

Love Poetry and Songs from the Ancient Egyptians

Gilbert Moore



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During the reigns of Ramses II and his successors, from about 1300 BC to 1150 BC, a social class of well-educated secular royal scribes and temple craftsmen appeared in Ancient Egypt rivaling the traditional priesthood in cultural influence, if not power. In their hands a new genre of literature took shape: Secular love poetry depicting in hieratic script real flesh-and-blood men and women, expressing real emotions and speaking to one another with real, often erotic and tender human feelings for the first time. Unfortunately, this state of affairs was to last only as long as the reigns of Ramses II and his immediate successors. Roughly 100 years. The translations edited and presented in this third edition represent the collective effort of at least three generations of Egyptologists, dating back to the late 19th century and reaching a highpoint in the translations of Miriam Lichtheim in the 1970s and the recent efforts of Bernard Mathieu and others.



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