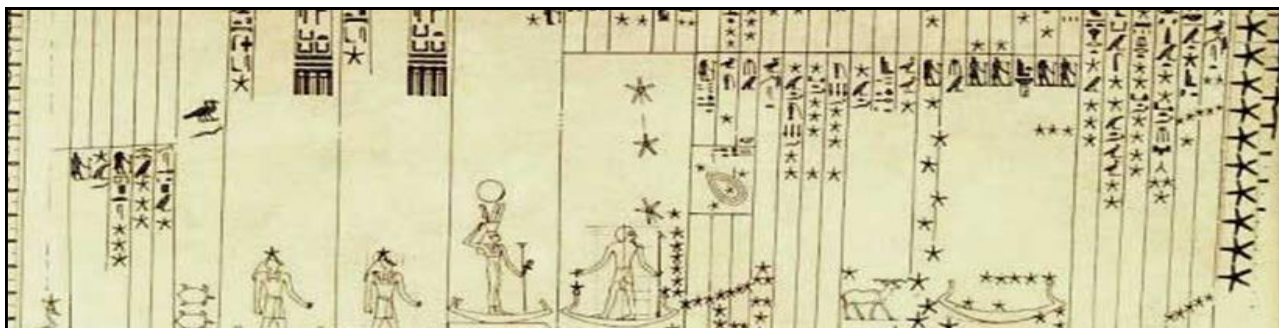




THE ASTRONOMICAL CEILING OF SENENMUT

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Overview : Egyptian astronomical Images and Ceilings

The known astronomical data in tombs funeral art
(all dates can be challenged):

Eighteenth Dynasty

Senenmut: 1473 BCE. - Decans and constellations
Amenhotep III: 1411 BCE – a water clock – could be earlier.

Nineteenth Dynasty

Seti I : 1303 –1290 ?BCE - Decans and constellations .
Cenotaph – Book of Nut
Ramses II: 1279-1213 BCE - Decans and constellations
Merneptah : 1213 – 1203 BCE - Decans and constellations (little remains)
Tausert: 1190 BCE - Decans and constellations

Twentieth Dynasty

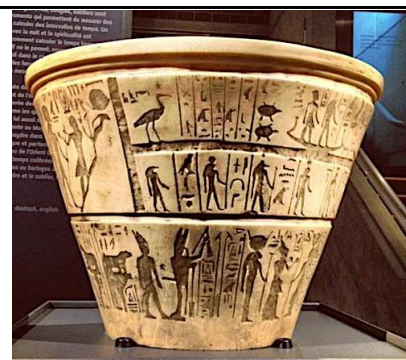
Rameses III: 1186 –1155 BCE -Decans and constellations - wall
Rameses IV : 1155-1149 BCE - Decans and constellations – wall
Rameses VI : 1145-1137 BCE - Star Clocks + Decans and constellations
Rameses VII: 1136-1129 BCE – Star Clocks +Book of Nut – double set of constellations
Rameses IX: 1129-1111 BCE - Star Clocks + Decans and constellations

Twenty-second Dynasty

Osorkon II : 837 BCE - Decans

Twenty-fifth (or sixth) Dynasty

Pedamenope (Chief Reciter) – Decans and constellations
Montemhet: 680-650 BCE – Decans and constellations



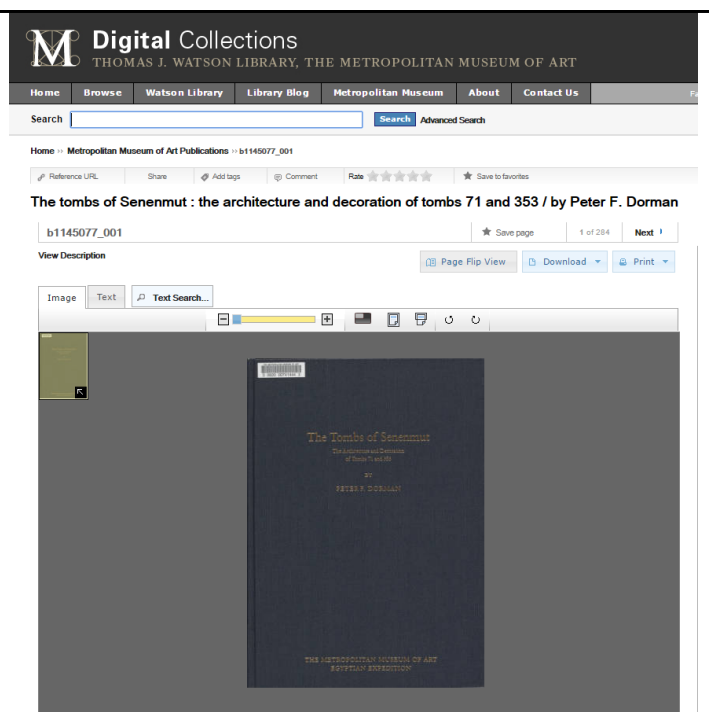
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Dorman, Peter F,

The Tombs of Senenmut, the Architecture and Decoration of Tombs 71 and 353. Vol. XXIV (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991).



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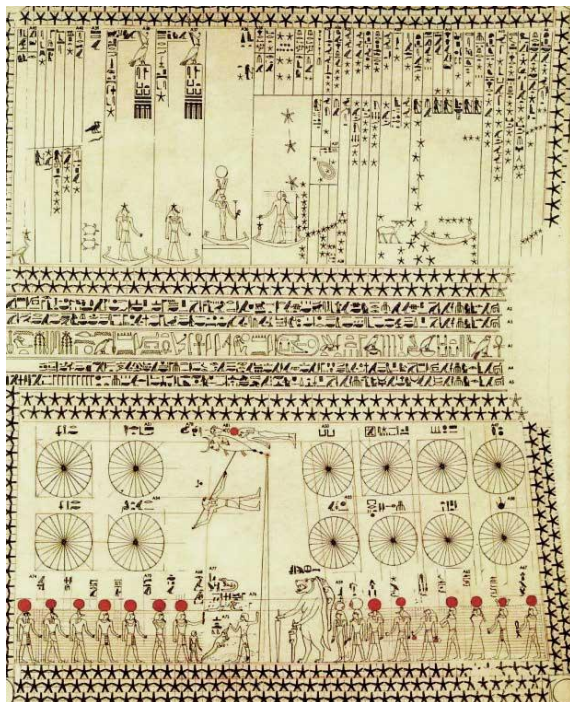


The Senenmut ceiling is the oldest known ceiling and the only other known monument which is older is the now lost coffin lid of Heny (XI Dynasty, 2134-1999 BCE).

55a. Chamber A after clearance, looking northeast toward entrance.

Image from: Peter F Dorman, *The Tombs of Senenmut*, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1991).

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Southern Panel – on the south side of the chamber

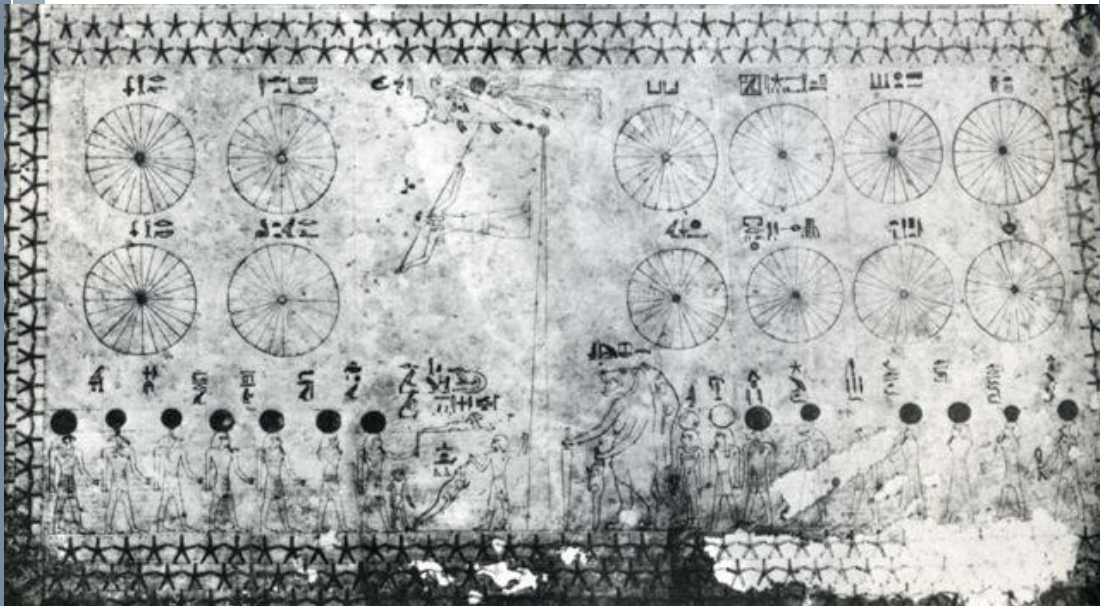
Central Band:

Live, Horus powerful of *k3s*, Two-Ladies flourishing of years, Horus-of-Gold divine of appearances, king of upper and lower Egypt, Maatkara, beloved of Amen-ra, living; the sealbearer of the king of lower Egypt, the steward of Amun Senenmut, engendered of Ramose, justified, born of Hatnofer

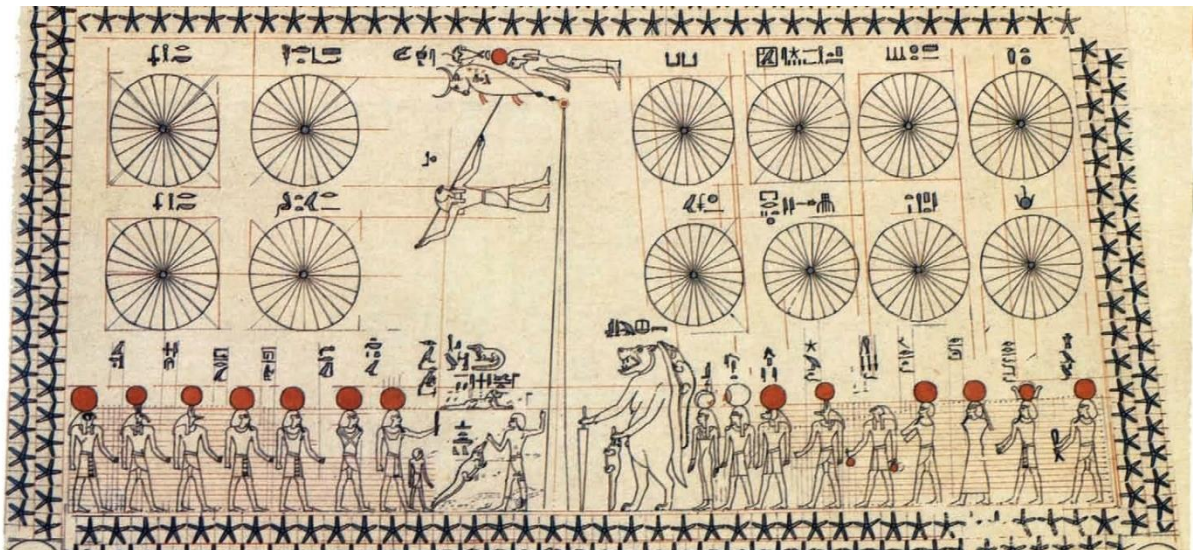
Northern Panel – on the north side of the chamber

The astronomical ceiling from Chamber A, Tomb TT353, the second tomb built by Senenmut. It is thought to dates from around 1473 BCE.

6

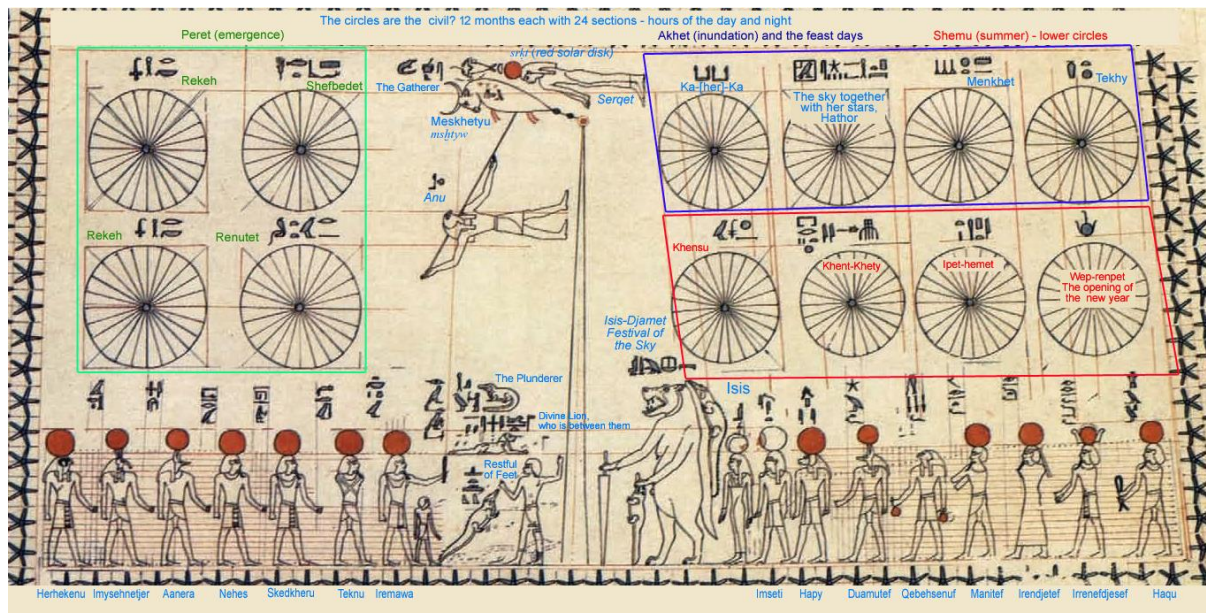


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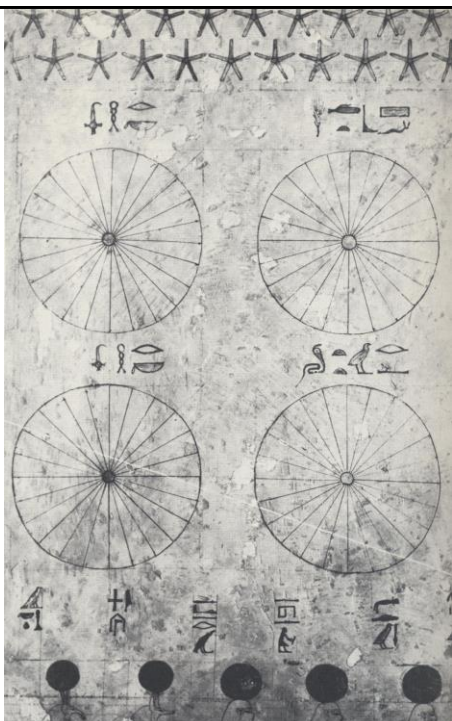
The northern panel of the astronomical ceiling from Chamber A, Tomb TT353, the second tomb built by Senenmut. It is thought to date from around 1473 BCE.

8



The astronomical ceiling from Chamber A, Tomb TT353, Senenmut.

9

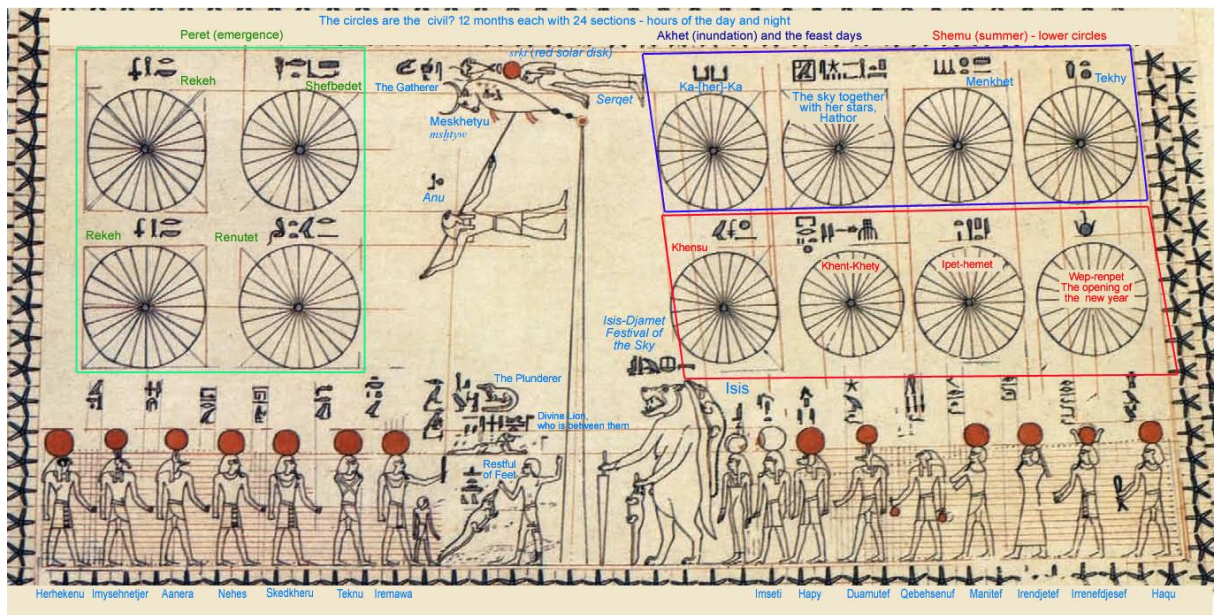


The season of Peret

Shefbedet, Rekeh (also Light or Fire), Rekeh and Renuet (Harvest goddess)

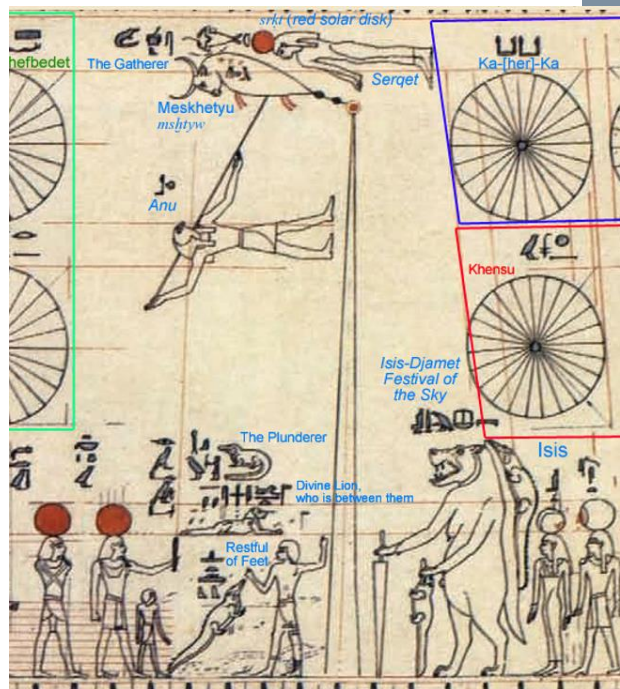
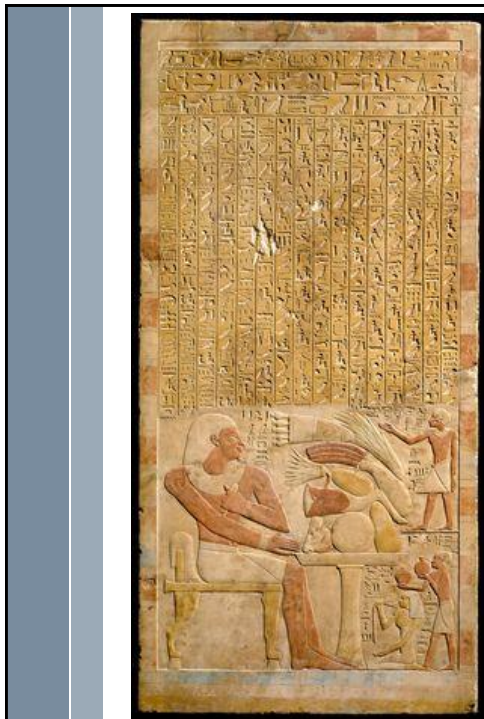
Each circle is divided into 24 slices all of seemingly equal size. Are these hours waiting for their decans, or are these zones of the sky?

10

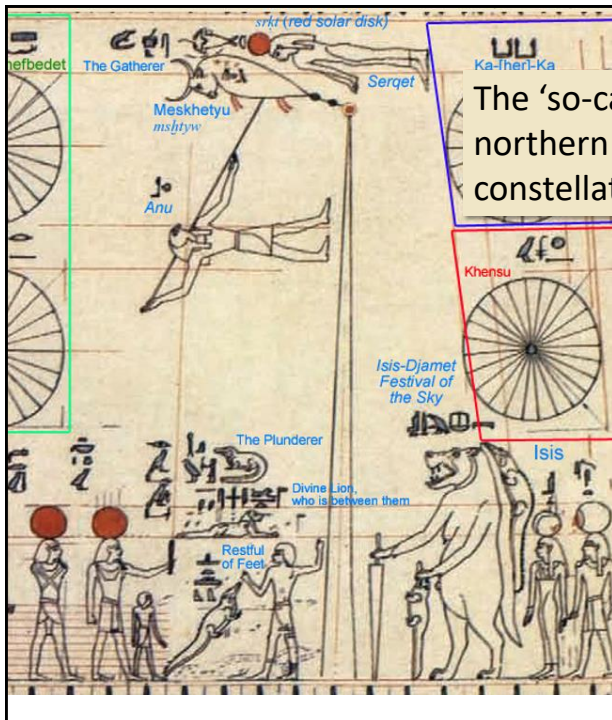


The astronomical ceiling from Chamber A, Tomb TT353, Senenmut.

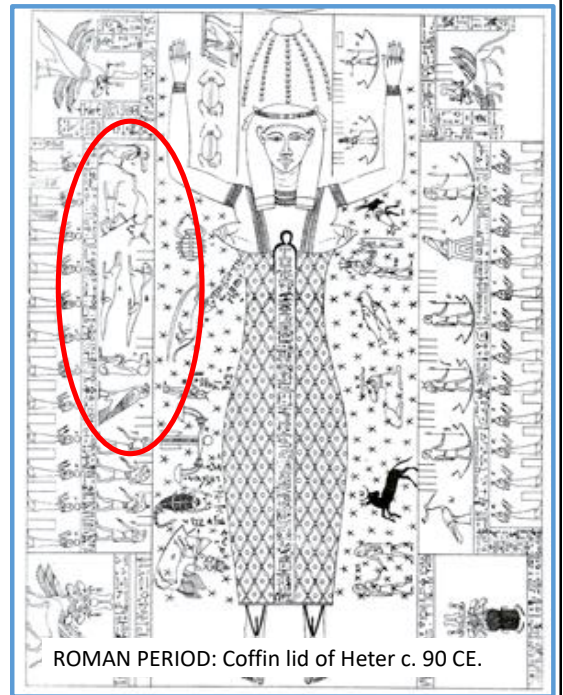
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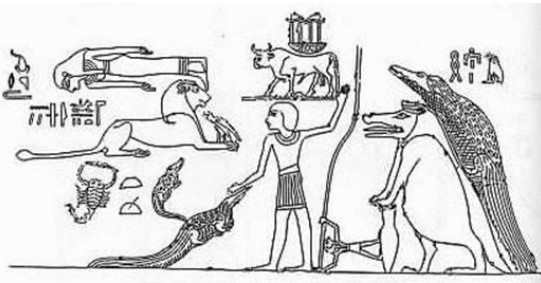


The 'so-called'
northern
constellations



ROMAN PERIOD: Coffin lid of Heter c. 90 CE.

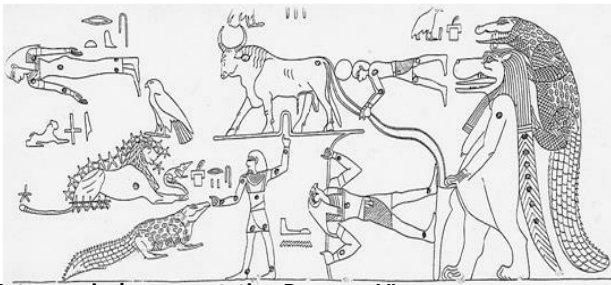
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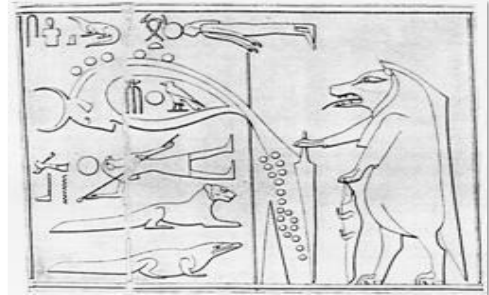
Rameses VI
Celestial diagram from the ceiling of the tomb of Rameses VI (KV9).



Psusennes 1047-1001 BCE
21st Dynasty



Astronomical representation Rameses VI
EAT III, fig. 29 p. 186.

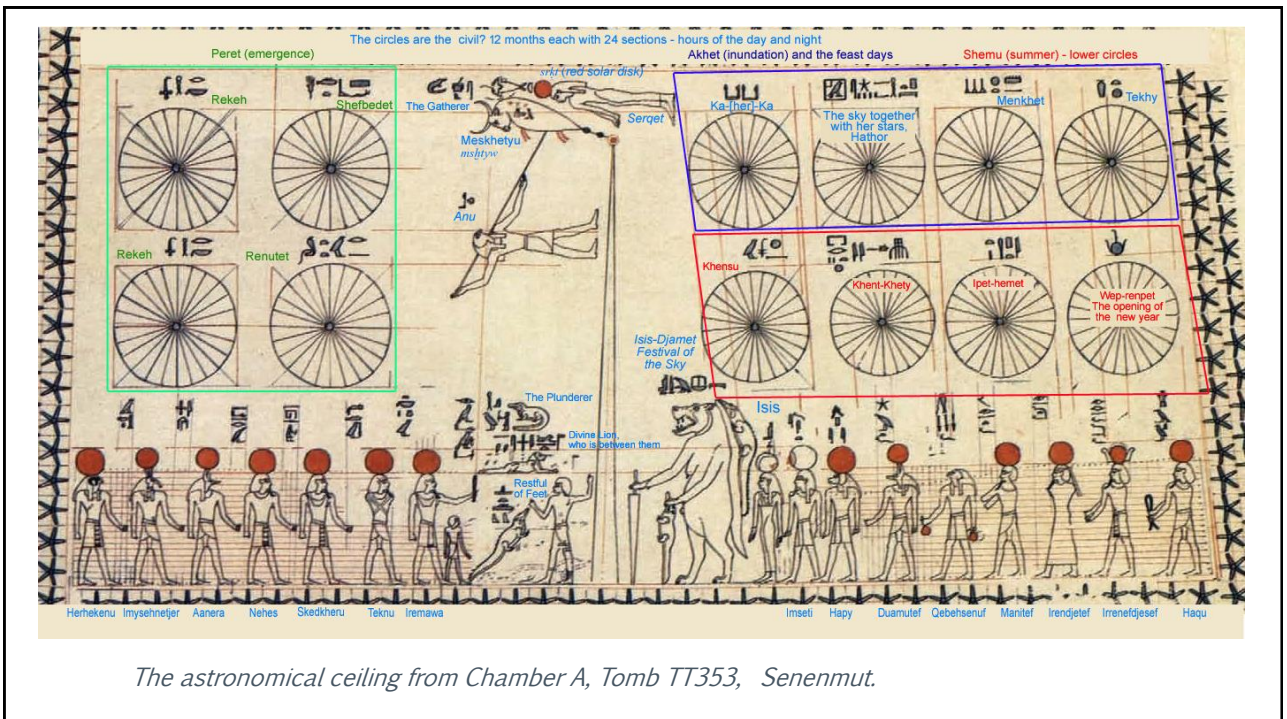


Astronomical representation Rameses III A. EAT III, fig. 28 p. 185.

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Senenmut – south panel of ceiling.

Top Row (Decan Numbers): 36 32 31 34 33 33 33 29 27 25 24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Left Column (Deities and Symbols):

- 6 of the 12 triangular decans
- 1, The Two Torchbearers
- 2, Neseur
- 3, Ssegep
- 4 or 5, Kheset?
- 6, The Horned of God
- 7, Mercury
- 8, Venus - the crosser
- 9, The Osiris
- 11 is a cluster
- Heron

Right Column (Deities and Symbols):

- 1, Forerunner of Kemnet
- 3, The one under the tail 2, Kemnet
- 4, The Beginning 5, The end of Day
- 6, Upper Tynat 7, Lower Tynat
- 8, Two Witches 9, Two pregnant Dogs
- 10, Forerunner of Kemnet 11, Upper Kemnet
- 12, Lower Kemnet
- 13, The Red One
- 14, Sappi of Khenuy
- 15, The star in the middle of the ship
- 16, The Guides
- 17, The Kenna Stars
- 18, Fore-runner of the Star of the Moon
- 19, Half-south
- 20, The two Children
- 21, The two Children
- 22, The one under the buttocks of the Sheep
- 23, The forerunner of the two Sprits
- 24, The two Sprits
- 25, The two Souls
- 26, Upper 27, Lower Kemnet
- 28, 29 Children of Osiris
- 30, The thousands
- 31, The Eye of Horus
- 32, Isis
- Above the arm of Orion
- Water cluster constellation 73

Central Text and Symbols:

- Saturn:** Mut (Horus) bull of the sky Eastern Star which crosses the sky.
- Jupiter:** Horus who bounds the Southern Star of the Sky
- Eye of Horus:** Above the arm of Orion
- Arm of Orion:** The arm of Orion - 35 Orion's mesop
- Bottom Line:** The bottom line of a diagonal star clock
- Sheep:** A drawing of a sheep.
- Ship:** A drawing of a ship.

Senenmut – south panel of ceiling.

The Planets in Egyptian Astronomical Monuments



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Planets:

The planets are represented in over 34 ceilings, walls and coffin lids and can have different epitaphs to their names, for example, star of the east, west, south, crossing, or moving backwards.

The order of the planets in their representation before the Ptolemaic period is always given as: Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Mercury and Venus.



Neugebauer and Parker, *Egyptian astronomical texts. vol. 3. Decans, planets, constellations and zodiacs.* ,p. 175.

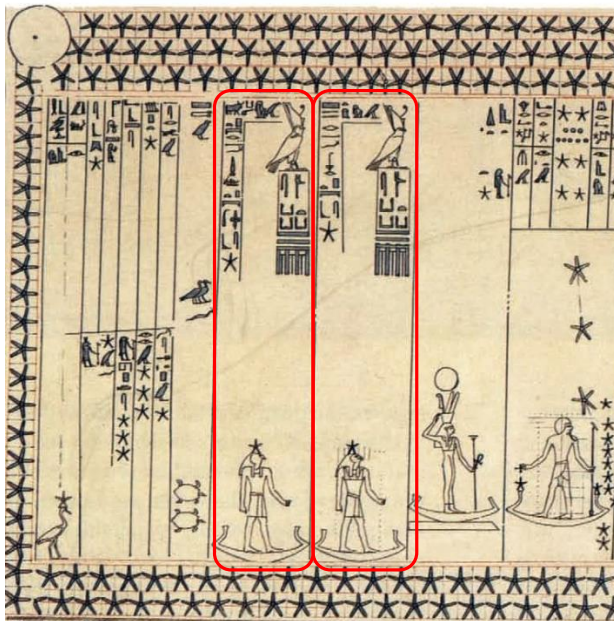
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The planets in the astronomical ceiling of the tomb of Senenmut. Photograph © Juan Belmonte

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The Planets in Egyptian Astronomical Overview



Senenmut Ceiling

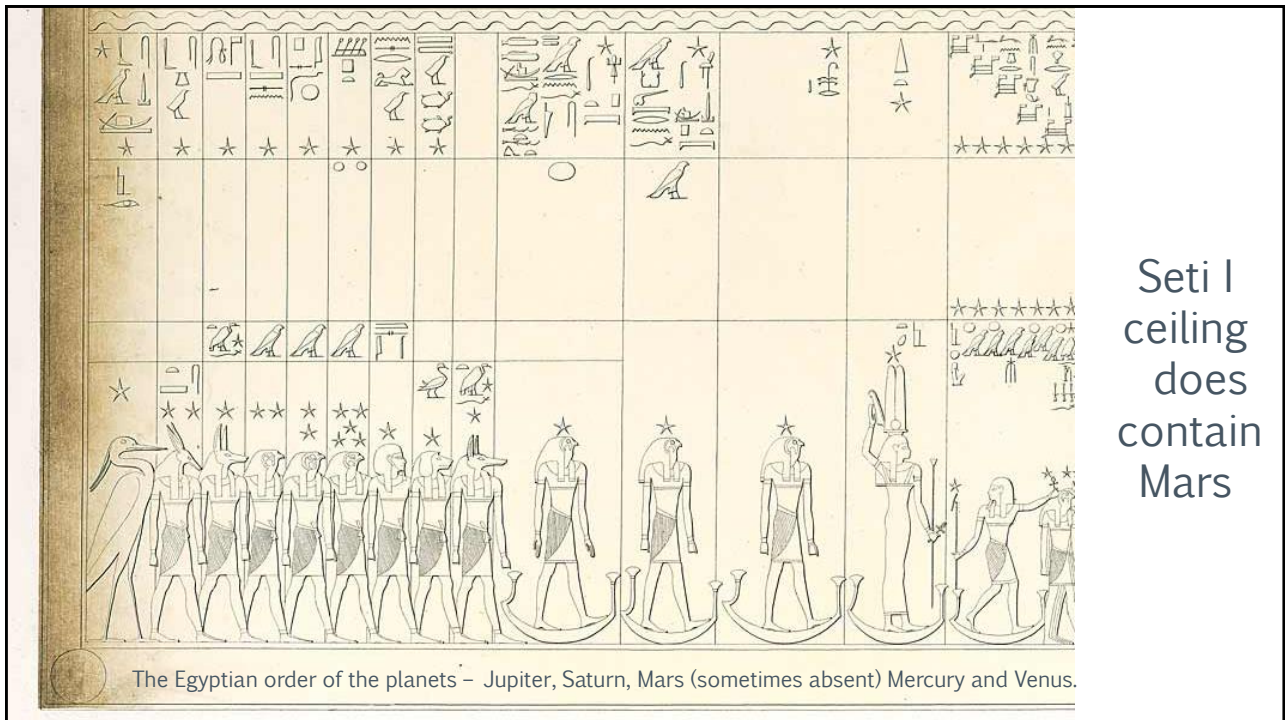
Mars is absent.

Jupiter: *ḥr-(p3) -št (ḥr- t3š- t3wy)*

‘His name is Horus-who-bounds-the-Two-Lands, ‘the star of the southern sky.’

Saturn: In the Senenmut ceiling (opposite) Saturn is labelled, *mwt k3-pt rn.f*, Mother of the Bull of Heaven the ‘eastern star in the sky.’

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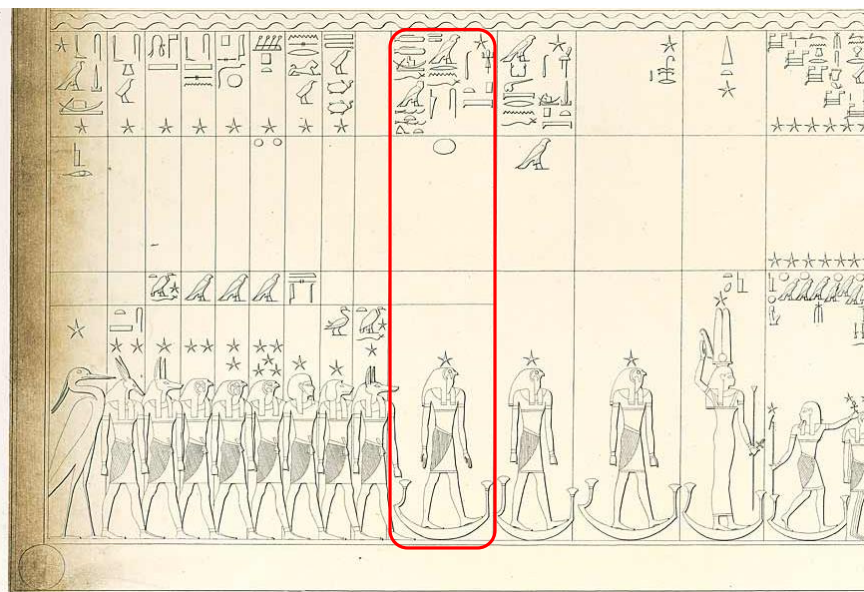


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The Planets - Mars in Seti I Ceiling



Seti I Ceiling: The Egyptian order of the planets – Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Mercury and Venus.

Mars is labelled *ḥr-3ḥtyr.n.f*, 'His name is Horus-of-the-horizon' Mars also carries two epithets the first of which is, *sb3 i3bty(n) pt* 'eastern star of the sky' followed by the statement, *skdd.fm ḥtht*, 'he travels backwards'.

Thus according to the phase information Seti's ceiling is for a **SUNSET** as this is the only time that Mars is retrograde and in the eastern sky.

27

Mars

ḥr-tš Horus the Red (Mars)

'Horus-of-the-horizon'

'The eastern (western) star of the sky'

Also

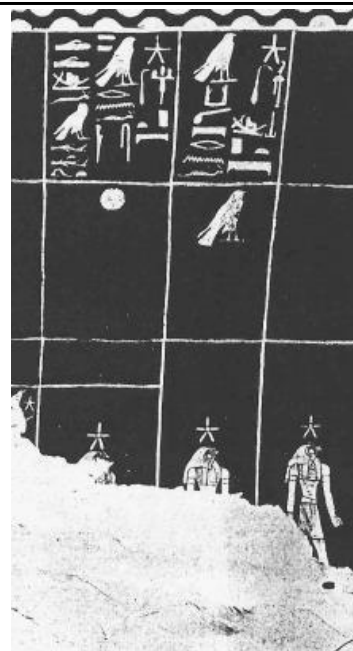
'He travels backwards' - represented in the name written on the Seti I ceiling (right image, left side)

Possible other Representations:

Human headed god in Egyptian dress with Greek helmet

Falcon headed with white crown

Human headed god, standing in a bark, with *w3s*-sceptre



Seti I - Mars, (left) the planets on the south panel of the astronomical ceiling

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Jupiter

hr-(p3) -št (hr- t3š- t3wy)

‘His name is Horus-who-bounds-the-Two-Lands’
(Jupiter), ‘the star of the southern sky.’

Also can be called:

‘His name is Horus – mystery-of-the-Two-Lands
follower of the sky’.

‘His name is Horus-who-illuminates-the-Two-Lands’

‘Who-opens-mysteries’

The earliest mention of Jupiter appears to be in
the eleventh dynasty, coffin of Heny (now lost).

Possible other Representations:

Falcon with crown of horned disk and feathers
Falcon with out stretched wings and horns.



Montemhet – 680-650 BC

29

Saturn

hr-k3 - Horus the Bull (Saturn)

‘His name is Horus-bull-of-the-sky’

‘The eastern star which crosses the sky’

Sometimes represented as the : ‘western star that crosses
the sky’

Or even ‘the south-western star which crosses the sky’

Possible other Representations:

Bull Headed god with *w3s*-sceptre
Bull Headed Falcon
Bull Headed Falcon with outstretched wings.



Montemhet – 680-650 BC

30

Venus

p3-ntr-dw3y The morning god (Venus).

‘the Crosser’ or ‘The star which crosses’.

‘The eastern (western) star of the sky’

Also in the Late Period:

‘the-morning-star.’



Bennu Bird

Possible other Representations:

Two faced human headed god, standing in a bark, with *w3s*-sceptre

Two headed god, human head with red crown.

Falcon headed with a white crown.

Two headed, one human and one lion standing god with *w3s*-sceptre

Montemhet – 680-650 BC



31

Mercury

sbg , The Unknown (Mercury)

Often represented by a small figure of Seth.

Also known as:

‘Seth in the evening twilight, a god in the morning twilight’.

Possible other Representations:

Frog headed falcon

Human headed god, standing in a bark, with *w3s*-sceptre

Falcon with serpent tail and head of Seth

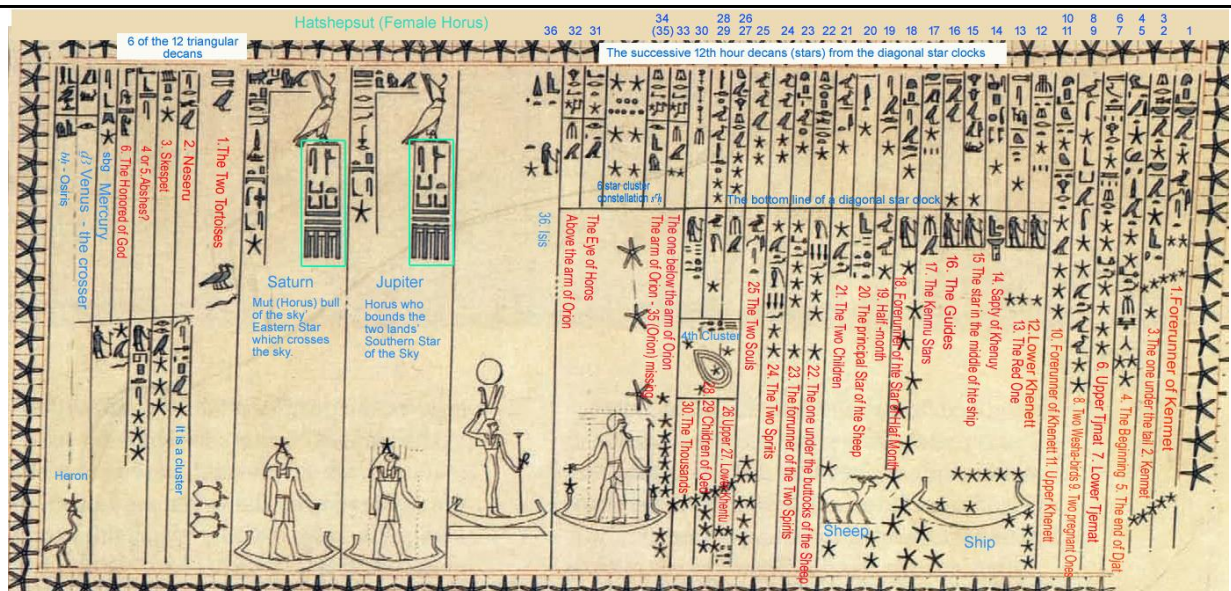


Seth



Seti I - Mercury , (left) the planets on the south panel of the astronomical ceiling

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