

THE NABTA PLAYA MEGALITHIC CIRCLE: A DEVELOPPEMENT OF BROPHY'S
ARCHAEOASTRONOMICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SITE

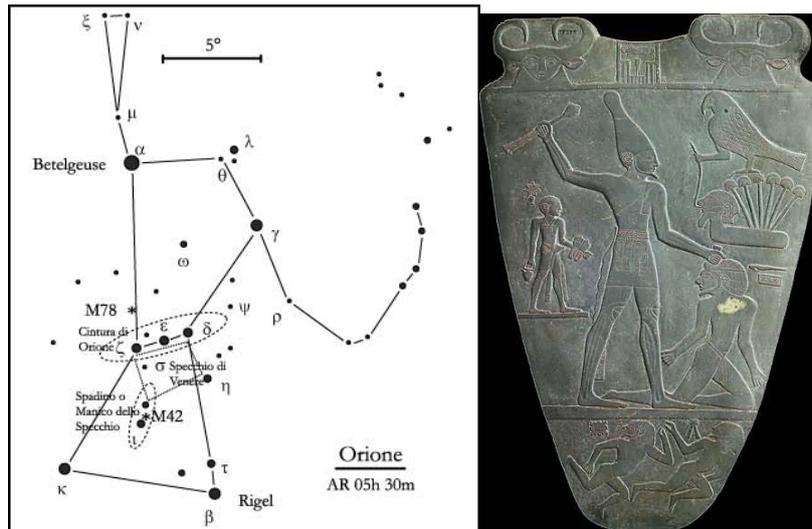
*The night here's so sparkling
Maybe even dying it's not so hurtful
What does it matter my wicked soul
And the lamplight on my back dangling.*
Medieval French Ballad

*You have to knee thousand times to dust
To see once in a lifetime the sky.*
The Author, watching the Khufu Horizon.

Before to get to the core of our reasoning we have to understand what happened in Nabta Playa Megalithic Circle about 7000 years ago, a site that was, as Brophy unquestionably demonstrated, what we can *someway* compare to our astronomical observatories. To do this, we have to stop to think in a Modern Western scientific way, and try to understand the way of thinking of a Paleolithic Old Egyptian one. But it is *very* difficult. Before to try to do this, we have to understand what is the way of thinking *we* adopt, so that we can get rid of it, at least for the few minutes we'll need to end this not so long issue.

What see a Modern Western man – consciously or unconsciously – when he look at the night sky? He see a gigantic, dark ocean of space – that in a very, *very* strange way he defines “finished” – but despite this it is expanding to an unfathomable speed from *billions* of years, when all the matter which compose it was compressed because of gravity in a sort of football (soccer) ball. Then, one day, a day before the time was born – because to a western thinker time exist only in relation with space – there was a big explosion, the one that we call “the” Big Bang, and the Universe finally got the form that presently has: the immense dark ocean of four dimensions, curved space expanding out of itself, bound we don't know where; a black infinity, dotted with stars. And what a star is to a Modern Western one? It's an enormous amount of gas, burning in the almost infinite curved space with a temperature of hundreds of millions of degrees, madly and randomly spreading its light all around in the dark. *That's* the way we think about the night sky and the stars, the way we need to get rid of to understand the Old Egyptian Paleolithic way of thinking in a site like Nabta Playa.

A man like this, it seems, watching at the night sky was constantly seeing powerful Gods, during the night and during the day. The form of the night Gods were so to speak “drawn” by the stars, gathered in constellation, like this which interest us in this very brief essay: we are obviously speaking about Orion, the constellation which to the Old Egyptian religious thinking was Osiris, the God of Death and Resurrection. In the photos that follow you will note surely how the icon of this God is in its way *very* similar to the geometrical figure drawn by the eight principal stars of the constellation, that's to say: Beltegeuse, Meissa, Bellatrix – whose triangle make up the Orion-Osiris Shoulder – Alnitaki, Alnilam and Mintaka – whose a little bent line make up the Orion-Osiris Belt – and Saiph and Rigel that we will call the Osiris-Orion Feet. An Old Egyptian priest and so an “artist” and so the most normal one between Old Egyptian people, watching at the sky and seeing Orion (the first photo: Meissa is λ , Bellatrix is γ , κ is Saiph, Alnitaki is ζ , Alnilam is ϵ , Mintaka is δ), at the Nabta Playa time would have seen *that* kind of figure that we can admire aside



So, they *didn't* see a random collection of light dots, randomly scattered by pure Chance in the almost boundless Universe, but *that* kind of warrior-triumphant God. He was the Death and Resurrection God, resurrection that was complete at the Summer Solstice rising. Because, as stars in the horizon change position in the course of the year as the Hearth goes around the Sun, at the moment of the Equinox, you would see this God in the position of a dead one (an so like the Death itself)



Going from the Vernal Equinox heliacal rising to the Summer Solstice, Osiris-Orion would have change its dead one position, symbol of the Death, to the vertical, high-proud position of the triumphant life.



Before the Summer Solstice (I recall that we are talking of a date about 4.900 BC or earlier) rain would come, and the almost desert hearth would have reborn to life for some months, to become again a desert in another few months. That was the Death-Resurrection cycle of the astral, visible God, made of stars: what is to us, Modern Western men, just the predictable changing in position of a random bunch of star, arbitrarily put together in what we call a “constellation” from Vernal Equinox to Summer Solstice, and nothing more.

But we must stay in the Old Egyptian Paleolithic way of thinking, and so we must to think about what we've just seen as a divine cycle, and not as maybe a curious but at the end insignificant change of position in a Cartesian Space, made of crossing axis whose centre is wherever and whose end I nowhere: the sky was intended more or less as a dome in which the night stars apparitions were intended really and literally as truly and living Gods.

So, we have to remember that this divine cycle regarded a very important *God* – maybe the most important God, as he was capable to give again and again life to the desert carrying the vital rains with his triumphant Resurrection after about two months of vanishing from the horizon: but with the passing of time this God was enigmatically and maybe alarmingly changing his *path* on the horizon. Because in the photo above we've seen the God in about 4.900 BC.: but in about 16.500 BC Osiris Orion would be seen in another kind of standing position, similar, but not identical



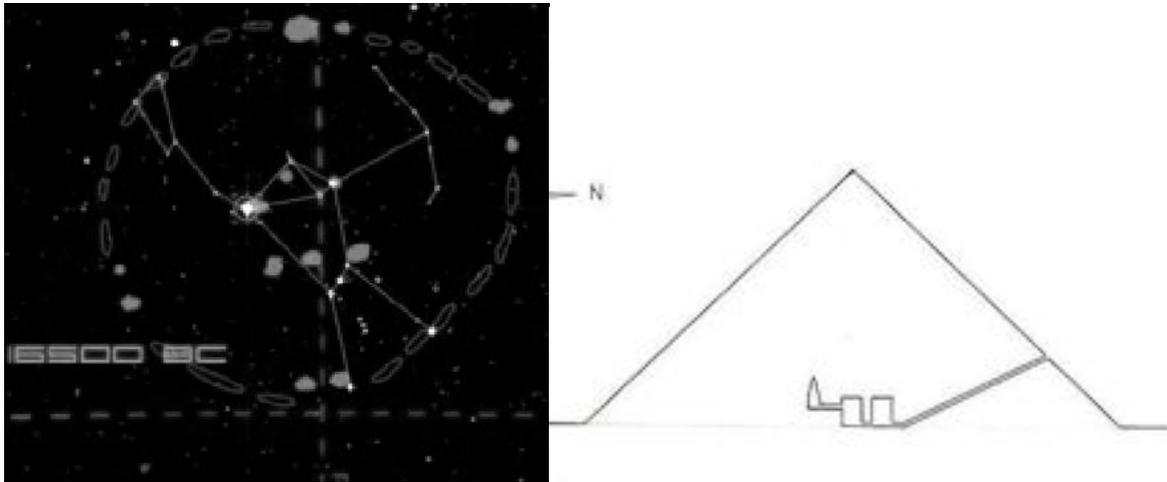
If we compare this with the 4.900 BC image, the standing God of Resurrection, seems to have changed a little his position, or, better, it seems to have change the *direction of his path in relation to the terrestrial horizon*. Yes, because the path that we see over there in 16.500 BC is actually inclined of about 44-45 degrees in relation to the horizontal line of the observer. What a combination! we could say: the inclination of the older path of the God of Resurrection seems just *the same* of what seem *the base of the projection of Nabta Playa Megalithic Circle in the sky!*

Watching with more attention, now we note that in fact the so called “Circle” *is not* a true circle, but a some sort of strange figure. How can we say? Maybe a circle-cut-like in one side, so that it seems to have a *bottom*. Yes: it seems an image of a Flat Hearth, of a Hearth with a solid surface where to stand, a surface where to *place* the feet: and the circle seems to stay *above*, seems the *image of its sky!*

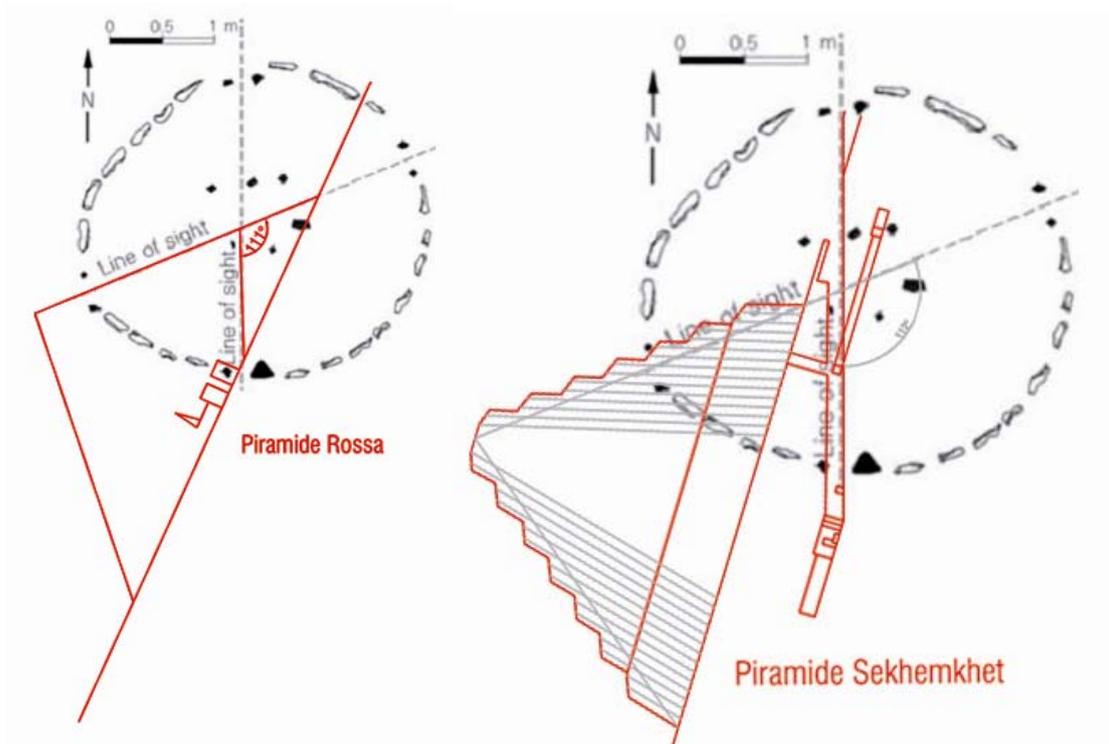
Maybe we can now understand this enigmatic form: the stones of the Circle were the visible, terrestrial replica of the invisible, celestial path on which the Death and Resurrection God walked his Summer Solstice steps of Resurrection; above, the round part of the Circle was the representation, so to speak, *of the Sky in the skies*. As Osiris-Orion had a Path for his Feet, also he had to have a Sky above his Head.

If we accept this, if we accept that the stones erected in the desert are the *symbolic replica* of the Sky World of the Gods, now we know *why* the Nabta Playa Megalithic Circle is orientated in *that* way. Not to North-South axis, nor East-West – as it seems natural and spontaneous to conjecture – but in a strange, first look incomprehensible direction. A direction that in the Paleolithic Egypt was meant to take on hearth the image of the Sky World of the God at the moment in which nature, with the coming of the rain, came from death to life *at that time* (at that time, in a zone like Nabta Playa, the annual flood of Nile was not important, as it seems that that people was living essentially by breeding).

But looking better at the scene, we also catch another *very* interesting particular. Let's see the Osiris-Orion constellation at the 16.500 BC Summer Solstice nearby some familiar structure, that's to say the Red Pyramid.



You can do the overlapping by yourself. The inclination of the Red Pyramid is a sort of copy of the inclination of the Path that Osiris-Orion was walking in the 16.500 BC. You almost can see the God walking upside the profile of Snefru monument, going up to the higher skies of Resurrection (obviously you can do the same with the superior part of the Bent Pyramid). And now is clearer the meaning of the inclination of the Descending Corridor of the Red Pyramid itself, that corresponds in a *perfect* way to the inclination between the North-South axis of the Circle and that of the Summer Solstice: the descending underneath is not a dying, but a being reborn to an eternal life, the eternal life of the Northern never setting stars. It is not a case that this same angle was used for another Descending Corridor of one of the oldest Pyramid of the Dynastic Egypt. And it's not a case that in the Cheops Pyramid the Descending and Ascending Corridors are intersected: because in Old Egyptian theological thought to go underneath, into the abyss of Hearth, is someway the same thing that going up to the highness of the Eternal World of the night sky, made up by the sacred angles of the stars of Resurrection (Osiris-Orion) and Eternal Life (the northern stars, that never set). It is maybe the same sort of divine paradox because of in the Bible is said "the seed which doesn't die is not fruitful".



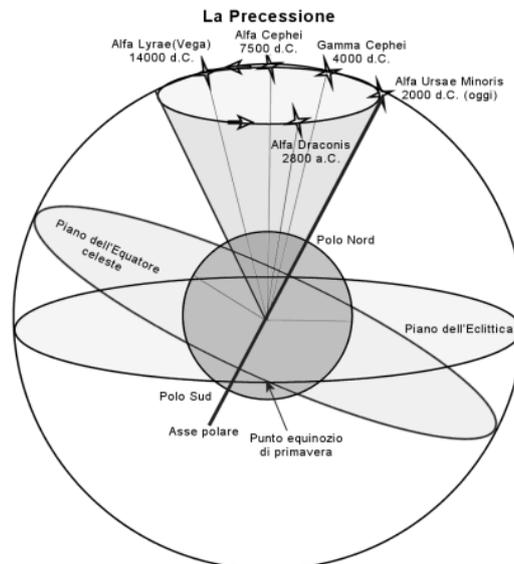
The never setting stars of North are incapable do give Eternal Life only by themselves. To reach Eternal Life you need the God because of Death is won, the God of Resurrection, that's to say Osiris-Orion, the God that each year resurrect from the abyss of Hearth to the glory of Horizon (Christ is the Son of God that, with His own Death and Resurrection give to human kind the possibility to achieve Eternal Life: something that is so similar to the Osiris role in the Egyptian theology that you can't say if Osiris is a sort of stellar Christ, or Christ a sort of human Osiris; and the Northern Eternal Stars seems to have the same role of the Eternal Father, the Kingdom of Heaven and Eternal Life in the Gospels).

Now we can look again at two pictures we have already seen, to get deeper and better to their theological-astronomic meaning, and this way to see other invisible things that an Old Egyptian Paleolithic priest used to pray and adore (and *therefore* to watch at) probably in each day of his life. Let's give a look again to two images we have already seen, that's to say Osiris-Orion in about 4.900 BC and the Narmer Stone



What we can see immediately is that the axis Alnilam-Alnitaki (the central star of Osiris-Orion Belt and the first star from the left of Osiris-Orion Shoulders) and Rigel-Mintaka (the right Osiris-Orion Foot and the right star of the Osiris-Orion Belt) point out to North: now the Path of the Resurrection of the resurrected God of the Summer Solstice seems to match more or less with the Hearth horizon, that's to say with the *horizon of the watcher*. The watcher: that's to say an Old Egyptian Paleolithic astronomer-priest.

The right part of the constellation stars seems to match in an almost perfect way with the profile of the bust of the Defeated one, who's submitted by the Triumphant Osiris, holding the warrior mace. Now put your eyes on the axis that goes from Mintaka to the stone of the Circle that stay-for Meissa: this axis is cutting in a half the megalithic circle. We find another, very, very strange coincidence: because this way the Circle seems to mark the angle of rotation that the constellation have covered in about 13.000 years. And so it seems that the stone which marks Meissa is pointing on a date of about 1.500 years before the 16.500 BC! This angle corresponds to twice the inclination of the Hearth in relation of the Plane of the Ecliptic, that's to say another angle of about 45 degrees, as we know that in the millennia this inclination change slowly between a maximum of 23.5 degrees to a minimum of about 21.5. The angle covered by Hearth in half of the Precession Cycle correspond obviously to the double of the medium angle, *and that's what we found in Nabta Playa*, as $23,5+21,5$ is 45 degrees, that's to say the same inclination we find between the North-South axis and the projection of the orientation in the sky of the Megalithic Circle.



This people not only discovered and noted the sky changes other the centuries and the millennia, not only knew the relative distance of Osiris-Orion Belt and Shoulder stars independently from the brightness, as Brophy has already demonstrated: they *also* were capable to gauge the medium angle between the terrestrial axis and the Ecliptic and so the angle of rotation of stars and constellations in relation to the horizon of the observer: *and they marked it*. They marked it not only in the way we've already said, but also with the axis Mintaka-Bellatrix, which in the Brophy's diagram of 4.900 BC coincides with the North stone of the "East Door" of the Summer Solstice rising.

This could be the starting point of a research that could solve similar problems in sites that has the same Nabta Playa form, that's to say like Castle Riggs, Chaco Canyon, etc (actually, Castle Riggs has a form and an orientation embarrassingly similar to those of Nabta Playa: so the astronomical-theological meaning *could* be the same: to represent the Orion Path in a date around 18.000 BC). A research that could carry to this conclusion: that a place like Nabta Playa was not made to sign just one or two dates, as in Brophy's analysis results. Nabta Playa could be a sort of Precessional Dial, that, as a millenary gnomon, gauge the eternal cosmic cycle simply standing still, as the Universe is wheeling around it.

A thing like that could seem meaningless. But instead, this way of gauging time implies an idea of the time itself that is the perfect *opposite* of which a modern western clock implies. A clock is in fact a mobile mechanism which runs nearby to an universe that's running away toward nothing and nowhere. The Precessional Dial, in contrary, means that the Universe and Time have both an Eternal Centre, a concept that to a western modern thinker seems absolutely absurd, like the concept implicated by the idea of a Navel of the World, or to a *place* where the world, that's to say the *space*, was created.

CONCLUSION

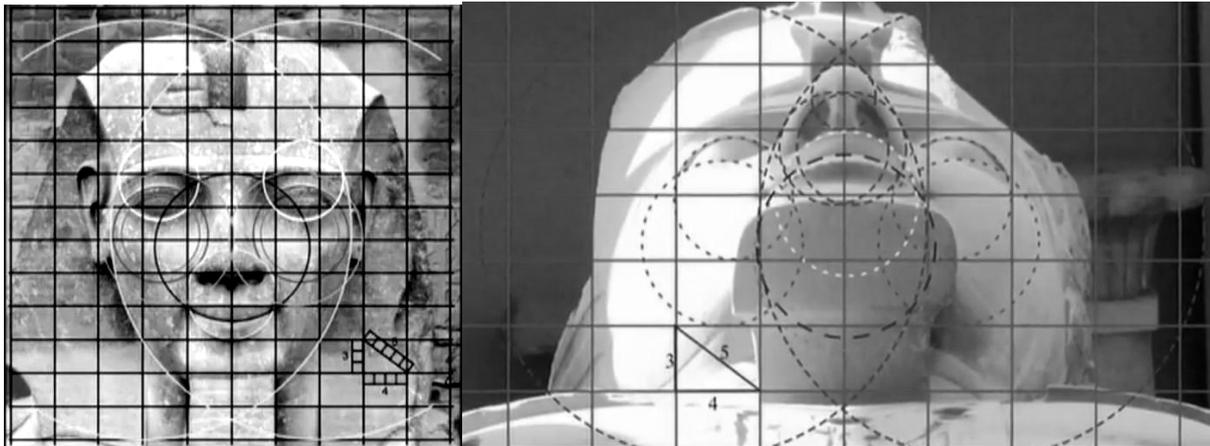
When I was student, to say that a question was absolutely pointless and useless, we use to say that "to wonder about a thing like this is to wonder about why Old Egyptians made Pyramids with the point shaped top". That's *actually* remarkable: in all the world you find Pyramids, but only of the kind that end with a sort of roof, usually with a little temple or a little altar built on: a roof that you can obviously reach with a monumental and often astronomically significant stairway. The Old Egyptian Pyramids are the *only* ones in all the world with the point shaped top: but few people have ever sincerely considered the hypothesis to solve this strange and almost absurd question. Well, at the end of this reasoning, we *can* say to have finally solved this problem – almost ironically neglected and abandoned.

All other peoples considered Pyramids as a way to get nearer to the sky, to the Gods made of stars, to the night sky of the constellations, to Sun and Moon and other solar system planets. *So* they had stairways to go up, and a place to celebrate rituals. In contrary, Old Egyptian did *not* considered the Pyramids a way to get nearer to the sky, *but the projection of the sky itself on Hearth*. Bauval – in his complex argumentation – quote the Westcar Papyrus where the Khufu Pyramid is called "Khufu Horizon". Khufu *Horizon*: that means that the Pyramid was not essentially a tomb, but essentially – just like Nabta Playa Megalithic Circle – the Sky World of the Gods *itself* reflected on Hearth. So you didn't need stairways to go up to a roof nearer the Sky than the surface of the Hearth is. The Hearth itself was transformed in a sort of terrestrial sky, so that watching at the Khufu Pyramid you didn't watch at a tomb, but an horizon, the same horizon which by Old Egyptian astronomic-priests was scanned day and night. And if the Sky is symbolically on Hearth, you don't need stairway to get nearer. The Sacred Angles of the Orion Death and Resurrection Path are inscribed in the Pyramids, so Walking on the very Hearth you are walking on the Night Sky World of the Gods; touching Pyramids (the Khufu Horizon) you are touching Osiris-Orion (this is not a Catholic nor a Christian interpretation of Pyramids: this words was quoted by Bouval from the Pyramid Text; from his very theory he could have already drawn this very conclusion).

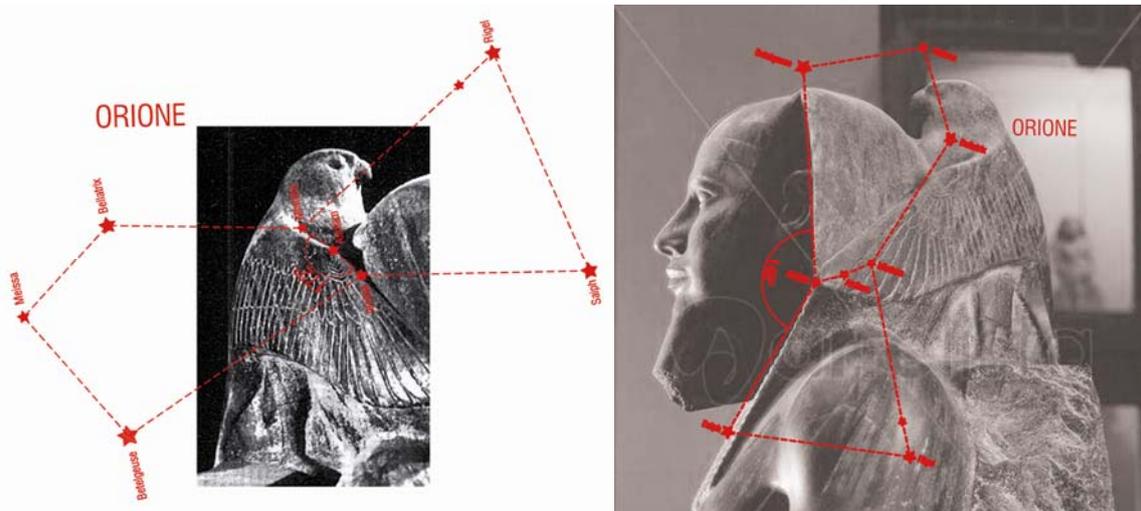
Now we can understand too why Old Egyptians used to represent in both in their wall paintings and in the relief sculptures all kind of figures in profile or in the frontal view: because all figures were meant to be represented as the stars in the sky represent Gods: watching the figure of a God drawn by the stars you can hardly imagine any kind of perspective, because perspective is the characteristic of the changeable entity of the terrestrial world, that you never see in the same way, or from a similar point of view, because in temporal life you must have movement. In contrary, Osiris-Orion and all other Gods, as their life is always returning, fixed in an eternal cycle, is fixed in the same, eternal position. And this position *must* be that in which any kind of figure possess the most high degree of recognizability, the most unmistakable and *unique* form: that's to say the frontal and the profile views that, as any kind of ID irrefutably demonstrates. The Old Egyptian stone walls were *not* essentially the walls of a building, that's to say something *functional*, but essentially the *symbol* of the sacred, Eternal Sky, in which Gods every night shows themselves to the temporal world, made of time and dust. So you can't represent – for instance – the Pharaoh in perspective, because that would mean that he is not an Eternal God in Hearth, but just time and dust: and that, to an Old Egyptian "artist" would not be an error, or a lack of style, but no less than an horrendous blasphemy, as would be to a Christian artist to represent the Father while eating and drinking. Pharaoh aside, the scenes of Old Egyptian wall paintings and reliefs were *not* the representation of a particular scene of a kind of scene that repeats *in* temporal world. In

contrary, the temporal world was conceived as a projection of the eternal story that's fixed in the figure of the sacred Eternal Sky. Nothing new never really happens in the world, until nothing new happens in the sacred Eternal Sky (compare Jane Sellers argumentations in the first part of "The Death of Gods in Ancient Egypt"), as in the Old Egyptian thought, only in the Sky something important and real could happen)

Now we can deeply and thoroughly understand why – as Christopher Dunn has irrefutably demonstrated with his very accurate measurement work – that in the Ramesse II statue you *can't* find those characteristic angles. At that time, the Old Egyptian religion had already changed from a Death and Resurrection stellar cult to a similar one, save for the fact that it was based on the Sun cycle.



Osiris and Horus are now inextricably connected with spherical form, and that's the reason why the Pharaoh portrait is *completely* based on a system of circles and spheres – as *this* is the form of the new heavenly entity which stays at the top of the Old Egyptian cult, that's to say the Sun. But about a thousand years before the stellar cult was still predominant, as it is demonstrated by the inexorable recurrence of the Osiris-Orion and Duat Sacred Angles in all the architecture of the Ancient Kingdom, and also in the statuary, as we can see in the Khefren diorite statue that was found in the Valley Temple of his Pyramid



The Pharaoh is Horus, that's to say the Sun. The Hawk is Osiris-Orion: the Hawk is the Father, the Pharaoh, as he is alive, is the Son. Dying he will become Osiris-Orion, and his Son will become the Sun, the Horus of the Horizon. But with the IV Dynasty the stellar cult begin to die as it accomplish the most high architectonic realizations. After Menkaure you will not find a Pyramid built with accuracy, they are all doomed to collapse in a relative brief time. The Solar Temple will take their place and the Pyramids – at the time of Ramses II – were maybe a mystery to the Egyptian as it will be for the astonished people that in the following centuries will remain breathless in front of their untemporal greatness.