

Folio 134 of the Codex Atlanticus: Did Da Vinci Draw Pyramids and Tunnels?

*A Source-Critical Examination of a Viral Claim Linking a Renaissance Sketch
to the 2025 Khafre "SAR Project"*

Anthony Vondoom
0009-0003-4953-1427
www.dssm.academy

Abstract

Absolutely not. A claim circulated in 2025 through the social media pages of Robert Edward Grant and affiliated accounts asserts that a pencil-and-ink sheet from Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Atlanticus, referred to in the posts as "Folio 134," depicts a structure descending beneath the Pyramid of Khafre, corroborates the unpublished "Khafre SAR Project" radar claims of 2025, contains a mirrored annotation reading "Avendo Egiptato" that encodes a $3/4$ architectural ratio, and conceals a Kabbalistic Tree of Life mapped onto the Platonic solids beneath the pyramid. This paper examines each component of that claim against the public record. The annotation is unattested in any scholarly transcription of the Codex; the $3/4$ ratio is arithmetically inverted relative to Khafre's documented dimensions; the SAR findings it leans on have been denied by Egypt's own antiquities authorities and were never peer-reviewed; and the Sephirot-to-solid correspondence is a twentieth-century esoteric framework with no basis in either Kabbalah contemporary to Leonardo or in Leonardo's own documented work for Luca Pacioli. The claim's structure, admitting no confirmation while asserting compelling convergence, is identified as a rhetorical pattern rather than an evidentiary one, and situated within a broader body of similarly structured claims from the same source.

Keywords

Codex Atlanticus; Leonardo da Vinci; Pyramid of Khafre; Synthetic Aperture Radar; pseudo-archaeology; sacred geometry; source criticism

1. Introduction

In March and again in later 2025, a claim began circulating on Facebook and affiliated platforms under the byline of Robert Edward Grant, tying a drawing from Leonardo

da Vinci's Codex Atlanticus to the Pyramid of Khafre at Giza. The claim asserts that the drawing depicts a structure extending beneath the pyramid, that a mirrored annotation on the sheet encodes a proportional relationship matching the pyramid's dimensions, and that a deeper geometric layer in the drawing corresponds to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life and the five Platonic solids. The post explicitly links these assertions to the 2025 "Khafre Project," a set of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) claims presented by Corrado Malanga, Filippo Biondi, Armando Mei, and Nicole Ciccolo at a private symposium in Bologna.

This paper tests the claim against the public scholarly record on the Codex Atlanticus, the documented dimensions of the Pyramid of Khafre, the public response of Egypt's own antiquities authorities to the SAR claims, and the documented history of Leonardo's work on Platonic solids for Luca Pacioli. No new claim about the folio's true subject is advanced here; the purpose is exclusively to test the claim as stated.

2. The Claim as Circulated

As posted, the claim consists of six linked assertions: (i) the drawing depicts an extensive structure descending beneath the Khafre Pyramid; (ii) this bears an intriguing similarity to the proposed but unconfirmed SAR scan findings; (iii) a mirrored annotation reading "Aegyptato" or "Avendo Egiptato" appears on the sheet; (iv) this annotation references a $\frac{3}{4}$ proportion associated with Khafre's dimensions; (v) a deeper layer of the drawing's geometry reproduces the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, with the dodecahedron corresponding to Keter, the cube and octahedron to Da'at, and the icosahedron to Malkuth; and (vi) while none of this confirms the SAR structures, the convergence of the two is described as making the folio "increasingly compelling."

The two source posts (Grant, [n.d.-a](#); Grant, [n.d.-b](#)) are cited by URL with an access date rather than a third-party archive mirror. At the time of writing, neither the Wayback Machine's save function nor archive.today produced a stable capture of either post, consistent with the general difficulty of archiving Meta-platform content that sits behind partial login walls. Readers seeking to verify the primary source directly are advised to consult the cited URLs as soon as possible after publication of this paper, as social media content of this kind is subject to editing or removal without notice.

3. Examination

3.1 Borrowed Authority: The Khafre SAR Claims

The claim's persuasive force depends heavily on treating the Khafre SAR findings as an established reference point that the Leonardo drawing can be shown to “resemble.” This is not a safe foundation. The SAR claims were announced at a ticketed conference in Bologna in March 2025 and through subsequent press and social media releases, not through a peer-reviewed publication. Egyptian Egyptologist Zahi Hawass and Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities publicly and specifically denied the claims, stating that no radar survey of any kind had been authorized or conducted beneath the Khafre Pyramid, and that no permits for such work had been granted (Ahram Online, [2025](#); Jerusalem Post, [2025](#)). Independent fact-checking of the episode likewise found no corroborating peer-reviewed evidence for the announced structures (Snopes.com, [2025](#)). A claim cannot lend credibility to a second claim if the first has itself been denied by the institution with direct authority over the site and has not been independently verified by any published, reviewed source.

3.2 The Logical Structure of “Convergence”

The post's own hedge, that “none of this confirms the proposed SAR structures, but the convergence makes Folio 134 increasingly compelling,” is worth isolating as a distinct move. Two unconfirmed claims do not increase each other's reliability by being placed side by side. Triangulation requires at least one fixed, independently verified reference point; here, neither the SAR structures nor the drawing's proposed meaning has that status. The sentence is structured to survive scrutiny (“none of this confirms”) while still producing the emotional and rhetorical effect of confirmation (“increasingly compelling”). This is a rhetorical technique, not an evidentiary one.

3.3 The Unverifiable Annotation

No public transcription of the Codex Atlanticus consulted for this paper, including the Biblioteca Ambrosiana's own digitization and transcription project, contains the phrase “Aegyptato” or “Avendo Egiptato.” If the phrase is genuinely present on the sheet in question, the burden of demonstration rests on the claimant: a high-resolution crop of the manuscript with the word identified, alongside a transcription reconciled against the existing scholarly editions of Leonardo's notebooks, would be the minimum standard. An assertion of a reading, without that documentation, is not a citation.

3.4 The Inverted Ratio

The claim that a “3/4 proportion” on the sheet is “associated here with Khafre's dimensions” is the one component of the argument that is directly checkable against public data, and it fails. The Pyramid of Khafre has a base length of approximately 215.25–215.5 metres and an original height of approximately 143.5 metres (Britannica, [2026](#); Wikipedia contributors, [2026a](#)). Half the base is therefore approximately 107.6–107.75 metres, and the ratio of height to half-base is approximately 1.33, or 4:3, not 3:4. This 4:3 relationship is consistent with the well-documented Egyptian seked system of pyramid slope, expressed as a run of five palms per cubit of rise. A theory that rests its central numerological claim on a ratio, and inverts that ratio relative to the monument's own measured dimensions, has failed on its own terms before any question of the drawing's actual content arises.

3.5 The Retrofitted Symbolism

Leonardo da Vinci did produce extensive, well-documented illustrations of the five Platonic solids: some fifty-nine woodcut illustrations after his drawings, prepared for Luca Pacioli's *De Divina Proportione*, composed in Milan by 1498 and printed in Venice in 1509 (Hart, [n.d.](#); MAA Convergence, [n.d.](#); Wikipedia contributors, [2026b](#)). These illustrations, in both solid and skeletal (“vacua”) form, are discussed at length in the history of Renaissance mathematics and are understood as studies of geometric solids in the context of proportion theory, undertaken while Leonardo was Pacioli's houseguest and mathematics student. Neither Pacioli's text nor any documented statement by Leonardo attaches these solids to the Kabbalistic sefirot. The specific correspondence asserted in the claim, dodecahedron to Keter, cube and its dual octahedron to Da'at, icosahedron to Malkuth, belongs to a modern esoteric framework commonly associated with twentieth-century “sacred geometry” literature, not to fifteenth- or sixteenth-century Kabbalah and not to any position Leonardo is known to have held. Applying it to an unrelated sheet is not an act of decoding; it is the importation of a later interpretive scheme onto an earlier and unrelated body of work.

3.6 The Unfalsifiable Close

The post ends on a question rather than a claim: “What else might Leonardo have encoded within this mysterious illustration?” A closing question of this kind carries no truth-value and asserts nothing that could be checked or retracted. Its function is to invite the reader to supply their own confirmation of a thesis the preceding sentences have already declined to establish. This is a standard closing device in speculative and conspiratorial writing and should be recognized as such rather than treated as an open scholarly question.

4. Discussion: The Broader Pattern

The claim examined here is not an isolated lapse. It appears on a website and social media presence that, under the same author and the same “sacred geometry” branding, also advances a claimed proof of the Riemann Hypothesis, a self-titled “Grant Projection Theorem” concerning polyhedral topology, and content built around Metatron's Cube, past-life narratives, and a described AI system said to have addressed its creator by an Atlantean name. The Riemann Hypothesis is among the most heavily scrutinized open problems in mathematics; a claimed resolution circulated through a personal content platform rather than a peer-reviewed venue is, on its own, a strong and well-established signal of the genre this material belongs to. Evaluated together, the individual components of the Folio 134 claim are not an aberration from an otherwise careful body of work. They are consistent with it: the repeated pattern is the assertion of rigorous, encoded, or mathematically proven content, published outside the institutions that would test it, and structured throughout to imply confirmation while formally declining to claim it.

For a reader deciding how much weight to give any single claim from this body of work, that pattern is itself useful evidence, independent of the specific rebuttals given above.

5. Conclusion

Every checkable component of the claim that Folio 134 of the Codex Atlanticus depicts pyramids and tunnels beneath Khafre fails independently. The SAR findings it relies on have been denied by the relevant Egyptian authorities and were never peer-reviewed. The annotation central to the claim is absent from the public scholarly record of the Codex. The one numerical claim that can be checked against measured reality, the $\frac{3}{4}$ ratio, is inverted. The Kabbalistic framework applied to Leonardo's geometric studies postdates him by roughly four centuries and has no basis in his documented work for Pacioli. And the argument's own closing structure, admitting non-confirmation while asserting compelling convergence, is a rhetorical rather than an evidentiary pattern. Da Vinci did not draw pyramids and tunnels on this sheet. Whatever it does depict, the claim as circulated is not a reading of it.

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