

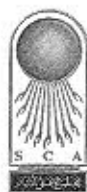
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SUPPLÉMENT AUX ANNALES DU SERVICE DES  
ANTIQUITÉS DE L'ÉGYPTE

CAHIER N° 34

Volume

II



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LE CAIRE 2005

**A**n article on 'The Step Pyramids' in a beautifully illustrated volume was recently published by Ali Radwan.<sup>2</sup> This work will certainly refresh a lacking interest in the Third Dynasty. More of such images and ideas are needed.

As we all know, many aspects of the Third Dynasty remain mysterious or hazy.

The chronologies available are fragile or argued on isolated evidence with no consistency.<sup>3</sup>

Major sectors of the monuments of the Third Dynasty, e.g.: galleries and dry moat of Netjerykhet; pyramid, layout, and terraces of Sekhemkhet; pyramid and surroundings of Zawyet el Aryan south, require time and money to be studied and published. In contrast, minor queries which are less costly and have available answers are emerging all the time.

Here I offer one of these minor queries to Professor Ali Radwan on the relationship between the layer monuments and the present course of the river. In this short study I present a list of reference maps; geographical and UTM coordinates; information on distances, positions and orientations; and finally icons showing their deviation from the present river course. Unfortunately no solid conclusions can be drawn until the ancient river course has been revealed.

## Maps and Coordinates

### Seila

(1: 25 000) EL RODA sheet 74/615 of 1971, the monument is ignored on this map.

(1: 100 000) BANI SWEIF sheet 29, 00 / 31, 00 of 1956.

Coordinates:

Lat and long 29° 33' N, 31° 03' E

UTM kilometres grid 741.5 N, 620 E

### Hebenu

(1:25 000) EL MINYA, portions of sheets: 59/585 and 59/600 of 1953.

(1:100 000) EL MINYA, sheet 150, of 1956.

Coordinates:

Lat and long 28° 03' N, 30° 50' E

UTM kilometres grid 593.3 N, 598 E

By the layer monuments I mean those named Seila, Hebenu, under Ay, Sinki, Nubt, el Kula, el Ghenimiya, and Elephantine commonly referred to as the minor step pyramids. In a study being prepared (Seven Layer Monuments of the early Old Kingdom) the profiles and sections revealed can reconstruct them as: a step pyramid or a number of benbens shapes. Consequently it is safe to refer to them as the layer monuments until we have better knowledge

of their ultimate shape.

<sup>2</sup> Z. Hawass (ed.), *The Treasures of the Pyramids* (Cairo, 2003), 86-111.

<sup>3</sup> N. Swelim, Rollsiogel, *Pierre de Taille and an Update on a King and Monument List of the Third Dynasty*, *Studia Aegyptiaca* XIV (Budapest, 1992), 541-554.

### Under Ay<sup>4</sup>

(1:25 000) ABU SHUSHA, portion of sheets: 38/705 and 38/690 of 1982.

The exact position is uncertain west of Shunet el Zibib.

### Sinki

(1:25 000) ABU SHUSHA, portion of sheets: 38/705 and 38/690 of 1982.

(1:100 000) NAG HAMMADI. Portions of sheets: 36/66 and 36/72 of 1938.

Coordinates:

Lat and long: 26° 09' N 31° 57' E

UTM kilometres grid: 384.5 N, 711.5 E

### Nubt

(1:25 000) QIFT, portions of sheets: 36/780 and 36/795 of 1954.

(1:100 000) QENA, portions of sheets: 36/72 and 36/78 of 1934.

Coordinates:

Lat and long: 25° 58' N, 32° 44' E

UTM kilometres grid: 365.2 N, 788.3 E

### el Kula

(1:25 000) EL SIBAIYA, portions of sheets: 27/780 and 27/765 of 1987

Map overlapping 27/795 and 27/780

(1:100 000) IDFU, portions of sheets: 24/72 and 24/78 of 1943.

Coordinates:

Lat and long: 25° 08' N, 32° 44' E

UTM kilometres grid: 271.9 N, 789.8 E

### el Ghenimiya

(1:25 000) IDFU sheet 25/795 of 1957.

(1:100 000), IDFU portions of sheets 24/72 and 24/78 of 1943.

Coordinates:

Lat and long: 24° 57' N, 32° 50' E

UTM kilometres grid: 250.8 N, 800.9 E

### Elephantine

(1: 25 000) ASWAN, portions of sheets: 15/795 and 15/810 of 1988

(1: 100 000) ASWAN sheet 12/78 of 1940.

Coordinates:


Lat and long: 24° 06' N, 32° 53' E

UTM kilometres grid: 156.5 N, 806.5 E

## Distances, positions and orientation

### Distances apart

On the map of Egypt the layer monuments are located between Fayum and Aswan over 800 kilometres. The longest distance apart is between Hebenu and Sinki, approximately 320 kilometres. The shortest distance is between el Kula and el Ghenimiya approximately

 C.T. Currelly, *Abydos III* (London, 1904), 10, pl. XV, in this drawing the orientation is north but remains uncertain.

30 kilometres but shorter still between Sinki and the monument under Ay at Abydos approximately 6 kilometres.

#### Distance from the river

The distances of Hebenu, Elephantine and el Kula from the river are: 200, 250 and 500 metres. The distances of the other monuments are 2-10 kilometres.

Hebenu, Sinki, and el Kula are opposite narrow river channels. The other layer monuments are opposite locations where the river has the common width.

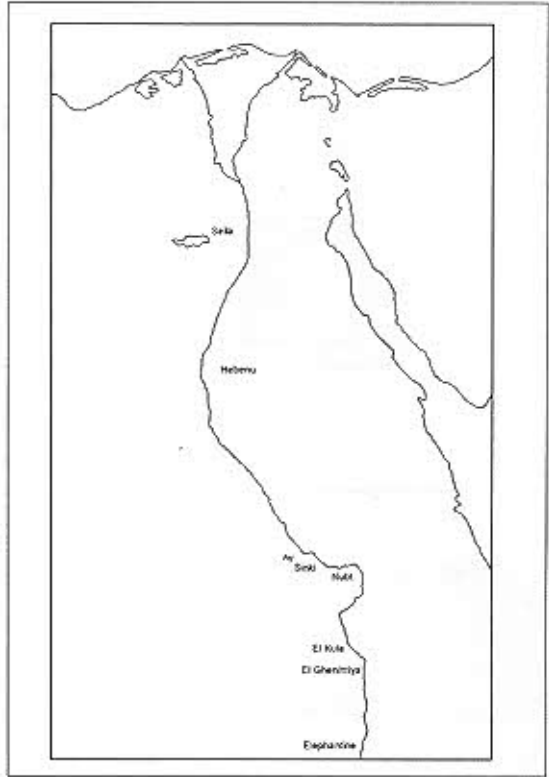
#### Unusual positioning

Seila is separated from the river valley by the desert of the Nile-Fayum-Divide.

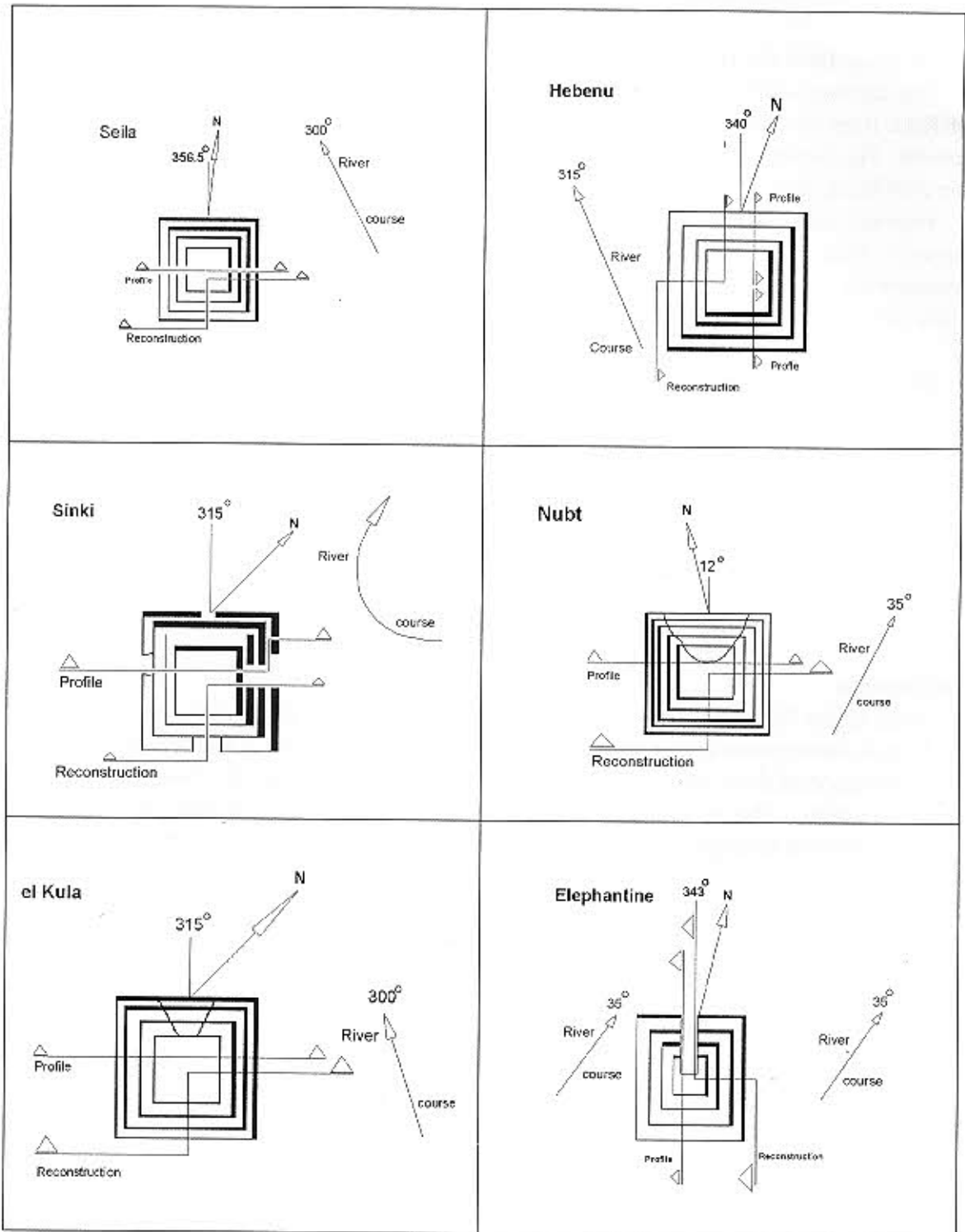
Hebenu and Elephantine are not at the edge of the western desert where the monuments are usually found; the first is on the east bank while the second is on an island.

#### Orientation

None of the layer monuments are oriented parallel to the present river course except perhaps the monument under Ay at Abydos. There is no uniformity or factor that determines the orientation of these monuments. Sinki and el Kula are oriented by their corners to the cardinal points. The general course of the present river in their regions, on small-scale maps is  $315^\circ$ , but on large-scale maps, the immediate course of the river differs.



Icons showing the deviation from the river



Icons showing the orientation of the layer monument (except the ones under Ay and el Ghenimiya) and the course of the river in their location; other directions shown, indicate profiles, sections and reconstructions in Seven Layer Monuments of the early Old Kingdom; forthcoming.

## A summary

Monument name	Orientation	Distance from the river	River course is running for	Deviation from the river
Seila	356.5 °	Separated by the Nile Fayum Divide; 16.0 km E	030 ° along 09km and alters course to 325° along 7 km From Zawyet el Masloub to Atwab and to el Riqqa.	not applicable the river is too far away
Hebenu	340 °	00.2km W	315 ° along 08km between el Kom El Ahmar and the city of Minya.	025 °
Under Ay	000 ° uncertain	10.0km E	000 ° along 16 km between Bani Hemil to the Island of Nassirat.	uncertain
Sinki	315 °	05.5km NW	Along a circular course ranging from SW to NW to N along 16 km between the islands of Naqnaq to Nasirat.	not applicable
Nubt	012 °	04.0km E	035 ° along 11km between south of Naqada to el Zawayda.	023 °
el Kula	315 °	00.5km E	300 ° along 30km between the islands of el Hellah to el Kalh.	015 °
el Chenimiya	not measured	02.0km E	025 ° along 05km between el Chenimiya to Edfu.	not measured
Elephantine	343 °	00.25km S, E and W	035 ° along 05km between Sluga to Qubet el Hawa.	052 °