

DISCUSSIONS
IN
EGYPTOLOGY

30

1994

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With this number we celebrate ten years of life for this Journal. It is our subscribers and contributors who have made this possible. We hope it will continue for at least as long again.

Alessandra Nibbi
October, 1994

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THE HORIZON OF KHUFU
A "stellar" name for Cheops's Pyramid

By Robert G. Bauval

INTRODUCTION

In DE 13, it has been argued that the three Giza Pyramid were constructed under a unified plan, and that the religious motive of the plan was to represent the central region of the sky-DUAT, the starry kingdom of Osiris-Orion in the sky defined by the three stars in Orion's Belt <1>. Support for such a contention was found in the Pyramid Texts where the "soul" of the departed king was said to join Osiris-Orion in the sky <2>, and also the fact that the southern shaft of the King's Chamber was directed to the lower star in Orion's Belt, Al Nitak, at the epoch when the pyramid was constructed <3>.

THE LINK BETWEEN THE SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN SHAFTS
IN THE PYRAMID OF CHEOPS

In recent articles by the present writer <4>, it has been shown that the northern shaft of the King's Chamber was directed to the star Alpha Draconis in c. 2450 BC. It was also shown that the northern shaft of the Queen's Chamber was directed to a star in Ursa Minor at its meridian culmination that corresponded to the tip of the celestial "Adze of Upuaut" which the Pyramid Texts describe as being used by Horus of Letopolis during the ceremony of the "Opening of the Mouth" <5>. It was also briefly mentioned that when this specific star in Ursa Minor struck the meridian, also, too, would the star Al Nitak -which is believed to represent Cheops's pyramid- would rise. In the stellar rituals found in the Pyramid Texts we are told that this describes the precise moment of "rebirth" or rising of the Osiris-king:

"...Behold, he has come as Orion, behold Osiris has come as Orion...O king, the sky conceives you with Orion, the Duat bears you with Orion, you will regularly ascend with Orion from the eastern side of the sky..." [PT 820-822]

Furthermore, the actual monument i.e. the pyramid construction, is identified to "Osiris":

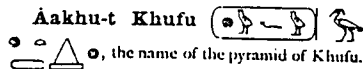
"...this pyramid of the king is Osiris, this construction of his is Osiris..." [PT Utt. 600]

THE NAME OF CHEOPS'S PYRAMID

It has been cogently shown by A. Badawy that the names given to pyramids by the ancient Egyptians themselves bore strong stellar connotation: Badawy wrote that "the names of the pyramids of Snefru, Khufu, Dedefret, Nebre indicate clearly a stellar connotation while those of Sahure, Neferirkare and Neferefre describe the stellar destiny of the ba" <6>. Two such names "Djedefra is a Sehed STAR" and "Nebka is a STAR" make this a certainty. Other pyramids have Ba i.e. "soul" names; the "souls", as many will surely agree, were thought in the Pyramid Texts to be "stars" <7>. The question, therefore, is whether the

name given to Cheops's pyramid could bear a "star" name and, consequently, could this "star" be identified to Al Nitak, the lower star in Orion's Belt ?

There are many variations as to the way the name of the Cheops (Khufu) pyramid should be read. The best is given by Edwards as "*Khufu is one belonging to the horizon*" <8>. In hieroglyphics, the name appears as:

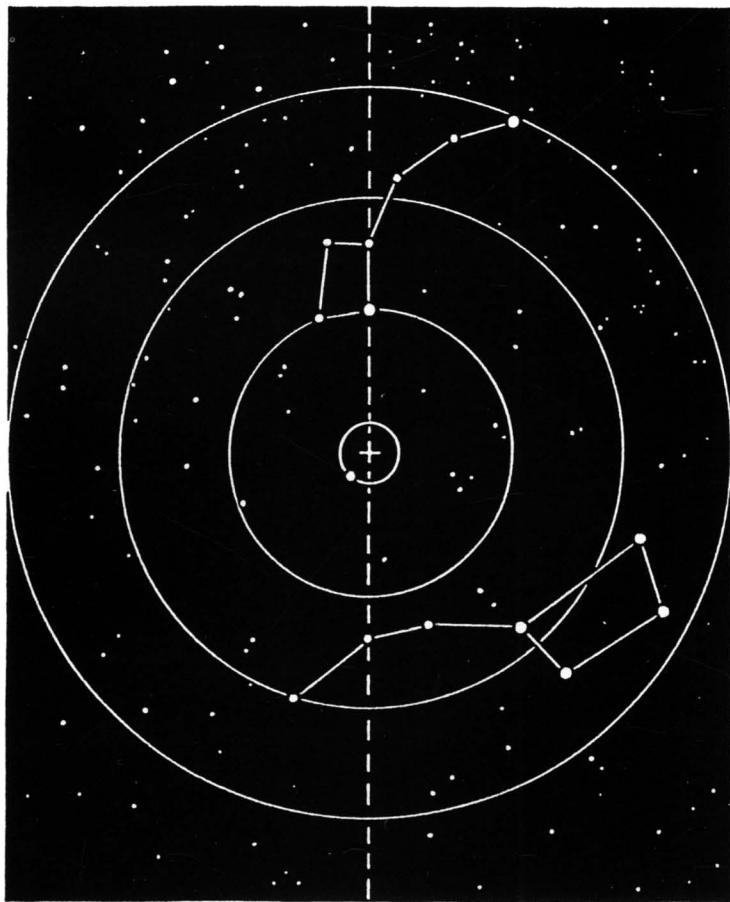


(from E.A.Wallis-Budge *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, vol.1, p.25 a; Dover edition 1978)

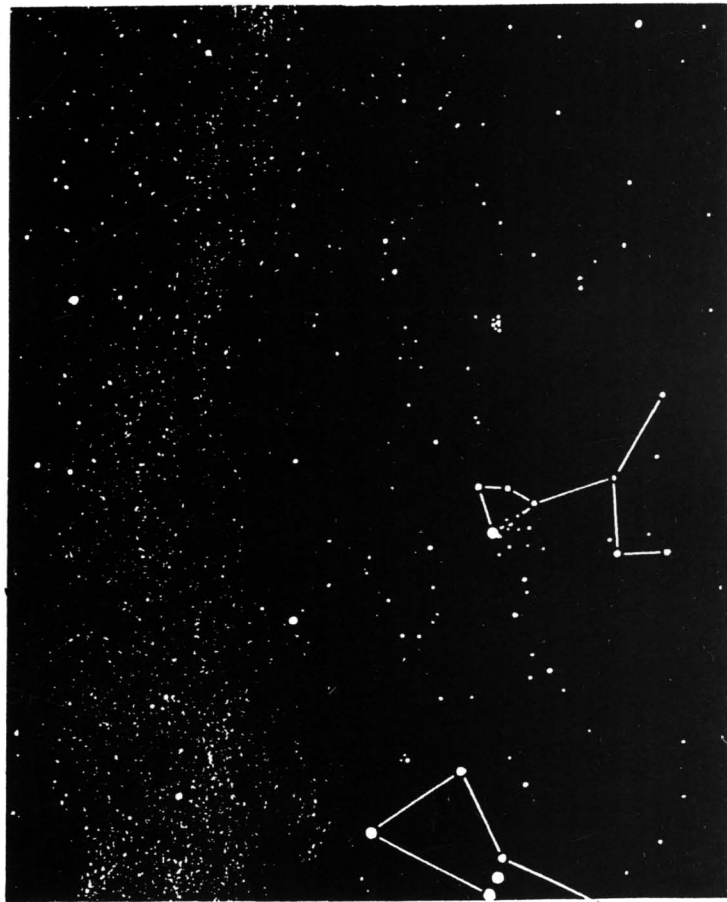
This stands for *AaKhu-t Khufu* i.e. "The Horizon of Khufu". The present writer favours this name as it lets the original hieroglyphic text speak for itself. Now we have seen that this pyramid has a likely correlation to the star Al Nitak, the lower (and larger) star in Orion's Belt. It also had the southern shaft of the King's Chamber directed, in c.2450 BC, to this specific star when it culminates at the meridian <9>. Further more it also had an "adze" shaped shaft <10>, the northern one of the Queen's Chamber directed to Ursā Minor as it, too, culminates at the meridian which, at this precise moment, also has the star Al Nitak (the lower star of Orion's Belt) actually rising in the horizon. In the Westcar Papyrus (P Berlin 3033), the pyramid is actually called "horizon" <11>, and in view of the stellar connotations of such names, it is therefore a "star in the horizon". The stars par excellence of the Osirian rebirth were those of Orion. The evidence is compelling, to say the least, that Al Nitak in Orion's Belt, as it stand right on the horizon when the cosmic adze strikes the meridian and aligns itself with the northern shaft of the Queen's Chamber is to be seen as the "*The Horizon of Khufu*" (Diagram 1 & 2).

Notes:

1. DE vol. 13 pp.7-18.
2. R.O. Faulkner in JNES 25, 1966, pp.153-161.
3. DE vol. 26 pp.5-6 ..
4. Ibid.
5. DE vol. 28
6. A. Badawy in JEA 63 p.58
7. DE vol. 14 by R.G. Bauval "Investigation On the Benben Stone: Was it an Iron Meteorite?" pp.5-16.
8. I.E.S. Edwards, *The Pyramids Of Egypt*, Penguin ed. 1993, p.295.
9. DE vol. 26 pp.5-6
10. DE vol. 28
11. G. Goyon, *Les Bâisseurs Des Grandes Pyramides*, Pygmalion Ed. 1990, p.41.

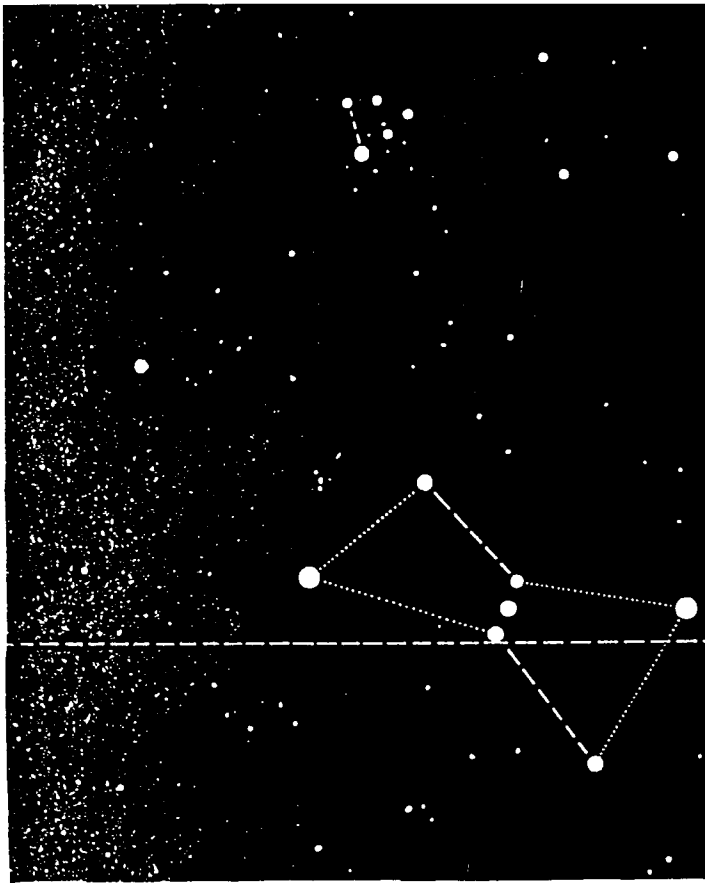


NORTH HORIZON

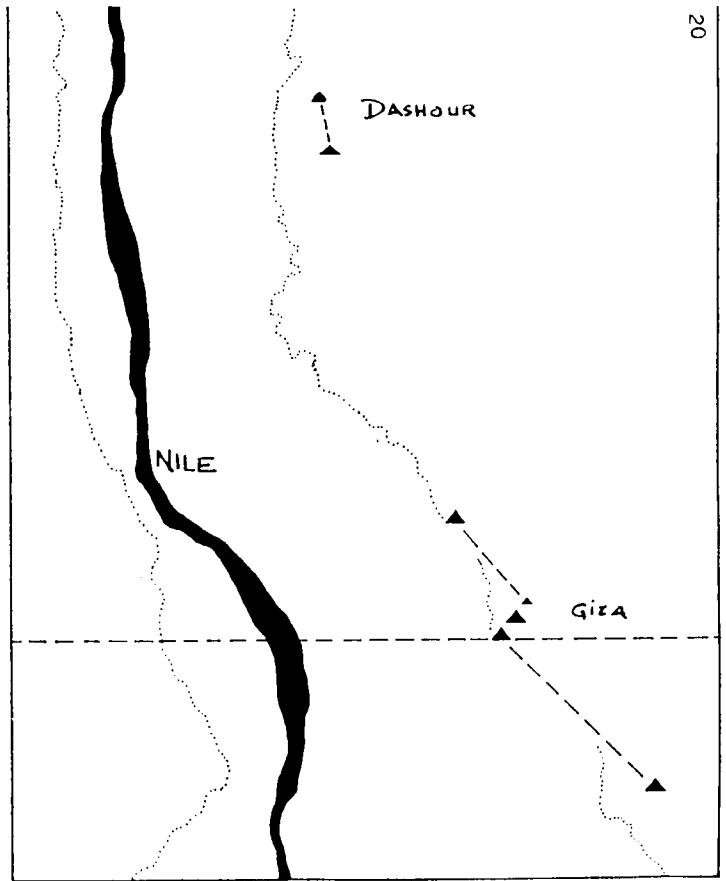


EAST HORIZON

DIAGRAM 1



THE HORIZON OF KHUFU



4th DYNASTY PYRAMIDS