



Women in Ancient Egypt

Barbara Watterson

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Women in Ancient Egypt is a detailed and fascinating study of the often overlooked contributions made by women of all classes to the social, and sometimes the political, history of ancient Egypt.

Using evidence gleaned from written records, monuments, sculpture, tomb-paintings and the material found in tombs, including objects and human remains, Barbara Watterson has been able to build up an intriguing picture of the lives led by ancient Egyptian women, lives that were free of the restraints normally placed upon women in the rest of the ancient world, allowing them to exercise a full part in society, recognized as equal with men under the law. The types of occupations and careers open to women are described, as are their domestic and personal lives - marriage, health and childbirth; family life; running a home; clothing, jewelery and beauty preparations. The women whose lives are fleshed out in this book are largely the 'little people' of history, women who rarely exercised any power outside the domestic sphere. In contrast, however, the final chapter deals with those women, surprisingly few in number, whose influence on the political affairs of their country was considerable and, in some cases, legendary, with a small number of royal women able to ascend the throne of Egypt and rule as female kings.

The book is supplemented by a series of superb illustrations, detailed references and a comprehensive bibliography. It is an entertaining survey of the role of women in ancient Egypt, written in an authoritative yet highly readable way.

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