were treated with respect and had a certain amount of independence. Lack of education prevented most women from achieving personal success outside the home, though there was no active policy to deny them this opportunity since we do know of female scribes and doctors.[122]

The feelings and thoughts of ancient Egyptian women are largely unrecorded. Brief glimpses can be found in letters and in economic, legal and poetic texts. These generally show compliance with the *status quo*, which is to be expected given that the whole of Egyptian society was predicated on the maintenance of *Maat*, making rebellion tantamount to evil. Such freedom as women had was exercised within the constraints of a consciously hierarchical and patriarchal society.

NOTES

1. Allam (1989b).
2. Bruyere (1924–53).
3. Pestman (1961), p. 10; Eyre (1984), pp. 100f; Lichtheim (1980), p. 128.
4. Lichtheim (1976), pp. 167–78. Ostraca were flakes of stone or pottery inscribed with ink or paint. In Ancient Egypt they functioned in much the same way as note-pads or scrap paper today, for draft reports, lists, school exercises etc.
5. Bleeker (1929); Hornung (1982), pp. 213–16; Shirun-Grumach (1985), p. 173f.; Frankfort (1977), p. 14; Wilson (1977), pp. 105–9 and pp. 82–6.
6. No standard version of the myth exists. It has to be reconstructed from a wide variety of materials, for which see Griffiths (1960), Lichtheim (1976), pp. 214–23, Rundle Clark (1978), pp. 97–180; Te Velde (1980), col. 25–7.

7. Gardiner (1961), pp. 107–46.
8. Redford (1986), p. 168, n. 24; Redford (1967), p. 65, n. 42; Griffiths (1966), p. 140 and n. 92; Garland (1968), p. 35f.
9. Hornung (1982), p. 218.
10. Troy (1986), pp. 104–7; Černy (1957), pp. 51–5.
11. See, respectively, Lichtheim (1976), p. 139 and Caminos (1954), p. 96.
12. Gardiner (1940), p. 24, 1.14–15; Eyre and Baines (1989), p. 109; Sethe and Helck (1928), pp. 79–80; Shupak (1989).
13. Baines and Eyre (1983), pp. 65–9; Lesko (1990) argues for a larger proportion of the population being literate.
14. Baines and Eyre (1983), pp. 81–5; Ward (1989), p. 35f.; Bryan (1985), pp. 17–32; Fischer (1989), pp. 13f.
15. Peet (1930); Gardiner (1940), pp. 23f.; De Buck (1947), pp. 152–164; Goedicke (1963), pp. 71–92; Lichtheim (1976), p. 160, ch. 23 and 26 and (1975), pp. 169–84.
16. Kitchen (1980).
17. Other comparative literature has been published by Pritchard (1950); Ruffle (1979), pp. 29–68.
18. Théodoridès (1971), p. 297.
19. Lichtheim (1975), p. 128; Gardiner (1910), pp. 87–99; Gardiner (1947), I, 2.
20. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 18–27; (1976), pp. 18–20; (1980), pp. 13–41.
21. Gardiner (1940), p. 24; Černy (1945), pp. 29–53; Hoffman (1979), pp. 322f.; Fischer (1989), p. 3; Lesko (1989c), p. 31; Redford (1986), p. 213; Troy (1986), pp. 102–4.
22. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 170 and 173.
23. Caminos (1954), p. 55; Allam (1989), p. 22f, Černy (1973), pp. 175–81.
24. Posener (1951), pp. 184–5.
25. Simpson (1973), p. 304 (13); Lichtheim (1976), p. 183 and p. 190.
26. Kitchen (1979), p. 237; Gardiner (1961), pp. 72–106.
27. It is argued by some Egyptologists, such as Lichtheim (1975), pp. 6f., that these works were pseudepigraphical and were attributed to eminent writers and an early date to give them added weight and validity.
28. Fischer (1989), p. 23.
29. Lichtheim (1975), p. 60, n. 8.
30. Posener (1952), p. 113.
31. Lichtheim (1976), p. 12.
32. Lichtheim (1975), p. 58; Simpson (1973), p. 340; Posener (1952), p. 113.
33. Parkinson (1991), p. 55.
34. Pestman (1961), pp. 145ff.
35. See Lichtheim (1976), pp. 176 and (1980) 178; Badawy (1961), p. 144.
36. Manniche (1978), p. 54.
37. Robins (1990), p. 21.
38. See Lichtheim (1976), p. 143.
39. Troy (1984), pp. 77–81; (1986), pp. 7–9 and p. 24.
40. Te Velde (1980), col. 25–7; Troy (1984), p. 78 and n. 8.
41. Lichtheim (1976), pp. 197–9; Troy (1986), p. 24.
42. De Cenival (1988); Smith (1984), col. 1082–7; Boylan (1922); Bleeker (1973).
43. Translation after Cannuyer (1986), pp. 92–103.

44. Naville (1898), plate LXIX, 3rd Register; Baines (1985), pp. 110f.
45. Darby, Ghalioungui and Grivetti (1977), p. 60.
46. Cannuyer (1986), p. 102.
47. On divorce, see Pestman (1961), pp. 58–79; Allam (1981); Eyre (1984), pp. 98–101 and n. 81.
48. Pestman (1961), pp. 13f.
49. Parkinson (1991), pp. 68–9.
50. Černy (1929), pp. 243–58; Eyre (1984), pp. 93f. and n. 17.
51. Troy (1984), p. 77.
52. On punishments for adultery see Simpson (1973), pp. 16–18; Manniche (1978), pp. 61f.; Eyre (1984), pp. 97–100; Lichtheim (1976), p. 137 and (1980), p. 177; Volten (1955), p. 272 1.7.
53. Eyre (1984), p. 100; Černy (1929), pp. 243–58; Janssen (1988), pp. 134–7 and nn. 12, 13.
54. Allam (1989b), passim.
55. Lichtheim (1976), p. 139.
56. Caminos (1954), p. 96.
57. Ogdon (1986), p. 62f.; Ghalioungui (1983), p. 92.
58. Fischer (1989), pp. 8–11; Ward (1989), p. 43; Redford (1967), p. 65, n. 4 and (1986), p. 168, n. 24.
59. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 97–100 and pp. 135–9.
60. Lichtheim (1975), p. 128; Kitchen (1979), p. 281; Lichtheim (1975), pp. 184–92; Fischer (1982), pp. 45–50.
61. See, for example, Lichtheim (1975), pp. 149–62.
62. Pestman (1961), p. 88; Gaballa (1977); Allam (1989b), pp. 25f.
63. Lichtheim (1975), p. 100.
64. Lichtheim (1975), p. 172; Stewart (1979), plate 18. 13.
65. Lichtheim (1975), p. 137.
66. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 18–23.
67. Lichtheim (1975), p. 185.
68. Lichtheim (1975), p. 191.
69. Ghalioungui (1983), p. 73; Edwards (1965), p. 25, plate 11.2, line (X + 8) of inscription.
70. Gaballa (1977); Allam (1989b), pp. 25–6 and 29.
71. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 191.
72. Lichtheim (1976), p. 141.
73. Lichtheim (1975), p. 188.
74. On weaving, see Ling Roth (1978); Hayes (1953), pp. 264f.
75. On childbirth, see Robins (1988), p. 67; Harris (1971), p. 120, plate llb; Brunner (1964); Pillet (1952), pp. 77–93 and fig. 8; Ghalioungui (1973), pp. 114–16, n. 178 and fig. 14; Lepsius (1849–59), Abt. IV, plate 60b; Goedicke (1985), pp. 19–26; Ebbell (1937); Lichtheim (1975), pp. 220f.
76. Robins (1988), p. 67; Frandsen (1986), col. 135–42.
77. Simpson (1973), p. 334.
78. Gardiner (1979), G37.
79. Pestman (1961), p. 61.
80. Möller (1918), p. 10, c(6), d(4/5) and p. 14, n. 6; Clère (1949); p. 38 and p. 42.
81. Janssen (1980), pp. 127–52.

82. Gardiner (1979), D26.
83. Kitchen (1986).
84. Lichtheim (1976) pp. 135–63; Kitchen (1979), pp. 281, 282.
85. Manniche (1978), p. 33; Eyre (1984), pp. 95–6; Černy (1973), pp. 175–81; Goedicke (1967), pp. 97–102.
86. Caminos (1954), p. 182.
87. See Lichtheim (1976), pp. 135–6 for text and further discussion.
88. Lichtheim (1976), p. 136.
89. Lichtheim (1976), p. 143.
90. Lichtheim (1976), p. 140.
91. Lichtheim (1975), pp. 66 and 71; Lichtheim (1976), pp. 12–15.
92. Bryan (1985), pp. 17–32; Ward (1989), p. 37; Ghalioungui (1983), p. 92; Ogdon (1986), pp. 62f.; Troy (1986), pp. 76–9; Robins (1990), pp. 18–21.
93. Posener (1951), pp. 184–5; Lichtheim (1980), p. 180.
94. Pestman (1961), p. 4.
95. All citations of Ani from Lichtheim (1976), p. 141.
96. Lichtheim (1976), p. 137.
97. Cannuyer (1989), pp. 53f.
98. Lichtheim (1980), p. 171.
99. Lichtheim (1980), pp. 207–8; Cannuyer (1989), pp. 48f.
100. Janssen (1988), p. 135.
101. Möller (1918), pp. 6–7 and 11.
102. On adultery, see Eyre (1984), pp. 95 and 100–5.
103. Lichtheim (1976), p. 143.
104. Lichtheim (1976), p. 185.
105. Lichtheim (1976), p. 151.
106. Marzal (1965), p. 101.
107. Eyre (1984), pp. 102f.; Pestman (1961), p. 88.
108. Lichtheim (1976), p. 161.
109. Lichtheim (1976), pp. 21–4, (1975) 169–84.
110. Kitchen (1979), p. 282.
111. Lichtheim (1976), pp. 169.
112. Lichtheim (1976), p. 176.
113. Kitchen (1979), p. 281.
114. Gardiner (1957), pp. 43–5.
115. James (1962), letter II.
116. Pestman (1961), p. 75; Gardiner (1940), pp. 23f.
117. Pestman (1961), p. 77.
118. Stewart (1979), UCII, plates 18 l. 13 [l = line].
119. Allam (1989a), p. 128 and n. 22; Janssen and Pestman (1968), p. 140.
120. Lichtheim (1976), p. 137; P. Harris quoted by Eyre (1984), p. 101.
121. Lesko (1989c), p. 101.
122. Ward (1989), p. 35; Fischer (1989), p. 21.