INTRODUCTION

Research about diverse facets of women's life in ancient Egyptian society has become a common topic for Egyptology in recent decades. Their way of life and work, their participation in different spheres such as law and religion, and research into their sexuality have been analyzed from diverse viewpoints by students of the history and civilization of the ancient Land by the Nile.

Jean-François Champollion may be considered the first Egyptologist of modern times who analyzed the role of women in Egyptian society. In this regard, he wrote that female representation shows

"Just like with another thousand parallel facts, how different Egyptian society was from the rest of the East and how it compared to ours, since one can appreciate the degree of civilization of a culture according to the more or less tolerable circumstances of women in its social structure."

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1 The author expresses his gratitude to the Regenstein Library, to the Department of Special Collections and the Oriental Institute Archives at the University of Chicago, for their authorization to publish the materials represented here. Likewise, he is thankful for the invaluable document research assistance from librarian Julia Gardner of the Special Collections Research Center at UC; John Larson, Head Archivist at the Oriental Institute Archives, UC; Rita Vazquez, Associate Registrar, and John J.W. Plampin, Assistant University Registrar, both of the Office of the University Registrar at UC. Thanks to them I was able to obtain valuable information about Miss Ella's personal and academic life. Their help was very important due to the difficulty in finding information about her life. It is worth mentioning that the research mainly took place at the Regenstein Library at UC and the National Archives in Washington, D.C., both institutions to which I am indebted for their gentle hospitality during this investigation. Finally, I would like to thank Maria Capetillo for her assistance in translating this article into English.

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Beyond having found the clue to decipher ancient hieroglyphic writing, as we can see Champollion had from his first and only journey to Egypt an intuition of the fundamental role that Egyptian women were able to reach within their society. As a matter of fact, Egyptian documents frequently reference Egyptian women as "her husband's revered companion", "the sister beloved of his heart", "she who is rich in her life and brings fortune...". This is also a decisive contribution from the founder of Egyptology, who was surprisingly modern when formulating the basic conclusions that later Egyptologists interested in the subject have established on a broader basis, in contrast with the more limited focus of academic followers of the work of the French master. These works seem to focus mostly on studying the status of Egyptian women fundamentally through a perspective of legal aspects analysis.

This comment is in reference to the work of Eugène Revillout, who began to publish the Ptolemaic papyrus of Thebes in 1880. It was a great accomplishment and a pioneering work, the first real attempt to highlight the importance of demotic contracts. This Egyptologist contributed some of the first studies about women in ancient times and in ancient Egypt in particular, from the basic approach we already mentioned. Therefore, his article "Du rôle de la femme dans la politique internationale et le droit international de l'antiquité (Leçon d'ouverture du 17 décembre 1898)" is centered on the analysis of the Egyptian-Hittite treaty and the relations between Ramesses II and the country of Hatti, concluding that Egyptian women could not participate in their country's political life, unlike what happened among other peoples, such as the Ethiopian Jetas (p. 29). In spite of such limitation, he points that women in ancient times were not always subject to the degrading position sometimes assumed. Thus, the author emphasizes an aspect covered in detail by later studies: What was the role of women in ancient political life, particularly in Egypt? He answers by analyzing the lives of Tiye and Nefertiti.

In another study, the French Egyptologist elaborates around real estate and estate property problems between husband and wife as well as donations and other transactions executed as a couple, but as we mentioned before focusing on his main specialty field, the Ptolemaic Period.

The second specific piece of work published on these aspects has a broader title, and is one of the earliest articles dealing with these themes. Revillout summarizes previous work and widely focuses on women in Egypt despite his global approach to the subject. This work develops into his main contribution to our study subject: the first complete book about La femme dans l'antiquité égyptienne (1909).

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5 Ibid.: 170.
Revillout then points out the paths followed until today by Egyptology around the study of Egyptian women: analysis of plastic and archaeological work in contrast with written documents. It is a very thorough analysis, from the earliest stages of Egyptian history through Roman times. Generally speaking, Revillout highlights the privileged condition of Egyptian women and how their situation changed with their country's historical developments. He points out the contrast between the Ancient Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom, though he attributes the change to "Semitic influence" (p. 57), which becomes a constant throughout his interpretations. "Damaging" cultural influences arrive from outside Egypt, such as the veneration of the Semitic goddess "Qadesh" or Astarte (p. 126), which corrupted Egyptian society by provoking "unbridled sensuality" and "decadence of customs" at the time of the New Empire.

On the other hand, the public stage is reserved for men, while the private stage or nbt pr, ("lady of the house") belongs to women. This situation would progressively revert in the New Empire, reaching its climax by the time of Pharaoh Horenmheb when women rights became completely comparable to those of men. Despite legal changes under the Ramesides, which displaced her again in the public arena, in private granted her total equality with men. Other key moments take place under Pharaoh Boccoris and Pharaoh Amasis. His ultimate conclusion is in great accordance with his time: only Christianity could grant women her true role as a wife and mother based on its perception of woman as "the queen of love" (pp. 390-392).

In summary, Revillout shows aspects which would generally be retaken by Egyptology during recent years in the study of the subject addressed here.

G. Paturet (1886), from the same school as Revillout,\(^\text{10}\) insists above all on the legal equality of Egyptian women relative to men, and contrasts it with the situation in other areas. In Rome, for example, the lower social and legal standing of women is justified by concepts such as *imbecillitas mentis* (weakness of spirit) and *infirmitas sexus* [sic] (the lack of perfection of her sex relative to men). Thus, the author analyzes the characteristics of Egyptian marriage basically using the demotic documentation studied by Revillout. He subsequently discusses women's access to property and economic condition, as well as laws on inheritance and nuptial contracts.

**“THE WOMEN OF ANCIENT EGYPT” IN THE AMERICAN CONTINENT.**

It would seem besides Revillout's and Paturet’s works about this subject matter, of the earliest studies from last century is Ella Satterthwait's thesis, "The women of ancient Egypt"\(^\text{11}\). The critical apparatus in this specific piece of work would not withstand modern scrutiny, but met the academic requirements of its time\(^\text{12}\).

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\(^{10}\) *La condition juridique de la femme dans l'ancienne Égypte.* lettre a l'auteur par E. Revillout, Paris, E. Leroux, 1886, LIV+77 p., (École du Louvre).


\(^{12}\) By way of comparison there's the thesis of Caroline Ransom Williams (1872-1952), the first professionally prepared North American Egyptologist, who studied next to A. Erman in Berlin at James H. Breasted's instance. In Chicago, her "Partial Catalogue of the Collection of Greek Vases in the Art Institute, Chicago",
Very likely redacted under the direction of James H. Breasted (1865-1935) himself, it amounts to what may be considered an article worthy of being published and supported by primary sources – written, archaeological and artistic – that Miss Ella was able to study during her research. Documents compiled by Breasted in his Ancient Records of Egypt. Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest, completed in 1905 and published the following year,\textsuperscript{13} the study of the papyrus of Ani\textsuperscript{14} and the Egyptian collections of the Field Museum of Chicago and the then Haskell Museum, est. 1896, presided by Breasted and which eventually gave origin to the Oriental Institute (OI) of the University of Chicago. The museum remains part of the OI to this day. Miss Ella studied these archaeological collections as part of her pioneering study.

She had access to reports on the Dahshour excavation from a strictly archaeological standpoint\textsuperscript{15}. Besides these first-hand sources, Miss Ella consulted basic supporting texts on this subject, such as C. Richard Lepsius', Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien\textsuperscript{16} and Adolf Erman's Life in ancient Egypt,\textsuperscript{17} among others.

Miss Ella carefully differentiates her information by separating available information about noble women and those belonging to the masses, which she says can be studied especially from plastic testimonies (p. 7), highlighting their support for their life companion's daily labor, (p. 8).

Regarding the subjects considered, the author studies family life and social customs associated to Egyptian women, reaching the conclusion that women were regarded by their partners not only in consideration to their beauty or their roles as wives and mothers but also for their diligence and family activities (p. 1) The problem of educational possibilities granted or denied to Egyptian women is foreseen by our author (p.2), who also studies the title nbt pr for which they are typically known (p.4). She also emphasizes (p. 6) that women could own properties themselves, with resulting financial independence.

She also studies the "character", apparel and hairstyles of Egyptian women. In this section she highlights their important participation in religious life (p.9), notwithstanding their presence in other social spheres as proof of their love of life and relevant social activity (p.10). Here she insists that the ideal perspective on women shown frequently in

\textsuperscript{13} 5 v., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1906, illus., maps., (Ancient records). Regarding the work's conclusion date cfr. I, XIX.
\textsuperscript{15} Jacques de Morgan, Fouilles à Dahchour mars-juin 1894, Vienna, A. Holzhausen, 1895, 260 p., illus., maps., plans.
\textsuperscript{16} 12 v., Berlin, Nicolai, 1849-1856, 900 pl., illus., maps., plans.
\textsuperscript{17} Trans. by H. M. Tirad, London, MacMillan, 1894, 628 p., illus., maps., plans.
plastic sources was not static, as it evolved over time (p. 11-12). She mentions the particular shade of skin tone assigned in pictorial samples to women and noblewomen in particular (p.21).

She analyzes the civil rights they enjoyed as granted by the law and which gave them a great degree of equality with men, even allowing the possession of property and the capacity to hold public office (p.15) long before other ancient societies. Women had a right to be judged, as she proves via famous cases such as the prosecution by Pepy I of her queen (VI Dynasty) or the famous "Harem Conspiracy" against Ramesses III (XIX D.) and the subsequent tomb raiding trials under Ramesses IX (XX Dynasty), just to name some examples (pp. 16-17).

In regards to women and their ability to rise in political office, she not only highlights the obvious example of Hatshepsut but also the role of Tiye (emphasizing her rise from the "middle class" levels of Egyptian society), and above all, of Nefertiti as a woman of "exceptional personality", which led her to hold a "prominent place in the political life of her time". She ends this section pointing that "the influence of these queens probably accounts for the great prominence of the wives of the officials who seem to occupy as important a place as their husbands in the political life, coming in for their share of the rich favors and making public speeches before the court in acknowledgement of the same" (pp. 17-20).

She closes her study by reviewing the economic participation of women via professions such as dancer or singer, maid, weaver or farmer (21-24). Egyptian women were an important and acting member of Egyptian society. But “this lady of old Egypt [is] dimly seen like a moving picture without color” (p. 24).

This thesis is perhaps the oldest investigation on the subject ever written in American continent, the same year as the previously cited Revillout study (1909) and for anyone with a knowledge of this subject's literature, it highlights the methodological proposal of her primary sources, topics of choice and her conclusions, all these with great similarity to future research studies on Egyptian women.

Who was Miss Ella's advisor? As we said, he was very probably Professor J.H. Breasted, who after his last expedition to Egypt, which began in 1906 and ended abruptly in 1907, was materially forced to remain in Chicago by different circumstances which it is not possible to study now. Miss Ella benefited from the forced stay of the great Egyptologist in Chicago: He probably was her Master Thesis advisor between 1908-1909, as Miss Ella's scholarly documentation in the UC files seems to imply. In a personal note from Breasted to "Professor Small", he declares his agreement to participate in her exam to obtain a Master's Degree in August of 1909. The exam finally took place on the 25th of that month.

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18 About this difficult time in Breasted’s academic life, vid. our article “The Price of Success. An Episode in the life of James Henry Breasted, Egyptologist”, GM, (to be published)
19 College record matrix number 20325. Archive of the Office of the University Registrar, University of Chicago.
20 University of Chicago, Oriental Institute Archives, Office Files of James Henry Breasted, 1909.
with the participation of the great Egyptologist who, if not directly responsible, must have at least closely guided Miss Ella, as her own thesis work suggests.

WHO WAS MISS ELLA SATTERTHWAIT? HER LIFE AND HER TIME.

She was born on October 18th, 1884 to Charles Satterthwait of Iowa and Mary Branson of Ohio. According to the Federal Census of 1900, at 15 years of age she resided in Cedar Rapids, Linn, Iowa. It must have been at this time when her father decided to move the family to Chicago, where Ella would go to Hyde Park High School. The Satterthwaits then lived in 5558 Lexington Ave, renamed "University Avenue" in 1912 - that is, they lived in the heart of the University of Chicago, established in 1892. Ella joined this institution on September 16th, 1904, to pursue a Bachelor in Philosophy (Ph. B.) in the Literature College. She obtained her degree on March 17th, 1908, and enrolled immediately (on March 30th the same year) in the Graduate School, where she would study towards a Ph. Master with a History specialty. Yearbooks from this period register her progression as a Junior, Senior and then Graduate student.

In 1909 as a full time student in the Masters program with a History minor, she became one of Breasted's students, at least in the "History of Eastern Art since Ancient Times through Alexander's Conquest" class. She also studied Greek, Hebrew, Ancient Eastern history and Psychology of Religion, among other courses. These do not show a clear inclination towards Egyptology, but as we saw, the content of her work does reflect close guidance from the Egyptologist.

After obtaining her Master's, Ella enrolled immediately in Doctoral studies, this time in "English, History," which she began in the fall of 1909. But she was nearing the end of her student life: both the Annual Register as well as her studies Record show a

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21 Our hesitance to acknowledge Breasted's direct guidance is because Miss Ella's academic information is not clear. Breasted's name is only mentioned in regards to the "final exam" on the aforementioned date, without specifying whether he was the thesis advisor, which seems most likely to us. We must also say that, according to a letter from Breasted to Harper dated July 18th, 1905, his department approved theses collectively at a "departmental meeting". UCL.DSC. Office of the President Harper, Judson, and Burton Administrations's. Records Box 12, Folder 13. From studying these documents, Breasted's interest on his students' academic life is apparent. He always aimed to conciliate his teaching work with his fertile research life.

22 California Death Index 1940-1997, Sacramento, CA, USA: State of California Department of Health Services. Center for Health Statistics. [database on line.] Provo, UT, USA. Ancestry.com, accessed May 25, 2012. Research on the life of Ella Satterthwait represented a difficult task. We found needed guidance in the National Archives in Washington. The information was completed as much as possible with data obtained in the University of Chicago, which is cited accordingly.


24 Breasted taught the majority of Ancient East classes in the Department of Semitic Languages and Literatures: “104. Egyptian archaeology and the Old Testament....118. Egypt, Babylonia and the Early Orient. 120. Europe and Asia in the Egyptian Monuments. And the complete Egyptology section: “VII. Egyptian Language and Literature”, 11 courses, to wit; “Beginner's Hieroglyphic; Translation of Egyptian Texts; Late Egyptian; Egyptian Literature; Pyramid Texts; Egyptian Texts of the Graeco-Roman Period; Coptic Language; Coptic Language. Sahidic Dialect; History of Egypt; Egyptian Archaeology; Egyptian Life and Antiquities”, Annual Register 1909-1910... op. cit.: 271-278.

gradual abandonment of her doctoral studies, which she regularly kept until 1910. She then stopped enrolling, still participating in courses as a visitor in 1912, 1914 and 1915, the last year in her official record marking her as a UC student.  

What happened? We are inclined to think about problems of a financial nature leading her father to stop supporting his daughter's studies. In fact, Miss Ella began working in the University Library since at least 1908, after concluding her Bachelor's and as she was doing her Master studies. And it was precisely on July 1st, 1911 she began formally working as a librarian, entering as a cataloger with a monthly salary of $60 USD. Her income was always modest, growing to $65 in 1912, $70 in 1914 and $85 by 1918, her highest salary by then as an "Assistant". The Alumni Directory. The University of Chicago 1913 registers her title (from 1908) and academic degree (towards the year of 1910) indicating that she worked in the University Library. The same directory, from 1919, registers that Miss Ella became an Assistant in UC's Harper Library.

Librarians in the UC, since 1912 the William Rainey Harper Memorial Library in honor of the first Dean of the University, classified from 50 to 60,000 books every year, which would increase the number of books in the UC libraries to 545,890 by July of 1918. Among the Assistants' duties were conforming specialized bibliographic collections, cataloging diverse bibliographical materials, compiling selective bibliographies, performing advanced reference work, including independent research from rare sources from their evaluation and study. The Assistant would be in charge of an extensive collection of materials specialized in one field of knowledge.

During this period Miss Ella lived in 5552 of the old Lexington Street, since 1912 renamed University Avenue. In any case, she remains tied to her family home and looking after her parents, Charles and Mary, and her 82 year old grandmother Elizabeth, still alive in 1920. It seems that in 1919, at 35 years of age, she married George H. Chalmers, probably born in 1893 in Illinois of Scottish descent. The Census of 1920 registers her

27 Scale of titles and salaries in the UC Library, UCL.DSC. University Library Records Series II, 1910-1928, Box 12, Folder 15 and Box 16 Folder 8.
31 Annual Register. Covering the Academic Year Ending June 3, 1918 with Announcements for the Year 1918-1919, Chicago, The University of Chicago, 1919, XIII+768 p.: 422.
32 Internal documents of the UC Library. UCL.DSC. University Library Records Series II, 1910-1928, Box 16, Folder 1 and 12.
under her husband's surname,34 just as in the records of the University Library where she still worked for two more years35 since she was not expected to be rehired for 192136.

Maybe the search for opportunities offered by the "Far West" motivated a radical change in Mrs. Ella's life. It's likely that by 1922 or 1923 the Satterthwaits moved to Los Angeles County, California, where the 1930 Census registers them. Ella's husband was a merchantman ("wholesale grocery", according to the Census), so by then we can imagine her helping him in these activities. The Census shows her not having any formal work, so it would seem she did not return to the university life she had known in Chicago. She had no children, either37. She looked after her parents, the dates of their deaths unknown to us. However, we can say that Ella Satterthwait died in Los Angeles on September 11, 194038.

REFLECTIONS.
Miss Ella Satterthwait's life, her "micro-history"39, is a faithful mirror of the life realities of many North American women at the beginning of the last century.

In effect, the ideas keeping women mainly in a private environment and away from academic achievements had been by no means overcome by the dawn of the XX century. One of the best examples we can find, from the time of Miss Ella's school years and a summary of thoughts still very much in vogue at that time is William Hyde (The College Man and the College Woman, Houghton, Boston, 1906), who believes women must be in charge of the domestic environment in order to meet her social functions and in benefit of the nation's economy:

“Food must be prepared and served. The house must be furnished and kept in order. Cloth must be fitted to the person who is to wear, and kept cleanly and presentable. Children must be separately reared and individually trained. Hospitality must be extended. The sick must be nursed and the aged must be cared for. The right rendering and ordering of these and kindred services is woman’s distinctive economic function. Happy is the woman who as daughter, sister, wife, mother, finds herself excused from the task of direct economic production by generous devotion of father, brother, husband or son, and can find the economic justification of her life in this ministry and superintendence of the common household consumption… From the foregoing it is clear that the ideal place for woman is in the home; that only when a home is out of the question may woman acceptably enter other activities; and that, even when forced to earn part of her living, she must be

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36 Internal document of the UC library. UCLDSC. University Library Records Series II, 1910-1928, Box 16, Folder 14.
38 California Death Index 1940-1997, loc cit.
banished from the world of large affairs, for they are ‘exclusively masculine occupations’ and to enter them would be to transgress against ‘the womanly ideal’.”

And, what career paths were suitable for women who, because of their personal situations, had to "transgress womanly ideal"? Those which allowed “production for immediate consumption”, such as

“nursing, domestic service, teaching, typewriting, retailing in small communities, work for wages of salaries in factories or offices, practice medicine, acting, music, the management of such local industries as serve patrons personally known to the manager…”

Unfortunately, the profession of "Egyptologist" does not appear in this list...

The other fundamental field for women was, of course, procreation. Even Charles W. Eliot himself, the President of the prestigious Harvard University during those years (from 1869 to 1909), thought that even though in recent years more women were forced to forget about married life, since

“The secondary and higher education of women has been greatly improved during the past forty years; but it has not been sufficiently affected by the considerations that all women should be prepared in youth to maternity…[for] the happiest, most informing, and most serviceable occupation of the female sex—[es] the bearing and bringing up of children…”

Of course, against this perspective, some liberal thought masters began to offer forms of higher education from the end of the XVIII century and basically in the great cities, among them Catherine Beecher, Benjamin Rush, DeWitt Clinton, Charles Burroughs and Emma Willard. For example, for Burroughs it was necessary to set "superficial and ornamental" education aside in order to promote another type of education based on culture, the development of women's capabilities, knowledge and intellectual excellence. However, the dilemma between "domesticity" and a "professional career" would still affect the lives of many women towards the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX.

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41 Apud ibid.: I, 102. The author collects diverse opinions along these lines, which dominated throughout the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century in the U.S.

42 Apud ibid.: I, 104.

43 Woody, op. cit.: I, 301.


The path towards college education was still difficult. It was even thought that the years of study required for college degrees would affect a woman’s health: study was beyond their purview (the home) and of course beyond their physical and mental aptitudes. It was said that “Women know not how to think; they perceive and can associate ideas, but can no go further”\(^{46}\).

This explains why Prof. Quincy, President of Harvard, said to one of the six females aspiring to enter the University in 1836: “My dear, we never allow girls at Harvard. You know the place for girls is at home”\(^{47}\). In fact, it was not until 1874 and in response to pressure from feminine associations such as the Women’s Association Education of Boston that the Harvard Corporation offered women University professor-supported tests\(^{48}\).

Yale University granted its first Doctorate degree to a man in 1862. In the field of education the first Ph. D. thesis by a woman was presented in 1877 in Boston University by Helen Magill, a pupil of Swarthmore. It was followed by degrees granted by Cornell, Syracuse and Pennsylvania in 1880\(^{49}\). From 1862 until 1950s, over 130,000 Ph. D. degrees were granted in this field, of which at least 15,000 were obtained by women\(^{50}\).

Yale opened higher level courses in philosophy and arts aimed at women in 1846, but they were not admitted to postgraduate courses until 1891, at the same time as Brown University. The Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences was established in 1872 and accepted women into postgraduate courses in 1894, corresponding with the University of Pennsylvania in 1882. Columbia University began a higher studies program in Philosophy in 1890 and in Pure Sciences in 1892, both accepting women\(^{51}\). John Hopkins University admitted them since 1907. In contrast, Princeton and the University of Virginia remained closed to women until 1970\(^{52}\). Of women colleges in 1907, only Bryn Mawr granted Ph. D. degrees.\(^{53}\)

The University of Chicago, established in 1892, was a pioneering higher education institution which offered equal study and professional development opportunities for both men and women. Between 1892 and 1897, ten women received Ph. D. degrees and eleven Master's degrees in diverse fields. Even more, five women joined the faculty between 1892 and 1893, and ten between 1897 and 1898.\(^{54}\) However, aside from being only a few, their

\(^{46}\) Farello, op. cit: 169, 170.  
\(^{47}\) Apud. Farello, op. cit.: 165.  
\(^{49}\) Solomon , op. cit.: 134.  
\(^{50}\) Farello, op. cit.: 464-465.  
\(^{51}\) Woody, op. cit.: II, 333-334.  
\(^{52}\) Solomon , op. cit.: 134.  
promotion process was very slow, slower still than that of their male counterparts and sometimes with lesser salaries\textsuperscript{55}.

Despite all these accomplishments, still in 1905 May S. Cheney, Secretary of the University of California, argued, "Will Nature Eliminate the College Women?" in an article\textsuperscript{56}. This taking into consideration the opinion of respected and prestigious medical professionals such as Dr. G. Stanley Hall, who wrote in a recent work: “From the available data, it seems that the more scholastic the education of women, the fewer children, and the harder and more dreaded is parturition, and the less the ability to nurse children”.

Other studies by Drs. Hall and Smith pointed that more advanced education for women

“reduces the rate of marriage and offspring, since less than fifty per cent of the graduates of these colleges have married, a large percent of those who have married are childless, and, for those who are mothers, the average number of children per mother is less than two. In other words the college classes have failed to reproduce themselves. The fact, if it be a fact, that college educated women tend to become sterile, and fail to reproduce themselves, would seem to point to a merciless law of nature operating to eliminate them.”\textsuperscript{57}

Fortunately, the author's conclusion was that there was no such risk since other studies showed that a correlation between "higher studies" and sterility "may not necessarily" exist, and in any case, "the strongest argument in favor of educating women is that it prepares them to be wiser and better mothers. If our present system of education tends to sterility, it is our duty to find a different system which shall not operate to cut off the most enterprising and highly developed class of society”\textsuperscript{58}. And on top of recommending a more careful analysis of any evidence of a decree of nature regarding "the progressive extermination of the college woman", he concluded by stating:

“May it not be that the women who bore the brunt of social opprobrium in the struggle for intellectual emancipation exhausted themselves in this willing service to humanity, and have left to the women who come after them that perfect adjustment to physical and social environment which shall prove the college woman fittest to survive? Not until the effect of inherited prejudice has worn away, and we allow young men and young women to associate naturally during the years most favorable to marriage, shall we have a final answer to the question ‘What will Nature do with the college woman?’ Will she assimilate or eliminate her?”\textsuperscript{59}

In fact, the true and greater problem was the lack of work opportunities for women. Some of them, who wanted to study law or medicine professionally but who were rejected...
without consideration by their society, which outside of an elementary teaching field saw women and their professional capacity with mistrust.\textsuperscript{60} So it didn't matter if there were 987 women and just 582 men studying in California state universities in 1907, 497 vs 473 in Iowa, 393 vs 382 in Kansas, 879 vs 465 in Minnesota, 725 vs 314 in Nebraska, 448 vs 369 in Texas or 487 vs 209 in Washington\textsuperscript{64}: the job market was more limited to them. However, there would be 22 million women employed in diverse professions by 1956.\textsuperscript{62}

It's because of this that Miss Ella has the reality of her time applied to her as seen in \textit{College Woman Graduate} from 1907: Of 3,800 women students graduated from two large colleges, there were only 33 doctors working in their fields, seven lawyers and two ministers in divinity. There were 21 nurses, 50 writers, 100 who performed in the "philanthropic world", 85 worked in bookstores, five were actresses and two were architects. That is, 16\% were professionals and the remaining 84\% were either "homemakers or teachers". From the above we can conclude:

\begin{quote}
“as the two colleges chosen are pre-eminent for their standards of scholarship, it would seem to be a fair inference that the college woman graduate of today is in general either a home maker or a teacher. Many teachers, however, are but teachers in passing, since notably through marriage, they subsequently become home makers. The home, even more than teaching, is therefore seen to be the ultimate goal and fruition of the life of the majority of college women”\textsuperscript{63}
\end{quote}

Solomon\textsuperscript{64} analyzes with great clarity the prospects of a woman at the beginning of the XX century after concluding her superior studies, like Miss Ella. Curiously, she had a direct example in the field of Egyptology: Caroline Louise Ransom Williams who became a "Sometime Associate Professor of Art and Archeology in Bryn Mawr College; Formerly Assistant Curator in the Egyptian Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Honorary Curator of the Egyptian collections, The New York Historical Society,” among other important academic achievements. She was the first North American Egyptologist educated as such by Erman's side, as a result from Breasted's motivation and of course her own talents. She was the first Egyptologist to become a member of the Epigraphic Survey of the Oriental Institute in Luxor, in 1926. No other women would receive such an honor until the 1970s. Her publications\textsuperscript{65} were also greatly appreciated\textsuperscript{66}.

\textsuperscript{60} Woody, \textit{op. cit.}: II, 321-323.
\textsuperscript{61} According to Farello's chart, \textit{op. cit.}: 190. In other states the difference in favor of men is minimal: for example, 475 men vs 420 women in Illinois, 992 vs 669 in Michigan.
\textsuperscript{62} Farello, \textit{op. cit.}: 453-455, about the great development of women’s work and its relationship with education during this time.
\textsuperscript{63} Woody, \textit{op. cit.}: II, 323. A much broader report showing diverse work possibilities for women in the first decades of the XX century, from Elizabeth Kemper Adams, \textit{et al.}, “College women in non-teaching occupations: a study made by the Committee on Vocational Opportunities Other Than Teaching”, \textit{The Journal of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae}, Chicago, VI, 2, March 1913: 73.-88.
\textsuperscript{64} Op. cit. chapter VIII.
In comparison, Miss Ella and many other women like her who tried to follow the path of college study met with the unavoidable restrictions of their time and with written or unwritten rules that defined the participation of women then. As Solomon quotes a reflection from a young woman at the time:

“You know I am very anxious to go away to study [medicine...] but I am trying to be contented and happy... but I do not keep always patient... I am learning everything about housekeeping and sewing. Mother is a New Englander and has taught me that no true woman should be ignorant of the way a household should be carried on…”

And also:

“Strong, indeed, is the girl who can decide within herself where duty lies, and follow that decision against the combined forces which hold her back”

In fact "various forces" acted upon these North American women of generations between 1870 and 1920 regardless of their college formation. The options varied from remaining single to marrying. What to do after professional graduation?

“Graduating seniors in the first two generations did not question the belief that they should contain their ambitions within the boundaries of domesticity. Yet even while these students paid homage to motherhood, new opportunities arising from social and economic developments in their lifetime forced educated women to refine their options, though not without a struggle. The graduated felt acutely the interplay of pressures imposed by what her family expected and what college education represented to her”

In fact the "family claim" that was well known by Miss Ella imposed itself. That is, the tradition that an adult single woman's first duty was caring for her parents, combined with the fact that at the beginning of the century women's work was still poorly seen by middle and upper class families unless forced by economic circumstances.

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67 Fall 1875 in Nancy N. Barker in Vassar Alumnae Magazine, 47, p. 28 apud Solomon. op. cit.: 115. In fact, among the few courses Miss Ella followed while preparing for her Ph. D. are "Applic. Of Heat to Food Mater" and “Food Preparation”. College record matrix number 20325, loc. cit.


69 Solomon, op. cit.: 116.

In either case, for many graduates a job position was temporary since they did not intend to permanently postpone marriage. Graduates certainly married much later than non-graduates. The average was 22 years of age, but much later for graduates. Of these, less than 50% married, and they had fewer children, which was also a source of social criticism. After marriage it was common to embrace fully the roles of wife and mother, assimilating her husband's ambitions as her own or sharing his workload whether on professional or business endeavors. After all, work life remained dominated by men, particularly the most prestigious fields (Divinity Ministry, medicine, laws and academics).\(^{71}\)

Therefore, marrying or earning a living as a high school teacher were the most common escapes for many college graduates.\(^ {72}\) In fact, even though the number of possible fields of work for women increased greatly between 1890 and 1930, many women still chose to work for a few years at the end of their university studies as a "prelude to their long-term career": becoming wives and mothers.\(^ {73}\)

We must also factor in the cost of superior education. Scholarships for postgraduate studies were scarce and even more so for women, which forced even the most brilliant students to find diverse work to save up for their studies. In the University of Chicago, the number of scholarships generously offered at its opening was not replicated in the first decade of the previous century.\(^ {74}\)

\(^{71}\) Solomon, op. cit: 116.-130. Even in the academia, salaries were not high. In other levels to which women generally had access, the situation was even worse, from high school teachers to college teachers. Despite the academic requirements demanded, for the latter, "her salary is very small as a rule. She is often unable to afford even ten dollars for the theater; and the dentist’s bill looms large in her imagination!" Amy Tanner, “The Salaries of Women Teachers in Institutions of Collegiate Rank”, The Association of Collegiate Alumnae Magazine, Richmond Hill, N.Y., series III, 15, November 1907: 20.-24.

\(^{72}\) Vid. Annie Crosby Emery [Dean of Women, University of Wisconsin,] “The Method and Aims of Graduate Study for Women”, The Association of Collegiate Alumnae Magazine, Richmond Hill, N.Y., series III, 3, February 1900: 12-18, : 9-18, specifically pp. 12-13. Marguerite Witmer Kehr, “A Comparative Study of the Curricula for Men and Women in the Colleges and Universities of the United States”, The Journal of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, Chicago, XIV, 3, December 1920: 3-26, also analyzes the professions most commonly taken by college or university graduates. In the following order: teaching, social services (charitable organizations, childcare, treating social offenders, among others), work in libraries (such as Miss Ella); business, literary work (author, bibliographer, editor, translator, among others), religious work (missionary, nun, assistant to the clergy); clerical work in the educational field, personal services (private secretary, childrearing assistance); and professional work in fields such as medicine, nursing and engineering, among others.


\(^{74}\) Solomon, op. cit.: 136. Regarding the amount and the characteristics of Fellowships (from $120 to $520 USD per year) and Scholarships in UC during 1907, vid. “Scholarship Opportunities Offered to Women Students by Institutional Members of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae”, The Association of Collegiate Alumnae Magazine, Richmond Hill, N.Y., series III, 15, November 1907: 6. In fact, the difficulties faced by women to continue studying after high school in the U.S. have for years been the focus of attention by specialists and government departments. Cfr. as an example Esther Manning Westervelt, Barriers to Women’s Participation in Postsecondary Education, A Rev of Research and Commentary as of 1973-74, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare-Education Division-National Center for Education Statistics, 1975, VI+74 p.
Scholarships were not enough to cover the expenses entailed by college life, much less at a graduate level and even less so for women, so some of them made major sacrifices to complete their studies and obtain their Ph. D. Even if they obtained it, women faced diverse limitations that in many instances relegated them to administrative, non-academic work or forced them into universities "home economics departments".  

And in Miss Ella's case, the "problem" was even greater: she could either leave the U.S. for Germany to continue her studies in Egyptology, as her mentor Breasted and her predecessor Williams did, or she remained in the U.S. and completed an affordable doctorate in an American university, specifically in Chicago. She was surely forced to do the latter, without success.

**IN CONCLUSION.**

Why blame Miss Ella, then, for not having continued her career as an Egyptologist? Was it not the great Egyptologist James Henry Breasted who at 21 seemed to be on the path of a prosperous pharmacist career? He actually studied between 1882 and 1886 at the Chicago College of Pharmacy and began working at a pharmacy in Omaha, Nebraska that same year. As his son Charles Breasted wrote:

"This picture of my father as a youth of twenty-one, standing behind the prescription counter of an old-fashioned, gas-lit drug store, with its glass vases of colored liquids in the windows, its medley of medicinal smells, its wall cases full of little drawers with porcelain pulls bearing enigmatic Latin abbreviations in black letters, has always possessed for me a curiously wistful and at the same time startling quality. He might so easily have drifted into the respectable oblivion of a pharmaceutical career".

Instead, he wrote to his sister on October 26, 1887:

"The world appears very beautiful now that I have a mission in it, and life has a new meaning. I begin studying in Chicago, at the Congregational Institute [Chicago Theological Seminary] next Tuesday. Do not think me inconsiderate in one particular: I shall be of no expense to father".

Breasted's stated "mission in life" to preach the Gospel transformed into what we now know. And if his parents eventually accepted his decision to become a "Orientalist" (whatever this meant), they did so with the apprehension that no good could come out of young James' decision. They would soon realize how baseless their fears were, but at least

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75 Solomon, *op. cit.*: 135.-137. A discussion about these typically "women's" university departments at the time Miss Ella entered the University of Chicago, from R.H. Jesse (President of the Missouri University), "The Position of Household Economics in the Academic Curriculum", *The Association of Collegiate Alumnae Magazine*, Richmond Hill, N.Y., series III, 10, January 1905: 24-29.
77 Charles Breasted, *op. cit.*: 17.
on one occasion his father regardless doubted of his professional future: “Now the question is what has old senackarib [sic.] got to do with my raising the money to pay the rent”\textsuperscript{79}

Ella Satterthwait did not have the same luck. Or opportunities. Or interest. But despite this, perhaps for the first time in our continent, she was able to brilliantly write about the women of ancient Egypt, thanks to Breasted’s guidance and her own talent. Her contributions to Egyptology did not reach any further, however. To the best of her abilities, she maintained contact with scholarly life and modestly played a part in the growth of what is now one of the foremost universities in the U.S. And she encountered the same problems many other women faced and continue to face to reach their professional development in an academic environment. Maybe because of this, on her deathbed she may have thought: “I was a victim of the feminine mystique…\textsuperscript{80} Or the “womanly ideal”. It would have been the same.

\textsuperscript{79} Apud Abt, op. cit: 18.
\textsuperscript{80} As written by Renee Kogel, “The Reentry Experience”, Irene Thompson and Audrey Roberts, eds., \textit{The Road Retaken. Women Reenter the Academy}, New York, The Modern Language Association of America, 1985, VI+152 p. 9-13. Quote in p. 9. The problems described by the author to resume her studies after marriage and maternity and to reach her place in a male-dominated academic world are very applicable to Miss Ella's case in certain aspects. The biggest difference is the times: the decade of 1910 for one and the decades of 1950-1980 for the other.