

On the relationship between Maat's concept and female status in ancient Egypt

Xinbo He

Northwest Normal University, GANSU, China

1742218373@qq.com

Abstract. In ancient Egypt with a strong religious belief, Maat was recognized, followed, and respected by all ancient Egyptians for its unique figurative metaphor and multiple connotations. The goddess Maat not only mastered the order of the universe but also guided real society. She was one of the important objects of goddess worship in ancient Egypt. The belief in the goddess Maat, which has been popular for thousands of years, is an imprint of the female status in ancient Egypt. The Maat's concepts of justice, harmony, and order have influenced the legal, family, and political status of women in ancient Egypt. Maat's concepts run through the history of the rise and fall of ancient Egyptian civilization and are deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, which are the spiritual source of the high status of ancient Egyptian women.

Keywords: ancient Egypt; Maat's concept; female status; goddess worship.

Ancient Egypt was a country with strong religious beliefs. Goddess worship, as a manifestation of religious belief, was indispensable in the life of ancient Egyptians. As one of the important objects of goddess worship, Maat's goddess belief is also universal and social. Siegfried Morenz believes that not only the king will defend Maat for his country, but also every citizen will defend Maat even for his or her interests [1]. The meanings of "truth" and "order" advocated by the goddess Maat are summarized into the Maat's concept. As an important window for us to explore the spiritual world of ancient Egyptians, there are not a few scholars who have analyzed Maat's ideas [2]. However, most of these studies pay attention to etymology based on primitive inscriptions, religious philosophy, and practical functions, but little attention is paid to the view that it is the universality of Maat's concept that determines it is also the key perspective in gender studies.

In 1992, Lichtheim described the relationship between Maat and ancient Egyptian women in his work *Autobiographical Inscriptions of Ancient Egypt*, based on a statue of Mrs. Sb-n-spdt named CG 42228. He believed that the lack of Maat's title about women in the words carved on the statue confirmed an obvious fact: Maat's worship was obvious. Except for temple services, women did not hold public office [3]. In 1997, Lichtheim published the work of *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, pointing out many times that Maat's followers were men and women [4]. In the same year, in *Ceremony of the God of Maat in Ancient Egypt and the Manifestation of Its Legitimacy*, Emily Teeter made a slight mention of the relationship between Maat and women from the political and religious perspectives and believed that women such as the wives of God, Amunirdis I and Shepenwepet II, showed that Maat was a vivid manifestation of their kingship. As the king's agent, women's ceremonies are conducive to maintaining world order and national well-being, so from the perspective of legitimacy and power, women play a vital role in the effective implementation of Maat [5].

Comparatively speaking, in *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* published in 2004, Maulana Karenga discussed the theological connection between Maat and women more comprehensively, extensively, and deeply, not only investigating the ethical and religious meanings of the concept of women but also spent twenty pages explaining the moral status of ancient Egyptian women in Maatian theology. The author believes that in Maat's theology, men and women have the same opportunity to enter the afterlife based on the same moral obligation. After entering the afterlife, eternal life does not depend on identifying with Osiris or any other male or female identity, but on Maat. If anyone wants to suggest that the identification with a certain divinity can ensure eternal life, it must be Maat, a female divinity. Because the ultimate moral and spiritual

achievement is to become the embodiment of Maat. In fact, a person can only become Osiris by becoming a Maatian person [6].

The female status in ancient Egypt occupies an important place in gender studies. At present, there are several perspectives explaining why the female status in ancient Egypt is high in academia, such as religious belief as the ideological basis; economic power as a guarantee of life; marriage customs as the embodiment of social ethics; legal guarantee for defending women's rights. The juxtaposition of religious belief and other factors, separately speaking, may split the integrity of the factors affecting the female status in ancient Egypt, and there is also a close relationship between religious belief and other factors, so the current research is obviously not sufficient and convincing enough. Although there are abundant academic achievements in the field of women in ancient Egypt, it ignores that Maat's concept, as a concrete component of religious beliefs in ancient Egypt, has a subtle influence on other explanatory angles such as law, family, and politics, which is an important explanation path for the higher status of ancient Egyptian women [7].

From the existing research abroad, western scholars have already had a rich understanding of the connotation of Maat's concept and ancient Egyptian women, and this understanding is mainly embodied in demonstrating the multiple implications of Maat by discussing the female status. Domestic academia mainly uses the Goddess Maat to explain and enrich the status and image of ancient Egyptian women, but there is no "point-to-point" research on the concept of Maat and the status of ancient Egyptian women. Because of the complexity of Maat's concept, we need to explore the female status in ancient Egypt from multiple dimensions. This paper intends to analyze the concrete and multiple connotations of Maat's concept, probe into the close relationship with the female status in ancient Egypt, and promote the explanation of the reasons for the higher status of women in ancient Egypt to make it more specific and detailed.

1. The concepts of justice and truth affecting the legal status of women in ancient Egypt

Maat's concept of justice and truth is the core and pursuit of ancient Egyptian law, which improved the legal status of ancient Egyptian women. This pursuit of justice and truth is first reflected in the universality of law enforcement in ancient Egypt, which shows that women are not excluded from the legislative and judicial system in ancient Egypt, but occupy a very important position in it and safeguard their interests from legal practice. During the Middle Kingdom period, an oracle literature named *The Eloquent Peasant* described that Maat was frequently mentioned in several petitions to the king after the farmer's interests were violated by powerful men, imploring the king to uphold the fairness and justice represented by Maat [8]. People at the bottom of society, such as farmers, were also aware of the right to pursue justice and truth, so Maat's principles are not exclusive to a particular group but are recognized by all social strata. In ancient Egyptian society under the autocratic centralized regime, the king enjoyed an unparalleled supreme position, therefore, the king alone was the law. However, the case of dividing marital property recorded in papyrus No.2021 in Turin revealed to us: "Just like Pharaoh (May you live long, be stable and be healthy!) put it that way: everyone can dispose of his property as he wishes" [9]. The king applied truth and justice to all people in ancient Egypt, not a specific group, which showed that justice and truth were important connotations of Maat's concept and were widely recognized by ancient Egyptians.

Secondly, it is reflected in the authority of the legislator king, who is a model of practicing Maat's concept of justice and truth, and the authority enables the legal status of ancient Egyptian women to be truly implemented. In a narrow sense, the king's words are the law. The king endowed justice and truth to the world through law, which made the goddess Maat happy. *Hermopolis, Decree of [Sety I]* in the 19th dynasty recorded in the law: "(while) I appear as [king...loss.....]their son, who rejoices in what is right (maat), a trusty protector. My Majesty shall exist as long as Re exists, for he has decreed his lifespan for me, according as (I) have presented Right (maat) to him upon earth, and he is gladdened by [my] goodness [daily(?).....]" [10]. Maat's concept of justice and truth is the basis and

foundation of ancient Egyptian law. Therefore, the landing of Maat's concept of justice and truth is mandatory, which is guaranteed by the state's coercive force. Ramses III claimed to have restored order in Maat, which enabled "Egyptian women to do everything smoothly, to go wherever they want, and to meet good people along the way" [11]. It is the king's fair attitude towards women that makes the laws formulated by the king effectively safeguard the interests of women in ancient Egypt, and protecting women's legal status has become part of the king's responsibility and mission.

The gender of Maat God is an important factor to consider when we discuss the legal status of ancient Egyptian women, because this factor reflects and affects the degree of judicial participation of ancient Egyptian women in legal practice, and has a subtle effect on the promotion of their legal status. In the 29th (b) scripture to prevent the heart of the dead from being robbed in the underworld, "The source of my life is Maat, and I live by it" [12]. The implication is that, firstly, if Maat (a feather) symbolizing justice and truth is lighter than the heart of the deceased, the deceased will be forever dead. The feather of the goddess Maat is the criterion for judging whether the deceased has done anything wrong. Secondly, the deceased confessed that everything he said and did before his death was in line with Maat's guidelines, which increased his bargaining power in passing the trial in the afterlife. The deceased, both males and females, are eager to enter the afterlife smoothly, and the key to deciding whether they can enter the afterlife is the goddess Maat.

It can be seen from the above that Maat's participation in the afterlife trial is extremely high. In order to promote Maat's concept of justice and truth, secular trials often follow some scenes, principles, or conventions of the afterlife trial. Since Maat, the goddess, has considerable participation in the afterlife trial, she will also appear in the secular trial. According to the previous work: "As the goddess of justice, she is the patron of judges who all wore small pendants of her as a sign of her authority over them" [13]. Russ VerSteege also mentioned, "It is especially important to note that Maat, the god representing fairness and justice, is a woman. In Deir el-Medina, women can be tried directly as judges" [14]. We can boldly infer that the female sex factor of the Maat Goddess is important in affecting the participation of ancient Egyptian women in legal practice.

At the same time, it is necessary for law enforcers to maintain judicial justice for ancient Egyptian women in order to defend and please the goddess Maat. Maat's concept of justice and truth guides people's code of conduct and moral norms. Making unfair judgments on women is an offense to the goddess Maat. Showing disrespect for women means openly competing with the beliefs of ancient Egyptians, and this kind of behavior is certainly not allowed by the king. "At the same time, the king was the chief priest of all cults. Any offence against law and order could be viewed as a religious matter, as an offence against maat" [15]. A legal document dating back to the New Kingdom from the craftsman village records a woman's complaint against her husband. A woman accused her husband of hitting her in court. She said, "As for me, my husband [...] Then he beat, beat [...] And I caused his mother to be brought, the [...] and then I called his mother ..." In the end, the judge ordered her husband to admit that he had done something wrong and swore to the chief executive that the woman won the case [16]. "I did the right thing and kept Maat" shows the husband's determination not to hurt his wife again by swearing to the gods. Maat is a symbol of justice and truth in ancient Egyptian mythology. Under Maat's law, Maat's concept of justice is sacred beyond the world, but it strongly guides the secular legal practice in ancient Egypt. Therefore, ideologically, justice and truth constitute the judge's trial criteria and conscience.

Justice, the rule of law, and the pursuit of truth are essential elements of advanced civilized society, and protecting the weak and respecting women are the ideal state and eternal pursuits of human society. The legal cases recorded in the above-mentioned original inscriptions reveal that under the supervision of Maat's concept of justice and truth, which is the core idea of ancient Egyptian law, ancient Egyptian laws can not only maintain their dignity and initial heart in practice but also guarantee the participation and winning rate of women as vulnerable groups. It was the ancient Egyptians' obedience and adherence to the connotation of justice and truth in Maat's concept that ensured that ancient Egyptian women enjoyed a certain legal status.

2. The concept of harmony and benevolence influenced the family status of ancient Egyptian women

The concepts of harmony [17] and benevolence in Maat's belief provide women with a higher position in the family and an ideological basis for a more equal and harmonious relationship between the two genders. On the one hand, in the genealogy of ancient Egyptian religious mythology, the goddess Maat is the daughter of Re and plays the role of a family member. She accompanied Re in the parade on the sun boat, which made her happy and her nostrils full of vitality [18]. Therefore, the image of the goddess Maat represents the implied meaning of the wife and mother in the ancient Egyptian family to some extent. On the other hand, Maat's concept, as the dominant consciousness of society, exhorts people to be kind and maintain harmony.

The concepts of harmony and benevolence have influenced males' views and attitudes towards their mothers and wives in ancient Egypt, which is conducive to improving the relationship between mother and child and husband and wife, thus affecting their family status. Maat embodies and spreads the oracle literature, which takes Maat's concept as the core, and the oracle literature should be consistent with Maat's concept.

Maat's concept of harmony and benevolence is mainly reflected in the ancient Egyptian oracle literature. One of the themes of oracle literature is to maintain family harmony and community peace. Maat's concept of harmony and kindness is manifested in maintaining the family, respecting the elders, and caring for the weak. The *Instruction of Any* records the son's high respect for his mother in the 18th dynasty:

"Doubt the food your mother gave you, support her as she supported you; She had a heavy load in you, but she did not abandon you. When you were born after your months, she was yet yoked <to you>, her breast in your month for three years. As you grew and your excrement disgusted, she was not disgusted, saying: What shall I do! When she sent you to school, and you were taught to write, she kept watching over you daily, with bread and beer in her house"[19].

This instruction summarizes the sacrifices made by the mother for her son's growth. At the back of the quotation, for the sake of family harmony, stability, and happiness of family members, the son is urged to establish a family, show his dedication to his children, and repay his mother. The son should take care of his parents, and the status of the mother is almost as important as that of the father. An oracle literature in the Middle Kingdom period reflects the positive attitude of men toward their wives: "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" [20]. In addition, three broken pieces of toilet paper recorded the instructions addressed to King Merikar: "Calm the weeper, don't oppress the widow" [21]. It can be seen that establishing a family and taking care of vulnerable groups such as mothers, wives, and widows are the obligations that all ancient Egyptian men, including kings and ordinary people, must fulfill, which constitutes the elements of Maat's concept of harmony and kindness. This explains the relationship between Maat's concept of harmony and kindness and the respect of ancient Egyptian men for their mothers and wives, thus contributing to the fact that ancient Egyptian women are "women were neither under the authority of their husbands nor their eldest sons" and "being equal to men in esteem as well as Law" after marriage [22]. The realization of the family status of women in ancient Egypt became a high performance.

The concepts of harmony and benevolence exist under the eternal order stipulated by Maat, and as social ethics and family virtues, they affect the family status of ancient Egyptian women. According to James P. Allen, what this concept of harmony and benevolence advocates is not the harmonious scene after justice triumphs over evil, let alone the harmonious realm where all beings are equal, but shows that different fields and levels of society have their own places and go their own ways. This is the meaning of Maat's concept of harmony [23]. The person in charge should do his duty, which is manifested in the family: "It is joy when your hand is with her, there are many who don't know this...Every man who founds a household should hold back the hasty heart"[24]. This harmonious family atmosphere is the practice of Maat's concept of harmony and kindness. Then, why is the

fulfillment of Maat's concept related to caring for the weak? Because Widows, divorcees and orphans are symptoms of potential chaos, taking care of them is equivalent to restoring Maat. The care for vulnerable groups has restored the social and religious balance [25]. Because the balance between men and women leads to harmony (regarded as Maat), and this harmony is particularly valued by the goddess Maat [26]. Therefore, men are warned to be kind to the weak and loved ones, including wives, mothers, and even widows.

Harmony and friendliness reflected by filial piety and respect between husband and wife are the moral demeanor advocated by feudal society and one of the core values of constructing a harmonious society. The above-mentioned literature on ancient Egyptian women fully expressed the connotation of harmony and kindness in Maat's concept by inculcating and coaxing sons to respect their mothers; husbands to care for their wives; family members should live in harmony; pay attention to the emotional foundation of the family even if they go against their wishes, and maintaining a harmonious atmosphere in the family. Maat's concept of harmony and benevolence embodies caring for the weak and respecting the lives of women, which influences the ancient Egyptians' views on female family members and maintains the high family status of ancient Egyptian women.

3. The concept of order and balance influencing the political status of women in ancient Egypt

Maat is an important part of ancient Egyptian religion, and it is also something that ancient Egyptians are obsessed with in real life. It is an Egyptological term that contains truth, order, and cosmic balance [27]. In ancient Egypt, women could become rulers and enjoy certain political status, which was inseparable from Maat's concept of order and balance. It is the unique connotation of Maat's concept of order and balance that laid the foundation for ancient Egyptian women to become rulers. The connotation of this order and balance is more reflected in the national politics of ancient Egypt: the king is the representative of the goddess Maat on earth, the legitimacy of the king's power and rule is endowed by Maat, the king's behavior must conform to Maat's concept, and it is the fate of the king to carry out the order of Maat in the world. In Maat's concept, the most important feature of order is eternity and universality, and the adherence to the mission of defending order is the qualification of the king's secular rule and "eternal rule".

Dualism, the core connotation of Maat's concept of order and balance, is the theoretical support for ancient Egyptian women to become female rulers. Geraldine PinghIn thinks, in the book of *The Dead*, the goddess Maat was described as two identical goddesses, which exist in the land of light and the land of darkness in ancient Egypt [28]. This dual concept is applicable to male gods and goddesses in the religious field, men and women in real society, and male rulers and female rulers. However, this dualistic king's name cannot be understood as an absolutely equal and balanced dualism, which is different. The dualism of high and low has the substitution function and even contains the meaning of compromise. Some scholars believe that "Pharaoh was therefore essential to the wellbeing of Egypt and, as history showed, any king an infant, a foreigner, even a woman was better than none. The absence of a king would invariably be seen as an offence against maat" [29]. Most women became kings during the period of national turmoil. Therefore, we cannot hold the view that Maat's concept determines the high political status of ancient Egyptian women, because they often enter the political arena as a "stopgap measure" to fill the gap in Maat's order. However, we must admit that Maat's concept of order and balance did have an impact on female political status.

The inscription of the king embodies the female rulers' observance and maintenance of the initial secular order, thus revealing their divine authority and political status. The legitimacy of a female ruler's accession to the throne is the primary manifestation of her political status, and the expression of legitimacy is often realized through the king's inscription, and the core of the king's inscription is to reflect the adherence to Maat's concept of order. In fact, the Maat Code was the foundation of the ancient Egyptian regime, which was mainly manifested in maintaining order and repelling chaos. In ancient Egypt, any act of the king must abide by Maat's rule, that is, "The enemy bowed down before

Hatshepsut out of fear, awed by her majesty, and behaved like a dog ” [30]. Defeating the enemy means that Hatshepsut has successfully maintained the peace and order of the country, although we do not know whether it is in line with the historical facts, and the inscription and publicity of this behavior will undoubtedly enhance her prestige. At the same time, as Glenn S. Holland put it: “The king’s divinely given power is exerted not only for the good of humanity, but also for the good of the gods, whose actions, power, and very and very existence depend on maat” [31]. The goddess Maat was happy for Hatshepsut because she defended the order and balance.

The goddess Maat represents the female ruler, and the female ruler represents the orderly rule of the goddess Maat in real society, which shows that ancient Egyptian women could also rule the country. This has become a manifestation of the high political status of ancient Egyptian women. Goddess Maat is the god of sacred order and balance, which is first reflected in her titles: “Lady of the Trial Hall”, “Lady of Heaven”, “Lord of the Earth” and “Location of Truth”. Meanwhile, she is also regarded as the daughter or eye of Re, whose role is to protect good, destroy evil, and maintain order, so she is respected by all rulers. This is reflected in political life, that is, Maat’s followers include the most fanatical male ruler-Akhenaton and female ruler-Hatshepsut. “Hatshepsut even built a temple to her honor in Karnak near the precinct of Montu and named her throne Ma’atkare which translates into ‘justice is the soul of Re’” [32]. It can be seen that the king of ancient Egypt was closely related to the goddess Maat, and the goddess Maat endowed the king with kingship and the legitimacy of rule. Therefore, the concept of Maat became the guiding ideology for the king to rule the country.

The political characteristics of “the unity of politics and religion” in ancient Egypt determined the power of female rulers. The sacred order mode that the rulers of ancient Egypt depended on Maat made the rulers deify themselves to represent the interests of the gods in order to realize secular rule, which became the legitimacy proof that women could rule ancient Egypt. Rulers chose the name of the patron saint that met their expectations. Richard H. Wilkinson believes that Under the religious theological system of Amana’s period, just as Amenhotep III may be equated with Atun, Queen Tay is equated with the goddess Hathor ... Nafertiti is equated with the goddess Taifunute or the goddess Maat [33]. This showed that “The role of gods in the protection of kingship is beyond doubt. It is worth noting that male pharaohs prefer the patron saint to the male god, while female pharaohs prefer the goddess” [34]. Female rulers sought the protection of the gods to maintain their orthodox dominance. All these showed that female rulers, like male rulers, needed to establish a relationship with the goddess if they wanted to show their political functions and realize their rule. The relationship between Nefertiti and the goddess Maat is an expression of the connection between religious order and realistic order. However, after death, the afterlife of female rulers needs the protection of the goddess Maat, so as to maintain the balanced order of the deceased in the world of Yin and Yang. In the tomb of the Queen’s Valley, the goddess Maat addressed Nefertari, the queen of Ramses II: “*Protection, life, stability, dominion, all health, all joy, all her protection, like that of Ra*” [35]. In fact, the goddess Maat basically appeared in the tombs of all Egyptians, and female rulers could not be exclusive for the goddess Maat.

Orderly and stable development is the ideal state of a country’s rule, and it is the practice of Maat’s concept of order and balance, which can be used by male rulers and female rulers in ancient Egypt. However, in the patriarchal society, although ancient Egyptian women can be rulers, their legitimacy is often questioned, which just shows that women rulers are in the order stipulated by Maat. Indeed, it is the dual order that implies the possibility that women can also be rulers.

4. Conclusion

To sum up, under the proof of original historical materials such as legal documents, oracle literature, and murals in royal tombs, we have learned the rights enjoyed by ancient Egyptian women in legal practice, male attitudes towards housewives, and the close relationship between the goddess Maat and female rulers. Maat’s concept of justice and truth made ancient Egyptian women not lose their right to speak because of their weak voice, no matter what status they participated in the judicial

trial. Maat's concept of harmony and benevolence clarified the ancient Egyptian ethical norms and family virtues, so that ancient Egyptian women, as wives and mothers, would still be protected by the dominant ethical consciousness of society under relatively weak circumstances, so as not to lose their human dignity and win the respect of themselves and society. Maat's concept of order and balance shows us the relationship between God and king in ancient Egypt, and female rulers also belong to one pole of order and balance ...

The connotation and transfer of Maat's ideas have the characteristics of universality, pluralism, abstraction, high generality, and even compulsion, showing the characteristics of multi-level and dynamic changes in the development of ancient Egyptian civilization. The influence of Maat's concept on the female status in ancient Egypt did exist, with the characteristics of comprehensiveness, profundity, and inevitability, and the two had objective, close, and interactive relations. Thus, the goddess worship embodied in Maat's concept is the spiritual source of the high status of ancient Egyptian women. Maat's concept is a good perspective for us to explain why the female status in ancient Egypt is high, and it will also help us to have a basic conjecture on how high the female status in ancient Egypt can be and why it is not the highest.

Maat's concept had a favorable influence on the female status in ancient Egypt, but it was precisely Maat's concept that determined that the female status in ancient Egypt was not absolutely equal to that of men. As Western scholars have pointed out, the feelings and thoughts of ancient Egyptian women were mostly unrecorded. A brief glimpse can be found in letters, economics, laws, and poetry texts. These usually show the ancient Egyptians' adherence to the status quo, which is predictable, because the whole Egyptian society is based on maintaining Maat, which equates rebellion with evil. Female freedom was exercised under the constraints of conscious hierarchy and patriarchal society [36]. Therefore, even though the legal, family, and political status of ancient Egyptian women was relatively high, they still shared the limitations of the times and were endowed with a strong sense of religious idealism.

Appendix:

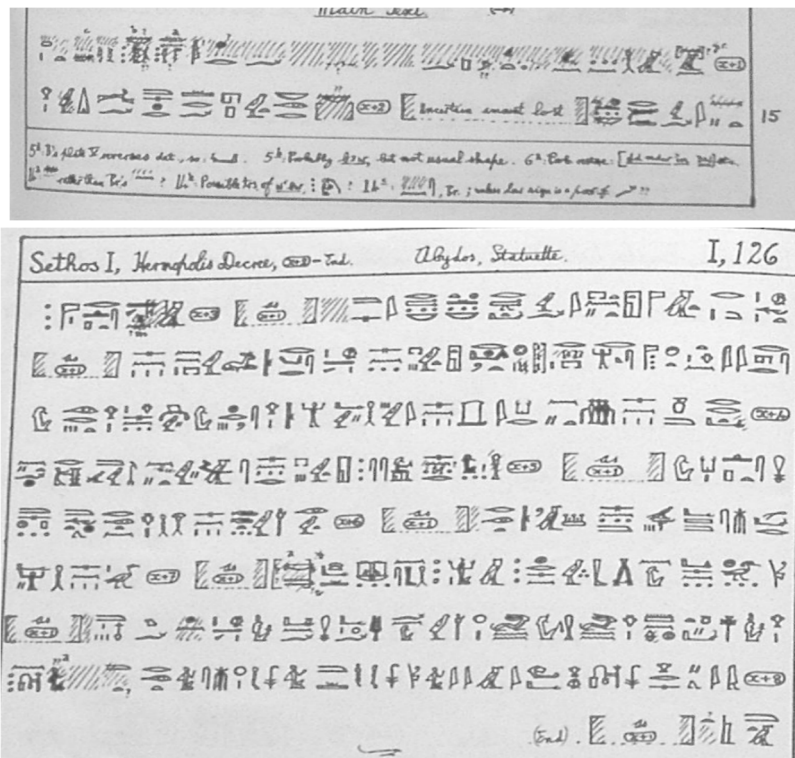


Fig. 1 The above two pictures show that the truth and justice of the goddess Maat expressed in the Decree of Hermopolitan are closely related to the kingship. Source: *The Inscription of Ramses Times* by Cotterson)

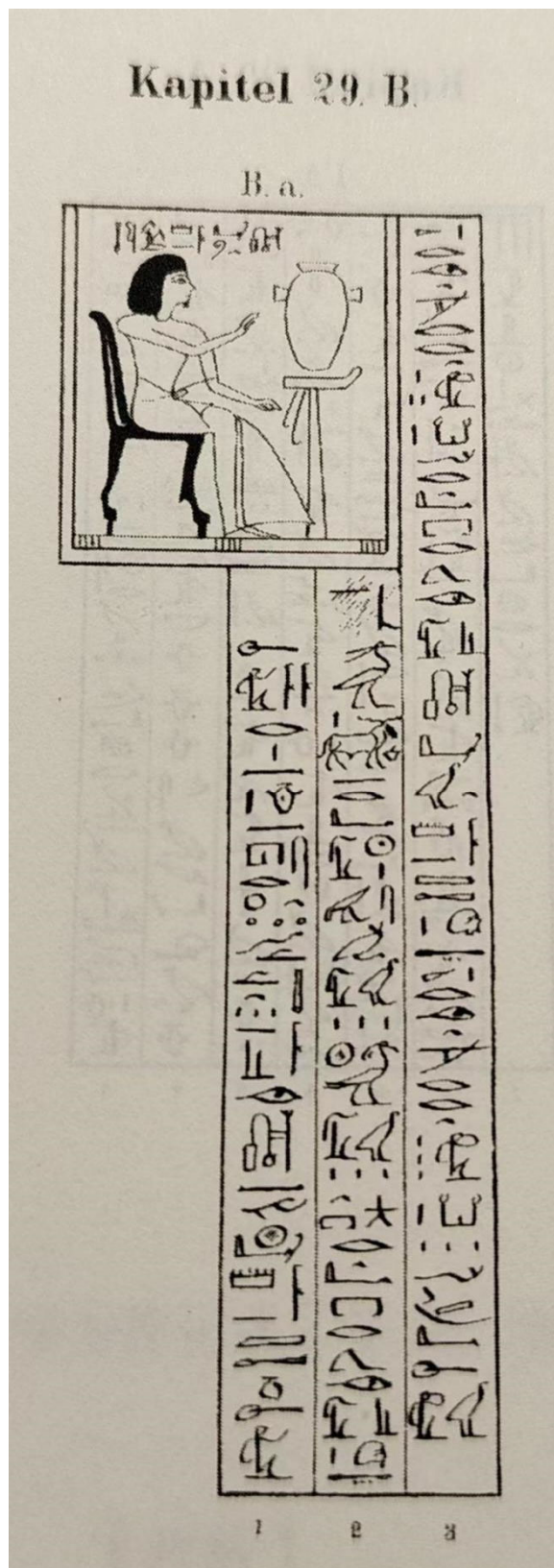


Fig. 2 The picture shows the 29th (b) scripture, which expresses Maat's key role in whether the deceased can pass the afterlife trial and smoothly enter the afterlife. Source: Jin Shoufu's *Book of the Dead in Ancient Egypt*)

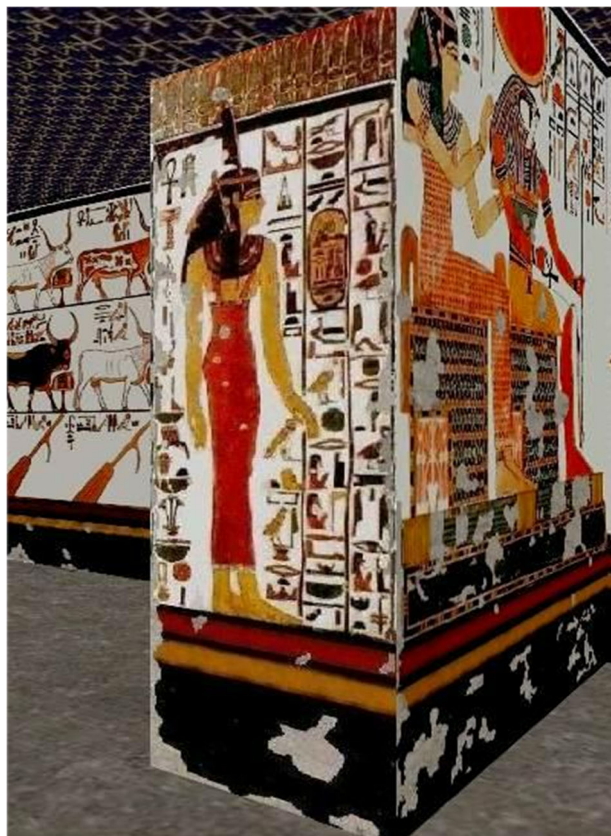


Fig. 3 The picture shows the image of Maat in the mural at the entrance of the first East Annex of the NafilTina Tomb, and the blessing of the goddess Maat to the queen. Source: *NEFERTARI-QV66 p.3 (osirisnet.net)*

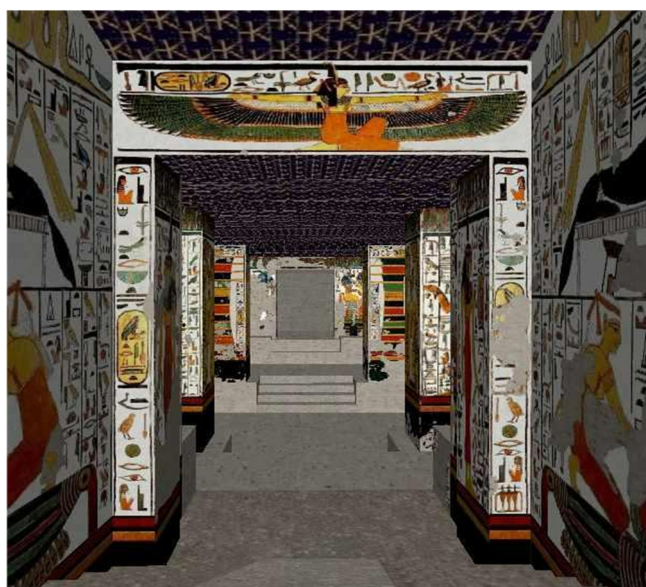


Fig. 4 The picture shows the goddess Maat at the lintel of the second staircase north wall passage, source: *NEFERTARI-QV66 p.4 (osirisnet.net)*

References

- [1] Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, translated by ANN E. Keep, New York: Cornell University Press, 1992, p.114.
- [2] Domestic related research mainly includes: Li Xiaodong: *Philosophical Thinking on Maat and Tao*, *Journal of Northeast Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2000; Shi Haibo: *On*

- Ancient Egyptian Maat, Historical Collection, 2001; Li Xiaodong: The Birth and Historical Stages of the Dominant Consciousness in Ancient Egyptian Society, Historical Collection, 2015. The most instructive for this paper are: Yan Haiying: Maat and the World Outlook of Ancient Egyptians, Peking University History, 1997; and Guo Dantong, Chen Jiaqi: Maat's Concept in Ancient Egyptian Letters, World History Review, 2021.
- [3] Miriam Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies*, University Press Fribourg Switzerland, 1992, pp.84-85.
- [4] Miriam Lichtheim, *Moral Values in Ancient Egypt*, University Press Fribourg Switzerland, 1997, p.79, pp.101-102.
- [5] Emily Teeter, *The Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt*, Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1997, p.67, p.75, p.83.
- [6] Maulana Karenga, *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics*, Taylor & Francis, 2004, p.79, pp.342-362.
- [7] Zhang Ye and Liu Hongcai believed that the religious belief represented by the worship of the goddess Hator was beneficial to the improvement of the family status of women in ancient Egypt, without mentioning Maat. (Zhang Ye, Liu Hongcai: *The Status of Egyptian Women in the Family in the Pharaoh's Era*, World History, 2004, p. 16); Zou Wenxing also analyzed the reasons for the high status of women in ancient Egypt from the perspective of religious belief, and did not mention Maat. (Zou Wenxing: *An Analysis of the Reasons for the Higher Status of Women in Ancient Egypt*, Dongjiang Journal, 2009, pp. 65-66.); Teacher Wang Haili's *Women in Ancient Egypt by the Nile* took "Goddess Maat" as a section and discussed the women in ancient Egyptian mythology. (Wang Haili: *Ancient Egyptian Women by the Nile*, Beijing: China Youth Publishing House, 2007, pp. 34-36); Han Shanshan introduced the image of the goddess Maat to us in the section of *Women's Cultural Roles* in her master's degree thesis. (Han Shan: *An Analysis of Women's Roles in the New Kingdom of Ancient Egypt*, Master's Degree Thesis, School of History and Culture, Northeast Normal University, 2020, pp. 38-39); In 2017, Ji Jiawei and Tian Ming wrote a review of the study of ancient Egyptian goddesses, pointing out that "at the same time, due to the different perspectives of topic selection, the influence of religious beliefs, especially goddess worship, on women's status is rarely touched." They pointed out the shortcomings of the current domestic research on ancient Egyptian women. (Ji Jiawei, Tian Ming: *A Review of Studies on Ancient Egyptian Goddess in China*, Journal of Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities (Social Science Edition), Vol.43, No.2, March 2017, p.63).
- [8] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, voll: the Old and Middle Kingdoms, California: University of California Press, 2006, pp.169-184.
- [9] Wang Liang: *A Study on Legal Documents in Ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom*, Doctoral Dissertation, School of History and Culture, Northeast Normal University, 2014, p. 257.
- [10] Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesseid Inscriptions: Historical and Biographical*, voll, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1975, pp.125-126. Translation: Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesseid Inscriptions: Translated & Annotated Notes Translation*, Voll, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995, p.106. (See Appendix for the original inscription)
- [11] Maulana Karenga, *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics*, Taylor & Francis, 2004, p.360.
- [12] Jin Shoufu's translation: *The Book of the Dead in Ancient Egypt*, Commercial Press, 2020, pp. 90-91. (See Appendix for the original inscription)
- [13] Sally Kamaluddin Ahmed Kamel El Hjersi, "The social status of women in ancient Egyptian Art as Goddesses," *Research on Art and Arts Education*, vol.21, no.3(July 2021), p.163.
- [14] Russ VerSteeg, "Ancient Egypt and Laws Relating to the Status of Women," *Women & Criminal Justice*, vol.33, 2023, p.12.
- [15] Joyce Tyldesley, *Judgement of the Pharaoh: Crime and Punishment in Ancient Egypt*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000, p.23.
- [16] K. A. KITCHEN, *Ramesseid Inscriptions Historical and Biographical*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1983, pp.471,472. Translation from: McDowell A G, *Village life in ancient Egypt: Laundry lists and love songs*, 1999, p34.

- [17] Jin Ling of Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities believed that Maat's concept of harmony includes three aspects: man and god, man and man and man and nature. This paper discussed the harmony between people. (See: Jin Ling: The Concept of Harmony in Ancient Egyptian Ethics, Journal of Inner Mongolia Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), Vol. 37, No.1, 2008, p. 139.)
- [18] Geraldine Pingh, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, P.159.
- [19] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings, vol2: the New Kingdom*, California: University of California Press, 2006, p.141.
- [20] Richard B, Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp.69-70.
- [21] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings, voll: the Old and Middle Kingdoms*, California: University of California Press, 2006, p.100.
- [22] Obenga, TheCophile, *Ancient Egypt & Black Africa: A Student's Handbook for the Study of Ancient Egypt in Philosophy, Linguistics & Gender Relations*, London: Karnak House, 1992, p.165. Quoted from: Maulana Karenga, *Maat, the Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics*, Taylor & Francis, 2004, p.360.
- [23] James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp.134-137.
- [24] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings, vol2: the New Kingdom*, California: University of California Press, 2006, p.143.
- [25] H. M. Stewart, *Egyptian stelaes, Reliefs and Paintings from the Pentrie Collection 2: Archaic Period to Second Intermediate period*, Warminster, 1979. Quoted from: Annette Depla, "Women in Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature," in Leonie J. Archer, Susan Fischler and Maria Wyke(eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of the Night*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994, p.44.
- [26] The Gifts of Isis: Women's Status in Ancient Egypt - World History Encyclopedia, 2023.10.5.
- [27] Donald B. Redford, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, vol2*, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp.319-321.
- [28] Geraldine Pingh, *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, P.160.
- [29] Joyce A. Tyldesley, *Judgement of the Pharaoh: Crime and Punishment in Ancient Egypt*, Orion Publishing: Illustrated edition, 2000, P.22.
- [30] Shih-Wei Hsu, *Bilder für den Pharaon: Untersuchungen zu den bildlichen Ausdrücken des Ägyptischen in den Königsinschriften und anderen Textgattungen*, Brill, 2017, p.258. Translation reference: Xu Shiwei: *An Analysis of the Relationship between the Inscriptions and Propaganda of Ancient Egyptian Kings*, Nankai History, No.2, 2022, p.144.
- [31] Glenn S. Holland, *Gods in the Desert Religions of the Ancient Near East*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2010, pp.39-40.
- [32] Sally Kamaluddin Ahmed Kamel El Hjersi, "The social status of women in ancient Egyptian Art as Goddesses," *Research on Art and Arts Education*, vol.21, no.3(July 2021), p.163.
- [33] Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, 2003, p.58.
- [34] Hao Yuying, *Reasons, Influence and Cultural Implication of Goddess Worship in Ancient Egypt*, Master's degree thesis, School of History and Culture, Hebei Normal University, 2014, pp. 28-29.
- [35] NEFERTARI-QV66 p.3 (osirisnet.net), 2023.10.5. See the appendix for the picture.
- [36] Annette Depla, "Women in Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature," in Leonie J. Archer, Susan Fischler and Maria Wyke(eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of the Night*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994, p.49.