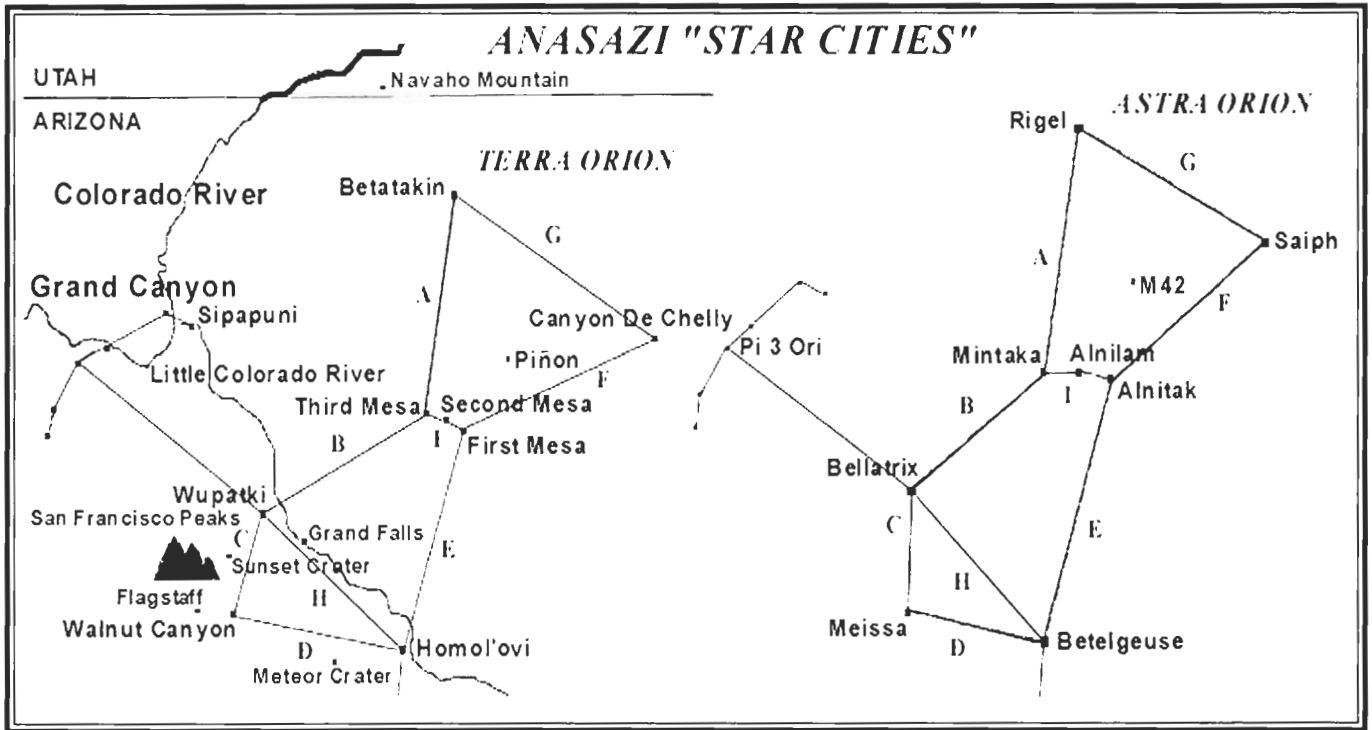


“As Above, So Below” in Ancient Arizona

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To watch Orion ascend from the eastern horizon and assume its dominant winter position at the meridian is a wondrous spectacle. Even more so, it is a startling epiphany to see this constellation rise out of the red dust of the high desert as a stellar configuration of Anasazi cities built from the mid-eleventh to the end of the thirteenth century. In fact, Orion provided the template by which the Anasazi (ancestral Pueblo people) determined the locations of their villages during a migration period that lasted centuries.

Spiritually mandated by a god the Hopi call *Masau'u*, this “terrestrial Orion” closely mirrors its celestial counterpart, with prehistoric “cities” corresponding to every major star in the constellation. The sky looks downward to find its image made manifest in the earth; the Earth gazes upward, reflecting upon the unification of terrestrial and celestial.

Extending from the giant hand of Arizona’s Black Mesa that juts down from the northeast, three great fingers of rock beckon. They are the three Hopi Mesas, isolated upon this desolate but starkly beautiful landscape to which the

Ancient Ones so long ago were led. Directing our attention to this “Center of the World,” we clearly see the close correlation to Orion’s Belt.

Mintaka, a double star and the first of the trinity to peek over the eastern horizon as the constellation rises, corresponds to Oraibi and Hotevilla on Third (West) Mesa. The former village is considered the oldest continuously inhabited community on the continent, founded in the early twelfth century. As recently as the early twentieth century, the construction of the latter village proved to be a prophetic, albeit traumatic event in Hopi history.

About seven miles to the east, located at the base of Second (Middle) Mesa, Old Shungopovi (initially known as *Masipa*) was reputedly the first to be established after the Bear Clan migrated into the region circa AD 1100. Its celestial correlative is Alnilam, the middle star of the Belt. About seven miles farther east on First (East) Mesa lie the adjacent villages of Walpi, Sichomovi, and Hano (Tewa). Walpi was established prior AD 1300. These villages correspond to the triple star, Alnitak, rising last of the three stars of the Belt.

Nearly due north of Oraibi at a distance of just over 56 miles is Betatakin ruin in Tsegi Canyon. About four miles beyond that, is Kiet Siel ruin. Located in Navaho National Monument, both of these spectacular cliff dwellings

were built during the mid-thirteenth century. Their sidereal counterpart is the double star, Rigel, the left foot or knee of Orion. (We are conceptualizing Orion as viewed from the front.) Due south of Oraibi approximately 56 miles is Homol’ovi Ruins State Park, a group of four Anasazi ruins constructed between the mid-thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. These represent the irregularly variable star Betelgeuse, the right shoulder of Orion.

About 47 miles southwest of Oraibi is the primary Sinagua ruin at Wupatki National Monument, surrounded by a few smaller ruins. (“Sinagua” is the archaeological term for a group culturally similar and contemporaneous to the Anasazi.) Built in the early twelfth century, their celestial counterpart is Bellatrix, a slightly variable star forming the left shoulder of Orion.

About 50 miles northeast of Walpi is the mouth of Canyon de Chelly. There, an eponymous national monument is located. In this and its side Canyon del Muerto a number of Anasazi ruins dating from the mid-eleventh century are found. Saiph, the triple star forming the right foot or knee of Orion, corresponds to these ruins, primarily White House, Antelope House, and Mummy Cave.

Twenty-five miles northeast of Shungopovi is Burnt Corn Ruin. It is

close to the village of Piñon on Black Mesa. Nearby is a spring considered the summer home of the Hopi *katsinam* (plural of *katsina*, or *kachina*), those masked, intercessory spirits that can take the form of any manifold physical object, phenomenon, or creature found in the world. The sidereal correlation to this specific region is the Great Orion Nebula (M-42 and M-43) located in the Sword which hangs down from his Belt.

Extending northwest from Wupatki/Bellatrix, Orion's left arm holds a shield over numerous smaller ruins in Grand Canyon National Park, including Tusayan near Desert View on the south rim. Extending southward from Homol'ovi (Betelgeuse), Orion's right arm holds a nodule club above his head. This club stretches across the Mogollon Rim (the southern edge of the Colorado Plateau which cuts across northern Arizona), down to other Sinagua ruins in the Verde Valley and some Hohokam ruins in the Phoenix Basin. (The Hohokam were the great canal builders of the low desert, establishing settlements as early as 300 BCE.)

As a small triangle formed by Meissa at its apex and by *Phi-1* and *Phi-2 Orionis* at its base, the head of Orion correlates to the Sinagua ruins at Walnut Canyon National Monument together with a few smaller ruins in the immediate region.

If we conceptualize Orion not as a rectangle but a polygon of seven sides, more specifically an "hourglass" (connoting Chronos) appended to another triangle whose base rests upon the constellation's shoulders, the relative proportions of the terrestrial Orion coincide with amazing accuracy. The apparent distances between the stars as we see them in the constellation (as opposed to actual light-year distances) and the distances between these major Hopi village or Anasazi/Sinagua ruin sites are close enough to suggest that something more than mere coincidence is at work here.

For instance, four of the sides of the heptagon (A. Betatakin to Oraibi, B. Oraibi to Wupatki, C. Wupatki to Walnut Canyon, and F. Walpi to Canyon de Chelly) are exactly proportional, while the remaining three sides (D. Walnut Canyon to Homol'ovi, E. Homol'ovi to Walpi, and G. Canyon de Chelly back to Betatakin) are slightly stretched in relation to the constellation: from 10 miles in the case of D. and E. to 12 miles in the case of G. (See Diagram.)

This variation could be due either to cartographic distortions of the contemporary sky chart in relation to the geographic map or to ancient mis-



The pine roofs are gone now, leaving sun roofs here at Wupatki, but the Sinaguans who lived here led lives totally exposed to the elements anyway, in physical and emotional harmony with the spirits that rule here still. Photo ©, 1991 by Ashleen O'Gaea, used with permission.

perceptions of the proportions of the constellation vis-à-vis the landscape. Given the physical exigencies for building a village, such as springs or rivers, which are not prevalent in the desert anyway, this is a striking correlation, despite small anomalies in the overall pattern.

As John Grigsby says in his discussion of the relationship between the temples of Angkor in Cambodia and the constellation Draco, "If this is a fluke, then it's an amazing one... There is allowance for human error in the transference of the constellation on to a map, and then the transference of the fallible map on to a difficult terrain over hundreds of square kilometers with no method of checking the progress of the site from the air."*

We are similarly dealing not with Hindu/Buddhist temples but, multiple "star cities" sometimes separated from each other by more than fifty miles. This template is also much larger than the one discovered by Robert Bauval and Adrian Gilbert at the Giza Plateau (See their international best-seller *The Orion Mystery*). Furthermore, we have suggested that the "map" is actually represented on a number of stone tablets given to the Hopi at the beginning of their migrations, and that this geodetic configuration was influenced or even specifically determined by a divine presence, namely *Masau'u*, god of earth and death.

Referring once more to the diagram, we note the angular correspondences of Orion-on-the-earth to Orion-in-the-sky. Here again, the visual reciprocity is startling enough to make one doubt that pure coincidence is responsible. Using Bersoft Image Measurement 1.0 software, however, we

can correlate in degrees the precise angles of this pair of digital images seen in the diagram. (Note: The celestial image is drawn from Skyglobe 2.04.)

The closest correlation is between the left and right shoulders (BC and DE respectively) of the terrestrial and celestial Orions, with only about two degrees difference between the two pairs of angles. In addition, the left and right legs (AG and FG respectively) are within the limits of recognizable correspondence, with approximately six to eight degrees difference. The only angles that vary considerably are those that represent Orion's head (CD), with over 15 degrees difference between terra firma and the firmament.

Given the whole polygonal configuration, however, this discrepancy is not enough to rule out a generally close correspondence between the constellation and the configuration of ancient star cities. Looking up at Orion on a midwinter night, we can imagine that we are suspended high above the land, gazing southwest toward the sacred Katsina Peaks (otherwise known as the San Francisco Peaks, the winter home of the *Katsinam*) where the head of the celestial *Masau'u* is suffused in the evergreen forests of the Milky Way. Ironically, it is here on the high desert of Arizona, that we also intuit the truth of the hermetic maxim attributed to the Egyptian god Thoth (Hermes Trismegistus): "As above, so below." ■

*Grigsby cited in Graham Hancock, *Santha Faiia*, *Heaven's Mirror: Quest for the Lost Civilization* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1998), p. 127.