

Xm(w) nTr mAat :
LAW AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN ANCIENT EGYPT.

INTRODUCCIÓN

The investigation in which we are working, and that constitutes the object of our communication in this Congress, born with the last purpose to deepen in the study of the officials known as Priests of Maat, always associated to judicial and legal fields.

Since the beginnings, the points that interested us to approach were to be able to define if we are dealing with a rank, title or epithet, if those officials carried out a specific duty to hold it or, on the contrary, if it is a simple epithet as a result of the exercise of another different duty, although related, the consequence of a concrete position inside the Administration, or due to their family status. If “Priest of Maat” would be a title, then it turns out to be evident that the following step would be to connect it with a possible family succession in the same one.

In order to the attainment of our objectives, we decided to undertake a prosopographical analysis of these Priests of Maat. Still knowing the existing criticisms to this kind of approximation, we consider that exist several prosopographies that have given rich fruits and are of evident interest for Egyptology, besides offering us a very proper method to our purposes by means of the analysis of all the titles and epithets of each official and the more in depth study of all those related to the judicial and legal fields during the chosen period.

Nevertheless, when the work began to give its fruits we realized that it would not be excessively complete if we did not dedicate a prior section in which the concept of Maat was undertaken in depth from the legal point of view, studying the terminology usually used by the ancient Egyptians that does relation to aspects that could be considered as legals and judicials during the chronological limits that we marked us, and the usually terminology used by academics to translate these terms, as well as a look around the antiquity Laws of the most nearby civilizations, in time and space, to the studied Egypt.

By this way, our work will be developed in two perfectly complementary, narrowly linked and related sections, seeking the following results:

- To Establish a proper terminology related to the Law and the Administration of Justice in ancient Egypt.
- To reconfigure the concept of Maat from a legal point of view.
- To define the duties of the Priests of Maat, since its appearance until the end of the XVIII Dynasty.

We will apply the following methodology:

- (Sec. I) A descriptive analysis of the terminology used by ancient Egyptians in the established period of time, and its possible relation with the contemporary terminology in the field of Law.
- (Sec. I) Analysis of the concept of Maat from a legal point of view that permit us to stress on some related and practical questions.
- (Sec. I) Comparative study between different contemporary legal systems and those ancient ones developed in nearby areas, in time and space, to the chosen Egyptian period.
- (Sec. II) Prosopographical study of the Priest of Maat, including other titles and epithets of these officials in order to carrying out a comparative analysis on possible existing links with a specific duty or social or family position.

PRESENTATION IN THE CONGRESS

In the course of our communication we will dedicate some minutes to explain in detail the study that we are carrying out, with special emphasis in the methodology to be followed and the main premises that constitute its basis.

At same time, we will expose succinctly our conclusions on the concept of Maat from the legal point of view.

Finally, we will be able to offer a real example showing the participants the obtained results with the prosopographical analysis dedicated to Old Kingdom, along with our preliminary conclusions for this period.

Our communication will be developed in a multimedia environment, using the most modern technologies, combined with a rigorous exposition of the topic.