

Gundula Schulze Eldowy

The Halls of the Records

*Photographic traces of the oldest library in the
world*



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"Draw a line from the great statue (Sphinx) that I built, to the apex of the pyramid, which I built as a gateway. Draw another line opposite at the same angle and in the same direction. Here you should excavate and find that which I have concealed. Here you will find the subterranean entrance which leads to the mysteries which I have concealed." That in the emerald tablets XI

The desert came to me, when I was living in New York. This was in 1992. For three whole years I investigated the city every day with my camera. Until the day Peter Galassi, the head of the photographic department in the Museum of Modern Art showed me a photograph by the Israeli photographer Michal Rovner, in which a wooden house in the midst of a

sand storm could be discerned. The picture drew me irresistibly into its train. I knew I would be able to find no peace of mind, until I too had experienced the desert with my own body and soul. Three months later I left the USA bound for Egypt. This was on the 26th February 1993, the day of the first terror attack on the World Trade Center.

The land of the pyramids was also overshadowed by terrorists attacks at that time. Tourists stayed away. This meant I was one of the few foreigners. This circumstance opened all the doors for me and allowed my creativity free reign. After I had journeyed every which throughout the country, I rented an apartment in Giza which looked out on the Pyramid of Cheops. And with seemingly endless time at my disposal I was able to investigate the Giza Plateau from top to bottom. These forays of discovery occupied my first and last thoughts each day. Very soon I came to know every nook and corner. Whenever I was inclined, I went into the chambers in the pyramid of Cheops, I meditated, sang and recited my poems to the sound of the ancient walls, climbed to the summit of the pyramids, rode at night along their South flank and curved by helicopter above and past them. For almost seven years I was to live, with some interruptions in between, in the land of the pharaohs. During this time thousands of photos came about, which I subsequently evaluated. I financed all of my flights there myself. The same goes for my accomodation, camera equipment, films, laboratory costs and enlargements. The longer I focussed on the pyramids, the greater their mystery became. In the beginning I was not conscious of the fact that the ancient Egyptians divided human nature up according to many facettes of the human psyche, which we today know as the archetypes. In the past these were conceived as historical forms. One might conclude that Freud and Jung had even taken tuition under them. And so now I too was to attend this same school. With these associations in mind, my studies metamorphosed into pictures. The photographic series entitled *The Egyptian Diaries* arose (Edition Stemmler), and countless poems and short stories. As a consequence my studies led me unavoidably in my photographic work into the field of archaeology. I was overpowered by the visual impressions of the ruins and of extinct ancient sites, which was no wonder, because I had just experienced the downfall of my own country of birth – the GDR – and all that this physically entailed. In the Egyptian Museum on Tahrir Plaza I spent much time, especially in the salons dedicated to the cultural history of Khem, as Egypt was originally called. In 1996 I was given the rare privilidge from the Director Dr. Mohammed Saleh himself, of being allowed to photograph the

mummies of the Egyptian Pharaohs. As far as I know, I am the sole foreign photographer to have been granted such permission. At this special moment in time, I was entranced by a particular picture. Next to green pyrite Chepren statues hung an aerial photograph of the Giza Plateau, which was taken in 1936/37 by the Egyptian Air Force. Because I didn't have a wide angle lense at hand, I didn't photograph the whole of the reproduction, only an excerpt from it. On my return to Berlin I discovered a strange imprint on my reproduction, which is usually typical as an indication of there being subterranean hollows, which have come about due to vibrations and tremours associated with earthquakes. With the course of time a barely visible edge had become visible at the seams, which betrayed the outline of the hollow spaces. On my reproductions it was clearly and distinctly visible. It must have been some sort of a large, rectangular building. Thus the urgent idea was born to go in search of this. And so I flew back to Egyptian once again and borrowed a helicopter from the general of the Egyptian Air Force. For countless photographs the pilot subsequently flew me for an hour long over the area. Although I had chosen midday so that the Pyramids would cast no annoying shadows, it was not possibly to discern anything with the naked eye from the helicopter. Everything appeared to materialise by way of the photographic process itself. It was known to me that by using special filters and techniques, different surface layers could be made more visible. Films such as Kodak Vericolor III Professional Infrared EIR 135-36 possessed the capability of making structures within stone formations more distinct than can otherwise be discerned with the naked eye. But these films are no longer manufactured. I worked with them fir fifteen years long.

In the nineties an obsessive search developed for the "Halls of the Records", which are considered to be the oldest library of the world. They were sought for beneath the pyramid of Cheops and beneath the Sphinx. The eye of my camera had espied the Halls. When I studied the aerial photographs of the plateau, I noticed that each pyramid was connected to one and the same outline. The pyramid of Cheops and of Menkaure both have three satellite pyramids. Together with Chepren this means there are nine pyramids on the plateau.

What convinced me that with the "outline" I had stumbled across the "Hall of the Records" was the discovery that all nine pyramids display a relationship towards it at prominent places, which was undoubtedly the intention of its builders. The same applied to the Sphinx. I was convinced that everything above ground gave visible indications of what was

underground. Thus I gained conceptual access to the Giza Plateau system, in which the rectangular subterranean enclosure is part of the whole. Towards the South the terrain descends and forms a flat area, which is used for riding, because of its evenness. Countless times I had ridden across it, without ever suspecting that the "Halls of the Records" might lie beneath it. The person who had perhaps come closest to finding the Halls was the north American professor James J. Hurtak, who in his own time was the discoverer of the Tomb of Osiris. This also lies to the South of the Pyramid of Cheops, at about half the distance to the Halls. "We were the first team to find the Tomb of Osiris, and to be exact, right in the centre of the Giza Plateau at a depth of about 33 metres. We were not only able to find this tomb and to evaluate all of our researches, but we were also able to apprehend that there also existed a series of further, adjoining chambers and that the complex must be of far greater extent underground than on the surface...In our opinion the subterranean labyrinths and tunnels were used to move and to place other structures, with the purpose of protecting and conserving records and artefacts."

As chance would have it, I became friends with Rudolf Gantenbrink, who with his self-built mini-computer called UPUAUT began exploring the south air shaft in the Queen's Chamber in March 1993 and in the process stumbled upon a mysterious blocking slab at the end of the 50 metre tunnel. It's builders had evidently blocked it with copper pins, so that it could not be opened. It was clear that this shaft could only have been integrated into the complete Cheops Pyramid construction at great trouble. It was first possible to carefully open this door in 2002. Behind it lay a second blocking slab which had been similarly blocked and which was first opened in 2009.

In 1872 an englishman called Waynman Dixon tapped all of the walls and because of the sounds was able to discover two shafts: the shaft which Gantenbrink investigated, and the north shaft in the Queen's Chamber. Because they both were at eye level, he opened them with hammer and chisel and thus proved that the covering behind was not very thick. Both of these known shafts connected to the great chamber which measures 5,23 x 5,76 metres, which lies exactly on the East-West axis of the pyramid, ended just a few centimetres before the chamber walls, without penetrating them. What the archaeological world did not yet know yet was that at a height of around eight metres there were two more shafts in existence. These were to be found in the west and east walls. I discovered them in 1996. Without a ladder I was not able to get closer and examine the walls

at such a height. But the eye of my camera recognised their outlines. On my photographs the western shaft can be recognized clearly, as it had apparently once been opened and closed up again. Presumably in ancient times. This is corroborated by the infrared images which I later presented to the geological physicist Prof. Dr. Meinhard Landmann at the Specialist College for Conservation and Restoration in Erfurt. On my images three symbols were also evident, presumably age-old coptic letters.

Throughout the chamber there is an anticlockwise spiral-shaped whorl pattern, which descends from above. On the west wall an energy current flows from below to above and on the east wall from above to below. In 1998 the Queen's Chamber was closed for restoration work for the whole year. When I returned to the chamber in 1999, the traces of western shaft and along with it the three symbols, had been erased due to restoration. My photographs remain the sole witness to the previous appearance.

Zahi Hawass, the director of the Pyramid Plateau of that time, who was later to become head of the Egyptian Antiquities revoked Hurtak and Gantenbrink's permission. He undertook the investigations himself and drilled through the first blocking slab on the 17th of September 2002 with the "Pyramid Rover". He had the opening up broadcast throughout the world. As a consequence of the Egyptian Arab Spring Hawass was removed from office, along with his benefactor, the former Egyptian President Mubarak. He has countless charges pending. In such a climate of research piracy, I thought it best to keep my photos to myself. They slept for thirteen years in the archive, up till today, when I present them to the public again.

And thus what must truly be the oldest library in the world was discovered, named amongst the Egyptologists as "The Halls of the Records". It was also the poets who also brought about the fall of Mubarak. They had been criminalized by the criminals and had ended up in prison. The new President of Egypt, a general, made provision for Mubarak to be released from prison. I feel connected in spirit to the poets of Egypt, who revolted against corruption and despotism.

"Time, the great mystery, is the key to freedom. For when man has conquered time, then he has also conquered death."Thot

translated by Christopher Haley Simpson