

that is to say, divisions of the zodiacs, proceeding from one of the colures, whatever place this colure occupies?

Is the point at which these zodiacs have been divided into two bands necessarily that of a solstice?

Is the division of the side next the entrance necessarily that of the summer solstice?

Does this division indicate, even in a general sense, a phenomenon dependent on the precession of the equinoxes?

Does it not rather relate to some epoch whose rotation would be less; for example, to the moment of the tropical year, when such or such of the sacred years of the Egyptians began, which being shorter than the real tropical year, by nearly six hours, made the circuit of the zodiac in 1508 years. Finally, whatever meaning it may have had, has it been intended thereby to mark the time when the zodiac was engraved, or that when the temple was built? Was there no contemplation of recalling a previous state of the heavens at some interesting epoch for religion, whether by observation at the time, or concluded on by posterior calculations?

From the mere statement of such questions, we may perceive how complicated they were, and how any solution that might be adopted must be subject to dispute, and how little susceptible of positive proof in solving any other problem, such as the antiquity of the Egyptian nations. Thus we may say, that amongst those who endeavoured to draw a date from these data, that there are as many opinions as there have been writers on the subject.

M. Burkard, the learned astronomer, according to a first examination, judged that at Dendera, the solstice is in the Lion, and consequently two signs