

THE RITUAL OF THE *išd* TREE: A RECONSTRUCTION

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## Abstract

This thesis reconstructs a possible sequence of events of the ritual of the *išd* tree of ancient Egypt. The main piece of evidence is the Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV. *išd* tree scenes have been discovered on temple walls from the reigns of Thutmose I to Hadrian. Reliefs and captions are examined and are supplemented by texts from other monuments including stelae, obelisks, and statuary. The scenes are analysed by their locations within the temples with respect to interior and exterior locations, wall registers, cardinal directions, and number of participants depicted. The stages of the ritual that occur most often in the scenes are the deities writing on the *išd* tree, the king being presented with his *sd* festivals, and the king kneeling in front of the tree. Once thought to be a royal tree where a miracle happened, the thesis concludes that *išd* tree scenes are part of the legitimisation of a king's claim to the throne and relate to the coronation as a ritual of status elevation through reciprocal actions rather than divine right. The purpose of these scenes is to aid in the dissemination of knowledge regarding the king's titulary, years of rule, and numbers of *sd* festivals as divine gifts from the gods. This ritual takes place in both the divine and human planes and shows changes in decorum relating to the amount of information about the king that is available to the general population of ancient Egypt.





For Mom

I hope I continue to make you proud



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## List of Abbreviations

AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i> . Baltimore
ASAE	<i>Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte</i> . Cairo
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i> . Washington
BES	<i>Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar</i> . New York
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> . Cairo.
CAJ	<i>Cambridge Archaeological Journal</i> . Cambridge
CANE	<i>Civilizations of the Ancient Near East</i> , J.M. Sasson (ed.). New York
CASAE	<i>Cahiers supplémentaires des ASAE</i> . Cairo
CFEETK	French-Egyptian Centre for the Study of the Temples of Karnak. Luxor
CG	<i>Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes de Musée de Caire</i> . Cairo
CT	Coffin Texts
DAIK	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo. Sonderschrift
FWS	Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV
GM	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i> . Göttingen
ICRAF	International Council for Research in Agroforestry
IFS	International Foundation for Science
JANER	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i> . Chicago
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i> . Boston
JE	Journal d'Entrée. Cairo Museum
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> . London
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> . Chicago
JSSEA	<i>Journal of the Society of the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</i> . Toronto
KRI	K.A. Kitchen, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions</i> . Oxford
Kêmi	<i>Kêmi: revue de philologie et d'archéologie égyptiennes et coptes</i> . Paris
Lexikon	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i> . Wiesbaden
LD	K. R. Lepsius' <i>Denkmäler aus Ägypten und Äthiopien</i> , 6 vols., ed. K.R. Lepsius, 1849–1859. Berlin
LGG	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen</i> . Leuven

MDAIK	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i> , Abteilung Kairo. Mainz
MIFAO	<i>Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire</i> . Berlin/Cairo
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications. The University of Chicago. Chicago
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta. Leuven
PM	B. Porter and R. Moss, <i>Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings</i> , 7 vols, 1927–1951 (1960– )
PMLA	<i>Publication of the Modern Language Association</i>
PT	Pyramid Texts
RdÉ	<i>Revue d'Égyptologie</i> . Cairo/Paris
Rec. Trav.	<i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes</i> . Paris
RITA	K.A. Kitchen, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions Translated &amp; Annotated: Translations</i> . Oxford
RITANC	K.A. Kitchen, <i>Ramesside Inscriptions Translated &amp; Annotated: Notes &amp; Comments</i> . Oxford
SAK	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</i> . Hamburg
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation. Chicago
UCLA	UCLA University of California at Los Angeles
Urk.	<i>Urkunden der 18. Dynastie</i> Vol I–IV, Leipzig.
Wb	<i>Wörterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache</i> Vols. I–VIII. Berlin.
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> . Leipzig/Berlin

## Chapter 1: The *išd* Tree Scene: An Introduction and Methodology

### 1.1 Introduction

The *išd* tree was a sacred symbol of the god Ra and divine kingship that also had commercial uses in ancient Egyptian society. Temple wall carvings included images of the king kneeling in front of the tree with explanatory text and depicted a royal ritual. Scholars including Wolfgang Helck (1957: 90–140), Karol Myśliwiec (1980: 349–356, plates 86–90), Alexander Peden (1994: 133–150), Eric Wulvaert (1996: 101–107), and Salvador Costa (2003: 193–204) have published some of these *išd* tree scenes, but no one has put them together to analyse the group of images and texts as this work does to see what can be learned from them as a whole. This thesis documents forty-one of the known *išd* tree scenes and texts as a group. Those not included here are quite fragmentary, possibly not *išd* tree scenes, and are listed in chapter 5 individually with an explanation of why they are not included in the main text of this thesis.

The importance of *išd* tree scenes has been overlooked for many years in Egyptology. Other than Wolfgang Helck's landmark articles, 'Ramessidische Inschriften aus Karnak' (1957: 98–116) and 'Ritualszenen in Karnak' (1968: 117–137), both of which collected, translated, and discussed many *išd* tree scenes (not previously done) across Upper Egypt and in Karnak Temple, respectively, little else has been done to collect, analyse, and publish other examples in the genres of ritual studies or literature. Most recent discoveries are published in site reports, unless they



are part of ongoing excavations, in which cases they are not yet published, and knowledge of their existence is via word of mouth within the local excavation community. Some scholars believe the scenes were specifically created to document the throne names of the pharaoh. Many *gaffirs* point out *išd* tree reliefs to tourists as ‘Christmas trees’ adding another layer of mis-information to that already widely circulated.

A manual of instructions or papyrus detailing the exact guidelines for performing what I call herein the ritual of the *išd* tree has not yet been discovered. It may not ever be. As such, the ideas in this thesis are my ideas and inferences from the available images and texts associated with the king and the *išd* tree.


After studying these reliefs and texts, it is my belief that they depict, at the very least, portions of a ritual used throughout the New Kingdom and later periods in Egypt as a way to legitimise a king’s claim to the throne. Unlike the Ritual of pMoscow 314, which is repeated on a daily basis (Bommas 2013: 217–218), the ritual of the *išd* tree appears to occur at the inception of a king’s reign granting him or her certain divine gifts in exchange for reciprocal offerings. I shall argue that *išd* tree scenes appear not only at times of turbulent regnal transfers (Ramesses III to Ramesses IV) but also at times when a ruler may feel the need for some relation to a previous golden era (Thutmosis I) and when a king asserts his divine right at a time of his choosing (Ramesses II). It is possible that every king from Thutmosis I through the Roman Period had at least one *išd* tree scene, and those that remain are the result of accidental preservation. In short, they have a propagandistic function. And for any text to function as propaganda, it had to be viewed or read by those whose support was being solicited (Bleiberg 1985/6: 5–13). The meaning of ‘propaganda’ here is one

similar to that of graphic design used in modern advertising—a way to make the target audience believe a specific message for a specific period of time.

My analysis of these scenes will show a new way of looking at royal ideology in terms of reciprocity rather than simply divine right. Both the deities and the kings want something—devotion, power, notoriety, long life, and will get what they want by giving something to the other side.

Rituals in ancient Egypt are difficult to reconstruct, especially since very rarely have the written instructions survived to modern times, even partially. The images and texts discussed in this thesis are used as a basic guideline suggesting participants, places, and actions. To be clear, the images and texts are not the rituals themselves. They are extant evidence that suggests a set of possibilities.

The main source for a ritual of the *išd* tree is the Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV (FWS) at Karnak Temple. Its lunette is severely damaged. However, the text of the stela is extensive and discusses the ritual at three cult centres. It is the only *išd* text to do so. In addition, the Festal Wall Stela gives an idea of what actions and which participants possibly took part in the ritual. Alexander Peden (1994a: 133–150) has published a translation of the text and it has been helpful to my interpretation of the text, as has been Kenneth Kitchen's text edition, translations, and annotations in *KRI* VI and *RITA* VI.

The word '*išd*' is documented in Egyptian texts as far back as the Pyramid Texts where it is used in food offerings with no mention of the king or of the tree (PT160). The determinative used is  (Gardiner M43) indicating fruit in generic terms rather than a specific tree (Koemoth 1994: 90–91 and *Wb* I 136). Spell 17 of the Book of the Dead lists Heliopolis as the home of Ra and the *išd* tree (Faulkner

1993: 48). This thesis deals only with those uses of the *išd* tree within the ritual aspect of legitimising a king's claim to the throne and does not attempt to include all possible instances of the word in Egyptian texts.

## 1.2 Methodology

In order to reconstruct a ritual as is intended in this thesis, especially one that has not been performed in almost two millennia, a range of topics is discussed here including the definition of ritual, the identity of the *išd* tree, and text and image analysis to determine what information is presented and how. By analysing the available texts and images separately, it is easier to see which audience the information is directed at and how the information is presented for consumption by that audience. The subsequent incorporation of the separate analyses allows modern scholars a more complete understanding of the scenes as a whole and how the ritual was incorporated into the societal understanding by the population at which the scenes were directed.

Discussions of what a ritual is and how it functions in society; who were the actors and participants; and what were the actions and liturgy needed to perform the ritual properly are included in chapter 2. What an *išd* tree is and why it is important is included in chapter 3. The Festal Wall Stela is the most complete *išd* text discovered to date and is translated and analysed in chapter 4. A discussion of the components of the ritual is included in that chapter as well, including: the writing of the king's name on foliage; the coronation of the king as decreed by the creator gods of Heliopolis, Memphis, and Thebes; and the granting of *sd* festivals by the creator gods of those same cult centres.

Next the *išd* tree scenes themselves are documented, translated, and analysed in a catalogue of monuments (chapter 5). Each monument therein is given a document number (DOC) that the reader can use to refer to in later chapters. The transliterations in this thesis are all lower case to avoid any confusion arising from capitalization concerns.

Chapter 6 looks at the locations and participants within the images. The placement of the scenes in the temples may also have some reflection on the stages of the ritual that are depicted or what information is displayed may depend on the particular location of the reliefs within the temple and who might have had access to that particular area of the temple.

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 analyse the images, captions, and other *išd* texts separately. The visual analysis of the reliefs that accompany the texts (chapter 7) determines if there is more information than is given in the written texts, or if the images simply reinforce the information in the texts. Sometimes the images show a participant kneeling or professing adoration for another participant, and that information may not be strictly explained in the written text. The images and texts complement each other, and both provide some information about the ritual—what possible stages occurred, when, and the functions of each.

The captions that accompany the images of the *išd* trees may indicate divine gifts, location, or movements that are not able to be depicted in the images and so are analysed in their own section (chapter 8).

Chapter 9 is then devoted to those texts that must stand on their own and do not have a coordinating image to supplement them. These texts often appear on monuments including statues, obelisks, and stelae.

The final chapter incorporates all of the images and texts to create as holistic an interpretation of the evidence as is possible. Finally, this thesis presents a possible sequence of events for the ritual of the *išd* tree for the first time in detail and serves as a firmer basis for future studies of royal rituals in ancient Egypt. It contributes to a better understanding of the cultic practices and participants in ancient Egyptian society by expanding our knowledge of the numbers and types of rituals practiced by the Egyptians.

## Chapter 2: Ritual—A Working Definition

### 2.1 Introduction

In order to reconstruct a ritual, secular or sacred, as this thesis intends to do, one must understand what is meant by the word 'ritual' and the basic components of a ritual. The following must be understood: what is done by whom and for whom; what is said by whom and for whom; how it is done and said—dance, music, other actions; where it is done—is there a particular place or not?; when it is done—is there a particular time period for the ritual to be most effective?; why the ritual is performed.

For more than one hundred years anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists have been attempting to explain what rituals are, why people practice them, and what importance they have to societies. Both European and American scholars (James Austin, Catherine Bell, Joseph Campbell, Mary Douglas, Émile Durkheim, Mircea Eliade, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Robert Segal, and Victor Turner among others) have immersed themselves in contemporary aboriginal cultures in order to understand and explain ritual, with varying outcomes. The Nambudiri Brahmins in India (Staal 1979), the Ndembu in Africa (Turner 1969), and the Yanomamo in Brazil and Venezuela (Chagnon 1968) have welcomed outsiders to study their rituals. Yet, there is not a consensus of what a ritual *is* (C. Bell 1992: 6). These theories discuss mainly the *psychology* of ritual rather than its *components*, and most of them are complicated, borrow from one another, and influence one another, all while trying to remain different from each other (C. Bell 1997: 88). This

chapter discusses a working definition for the components of ritual and how ritual functions in ancient Egypt, particularly with respect to the ritual of the *isd* tree.

It is difficult to define 'ritual'. Many people have an idea of what ritual is but putting that idea into words results in complex and confusing discussions. Jack Goody discusses the difficulty of clearly understanding the general term 'ritual' when scholars have preconceived ideas and attempt to force them to fit an observed situation (Goody 1961: 142). Frits Staal discusses the confusion resulting from the 'circular and uninformative' logic of defining 'ritual' in terms of 'sacred' and 'profane' since quite often the above-mentioned scholars also define 'sacred' and 'profane' in terms of 'ritual' (Staal 1979: 8).

The idea that the sacred and the profane are finite is limiting when defining the concept of ritual—as is the term 'ritual'. Making them finite is to apply the hard boundaries of modern, Western thinking to other, more ancient societies that incorporated concepts of the beyond with the physical world, as Durkheim and others do (see section 2.6 below). Instead, in this thesis, where other scholars use the term 'profane', I will use 'human plane' with the understanding that there is a permeable boundary rather than a hard, definitive boundary between the human and the 'other'. It should be understood as the daily, earthly existence of human beings and it cannot exist without its counterpart discussed next.

Rather than 'sacred', I will use the term 'divine plane' indicating something that is more than human, also with the understanding of a similar permeable boundary. It should be understood as the level of the gods. At these permeable boundaries, the two concepts can, and often do, overlap, each taking on some of the peripheral concepts of the other. I will continue to use the term 'ritual' with the understanding

that it indicates a series of actions or words that are in some way special to the individuals who perform or speak them and to the individuals for whom they are performed. Note the difference from the Durkheimian thought that 'sacred' means 'things set apart or forbidden' and 'profane' means 'normal' (Goody 1961: 149).

Many of these above-mentioned scholars also discuss 'rites' as separate from 'myths' and 'actions' as separate from 'words' but gloss over the concepts of place and time. Some also use 'rite' and 'ritual' interchangeably. None of these scholars agree on the concept of rituals, rites, and myths (Kyriakidis 2007: 289 and Segal 1980: 175).<sup>1</sup>

These 'theoretical descriptions of ritual generally regard it as action and thus automatically distinguish it from the conceptual aspects of religion, such as beliefs, symbols, and myths' (C. Bell 1992: 16, 19). Some of the theorists also separate text from action because by writing down the ritual (or at least the sacred words), those who can write control the understanding or knowledge of the society (Baines 1990b: 63, C. Bell 1992: 136, Bommas 2010/1: 15). Ritual without text came to be thought of as magic or pseudoscientific. The writing fixes the ritual in place and time and makes it separate from the normal language of open society. Writing promotes a standardization or orthodoxy (C. Bell 1992: 136). But do anthropologists understand what rituals *are* using these methods? One cannot explain a concept in terms alien to his or her own culture and have that explanation be understood on a broad scale. The object is to explain one culture in terms of another. Any socio-psychological or

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<sup>1</sup> For a more complete discussion of these competing theories see: C. Bell (1992); Segal (1996); and Turner (1969).



anthropological discussion will fall short in clarity when the explanation uses language foreign to the observing culture without some way to link the two.

These scholars have promoted many theories regarding the psychology of ritual using their particular studied cultures as microcosms for all cultures. The idea that 'if it works this way in Culture X, then it must work the same way in all cultures and at all times' is prevalent in their theories, which really only works if there are comparisons made between components or structures of rituals of a similar type across cultures, for example comparing marriage rituals to marriage rituals as Chagnon did in his work with the Yanomamo in South America (Chagnon 1968 and Mann 2000: 2251–2253). These scholars regularly look at the *why* of ritual in small segments in order to come up with the *what* of individual rituals. Yet a straightforward discussion of the *what* is necessary for an understanding of any ritual.

Catherine Bell points out that these scholars have sought to redefine ritual which has resulted in restating the same ideas with new vocabulary (C. Bell 1992: 6 and 1997: 88). Additionally, many of these scholars discuss ritual belonging only to the divine plane, which is not necessarily the case. Bell mentions that scholars such as James Frazer and Bronisław Malinowski pioneered the concept that most ritual is magic because it assumes an identity or link between words and the things themselves (C. Bell 1992: 11).

All these ideas look at ritual from the viewpoint of the outside observer. The observer subjects the rituals of a culture to his or her own preconceived ideas based on the outside culture, usually a Western perspective (Kyriakidis 2007: 292). According to Jack Goody, 'it is impossible to escape from the fact that the category of magico-religious acts and beliefs can be defined only by the observer and that

attempts to see either this or the sacred-profane dichotomy as a universal part of the actor's perception of his situation are misleading' (Goody 1961: 160). John Baines points out that what may not seem distinctive to the outsider, may actually separate social categories and stages of life within the observed society, thus making the seemingly minor distinctions, major ones (Baines 1990a: 1). Thus, the determination of an activity as ritual or non-ritual depends on the observer's prior knowledge of the culture or the activity (Kyriakidis 2007: 293). Bell mentions Eric Hobsbawm's study of rituals (sometimes called 'traditions' in his work) created to demarcate indigenous people in a society from that society's immigrants—definitely not a magical or divine concept (C. Bell 1992: 119 and Hobsbawm 1983: 2). Turner notes that all rituals are complex and resonate on many dimensions resulting in the idea that rituals could be either both divine *and* human, or one, or the other (Turner 1969: 42–3)—a basic concept with which I agree.

Turner discusses two types of ritual in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*: rituals of status elevation and rituals of status reversal (Turner 1969: 167). In rituals of status elevation, individuals change social levels, such as a person being promoted from one level of the priesthood to another, or being crowned king. These changes are permanent (Turner 1969: 167). Rituals of status reversal are temporary because for a short period of time individuals trade places in society: servants/employees trade places with their masters/employers in the hopes that an understanding of the plights of each side become apparent to both, resulting in more egalitarian treatment overall, thus a happier, more peaceful society (Turner 1969: 167). The ritual of the *išd* tree in ancient Egypt (as will be discussed in detail in the following chapters) is best described in Turner's terms as a ritual of status elevation.

However, this chapter will focus on creating a particular vocabulary of ritual for an appropriate analysis of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

## 2.2 Components of a Ritual: What Does it Take to Make a Ritual?

Several components are needed to make a ritual. James Austin (1962: 26), Émile Durkheim (2001: 36), S.H. Hooke (1996: 205), E.O. James (1958: 292), Robert Segal (1980: 175), and Bani Shorter (1996: 28) are a few of the theorists who describe a ritual as *actions* completed in a certain way. In order for there to be actions, there must be an *actor*, someone to perform the actions, and an *audience*, someone to observe and verify the actions. Often in addition to the actor doing something, he or she typically also *says* something. There must be words, music, or some sort of sound. Many of the above scholars use the word ‘myth’ to describe the words associated with rituals of a society; however, that terminology leads audiences of the twenty-first century to think of fairy tales, comic book heroes, or made up stories rather than etiological myths of creation or anything having to do with the divine plane. In this work, the word ‘liturgy’ will be used for words and sounds performed as a ritual component. A liturgy performed by an actor and observed by an audience, must be performed *somewhere*, thus a *place* must be a component of a ritual. Rituals must also be performed at specific *times* according to certain calendars. Finally, there must be a *reason* why these actions are performed. As a puzzle that is only complete when all the right pieces are put together in the correct manner, a ritual is considered complete only when all of the component parts are in place—an actor completes an

action in front of an audience in a particular place, at a particular time, and for a specific reason. This vocabulary is discussed in detail below.

### **2.3 Participants: Actor and Audience**

Human beings survive best when they are part of a unified group (ter Borg 2008: 42). Some scholars follow Mircea Eliade's belief that religion, rather than ritual, is needed for culture to exist, or Clifford Geertz's belief that humans need a religious sense but not necessarily a religion (Segal 1988: 31, 48). Others follow Frits Staal's minimalist approach that 'ritual [rather than religion] exists to create a bond between the participants' (Staal 1979: 11). All of them believe that ritual is necessary for human existence and that ritual must be performed. They do not agree on the religious-ness of ritual but seem to use the terms 'ritual' and 'religion' interchangeably.

Separate from these scholars, I believe that 'religion' is an institutionalisation of a group of people through the control of access to information. The means of control is 'ritual', but ritual is not confined to religion. 'Spirituality' is how an individual relates to the precepts set down by the institution.

Every ritual needs a person or a group for it to be enacted (Brown 2008: 17); however, it is not enough for any random person to act in a ritual. The actor must be a specific representative (Shorter 1996: 60). Only those participants who have been initiated into the fold or trained in the particular actions are deemed fit to act in rituals (Cooney and McClain 2006: 60 and Rolheiser 2011: 24). This actor, or officiant, is commonly called a *priest* in Western society (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011, hereafter USCCB). In ancient Egypt, the king was the named and

depicted officiant for state rituals, although an agent of the king could act in his place (Cauville 2012: 5, 271, Gundlach 2001: 372–3, and Quack 2010: 221). In either case, the initiation results in a person who has been purified, taught the appropriate actions, and been given access to the ritual space (Haring 1997: 5). In addition, being able to participate in rituals ‘defines membership in certain social groups’ (Kyriakidis 2007: 295). Participation creates a distinction between members and non-members, initiates and non-initiates, or insiders and outsiders. Members may participate, while non-members are kept out of the circle of knowledge. This inclusive/exclusive delineation creates a level of decorum in ritual situations.

A ritual is a collective experience (Segal 1988: 36). For it to be effective, the actions must be a shared experience, meaning they must be seen and understood by another party (Austin 1962: 22, Heffernan 2012: 36, Rappoport 1999: 24, and Segal 1988: 36, 40). That other party is the audience. In Durkheimian theory, all of society is the audience (Durkheim 2001: 18). In Western Christian thought, the members of the congregation are the audience, and not society as a whole (USCCB 2011). In Western thought, the audience must also be initiates as the priests are. In ancient Egypt, the audience is the Egyptian people outside the ritual spaces (L. Bell 1997: 135). The audience is not always in the realm of the human plane; however, gods and mythical ancestors are thought to be present when the actions are performed by the appropriate people (Eliade 1987: 91). Thus, the audience could be unseen by the actors. The audience is on the receiving end of the display of piety. It is the audience for whom the ritual is performed in the first place.

In ancient Egypt, rituals ‘needed a public component as well as a private one’ for full efficacy (L. Bell 1997: 135). ‘Had the rituals been performed . . . without public

participation, they could not have elicited the popular support necessary to maintain . . . [the king's] power and position' (L. Bell 1997: 135). This concept is reinforced by Rappoport who says that for a ritual to be believed, it must be seen by someone (Rappoport 1999: 24).

In all these theories, the actions must be performed by a specific person or persons and observed by an audience, seen and/or unseen.

## **2.4 Actions**

Theorists including Jan Assmann (2011: 70), Durkheim (2001: 36), James (1958: 292), and William Robertson Smith (1998: 28) agree that rituals are composed of actions. Austin calls these actions 'doing things' (Austin 1962: 26). Durkheim refers to rituals as a particular way of acting (Durkheim 2001: 36). James defines rituals as a time when 'sacred actions are performed' (James 1958: 292). Jan Assmann proclaims, 'if the rituals were not properly performed, the world would fall apart' (Assmann 2011: 70). Also, Robertson Smith points out that it is the accuracy of the performance that matters, not the belief (Robertson Smith 1998: 28). What is made clear in these descriptions is that it is not only the actions themselves but how they are performed that is important.

Action organizes chaos into a universal truth or divine order (Eliade 1987: 31), therefore it is the accuracy of the performance that is important to maintain that world order (Robertson Smith 1998: 292). This concept of 'ritual is action' (C. Bell 1992: 16) is not only a divine one. In the human plane of psychology and mental health, ritual is defined as 'repeating the same steps again and again in a set, precise manner'

(National Institute of Mental Health, 2013). A person with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) repeats the same steps again and again in a set, precise manner each day in order to get through his or her day. While the actions are ritualistic and offer a self-imposed sense of order, they are not divine. However, any change to the routine may result in the same feeling of unease that the performer of a divine ritual feels if the actions are not properly performed (J. Assmann 2011: 70 and ter Borg 2008: 43).

Those actions can be any movement as simple as walking in a particular manner; holding an item with a particular hand; or a dance. For movement to be considered in a ritual manner, it must include a formal, stylized, and repetitive behaviour in which information is expressed and framed (Hanna 1988: 40). Therefore dance can influence emotional and psychological changes leading to transformations in rituals of status reversal and status elevation (Hanna 1988: 42 and Turner 1969: 167). The movement of dance may allow some participants to satisfy their ritual needs if performed properly (Hanna 1988: 43 and ter Borg 2008: 43).

Catherine Bell uses the following terms to define the regularity of actions: formality, traditionalism, and invariance (C. Bell 1997: 139, 145, and 150). She states that these ideas are required for proper ritual action to be effective. Formality refers to 'routinely understood' actions 'in terms of contract and degree' (C. Bell 1997: 139). Traditionalism refers to 'the use of ancient costumes, the repetition of older social customs, and the preservation of archaic linguistic forms' (C. Bell 1997: 145). Invariance refers to 'a disciplined set of actions marked by precise repetition and physical control' (C. Bell 1997: 150). Together, these ideas represent rituals as unchanging components linking a distant past to the present (C. Bell 1997: 211–2).

However, changes do happen in rituals often without notice, such as when an officiant skips sections of the liturgy or turns two pages at once. If the change is repeated and no one notices, eventually it becomes intentional. At other times, the officiating body makes noticeable changes to maintain or increase membership, as in 1963 when the Vatican announced major language and music changes to its Sacred Liturgy in order to increase its dwindling congregations (Vatican 1963). Changes from Latin to the local language of the initiates and the updating of some music were noticed by all initiates of the time (Vatican 1963). Fifty years later, the culture is not the same as it was when the changes were made, and the fact that changes were made at all has been forgotten (C. Bell 1997: 211). Another reason rituals change is when a need for adaptation arises, such as when portions of a state ritual for Amun-Ra were adapted during the New Kingdom to include the deified Amenhotep I near Western Thebes (Cooney and McClain 2006: 43). Very few changes were made to retain the efficacy of the ritual; however, in appropriate places the name and epithets of the deified Amenhotep I were added to it in some geographic areas (Cooney and McClain 2006: 58).

## **2.5 Liturgy: Words and Sounds**

Austin is a leader in the theory of ritual language. He put forth his theory that speech, which he calls 'utterances', is the same as action (Austin 1962: 6). For a ritual to exist, the utterance has to be heard and understood by someone or something (Austin 1962: 22). That utterance may include music (Lang et al 2016: 1). In addition, to be effective the utterance has to be performed by the 'correct' or 'acceptable'



person or entity (Austin: 1962: 23). James Loxley follows Turner and Austin in his belief and refers to the concept of saying the utterances as 'performativity' (Loxley 2007: 154). Loxley expresses his belief in a more restricted manner: 'There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, the procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances' (Loxley 2007: 26).

Just as there are those scholars who believe that ritual must be action, there are scholars who believe that true rituals are word-based or sound-based. Bani Shorter believes, 'the foundation of all ritual is prayer' (Shorter 1996: 23). Samuel Hooke also believes 'ritual consists of things said' (Hooke 1996: 205). Catherine Bell mentions Frazer's and Malinowski's belief that words are actions, thus placing them firmly in the Austin/Turner group (C. Bell 1992: 111).

Music, especially religious music, influences ritual participation by linking thought and behaviour (Lang et al 2016: 1–2). Initiates will use instrumental music as a signal to perform certain movements and repeat certain words at particular points within a ritual (Lang et al 2016: 1–2, 11).

Some of the above-named scholars agree that to be a ritual, the actions and the words need to be set, formal, unchanging, and repeated (Kyriakidis 2007: 297). Words and actions are linked in an individual's memory (Bommas 2012: xxxi). An initiate will remember words associated with actions even when not near enough to hear the officiant. During the Catholic Mass, an initiate who is not near enough to hear the priest knows that when the priest raises his hand from top to bottom and then left to right in the sign of the cross, the words being spoken are, 'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (USCCB 2011). Because the initiate is part of the fold,

he or she knows the words spoken when he or she sees the actions of the officiant, where an observer who has not been initiated will not understand (Racaut 2009: 33). Actions without words function only when they are understood by initiates (Durkheim 2001: 276).

Understanding or recreating the manual for the ritual—a written set of instructions for its performance—gives the reader a sense of the movements, locations, actions, and audience of the ritual, but it does not recreate the special or divine words or exact performance: the chanting, prayers, and music and dance that were enacted during the performance of the ritual. In Egyptian rituals, that information would have been known by a select few and probably recorded on papyrus or leather (cf. the Berlin Leather Roll) in the form of a liturgy or script. The writing of the liturgy assumes two concepts. First, if something is written down, the assumption is that there is someone who can read it (Lesko 2001: II 298). Second, the writing places control over the information (Baines 2007: 282). This point is where the idea of decorum enters the ritual landscape. When the information is controlled in such a manner, it makes clear that it is not the information itself that is important but, rather, who knows the information that makes it important (Baines 1990a: 22). To have the complete ritual one must have both the manual of actions and the liturgy of words and sounds. It is rare to find both components in examples from the ancient world. The Ritual of the Opening of the Mouth is the most-often referenced example from ancient Egypt (Cauville 2012: 213–219).

## 2.6 Place

As mentioned above, for rituals to be effective, an actor must say and do something and be observed by an audience. The ritual theorists discussed above rarely mention *where* these words and actions must take place. These things must be said, done, and observed in a particular space. However, not all places are equal (Eliade 1987: 20). According to Durkheim, spaces must be divided and differentiated because the divine plane and the human plane cannot mix (Durkheim 2001: 13, 222) contrary to the discussion in section 2.1 above. I follow the belief that the spaces are separate in basic concept, but the boundaries overlap in function much like a screened porch or a foyer in a house that allows for some level of commonality between inside and outside. 'For religious life to flourish, a special place must be arranged from which profane life is excluded' (Durkheim 2001: 229), and the separation of that space must be maintained (Cannadine 1983: 107). In order to maintain this separation, there must be a designation of special places for the performance of rituals (Rappoport 1999: 33 and 51). Initiates meet in these special places (Bommas: 2012: xxxii), which are often called 'churches' in modern Christian ideology (USCCB 2011). The word 'temple' will be used in this thesis for buildings of a ritual nature. Temples link Earth and heaven, and rituals allow participants to reside within the divine plane for the length of time of the performance (Eliade 1987: 39 and 167), thus allowing participants to unite with the divine. The physical barrier between the divine plane and the human plane is a door or a wall (Eliade 1987: 25 and Verner 2013: 5). Rituals are performed inside a boundary wall surrounding a temple because it is a physical construction that symbolically protects the divine space from the chaos

that 'was a constant threat to the work of the gods' (Verner 2013: 7). The doors through the boundary wall and those into the temple itself serve a two-fold purpose. Open, the doors allow for the admission of the initiated into the divine space; closed, the doors exclude those who have not been initiated (L. Bell 1997: 133). These doors are secured both physically, by bolts, and ritually, by means of applied apotropaic images (Gundlach 2001: 364).

In ancient Egypt not all people had direct access to the interior of the temples (Baines 1987: 90). 'The general public was not permitted beyond a temple's outer courtyard' within the boundary wall (Freed 2001: 127). The images and texts on the interior temple walls indicate that the divinity of the space increased the farther into the temple an actor went; the greater the divine nature, the fewer actors who were permitted to enter (Gundlach 2001: 366). Theoretically, in ancient Egypt, only the king was allowed into the inner sanctum of the temple (Cauville 2012: 5); however, since the king could not physically be in every temple in the land for every ritual performance, it is likely that a duly appointed agent of the king performed those duties much of the time.

## **2.7 Time**

There are two types of time in ritual thought. There is the concept of time in repetition related to clocks, calendars, or social circumstances (Rappoport 1999: 33 and 51). And there is the concept of time related to the divine past (Cooney and McClain 2006: 57). According to Catherine Bell, 'calendrical rites occur periodically' and 'try to harmonize the activities . . . of the human community . . . with the larger

cosmos' (C. Bell 1997: 102–3). According to Durkheim, it is society that dictates the repetition of rituals whenever necessary to achieve the desired results (Durkheim 2001: 273). He later writes, 'we must act and repeat the necessary acts every time it is useful to renew their effects' (Durkheim 2001: 312).

Time related to the divine past is discussed differently by these theorists. According to Eliade, rituals re-enact a sacred past and divine rites outside time as it occurs in the human plane (Eliade 1987: 68 and 85). He believes festivals make divine events 'ritually present' (Eliade 1987: 88). And Jan Assmann writes that ritual 'lies in the *absolute past* of divine myth . . . not in the *relative past* of the people' (Assmann 2011: 73, emphasis original). Both theorists relate divine time as outside the world that is relative to humans but not continually affecting them.

## **2.8 Decorum and Hidden Knowledge in Ritual**

Restricted knowledge can be either 'revealed' or 'hidden' (Baines 1990a: 1–23). Revealed knowledge could be written down, while hidden knowledge was either not recorded or if recorded, was done in such a way so as not to reveal knowledge to the uninitiated within the population. Revealed knowledge is therefore found written and depicted on temple walls. Hidden knowledge is composed of the minutiae of the actual activities inside the temple and may have been passed from one person to another orally.

A division by degree of the revealed knowledge in the case of the ritual of the *išd* tree ritual is necessary. This subdivision consists of what is revealed to the literate versus what is revealed to the non-literate observer. The literate observer could

access the knowledge of the ritual through the captions, the images, and the extended text of the Festal Wall Stela. Knowledge available in these texts will be termed partially revealed knowledge. Those who could read the texts and the images had greater insight into the actual activities of the ritual than those who could only view the images. Information in the images is termed 'revealed knowledge'. Knowledge from images would only illuminate the main points of the ritual. The completely hidden knowledge of the *išd* tree scenes would have been known only to the participants in the ritual, and that information may have been transmitted orally rather than being written down.

The general population were permitted only in the public portions of the temples (L. Bell 1985: 271). With few exceptions the Dynasty XVIII and early Dynasty XIX scenes are in more private portions of the temples while later Dynasty XIX and Dynasty XX scenes are in public portions of the temples including the exterior faces of pylons.

Baines (1990a: 21) states that there was a gradual weakening of decorum beginning in the early New Kingdom and this may have led to an increase in revealed knowledge. The earlier *išd* scenes tend to reveal less information than the later scenes, indicating a comparable change in decorum. The chronology of *išd* tree scenes shows clearly that the early scenes were revealing very little information to a select group, while the later scenes revealed much more information to a wider audience.

Baines' notion of a relaxation of decorum in Ramesside times is illustrated by the Festal Wall Stela. It is in a courtyard in Karnak Temple where access would have been allowed to most members of the society at some point during the year (Bleiberg 1985/6: 5–13 and L. Bell 1985: 271). Although it lists the order of the ritual in text form

only, it still indicates partially revealed knowledge, thus a select audience. However, early *išd* tree scenes of the New Kingdom, located in the innermost parts of the temples, would not have been available for viewing by the general population.

The scenes of Thutmosis III (DOC 5) and Amenhotep III (DOC 8) are in private portions of the temples and the Thutmosis IV (DOC 7) scene is in the first hypostyle hall of its temple. This may indicate that the decorum of the *išd* tree scenes was more restricted in Dynasty XVIII than in Ramesside times. It is with the reign of Ramesses II that *išd* tree scenes are placed in the doorways (DOCS 19 and 20) and on the exteriors of pylons (DOCS 23, 33, and 34), accessible as revealed and partially revealed knowledge. Since the *išd* tree scenes, beginning in the Ramesside period, were located in places where the general population must have been allowed at certain seasons of the year (i.e. the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple), most members of society would know or recognize from stories told by older generations at least the basic information of the ritual (the divine origins of the king's name), and those who were more literate would have greater access to knowledge of the ritual.

Accepting that only a small portion of the ancient Egyptian people could read (Baines and Eyre 1983: 72), the difference between the captions and relief depictions demonstrates that not all knowledge was available to all viewers.

## **2.9 Purpose: Why Rituals are Performed**

The ultimate question after *what* rituals are is *why* rituals are celebrated. According to Robert Segal, the importance of rituals is to help organize society (Segal 1980: 175). 'Every time we ignore rituals, we erode the order at the mercy of which

we live', often resulting in feelings of uncleanness or confusion (ter Borg 2008: 42). According to Eliade, people need a religious or ritual culture in order to survive (Segal 1988: 48). As Turner writes, it is one idea to watch a ritual as an outside observer and overlay one's own ideology onto the actions and sounds being performed; it is another to understand what those same actions and sounds mean to the participants (Turner 1969: 7). The understanding of ritual is more the latter than the former. As discussed earlier, not all rituals are religious in nature because in ancient societies the divide between the divine plane and the human plane is 'artificial since religion was embedded in everyday life and not something separated from kinship or politics' (Lamoreaux 2009: 153). Therefore, to understand what ritual meant to people in ancient societies, the concept of the divine plane should not be a factor. 'Rites were attached to all important events' not only those of a divine nature (Staal 1979: 14).

With the understanding that it is impossible to know for certain all the reasons that ancient people practiced rituals, this thesis puts forth that one important reason is because 'rituals reinforce memory' (K. Douglas 2009: 63). Maurice Halbwachs first put forth the idea that societies have a *collective memory* in the 1920s (Erll 2010: 3 and Halbwachs 1991: 1, emphasis mine). He postulated that people put forth a collection of shared experiences that can only be stimulated through 'festival occasions when people gather together to remember in common the deeds and accomplishments of long-departed members of the group' (Halbwachs 1991: 22 and 24). This concept links collective memory with ritual practice but not with a required religious component. His ideas were later applied to ancient civilisations by scholars



including Jan Assmann and Martin Bommas.<sup>2</sup> Many terms have come out of the discussions of Halbwachs' original thesis including cultural memory, religious memory, historical memory, and social memory. This thesis will use 'cultural memory' as the general term.

Jan Assmann discusses cultural memory as 'a matter of cultural *mnemotechnics*, that is, the storage, retrieval, and communication of meaning' (J. Assmann 2011: 72). Jan Assmann's components of meaning include myth, sacred texts, and processional routes, among other aspects of society (J. Assmann 2011: 72). He also discusses the concept as functioning best within institutions of culture such as rituals otherwise memory rarely spans more than three generations (J. Assmann 2010: 111). Without the framework of ritual, memory is limited to what an individual might learn from parents or grandparents but would not be knowledgeable of events farther back in time. Institutionally speaking, that framework is referred to as cultural anthropology. Aleida Assmann posits that cultural memory can be divided into two components each with two subsections (A. Assmann 2010: 97–98). The two components are cultural forgetting and cultural memory, each with an active and a passive subsection (A. Assmann 2010: 97–98). Active cultural forgetting includes intentional acts of destruction such as deleting a person from a photograph, destroying a book, or removing a figure from a wall relief (A. Assmann 2010: 97–99). Thus, the actions of the Atenists removing the figures of Amun from temples in Egypt is an act of active cultural forgetting. Passive cultural forgetting includes unintentional actions such as losing or leaving something behind, or when portions of a ritual are

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<sup>2</sup> For a more complete discussion of cultural memory, see J. Assmann (2006 and 2011) and Bommas (2012).

accidentally skipped and no one notices such as the aforementioned unnoticed, double page turn of a liturgy (A. Assmann 2010: 98). Active cultural memory is a way people within a group intentionally preserve the past in order to keep it as part of the ever present (A. Assmann 2010: 98). Passive cultural memory is a way people within a group preserve the past with less immediacy (A. Assmann 2010: 98–99). Aleida Assmann calls active cultural memory the ‘canon’ and passive cultural memory the ‘archive’ (A. Assmann 2010: 98). The archive is a collection of all the concepts or pieces related to a particular idea (A. Assmann 2010: 99). The collection can be drawn from in whole or in part to create a message. The canon consists of those items or concepts from the archive that are used repeatedly to send a specific message, thereby triggering an instant understanding of a particular activity within the culture (A. Assmann 2010: 99). The canon and the archive together create a cohesive message. It is these two terms that will be most useful in the current discussion.

It is impossible to know with any degree of certainty how many items were in the archive or even if there was a specific location where the items were stored. For the purposes of this thesis, the archive will be thought of as all of the then-known options for use by the relief designers or decision makers, whether they be the senior scribes, priests, or the king, who would choose which images or texts to use in each situation. The canon will be thought of as those items from within the archive that were used with any regularity.

The concept of cultural memory is significant because it maintains the knowledge of ritual places and practices for longer periods of time than one individual’s lifespan (Kyriakidis 2007: 296). Cultural memory is also part of the

‘process of creating standardized religious practice’ (Bommas 2012: xxix), which as discussed earlier is necessary for ritual action to be effective.

A comparison of a modern ritual to an ancient ritual is necessary to test the working definition’s vocabulary as discussed in this chapter: actor, audience, action, liturgy, time, place, reason, canon, and archive.

## **2.10 An Example of a Modern Ritual—The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass**

In the twenty-first century, a ritual familiar to many people in the world is the Mass in the Roman Catholic Church, specifically the Mass that utilizes the post-Vatican II changes which include modern, local languages and songs (liturgy) in a more relaxed atmosphere (space) (USCCB 2011 and Vatican 1963). It is one formal and official form of worship in Roman Catholicism (USCCB 2011). Only an ordained priest (actor) can say certain portions of the liturgy or perform the action, which is done in a divine space for the purposes of unifying the believers or initiates (audience) with the divine (audience) (USCCB 2011). It is the unification of past, present, and future (time, canon, and archive) (Vatican 1963). There are multiple rites performed (action) to establish communion among the congregation (audience) (USCCB 2011) including gathering said congregation into the church (place) to chant (liturgy) while the priests (actors) enter the church to bow to and then kiss the altar (actions) (USCCB 2011). The chants and songs sung by the audience are part of a specific text that cannot be changed (USCCB 2011). A priest (actor) offers prayers for the salvation of all (USCCB 2011). Other steps are performed when applicable to each specific congregation (archive). According to instructions from the Second Vatican

Council, if a section does not apply at the particular time, it may be omitted, but it may not be omitted regularly (Vatican 1963).

This modern ritual unites the divine plane with the human plane for a specific time period, and using set, defined words and actions allows the audience to interact at a specific place for a desired purpose.

## **2.11 Examples of Ancient Rituals—The Daily Ritual and The Beautiful Feast of Opet**

Rituals in ancient Egypt were of two main varieties: those performed by the king or one of his designated officiates (actor) on a daily basis (time) within the temple precincts (place) and those that were annual (time) and involved the community (audience). ‘Temple rituals promoted social cohesion by validating the king’s preeminent role in society’ (L. Bell 1997: 127). Those performed within the temple precincts included the daily temple rituals (actions) that followed the same pattern for all cult and mortuary temples (places) (Cauville 2012: 271). These activities ritualized the everyday motions of caring for the cult statue and involved approximately five steps (canon and archive). The priest, acting as the agent of the king, dressed in specific clothing entered the sanctuary (place), which was purified (action) three times each day (Cauville 2012: 271). The priest (actor) would prostrate himself in front of the statue of the god (audience) (Cauville 2012: 272). Then the priest would cleanse and dress the statue applying fresh cosmetics, perfumes, and scented oils (action) (Cauville 2012: 272). The priest (actor) would thank the deity and the ancestors also present in the shrine (audience) (Cauville 2012: 273). This ritual was intended to

revitalize the deity each day (Cauville 2012: 274). While the general public did not participate, there was still an audience and the efficacy of the ritual was maintained.

Annual festival rituals differed by region within Egypt and reflected the specific mythology of each deity (audience) or cult centre (place). For example, rites of the Beautiful Feast of Opet (hereafter Opet Festival) in Luxor dealt with how to reconcile the humanity of the individual king with the divinity of kingship in general (Kemp 1989: 206). Other scholars relate it to a rebirth or renewal of kingship since it occurred during the second or third months of the Inundation when the annual Nile flood was at its height (time) (L. Bell 1997: 158). The Opet Festival has been described in detail by many scholars (L. Bell 1985: 251–294 and 1997: 127–184, Darnell 210: 1–15, Murnane 1982: 574–579, and Ullmann 2007: 3–25, among others). The key elements of the festival are the unity of the king with the deity and the sharing of the divine blessings with the common people (L. Bell 1985: 289). They are done through procession (action), singing/chanting (liturgy), public display (audience), concealed actions, and food and drink resulting in a unification of the community and a renewal of the king's claim to the throne (ritual of status elevation) (L. Bell 1985: 289).

Comparing a modern ritual to two ancient ones, it is evident that humans have thought of the concept of ritual in similar ways across many cultures for many thousands of years. The vocabulary discussed above applies equally well to both the ancient and modern rituals, as well as with respect to divine and human applications. Rituals have specific actions that are performed by certain members of society. They often require processions, singing, and food. Like the Roman Catholics, the Egyptians considered rituals effective only if they were performed correctly by the proper person, as only the king (being the incarnation of Horus and the son of Ra) could attend to

the divine needs or execute the gods' orders (L. Bell 1985: 255). Prior to the New Kingdom, tribal chieftains could perform rites on behalf of the local deities since the king could not personally attend to all the state and religious duties (Gundlach 2001: 372–3). At that point, some duties were relegated to senior officials or priests.

Rituals help people grasp the hard ideas that underlie the concept of religion; they have an emotional aspect that includes a feeling of togetherness and security (K. Douglas 2009: 62). Rituals 'provide the all-important elements that allow a religion to flourish: meaning, motivation and memory' (K. Douglas 2009: 62). They reinforce memory but their main purpose is social cohesion (Segal 1988: 34). The Mass, the Egyptian daily temple ritual, and the Opet Festival join the divine plane with the human plane. They have elements of both. In Egypt, the human plane remained an integral part of ritual since the king was the main officiate of the rituals and maintained the myth of his 'unique role as intermediary between the gods and the mundane world' (Kemp 1995: 36).

## **2.12 Conclusion**

Based on the above discussion, ritual is a compunction to speak and perform certain actions at certain times in specific places in order to make people feel whole and complete. If the rituals are not performed correctly, people feel less than whole and unclean. A ritual may or may not have a religious or spiritual component, but its completion is psychologically necessary for the cohesion of the group. Therefore, in this thesis, the term 'ritual' will mean any set, defined actions or words that must be performed a particular way, in a specific place or at a specific time for an audience

that may or may not be present in order to achieve a desired outcome. This performance includes the human plane and can include the divine plane.

The ritual of the *išd* tree is much the same as the Opet Festival discussed above, at least in formal parts. There is a procession, offerings, and there are public and private aspects. There are royal and divine levels, during which the populace and the army participate in order to reap the benefits of that participation. Because of these aspects, the *išd* tree scenes do depict a ritual. The texts and images of this ritual span more than fifteen hundred years from the reign of Thutmosis I to that of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Even as the language of the participants changed, the desire for the efficacy of the ritual remained.

## Chapter 3: The Identity of the *išd* Tree







### 3.1 Introduction

The identity of the *išd* tree by genus and species has not yet been confirmed. Nevertheless, many scholars have identified the *išd* tree as the perseia tree. There were many trees special to the ancient Egyptians and not all of them can be identified by genus and species. That lack of information does not stop modern scholars from attempting the identification. The *išd* tree has been identified by many names; however, none of them are convincing. The *išd* tree was important to the Egyptians as the place where the sun was reborn each day, was sacred to Ra, and was used in a ritual to justify the king's claim to the throne.

The *išd* tree was divine and magical in ancient Egypt (A. Wilkinson 1998: 90). It is mentioned in the Coffin Texts (CT IV 287), the Book of the Dead (Faulkner 1972: 48), and is the subject of the *išd* tree scenes carved on many temples across Upper Egypt. According to Lefébvre and Moret, the *išd* tree is the nightly retreat for the sun (Moret 1902: 146). And according to Malaise, it is also known as the daily birthplace of the sun (Malaise 1985: 135). Modern scholars, including Kákosy have called it by the same name as another tree from ancient Egypt, the *perseia* tree (Kákosy 1980: 182), which makes the specific taxonomic determination of the *išd* tree quite difficult, as noted by Lise Manniche (1999: 30).

The *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* characterised the *išd* tree as, 'Heiliger Baum in Heliopolis (Persea?)' (Kákosy 1980: 182). Its entry for perseia says the name is from the Greek and has been called *Mimusops schimperi* by several authors (Germer



1982: 942). Several Egyptologists have published translations of texts (Blackman 1913: 45–46; Breasted 1906: 123; Budge 1895: 42–43), where the original text clearly has  (*išd*) (*Wb* I 136) and the translation used is *persea*. In the *išd* tree scenes, the word  is used rather than the word for persea     (*šwb*) (*Wb* IV 435). The Egyptians cultivated both trees in gardens for the products the trees produced as part of the economy: leaves, fruit, oil, and wood, in addition to their beauty and shade (Jellicoe 1986: 158; Hugonot 1989: 241), the importance of which is more fully discussed in section 3.6. Only persea (*šwb*) is listed in the offering calendars of the Papyrus Harris (Grandet 1999: III, 171). There is no mention of *išd* wood in temple inventories.

Based on the observations of the relief carvings of *išd* trees as discussed in chapter 5, it is possible to create a general description of the main physical traits of a living *išd* tree.

In the *išd* tree scenes, the trees are depicted in great detail. While the reliefs do not indicate whether the *išd* tree is an evergreen, logic dictates the high probability that it is. Deities write the name of the king on the leaves of the tree (*KRI* VI 6.15). If the tree were deciduous or semi-evergreen, meaning it shed its leaves periodically, the king's name would be shed along with the leaves and therefore, it would not be permanent. An evergreen tree always has its foliage. Individual leaves fall, but the crown remains, thus it retains the idea of permanence—the king is always the king. In addition, the ideal species for a tree that is used to signify Egyptian kingship should be one native to Egypt rather than a species brought from outside Egypt.

The trunk of the tree may be squat and split low to the ground but does not come out of the ground at an angle. As the trunk rises through the height of the tree, it curves back and forth a bit, but overall, it is straight to the top of the tree tapering slightly as it rises. Wavy branches sprout from the trunk, and ovoid leaves sprout in a staggered manner all along the full length of the branches. The crown of foliage is tall and rounded with branches sprouting almost to the ground (see figs. 5.5, 5.7, and 5.8). The tree is wider at the base and the foliage tapers near the top. No obvious thorns are present in the depictions. Some of the leaves are larger than others but all are elliptical and pointed at the end. On occasion, as depicted in the *išd* tree scene from the Astronomical Room at the Ramesseum (DOC 24), larger elliptical figures are present showing the king's name and a deity holding a stylus to write the name. It has been posited that these larger elliptical figures are the fruits of the *išd* tree (A. Wilkinson 1998: 90); however, that is not likely. The Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV clearly states: *wr gmi ḥr g3b.t m pr r*<sup>c</sup>, 'great (cartouches) were found upon the foliage in the Temple of Ra' (*KRI* VI 6.15). Specifically stating 'foliage' rather than 'fruits' indicates the intention of the Egyptians to enlarge some leaves to show the name of the king written on them. In addition, fruits are seasonal; they would not be a permanent fixture of the tree. Writing the name on the fruits would not have the permanent nature desired by the ritual action.

Crown	Rounded
Trunk	Irregular and splits low to the ground
Branches	Wavy
Leaf shape	Ovoid and staggered
Type	Evergreen (?)

For more than 140 years, scholars have debated the specific identity of the *išd* tree. They have yet to reach a conclusion. To clarify the confusion mentioned above, four species of tree that have been put forth over the years for the identity of the *išd* tree are discussed below. They are *Balanites aegyptiaca*, *Mimusops laurifolia*, *Cordia myxa*, and *Cordia sinensis*. Each one has specific physical traits that lead scholars to argue for it over the others, but as will be shown below, this author is not convinced that the 'correct' species has yet been discovered or identified.

### **3.2 *Balanites aegyptiaca* (L.) Delile**

*Balanites aegyptiaca* (L.) Delile is commonly called the desert date, the soapberry tree (USDA 2014), or the Egyptian plum (A. Wilkinson 1998: 45; Hepper 2009: 23), and is found across Africa and western Asia in arid and subtropical temperate zones (FAO 2014). In few references, it is referred to as a Hegelig tree (Schweinfurth 1885: 260; Darby et al 1977: 716; Janick 2007: 193). It has been identified with the *išd* tree (A. Wilkinson 1998:45), but not all scholars agree with that determination (Germer 1982: 942; Manniche 1989: 81). The earliest documented find of a sample of *B. aegyptiaca* is from Djoser's mortuary complex (Darby et al 1977: 716). It is a kernel from the fruit.

*B. aegyptiaca* is a semi-evergreen tree that grows up to 12 metres in height (Chapagain 2006: 1) but in Sub-Saharan Africa will average 6 to 7 metres and rarely exceeds 10 metres (Barakat and Baum 1992: 36). In Egypt it averages 3 metres (Hepper 2009: 23). It has an irregular trunk of nearly 60 centimetres in diameter that often splits low to the ground (Chapagain 2006: 1; Sprague 1913: 140) and prefers

valley soils (FAO 2014) but will tolerate 'a wide variety of soil types, from sand to heavy clay, and climatic moisture levels' once established (Chothani and Vaghasiya 2011). The tree can tolerate occasional flooding but not prolonged periods under water (FAO 2014).

The tree survives best between 300 and 2,000 metres in altitude and in climates that average between 20 and 80 centimetres of rainfall per year (FAO 2014). It also does not survive atmospheric temperatures above 40 Celsius for long periods of time (FAO 2014). Egypt's average altitude south of Cairo, 460 metres (Nations Encyclopedia 2015), is within the survival requirements for *B. aegyptiaca*. Its annual rainfall in the last century averaged much less, 25 to 50 millimetres (BBC Weather 2012). Its average temperatures in the same time frame averaged 15 to 30 degrees Celsius (World Bank 2015). Thus, Egypt meets the altitude and temperature requirements for the survival of *B. aegyptiaca*. With Egypt's rainfall below the required minimum for *B. aegyptiaca*, it would need irrigation for survival. According to Friis et al, 'there is no indication of a climatic change since Roman times' (1986: 204). Based on the above information, it is not likely that *B. aegyptiaca* was native to Egypt, but that it was cultivated from elsewhere.

*B. aegyptiaca* has a dual root system: a tap root and a web of fine roots just below the soil surface (Chapagain 2006: 4). The tap root can reach depths of 7 metres in search of ground water, and the fine, surface roots can spread in a radius of up to 20 metres from the trunk (Chapagain 2006: 4). Because of the long tap root, *B. aegyptiaca* does not transplant well once it is established in soil (FAO 2014).

The wood is dense, easily worked, and insect resistant, thus it is ideal for tool handles and domestic items (FAO 2014). It is also said to emit almost no smoke when

burned (FAO 2014). Wood from *B. aegyptiaca* was recorded in a beam sample taken from the first Cheops boat discovery (El Hadidi 2005: 452). This example of a *B. aegyptiaca* wood construction establishes that the tree or its products was already used economically as early as the Old Kingdom.

The leaves of *B. aegyptiaca* are leathery, oblong, and asymmetric, averaging 2.5 to 6 centimetres long, and the branches have spines up to 8 centimetres long (Chothani and Vaghasiya 2011). The branches are irregular and form a round crown (Chapagain 2006: 1). The fruit of the tree is green when young and yellow when ripe, averaging 2.5 to 7 centimetres long and 1.5 to 4 centimetres in diameter (Chothani and Vaghasiya 2011). It is edible but bitter and when pounded makes a refreshing drink (FAO 2014). The trees flower and fruit as early as five years of age and are known to live one hundred years or more (FAO 2014). The flowers are small, greenish-yellow, and emit a spicy scent (A. Wilkinson 1998: 45).

For propagation, the seeds can be planted in pots and the seedlings kept in shade up to approximately twenty-four weeks (FAO 2014). After that point, the seedlings do not tolerate shade and require open space with plenty of water access for continued prosperity (Agroforestry 2009: 2).

The ancient Egyptians had many uses for *B. aegyptiaca*. The seeds contain up to 60 percent oil that is clear and similar to high-quality olive oil (Sprague 1913: 131–132). The fruits were found in a vault in Saqqara under Djoser's mortuary complex (Darby et al 1977: 716) and at Dra Abu-el-Naga in the remains of a funeral dinner (Schweinfurth 1884: 314). *B. aegyptiaca* was important to the economy of Egypt due to the number of products created from its raw materials (Barakat and

Baum 1992: 37). The leaves were not used in funeral wreaths (Schweinfurth 1883: 111).

*B. aegyptiaca* has come into prominence in medical studies due to the increased interest in naturopathic treatments and the costs of traditional, chemical medicines (Hamidou et al 2002: 37). Traditionally, the seeds, twigs, roots, and leaves of *B. aegyptiaca* have been used successfully to treat malaria, colds, syphilis, liver disorders, epilepsy, leprosy, as a contraceptive, and more (Yadav and Manju 2010: 140). The list is long and varied; the tree can be considered a cure-all. More recently *B. aegyptiaca* has been used in cancer treatment studies (Manal et al 2013: 1665) and in insecticidal studies as it shows promise in the destruction of the snails that carry schistosomiasis (Yadav and Manju 2010: 140).

Crown	Rounded
Trunk	Irregular and splits low to the ground
Branches	Irregular
Leaf shape	Ovoid and asymmetrical
Type	Semi-evergreen
Unique trait	8 cm spines

### **3.3 *Mimusops laurifolia* (= *M. schimperi*)**

The persea tree, known as *Mimusops laurifolia*, is another tree favoured by the ancient Egyptians (Germer 1982: 942) and is mistaken for or elided with the *išd* tree by some scholars such as Blackman, Breasted, and Budge (Blackman 1913: 45–46; Breasted 1906: 123; Budge 1895: 42–43). Much work has been done analysing and studying *M. laurifolia* by comparing ancient specimens to modern examples of many species of the genus *Mimusops* from Georg Schweinfurth in the late-nineteenth

century (1883: 111) to Friis, Hepper, and Gasson, and Wilkinson in recent years (Friis, Hepper, and Gasson 1986: 201–205; A. Wilkinson 1998: 43). All agree that *M. laurifolia* is another term for *M. schimperi*, where *laurifolia* is the most correct term (Friis et al. 1986: 202), and that tree is the perseia tree of ancient Egyptian texts and physical specimens (Friis et al. 1986: 202). At Schweinfurth's time, the perseia was all but extinct in Egypt. He had several transplanted to the garden near the Egyptian Museum in Cairo; the last of those trees was removed in 1981 (Friis et al 1986: 204).

Less well documented than *B. aegyptiaca*, *M. laurifolia* is an evergreen tree (Manniche 1989: 122) found at altitudes of 500 to 900 metres (Friis 1980: 785). The tree is slow growing, currently endangered, and little studied (Bafeel et al 2012). Its branches, leaves, and crown resemble that of a pear tree (Manniche 1989: 122) with tall, high branches with a rounded crown. *M. laurifolia* is native to Yemen, Ethiopia, and Somalia, and no evidence has been found to corroborate its ever having been native to Egypt (Friis et al 1986: 202–204). The examples of *M. laurifolia* found in tombs of ancient Egypt are assumed 'to be of cultivated origin' (Friis 1980: 785). The trees thrive in riverine forest or scrub (Friis 1980: 785), have a large, straight trunk and grow to 30 metres in height (Bafeel et al 2012). The trunk can reach a diameter of one metre (Louppe 2008: 381). The root system is hexarch in form (Smith 1909).

The pointed-ovoid leaves develop at the ends of the branches in clumps of five or more (Bafeel et al 2013). The yellowish flowers are small and fragrant (Hifnawy et al 2012: 124). Pliny compared the flowers to apple tree flowers and Schweinfurth agreed it was an apt comparison (1883: 111). The fruits are yellow when ripe and pointed at one end growing in clusters of up to six (Hifnawy et al 2014: 124). They are

described as being ‘about the size of a pigeon’s egg’ (Hepper 2009: 15). They contain two seeds (Hepper 2009: 15).

Modern scholars document the wood as pale brown to yellowish and used in construction (Louppe 2008: 382), although in the writings of Theophrastus, the wood is black (Schweinfurth 1883: 111). Papyrus Harris records persesea wood (*šwb*) as part of the temple inventories in plate 68b totalling 4,415 logs (Grandet 1999: III 171 and 68b). Bundles of persesea leaves were used in the foundation deposits in some tombs, including TT 11 and TT 353 (Fahmy et al 2010: 75), although funeral garlands are more commonly found than bouquets (Fahmy et al 2010: 76). To be recorded in the temple inventories and used in tomb foundation deposits, the tree and its components must have been an important part of the economy.

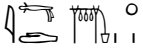
Modern medicine uses the saponins from the leaves of *M. laurifolia* for studies in the treatment of liver cancer (Hifnawy et al 2012: 134).

Crown	Rounded
Trunk	Large and straight
Branches	Tall and high
Leaf shape	Pointed and ovoid
Type	Evergreen
Unique trait	Leaves clump at branch ends

### 3.4 *Cordia myxa* and *Cordia sinensis*

*Cordia myxa* is sometimes called the sebesten plum, the Egyptian plum (Darby et al 1977: 705), or the Assyrian plum (Germer 1985: 159). There is much confusion among the ancient writers of the identity of this tree. Theophrastus’ description of the sebesten plum (4, 2, 8) is different from that of the persesea (4, 2, 6). Pliny writes of a



*prunus domestica* as an Egyptian plum but uses a description that is nearly identical to Theophrastus' perseae description (*N.H.*, XIII, XIX, 64). Alix Wilkinson (1998: 45) put forth the idea that the tree in the *īšd* tree scenes might be modelled on *C. myxa*; however, C.A. Schroeder (1977: 63) writes that the tree is from Asia and Australia, and thus it is not likely the ancient Egyptians modelled any depictions on it; however, other scholars record it as native to northern Africa, southwestern Asia (Bouby et al 2011: 397), and sub-Himalayan India (Fahmy et al 2010: 81), thus negating Schroeder's idea and making it quite possible that the tree was known to the Egyptians. While Germer (1985: 159) assumes a Dynasty XVIII date for cultivation, fruits are known as early as Dynasty III and leafy branches with fruits are known from the Middle Kingdom (Fahmy et al 2010:81). Darby, Ghalioungui, and Grivetti (1977: 705) list the word  (*iṣd.t*) (*Wb* I 130) under the heading for *C. myxa* and discuss the debates of other scholars of the plant's use in Egyptian medical papyri with Loret and Ebbell identifying the tree as an *īšd* tree, Loret later changing his opinion, and Keimer and Lefébvre also refuting that identity (Darby et al 1977: 708).

*C. myxa* is a semi-evergreen tree that averages 7 to 12 metres in height (Bouby et al 2011: 397) with a straight trunk and a dense, lopsided crown (Oudhia 2007). The leaves are elongated ovals and have white flowers (Bouby et al 2011: 397). The tree will tolerate shade, drought, and frost, but thrives in sun and alluvial soils at altitudes of up to 1500 metres (Oudhia 2007).

Crown	Dense and lopsided
Trunk	Straight
Branches	Leafy
Leaf shape	Rounded ovals
Type	Semi-evergreen
Unique trait	Lopsided crown

One of the many species in the same genus as *C. myxa* is *C. sinensis*, which is believed to be native to Egypt (Orwa et al 2009: 2). Its trunk is often multi-stemmed (National Museum of Kenya 1999), and the wood is used in construction, furniture, and agricultural implements (Infonet-Biovision.org). *C. sinensis* is an evergreen tree that grows to 12 metres tall, has ovoid leaves, and white flowers (Orwa et al 2009: 1). In *C. sinensis*, the leaves grow alternately along the full length of the branches (Infonet-Biovision.org). The fruits of *C. sinensis* are orange-reddish when ripe, grow in clusters, and are used as a sugar substitute as well as in local sorghum beers (FAO *Cordia sinensis* 2014). The tree prefers a semi-arid climate and rocky soils (Orwa et al 2009: 2). The key feature that separates *C. sinensis* from *C. myxa* is the leaves of *C. sinensis*. They are serrated rather than smooth along the edges (Orwa et al 2009: 1). Therefore, *C. sinensis* is not a likely candidate for the *isd* tree, either.

Crown	Rounded
Trunk	Multi-stemmed
Branches	Wavy
Leaf shape	Ovoid and alternating along the branches
Type	Evergreen
Unique trait	Serrated leaves

### 3.5 Products Made from *B. aegyptiaca* and *M. laurifolia*

The Egyptians used both *B. aegyptiaca* and *M. laurifolia* for a variety of products. Schweinfurth examined the wreaths covering the mummy of Ramesses II and determined them to be made from leaves of *M. laurifolia* (Schweinfurth 1883: 109–110). He also found the same type of leaves in wreaths belonging to a princess of Dynasty XXI, although he does not specify which princess (Schweinfurth 1884:

312). Two large stick bouquets of *M. laurifolia* leaves were found in Tutankhamun's tomb (Hepper 2009: 8). They were propped up against the wall in the antechamber.

Seeds from the fruit of *M. laurifolia* were found in the remains of the funeral dinners in a vault at Dra Abu-el-Naga from Dynasty XII (Schweinfurth 1884: 314).

The pollen of both *M. laurifolia* and *B. aegyptiaca* are found in the pollen of honey from Dynasty XIX (Hepper 2009: 50), which is another justification for both trees being important economic commodities to the Egyptians.

Perfumes were another component of the economy of ancient Egypt and the recipes for several of these liquids included balanos oil (Manniche 1999: 65). Mendesium was a perfume that used balanos oil as its base (Manniche 1999: 65). The oil, as mentioned above, from pressing the kernels of the fruit of *B. aegyptiaca*, is of similar quality to good olive oil. In the description by Dioscorides the scent used balanos oil, myrrh, resin, and cassia (Manniche 1999: 65). It is likely that at least one of the many jars of oils from Tutankhamun's tomb contained balanos oil (Hepper 2009, 19).

### **3.6 Temple Garden Construction**

Ancient Egyptian temples had two main components: a sanctuary which had raised, paved floors and solid/covered roofs, growing ever darker as one progressed toward the sanctuary, and an open space outside that contained a grove or garden as part of the primordial mound on which the temple sat (L. Bell 1997: 132–133). Gardens containing trees of various types were important in ancient Egypt for both food production and economic reasons (A. Wilkinson 1998: 41; Barakat and Baum

1992: 37). In addition, gardens provided a refuge and fulfilled an important religious function in the society (Hugonot 1989: 3 and Laboury 2007: 37–34). Pharaohs including Sahure in Dynasty V (*Urk.* I 112–113), Pepy II in Dynasty VI (*Urk.* I 120–131), Amenemhet II in Dynasty XII (Breasted 1906 I: 275 §605), Hatshepsut in Dynasty XVIII (*Urk.* IV 316–354), Horemheb in Dynasty XVIII (Breasted 1906 I: 21 §37–40), Sety I in Dynasty XIX (*KRI* I 6–8), and Ramesses III in Dynasty XX (Breasted 1906 I: 203 §407) recorded their voyages to other lands and listed the plants they brought back for cultivation.

The Dynasty XI pharaoh Mentuhotep II planted a garden with trees in the forecourt of his mortuary temple by digging pits in the tufa and filling them with Nile mud (Winlock 1942: 49 and 84; Jashemski et al 1992: 588). Hatshepsut did the same in her nearby mortuary temple, and the stump of one of the persea trees (*M. laurifolia*) she had brought back from Punt could still be seen when H.E. Winlock worked on the site in the early twentieth century (Winlock 1942: 6, 49, and 84). Hatshepsut's voyage to Punt documents bringing back living trees with root balls encased in native soils to be transplanted into the temple's garden (Dixon 1969: 56; Naville 1894: 24). The trees were dug up and put in wooden boxes or reed baskets for transport to Egypt (Dixon 1969: 56; Naville 1894: 24). From these containers, the trees could be transplanted into Egyptian soil but would have native soil in the root balls (Dixon 1969: 56) to minimize transplant shock and increase the likelihood that the trees would survive in their new locations (Alaska Division of Forestry 2007). Other temples and chapels where excavations have documented the remains of tree wells and roots in courtyards and gardens include the chapel at the necropolis at Deir el-Medina, the Temple of Taharqa at Kawa, the Temple of Amenemhet II at Hermopolis, the chapels at Medinet

Habu, and the cenotaph of Sety I at Abydos (Hugonot 1989: 35, 53, 54, 64, and 214). The Greco-Roman Temple of Thoth at Hermopolis had a vast rectangular space behind the temple with a hydraulic system for watering the sacred grove (Hugonot 1989: 55).

Special herb gardens were tended near tombs containing a wide variety of plants including *M. laurifolia* for the bouquets and wreaths left by mourners (A. Wilkinson 1998: 39–40 and Galán and García 2019: 4–8). In these gardens, the trees were the most important plants because they lined avenues for the temples and functioned as a windbreak to protect the more delicate plants within the gardens (A. Wilkinson 1998: 41). The tomb of Niankhnisut from Dynasty VI at Saqqara has a relief depicting workmen in the garden harvesting fruits from an *īšd* tree (Hugonot 1989: 241). His garden shows rows of plants separated by function and cultivated species (Hugonot 1989: 241). The Theban Tomb of Ineni (TT 81), architect to Thutmosis I in Dynasty XVIII, has a large depiction of a garden listing many trees including thirty-one persea (*šwb*) trees (A. Wilkinson 1998: 41). His garden shows a diverse range of species both indigenous and imported (Hugonot 1989: 162). Many different species of trees are associated with the tomb of Osiris, and their importance is not always easy to discern (Hugonot 1989: 214). *īšd* trees are found in the texts and depictions within these Osirid tombs at Busiris, Memphis, Medinet Habu, Dendera, and Karnak (Hugonot 1989: 215).

Gardens at mortuary temples were tended by a team of workers headed by an overseer (A. Wilkinson 1998: 89). Nezemger was the overseer of the garden at Ramesses II's mortuary temple and depicted that garden in his tomb (TT 138) (A. Wilkinson 1998: 89). In his depiction he describes a large garden with a canal in the

shape of a 'T' lined with olive trees in pots and a staff working constantly to keep the trees watered (A. Wilkinson 1998: 89). Without constant watering, the trees in pots would not survive.

This discussion clearly indicates that gardens in ancient Egypt contained both native and imported plant species including *išd* trees and that a staff of caretakers was necessary to maintain these gardens. It also clarifies that plants were not maintained inside temple buildings. Therefore, textual mentions in the Festal Wall Stela of the king walking in the 'pure region' (KRI VI 7.12) to find the *išd* tree, must mean that the king was in the garden rather than inside the temple building in spite of the *išd* texts not mentioning the words for garden, *hntš* or *k3nw*, for the trees could not survive indoors.

### **3.7 Challenges of Identifying the *išd* Tree**

Persea leaves, along with those of the sycamore, are found in the funeral wreaths of royalty and the nobility (Fahmy et al 2010: 76), and as such they were important in Egyptian society for their sacred and symbolic qualities (Fahmy et al 2010: 76). Trees represented in Egyptian art vary in their depictions, some are labelled, and others are not (A. Wilkinson 1998: 41). When they are not labelled, it is difficult to assign a particular genus and species. Schweinfurth associates a particular tree described as having elliptical leaves and associated with Isis and Hathor to be *M. laurifolia*, which he associates with the persea (Schweinfurth 1883: 111). The tree, seen in the vestibule of the tomb of Thutmosis III (KV 34) and a similar depiction in the tomb of Panehsy (TT 16) in Thebes, does indeed resemble a pear tree but looks

nothing like the trees in the *išd* tree scenes. The trees in KV 34 have trunks that are taller and thinner than those in the *išd* tree scenes. The tree in Panehsy's tomb clearly has groups of small fruits clustered together and *išd* trees in the scenes do not.

Since *B. aegyptiaca* has an irregular trunk that often splits low to the ground, large thorns, and a rounded crown of foliage at the top of the tree, it is not likely that it is the *išd* tree of the Egyptians. The root system of *B. aegyptiaca* is too large for the tree to survive in a pot for any length of time. *B. aegyptiaca* was known to the Egyptians and used to create many products for the economy and ritual purposes such as food and perfumes, but its identity as *išd* is not finalized. *M. laurifolia* is what the Egyptians called the *šwb* tree and what the Greeks and modern scholars call the persea; the Egyptians used it to create many products for the economy and ritual purposes including food and raw construction materials. *M. laurifolia* also has a low probability of being the *išd* tree of the Egyptians since it has branches higher up on a tall trunk, leaves that sprout near the ends of the branches, and a rounded crown near the top of the tree. The tree in the *išd* tree scenes is *išd* in the texts. However, the visual depiction does not match the physical appearance of *B. aegyptiaca* or *M. laurifolia*. Neither tree is likely to have been native to Egypt, but both were cultivated in Egypt.

By combining the above-mentioned descriptions of the traits shown in *išd* reliefs with the four possibilities discussed earlier in this chapter, the reasons that these options are not *išd* trees become clear. *B. aegyptiaca* has 8 cm spines that grow along the branches. *M. laurifolia* has a tall, straight trunk, and its leaves clump at the ends of its branches. *C. myxa* has a straight trunk and a dense, lopsided crown. *C. sinensis* has serrated leaves. Each of these physical traits are obvious enough that

ancient Egyptian artists would have included them in the reliefs if any of these particular trees were intended to be the *išd*.

While each of the species discussed above exhibits one or two attributes of those seen in the *išd* tree scenes, none of them exhibits enough to warrant a solid identification. It is possible that the tree depicted in the *išd* tree scenes is an amalgamation of several species; however, it is more likely that the ancient Egyptians knew a specific tree as *išd*, and that knowledge has not come down through the millennia to modern scholars. Until more information comes to light, Egyptologists have yet to find the appropriate genus and species of the tree the Egyptians called *išd*.

There is a story told by locals in the Luxor area that four '*išd* trees' were brought to Luxor from Persia. Two of those specimens died upon reaching Egypt; the remaining two survived to be planted—one in the garden of Chicago House which was later destroyed when the road widening project in Luxor caused the Chicago House garden wall to be moved, the other in the personal garden of Isabella Suleiman on the west bank of Thebes. Upon discussion with the garden keeper at Chicago House in the spring of 2017, no records were kept identifying the genus and species of these specimens. It is this author's opinion that these specimens are not *išd* trees because the trunks are tall and thin, and the leaves are not staggered along the branches. It is likely that these trees are *M. laurifolia*.



### 3.8 Could There Have Been a Living Tree in the Performance of the Ritual of the *išd* Tree?

If the ritual of the *išd* tree required a living tree as part of the ceremonial action, that action must have taken place in a location with the environmental attributes that allow the tree to prosper, either in the ground or in a pot. If the tree were part of the temple garden, either planted in the ground or in a pot, it would have been tended by a team of workmen to have enough water to thrive. It would have had ample sunlight out in the garden.

If the tree were in the temple proper, it would have had to have been in a pot and moved or changed regularly in order to have access to enough sunlight to survive in addition to having part of the garden staff regularly bringing water to the potted tree. That action would also require some drainage within the temple for the runoff from the pot. Excavation reports do not mention such drainage.

Based on the scale depicted in the *išd* tree scenes, the tree would have been an established specimen rather than a seedling, making it extremely tall and heavy to move. In the Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV, the text states: *m pr pth m p3 ʿnti wʿb hr p3 išd*, ‘in the Temple of Ptah in the pure region where the *išd* tree is’ (KRI VI 7.12). This portion of the text relates that the tree seen by the king is in the pure region of the temple, meaning it must be on the temple grounds rather than inside a structure. Therefore, at least part of the ritual performance had to take place outside where at least some portion of the population could witness it.

## Chapter 4: Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV

### 4.1 Location and Physical Condition

The Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV is the most complete text discussing the ritual of the *išd* tree that has been found to date. It is located on the inner face of the east wall of the Cour de la Cachette at Karnak Temple (PM II 131 [485]). Upon physical inspection, the stela as reconstructed on the wall is missing whole blocks. However, several of the blocks upon which much of the image and the caption and text of the *išd* tree scene are carved are preserved in the block yard at the base of the wall. The beginning of the text can be reconstructed, but the latter part of the text is missing substantial sections (see fig. 4.1). Both Helck (1957: 124) and Le Saout (1982a: 244) briefly discuss the remains and include photographs of the figures that do not reproduce well and are hard to see. The images from the Oriental Institute (OI-ES-negative-nos. 5174 and 5219) are also not informative. Number 5174 is dark, and number 5219 shows only the base of the wall without the figures. Upon physical inspection in 2010, 2011, 2017, and 2019, the carving that remains is clear, and there are faint traces of red paint on the king's figure. Between my visit in March 2017 and my return in November 2019, some of the blocks had been restored to their positions on the wall. As restorations continue, the following understanding of events may need to be updated by future scholars.

The Festal Wall Stela consists of an image of Ramesses IV kneeling in front of an *išd* tree facing the figures of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu. Behind the king are figures of Atum and Seshat. Below the tableau is a main text consisting of thirty-five horizontal

lines of hieroglyphs running from right to left. Below the main text is a four-column offering table consisting of an additional thirty-one lines of hieroglyphs. Separated from the main text and framing the entire stela, there are two columns of text on each side.



Fig. 4.1 Festal Wall Stela, courtesy of the author

## 4.2 The *išd* Tree Scene of the Festal Wall Stela

The *išd* tree scene of the Festal Wall Stela consists of blocks that no longer record a complete scene (PM II<sup>2</sup> 177 (S)). The images are centred above the text. On the left side are three deities of which only the headdresses remain (see fig. 4.2). On the far left is Khonsu-in-Thebes, Neferhotep's lunar disc. In front of him, to the right is Mut's crown, and in front of her is the double-plumed crown of Amun-Ra.



Fig. 4.2 Festal Wall Stela, headdress detail, courtesy of the author

On one block from the block yard at the base of the wall (fig. 4.3), the carving depicts the king kneeling in front of the *išd* tree. Upon physical inspection in March 2017, the carving that remains is in good condition and has traces of pigment. The branches show a slight arc and have ovoid leaves staggered along both sides of their lengths. Two leaves of the tree are enlarged and show different cartouches written on them: the topmost leaf shows the cartouche of Ramesses IV's prenomen,

Userma'atra Setepenamun; the other leaf shows the cartouches of Ramesses IV's nomen, Ramesses Heqama'at Meriamun.



Fig. 4.3 Festal Wall Stela, detail showing Ramesses IV and Atum, courtesy of the author

The king kneels in front of the tree and wears a *nemes* headdress over a broad collar. However, the broad collar is carved only on the far (right) half of the torso. The near (left) portion of the torso shows only traces of red paint and no broad collar carved or painted. The king has a *uraeus* above his brow and a straight beard showing traces of the strings to attach it running from his chin to his ear. He wears an elaborate kilt with pleats and knots at the waist. The block is broken at the mid-thigh point causing the loss of the king's knees and anything he may have been kneeling on. His near (left) arm is bent and holds a crook and flail up to his near (left) shoulder. His far

(right) arm is also bent and has the palm up to receive the *hb-sd* symbols being offered by the figure facing the king.

Behind the king and facing the same direction is a standing figure who writes on the leaves of the tree. According to La Saout (1982a: 244) that figure is either Thoth or Atum. Upon physical examination, the figure has a human face with a curved beard, thus it is definitely not Thoth and more than likely is Atum. The figure's near (left) arm is slightly bent and holds the strings from a scribal palette. His far (right) arm is bent and holds a stylus up to write on an enlarged leaf of the tree. The rest of the figure is severely damaged and missing below the waist and above the nose.

In front of and facing the king is a hand holding a sceptre. It probably belongs to the Amun figure in figure 4.2.

The above discussed block was restored to its position on the wall by the French-Egyptian mission between 2016 and 2018 (CFEETK 2019: 5). The text of the Festal Wall Stela contains a fragmented recitation by Seshat. However, now that the block with the figure of the king and Atum has been restored to the wall, there does not appear to be enough space for a figure of Seshat behind Atum. Further examination is required to determine if there are remains of her figure.

The stages of the ritual (see section 4.4) that are shown on this block are the king kneeling in front of the *išd* tree, his name being written on the leaves of the tree, and him receiving his *sd* festivals. This information will be incorporated into the discussion of the other relief carvings in chapter 7.

### 4.3 The Text of the Festal Wall Stela

The text of the Festal Wall Stela is the longest *išd* text yet discovered and is the most complete description known to date of what this thesis refers to as the ‘ritual of the *išd* tree’. This thesis does not claim that the entire, precise ritual is recorded on the Festal Wall Stela and fully acknowledges that there could be more stages of the ritual, but until more texts are discovered, this discussion is as complete as possible. In addition, this thesis does not claim that any divine or royal gifts, actions by participants, or members of the audience occur only in the ritual of the *išd* tree. It is the combination of these elements that makes the ritual what it is. As such the Festal Wall Stela gives a more complete idea of what may have been the stages involved in the ritual than any other single extant reference. It is important to remember that wall texts, especially during the Ramesside Period, did not document exact details of events but instead functioned as ‘momentary glimpses into the structures and functions of government’ (Higginbotham 2012: 67). Using the Festal Wall Stela as a base, it is possible to reconstruct some of the actions of the ritual as they may have been performed at three main cult centres in Egypt: Heliopolis, Memphis, and Thebes. It does not record the actual words spoken during the performance of the ritual. Unless a written liturgy—as discussed in chapter 2—is discovered in the future, we may never know the exact words spoken or the music, if any, used during the performance of the ritual of the *išd* tree. The actions recorded in the text of the Festal Wall Stela occur both in the divine plane and the human plane of existence.

The Festal Wall Stela has been translated by Wolfgang Helck (1957), Alexander Peden (1994a), and Kenneth Kitchen (2012). Peden followed Helck for the

body of the text but did include a transliteration following Kitchen and supplemented by Helck (Peden 1994a: 133–150). Kitchen published a detailed copy of the hieroglyphs in one volume (*KRI* VI 3–9) and a coordinating translation in another volume (*RITA* VI 3–9) but no transliteration. The transliterations and translations in this thesis differ slightly from the above scholars, and those differences are noted in the discussion following each section. I have used Kitchen's hieroglyphic text edition for my transliterations and translations in this work as they are the most complete.

Like all other *ỉšd* tree scenes and texts, the Festal Wall Stela serves to legitimise the king's claim to the throne as the rightful ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt. In the case of Ramesses IV, this legitimization may have been particularly necessary because his reign followed the probable assassination of his father Ramesses III (S. Redford 2002: 9). He may have felt it necessary to reassure the Egyptian people that he was the rightful heir to the throne of Horus. He did have at least two brothers (Ramesses VI and VIII) also vying for the throne (Dodson 2012: 2). Evidence from the Turin Judicial Papyrus indicates that there was a civil war in Egypt at the time from the reigns of Ramesses III to Ramesses VI (Peden 1994b: 195). Ramesses VI may have felt a similar need for legitimization as Ramesses IV since all of the cartouches of Ramesses IV on the Festal Wall Stela have been usurped by Ramesses VI, but the balance of the text was left unchanged (*RITA* VI 3, fn. 1).

At the beginning of the Festal Wall Stela, brief formulaic speeches are preserved for Amun, Mut, and Khonsu (*KRI* VI 3.12–4.1). Two columns of text each on the far right and far left of the main text list the king's titulary while granting him life, stability, dominion, and health (*KRI* VI 4.2–4.11). The main body of the text explains the ritual at Heliopolis, Memphis, and Thebes (*KRI* VI 4.13–8.5). At the end



of the main body of the text are four columns of offerings from the king to the gods as reciprocal offerings for the gifts the king receives as part of the ritual (*KRI* VI 8.36i–9.64iv). Many of these offerings are used as provisions for the army (*KRI* VI 7.5–6).

Though portions of the main body of the text are missing, there is enough text to explain the basic order of events in the ritual of the *išd* tree. The text mentions activities at three cult centres in Egypt: Heliopolis (*KRI* VI 4.14–7.7), Memphis (*KRI* VI 7.7–8.1), and Thebes (*KRI* VI 8.2–8.5). They are examined in more detail on the following pages.

## At right:

### Atum<sup>3</sup>

3.12 (1) *d[d mdw in]* [. . .] (2) *ntr ʿ3 nb* [. . .] (3) *nb t3.wy* [. . .]-*rʿ* (4) *rn=k* [. . .] (5) *k3b*

Re[citation by] [. . .], Great God, Lord of [. . .], Lord of the Two Lands, [. . .]

-ra, your name [. . .], double

3.13 *n=k* [. . .] (6) *dmd psd.t-pd.wt* [. . .] (7) *n=k (m) ksi*

for you [. . .] united, the nine bows [. . .] to you, bowing down.’

### Seshat<sup>4</sup>

3.13 (8) *dd mdw in sš[3.t] hr* [rest lost]

Recitation by Sesh[at], upon [. . .]

<sup>3</sup> Kitchen labels the speech as ‘Amun’, but the text belongs to the figure behind the king.

<sup>4</sup> Kitchen labels the speech as ‘Mut’, but the text belongs to the missing figure behind Atum.

## At Left:

### Amun-Ra

3.15 (1) *dd mdw in imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w* [rest lost] (2) *hk3 ntr.w n s3 n h.t=f* [any loss?]

(3) *mry=f nb t3.wy wsr-imn-r<sup>c</sup> [stp.n-imn]* [any loss?]

Recitation by Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, [. . .] Ruler of the Gods, to the  
son of his body [. . .] his beloved, Lord of the Two Lands,  
Useramunra [Setepenamun], [. . .]

3.16 (4) *šsp n=k hb.w-sd* [rest lost] (5) *nsy.t n r<sup>c</sup>* [any loss?]

‘Receive for yourself your *sd* festivals [. . .] the kingship of Ra.’ [. . .]

### Mut

3.16 (6) *dd mdw in mw.t nb.t [p].t* [rest lost]

Recitation by Mut, Lady of the [Sk]y [. . .]

### Khonsu-in-Thebes

4.1 (7) *dd mdw in hnsu-m-w3s.t nfr-[htp]* (8) *di.n(=i) n=k snb nb* (9) *3w.t-ib nb mi r<sup>c</sup>*

(10) *d.t nhh*

Recitation by Khonsu-in-Thebes, Nefer[hotep], ‘(I) have given to you all  
health and all joy, like Ra forever and ever.’

These speeches of the deities are formulaic and offer gifts to the king. All segments of the text are broken, but enough remains to give the reader an idea of some of the divine gifts. Atum grants the king's name, mentions doubling something, and that the nine bows (the traditional enemies of Egypt) do or bring something to the king in supplication. They are bowing down (*KRI* VI 3.12–13).

The text of Seshat is broken beyond her identification. Due to damage of the text on the wall, her gift is unknown (*KRI* VI 3.13). Amun-Ra then grants the king *sd* festivals and the kingship of Ra (*KRI* VI 3.16).

Mut's speech is broken after her epithet, the Lady of the Sky, making her gift unknown as well (*KRI* VI 3.13).

Khonsu grants the king health and joy for eternity, like Ra (*KRI* VI 4.1). The comparison to the sun god elevates the king's status to the divine level, thus making him more than human.

### Margins at Right—Inner Column

4.2    *[r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty k3-nht] m m3<sup>c</sup>.t nb hb.w-sd mi [it]=f[pt]h-[t3-tnn] nsw-bit nb [t]3.wy nb  
iri-ht*

[Ra-Horakhty, Strong Bull], in truth, Lord of *sd* festivals, like his [father],  
[Pt]ah [Tatenen], King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the [T]wo  
Lands, Lord of Rituals

4.3    *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn s3 r<sup>c</sup> mry ntr.w nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn mry imn-  
r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty nt[r<sup>c</sup>]3 [m ip.t-s.wt di nh dd w3s snb nb] [. . .]*

Userma'atra Setepenamun, Son of Ra, Beloved of the Gods, Lord of  
Crowns, Ramesses, Ruler of Ma'at, Beloved of Amun, Beloved of  
Amun-Ra-Horakhty, the Gre[at G]od [in Karnak, given life, stability,  
dominion, all health, [. . .]

This text in the right, inner column lists the names and epithets of the king. It mentions divine gifts of life, stability, dominion, and health. There are lacunae, and as such, any other information is lost.

#### Margins at Right—Outer Column

4.4 [r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty k3 nht] m m3<sup>c</sup>.t nb hb.w-sd mi it=fpth-[t3-tnn] nsw-bit nb t3.wy nb hpš

[Ra Horakhty, Strong Bull,] in truth, Lord of *sd* festivals, like his father, Ptah  
[Tatenen], King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands,  
Lord of the Khepesh-sword,

4.5 wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn s3 r<sup>c</sup> mr[y] ntr.[w] nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn mry  
hnsu-m-w3s.t nfr[-htp m ip.t-s.wt di nh] [d]d w3[s]

Userma'atra Setepenamun, Son of Ra, Beloved of the Gods, Lord of  
Crowns, Ramesses, Ruler of Ma'at, Beloved of Amun, Beloved of  
Khonsu-in-Thebes, Nefer[hotep in Karnak, given life], [stab]ility,  
domi[nion],

4.6 sn[b] [nb] [3w.t-ib] [n]b kn.t nb mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t

al[l] hea[lth], al[l] [joy], [a]ll [st]rength, like Ra forever.

This text in the right, outer column also lists the king's titulary. It likens him to both Ra-Horakhty and Ptah, and lists again the divine gifts given to him, which include life, stability, dominion, health, joy, and strength. There are fewer lacunae in this column (*KRI* VI 4.2–4.6).

### Margins at Left—Inner Column

4.8 [r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty k3 nht] m m3<sup>c</sup>.t nb hb.w-sd mi it=fpth-[t3-tnn] nsw-bit nb t3.wy nb iri-ht  
wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn s3 r<sup>c</sup> mry ntr.w nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn

[Ra-Horakhty, Strong Bull], in truth, Lord of *sd* festivals, like his father, Ptah-  
[Tatenen], King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands,  
Lord of Rituals, Userma'atra Setepenamun, Son of Ra, Beloved of the  
Gods, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, Ruler of Ma'at, Beloved of Amun

4.9 mry imn-r<sup>c</sup> [2 groups lost] ip.t-s.wt di nh [7 or 8 groups lost]

Beloved of Amun-Ra [. . .] Karnak, given life [. . .]

The text in this inner column parallels the text in the right inner column duplicating the king's titles. The lacunae here are in the place of the gifts listed on the right side and it is possible it duplicates those as well.

### Margins at left—Outer Column

4.10 [Horus name wholly lost] nsw-[bit] n[b t]3.wy n[b h]ps [wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>] stp.n[-imn]  
s3 r<sup>c</sup> mry ntr.w nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw h[k3]-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn

[. . .] King of Upper [and Lower Egypt,] Lo[rd of the Tw]o lands, Lo[rd of  
the Khe]pesh sword, [Userma'atra] Setepen[amun], Son of Ra,  
Beloved of the Gods, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, Rul[er] of Ma'at,  
Beloved of Amun

4.11 *mry mw.t [nb.t išr]w d.[t]* [7 or 8 groups lost]

Beloved of Mut, [Lady of Isher]u, for[ever] [. . .]

The text in this outer column parallels the text in the right outer column listing the king's titles. However, where the right side mentions Khonsu and divine gifts, this side mentions Mut. There is a large lacuna at the end that may have listed her gifts. Both inner columns list the king as the Lord of Rituals and both outer columns list him as the Lord of the Khepesh sword, which may parallel the concept of rituals being performed in the inner precincts and battle reliefs being placed on the exteriors of temples to function apotropaically.

### **Main Body Text**

The main body text of the Festal Wall Stela begins by listing a titulary and epithets for the king. Beginning at KRI/ VI 5.2, the text reveals stages of the ritual. At this point the first mention of the documentation of the king's titulary occurs with the phrase, 'causing his name to be recorded . . . so that it is established in their temples.' By recording and creating the name of the king within the temple itself, the king has an 'approved' claim to the titulary and, therefore, the throne. This first mention

indicates that the recording of the name occurs in several temples, near the palace, the nether chamber of Ra, and in the seat (capital) of Iusaas.

### Main Text—Heliopolis

4.13 (1) [Line lost] (2) [12 groups lost] [*wsr-m³ᵉ.t-rᵉ stp.n-imn*] [lost] [25 groups lost]

[. . .] [. . .] [Userma'atra Setepenamun] [. . .] [. . .]

4.14 [*imn-rᵉ nb nswt ʔ.*]wy [*h*]n.ty [*ip.t-s.wt mry*] (3) *ntr nfr wr nsy.t nb mnš.w* [. . .] [. . .].w

*mn gnw.t twt mi*

[Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two] Lands, [pres]iding [in Karnak,

Beloved] of the Good God, Great of Kingship, Lord of Cartouches [. . .]

[. . .]s enduring of annals, pleasing like

5.1 *hr hr srh rn wr ᵉnh wdʔ snb mi p.t twt ib mi dhwtj* [13 groups lost] [*wb*]n *hr dd m ir*

*mi hpri*

Horus upon the Serekh, one of great name, LPH, like heaven, perfect of heart

like Thoth [. . .] [shin]ing, speaking as one who acts like Khepri,

5.2 *di wdn* [*r*]n=f (4) *mn m pr.w m phr n hw.t-ᵉ3.t dwʔ.t n* [*rᵉ*] *m swʔw n s.t n.t iw.s-ᵉ3.s hb.t*

*ᵉ3.t hpr.ty m hrw nfr*

It is caused that his name is to be reco[rred] so that it is established in the

temples, in the surroundings of the Great Mansion and the nether-chamber

of [Ra],<sup>5</sup> and in the region of the seat of Iusaas. The great festival came

into being on the happy day and,

<sup>5</sup> Ra is suggested by Helck per KRI VI 5.2 fn 2a.

5.3 *ihhy pri m ḥw.t-sr r-gs sw3.t s.[t] n.t kṛḥ[.wt] [ps]d.t [n] pr p(w) n [ḥr šḥwi=sn] [m-]ᵀ*  
*dḥwty*

rejoicing came forth from the Mansion of the Noble beside the passage of the  
 pla[ce] of the serpent-sp[irits]. The [Divine] Ennead [of] th[is] temple  
 [assembled themselves] [wi]th Thoth

5.4 *m wsh ḥr r-ᵀ-sš.w-nsw d3d3. t n (5) ḥk3-ᵀnd twt r gs=f hrw n 3b.t nb[.w] ḥw.t m pr rᵀ*  
*itm̄w dd=f*

in the broad court with the royal document. The Tribunal of the Heliopolitan  
 Province assembled beside him on the day of offerings while the Lord[s] of  
 the Mansion were in the Temple of Ra. Atum spoke

5.5 *m ḥr.tw ḥr ᵀ nn ᵀnn.tw wd mi dd.n=f di=f m ḥr n ntr imy ḥmnw sr.w nb.w s.t nty ḥnᵀ=f*  
*r-dd irw smtr m*

as one (who) makes an immediate pronouncement without rejecting the decree  
 as he spoke (it). He commanded the god of Hermopolis and the Great  
 Ones, the Lords of the Place, who were together with him, saying, 'Make a  
 testimony in

5.6 *[ws]ḥ.t gb m mn.w n mnš.w m ti.t špsy wdᵀ whᵀ (6) [p3i=f nḥb] m bw sdm nty*

[the fore]court of Geb with a number of cartouches in an august design. Judge<sup>6</sup>  
 and explain [his titulary] in the places of judgement where

5.7 *ḥnmm.t irw sw3 ḥr.w iw ḥr sb3y.wt 3.w r dit rḥ=[tw] s.t ᵀm [p].t [t]3*

the people pas[s] by and that have upon them great proclamations so that  
 [they] know and are informed, and that [hea]ven, [ea]rth,

5.8 *dw3.t m n3yw 3ḥ.w r-dd inn i.ir nḥb.t (7) mnš m-ḥ3.t nsy.t n rᵀ iw=f m wsr [rnp.wt]*

<sup>6</sup> Wb I 404 as in make a determination or choice.



and the netherworld are aware of their glory, saying, ‘We are the ones who  
have created the titulary and cartouche before the kingship of Ra, he being  
rich in [years]

5.9 *wr nh̄t.w psd̄.t pd̄.wt n=f m ksi hr brk.w r ʕh=f hy p3 wd n [s]3.w=n dr hwi=sn*  
and great in victories, the Nine Bows (coming) to him bowing down, bearing  
gifts to his palace. What a decree this is for our [so]ns, since they protect

5.10 [1 group lost] *psd̄.t n w3s.t iwnw hw.t-k3-pt̄h imi mnš=f sw.t bi.t (8) iw=f m h̄k3 t3.wy*  
*nb*

[. . .] the Divine Ennead of Thebes, Heliopolis, and Memphis! Cause his  
cartouche (to be)—reed and bee—he is the Ruler of the Two Lands, Lord

5.11 *nsy.t ʕh̄w nh̄h d̄.t [mi] t[3-tnn is p3] [5 1/2 groups lost] h[r] sp[hr] [6 1/2 groups lost]*  
of Kingship, (with) a lifetime forever and ever, [like] Ta[tenen.] Now the] [. . .]  
copied [down] [. . .]

5.12 *hr di.t n=f h̄b.w iw bw rh rmt nbw t3-mry t3 nb (9) m 3ʕ.wy hry-tp sm3yt iw m*  
while giving him *sd* festivals, without the knowing of all the people of Egypt, and  
every land asleep (in bed) united. There came

5.13 [20 groups lost] *[iw rʕ hr d3i p].t skt.t m hr(y)-ib p.t ʕk3 n iwnw p3 dʕi<sup>7</sup> spr n sh-ntr*  
*iw=tw*

[. . .] [Ra is crossing the sk]y with the Night barque in the middle of the sky  
opposite Heliopolis. The *dʕi* (crowds?) approached the temple. They

5.14 (10) *m sgr ʕ3.wy n pr pn r ʕh̄w[.w] [24 groups lost] k.t bi3.yt hpr=s hrw n3 ntr.w*

<sup>7</sup> *Wb* V 535 states that the meaning is unclear when the word is used with the article *p3*. The idea of this term is a reference to those members of the populace who would attend these activities.

were silent; the two doors of this temple were in their proper position[s], [. . .

another marvel as it happened, beside the gods

- 6.1 *ir sšm=w (11) pn m irr.t n ʕ.wy=w m dr.wt=w ds=w [24 groups lost] [ʕk3] n iwnw pry  
m wp[w.t]*

who carried out this their instruction as the action of their arms with their own  
hands [. . .] [opposite] Heliopolis, (of) what came forth as a mess[age.]

- 6.2 *nis=sn m dw3.t (12) n r[ʕ] n itn h[rw]=f<sup>8</sup> [24 groups lost] [ʕm].tw drty.w*

They called out in adoration to R[a] and to the sun disc. His [voice] [. . .] that  
the ancestors [might be known]

- 6.3 *[mi] [1 group lost] rm[t] r-d[d] mtn.w (13) rn [wr] n [hm=f hr iš]d špsy m sš ntr ds=f  
m*

[like] [. . .] Peo[ple] say[ing,] ‘The [great] name of [His Majesty is inscribed upon  
the] august iš[d tree] in the writing of the god himself in

- 6.4 *[h]w.t-ʕ3.t iwnw [h]ʕi hm=f hr [h]tr [20 groups lost] [m hr]d ntry m iwnr n (14) k3-m-  
ʕ-mn.t di.n=f stw.t*

the [Gre]at Mansion of Heliopolis.’ His Majesty [app]eared upon [the ch]ariot  
span [. . .] a divine [chi]ld in a headdress of ‘Spirit-is-with-(me)-daily.’ He  
gave off the rays of the sun

- 6.5 *shd.n iʕr.t=f šnw nw t3 t3 nb mh m t3y=f mrw.t dd=tw imi gr[g] [20 groups lost]  
[. . .]r.w*

as his uraeus illuminated the circumference of the land. Every land is filled with  
his love. They say, ‘Let there be prepa[red] [. . .] [jew]els

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<sup>8</sup> Kitchen reproduces a 𓆎 (Gardiner O4) with a sic notation; Peden transliterates it as *hrw=f(?)*.

6.6 *m ḥḥ.w n ḥd nbw (15) inw knw (r) ḥ3i.t=w n iw3.w rnn.w m šbn.w ng3.w*

in heaps of silver and gold, and tributes too many to measure, of long-horned cattle and calves of various (kinds) and various long-horned cattle

6.7 *šbn.t wnd[.w] [18 groups lost] [. . .] n nb t3.wy šsp ḥsi mrw.t (16) hr ndm-ib ḥḥ.w sk3*

and various short-horned cattle [. . .] to the Lord of the Two Lands, who receives praise and love as well as joy and a prolonged lifetime.'

6.8 *p3 inw n nb t3.wy hr ib ḥr-ḥ3.t=w fk3.n sw itm(w) [some groups lost] [wnd.w nfr.w n stw.t] [some groups lost] r štp wdn.w ḥb.wt*

The tribute of the Lord of Two Lands is pleasing before them, and Atum has rewarded him [. . .] [beautiful parade bulls] [. . .] to present offerings and oblations

6.9 *(17) i.ir=f n it=f itm(w) r hrw ib[=f] p3-di.t wn rn=f mn mi p.t [20 groups lost]*

that he has made for his father, Atum, to please [him], the one who causes that his name be enduring like heaven [. . .]

6.10 *ḥ.w nb.t ḥk.n ḥm=f r šh-ntr (18) n it=f rḥ-hr-3hty ii.in ḥm=f r swtw m ḥnw pr rḥ s.t 3ḥw r*

all documents. His Majesty entered the temple of his father, Ra-Horakhty, then His Majesty came to walk about in the interior of the Temple of Ra, the place of glory, to

6.11 *m33 i3d nty m iw[nw ury gm.n=f g3b.t n i3d špsy wdn m rn=f ḥm=f r-dd nsw-bit]<sup>9</sup> wsr-m3ḥ.t-rḥ stp.n-imn s3 rḥ rḥ-ms-sw ḥk3-m3ḥ.t mry imn (19) iw inw št3.w*

<sup>9</sup> Peden (1994a: 138) adds this text in a place where Kitchen has a notation of twenty groups lost.

see the *išd* tree which is in Helio[polis].<sup>10</sup> There he found the foliage of the  
 august *išd* tree inscribed with the name of His Majesty, namely the King of  
 Upper and Lower Egypt] Userma'atra Setepenamun, Son of Ra, Ruler of  
 Ma'at, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun, with their mysterious colours

6.12 *mi nty m nbw n3y=sn ti.wt m<sup>c</sup>n m ir.wt ntr shn* [20 groups lost] [*p*]tr st nn

as if in gold, their images inlaid as if made by a god, enclosed [. . .]

6.13 *nty r-gs=f (20) <sup>c</sup>š=sn sgb.w r k3w n p.t sdm p3-dhw r-dr=f n3(.w) nfr twt m hnw*

Those who were beside him [s]aw it. They cried out to the height of heaven so  
 the whole (group) heard it. The entire good (things) in the chapel,

6.14 *p3* [20 groups lost] [. . . =sn] *ir.w smtr gnw.t (21) dr p3w.ty nsy.t n h3i hr <sup>c</sup>nh*

the [. . .] they inspected the annals since the primeval time of kingship of what  
 went through the scroll

6.15 *r h3w tpy.w-<sup>c</sup> bw hpr n=sn nn mitt hm=f* [20 groups lost] *wr gmi hr g3b.t m (22) pr r<sup>c</sup>  
 hr rn*

up to the time of the ancestors. This had not happened to them like (it did for)  
 His Majesty. [. . .] great (cartouches) were found upon the foliage in the  
 Temple of Ra having upon it the name

7.1 *n wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imm [r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imm] wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imm [r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw  
 hk3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imm] gmi.n=sn m-r-<sup>c</sup> bn=st mi* [20 groups lost]

<sup>10</sup> The text specifically mentions the tree in Heliopolis and it is in the Heliopolitan section of the text, therefore it is possibly a specific reference to a particular specimen—the particular living example of an *išd* tree in the Temple of Ra at Heliopolis, which would have to be in a courtyard or other open area for light and air to reach the tree so it could survive. Refer to chapter 3 for further discussion of the needs of a tree for survival within the temple.

of Userma'atra Setepenamun [Ramesses, Ruler of Truth, Beloved of Amun]  
and Userma'atra Setepenamun [Ramesses, Ruler of Truth, Beloved of  
Amun] they found likewise. They were not like [. . .]

- 7.2 *rh ht nsy.t r<sup>c</sup> (23) r-h3.t=f[h<sup>c</sup>i] m [iw]nw ns[w]-bi[t] nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imm nb  
h<sup>c</sup>w [r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw h<sup>c</sup>3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imm] n<sup>c</sup>y n nb <sup>c</sup> w s*

wisdom, the kingship of Ra before him, [he having appeared] in [Helio]polis,  
the Ki[ng] of Upper and Lower Egy[pt], Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra  
Setepenamun, Lord of Crowns, [Ramesses, Ruler of Truth, Beloved of  
Amun]. The lord, LPH, proceeded

- 7.3 *r mnk m <sup>c</sup>h špsy [20 groups lost] s.t skbb (24) [9 groups lost] [damaged] [damaged]  
t3*

to the *mnk* room in the august palace [. . .] the cool place [. . .] [. . .] the  
four

- 7.4 *hryw [m i]nw m [21 groups lost] t [. . .] [hr] [. . .] (25) m-b3h w3h hr dr.wt=w b<sup>c</sup>h.w  
portions of [tr]ibute [from] [. . .] [. . .] [upon] [. . .] formerly, placed upon their  
hands b<sup>c</sup>ht*

- 7.5 *htp.w r ri.t r sp-sn.wy ktš.t n mš[<sup>c</sup>] (26) [rest of line lost] <sup>c</sup>nh n3 wn.wt n ii  
baskets and *htp* baskets on both sides, *kyllestis* bread for the ar[my] [. . .] (life),  
these hours of coming.*

- 7.6 *iw=tw m ršw m pr r<sup>c</sup> hy pri 3s r mkw mš<sup>c</sup> [4 groups lost] n [. . .] pr-nsw <sup>c</sup>. w. s.  
People were in joy in the Temple of Ra; overseers came forth quickly for the  
provisioning of the army [. . .] in [. . .] the palace, LPH,*

- 7.7 *h<sup>c</sup>y n [6 groups lost]  
Rejoicing at [. . .]*

After several large lacunae, the Heliopolitan order of events for the ritual of the *išd* tree (*KRI* VI 4.13–7.7) begins with the creator god, Atum, issuing a decree to an assembly of gods regarding the king's name (*KRI* VI 4.13–5.1). This occurs in his temple in the divine plane of existence. He orders the Ennead to assemble in his temple together with Thoth and that the king's name is to be recorded in the temples, near the Great Mansion, in the nether chamber of Ra, and in the area near the seat of the goddess Iusaas (*KRI* VI 5.1–5.3), who is a goddess of the Heliopolitan Nome closely associated with the Ramesside kings (Raue 1999: 13). Then there is a great festival that comes forth from the Mansion of the Nobles on the human plane that is near a place of guardian spirits (*KRI* VI 5.2–5.3). This festival is probably a dual location—on the divine plane the gods are having a celebration where the discussion of lines 5.5–5.11 occur; and on the human plane, near the Great Mansion in the Temple of Ra at Heliopolis for the celebration of the coronation.

Continuing on the divine plane, the gods of the temple and Thoth assemble together as a group with a document (*KRI* VI 5.3–5.4), probably the written declaration of the king's titulary. Atum then makes the official announcement (*KRI* VI 5.5). The text specifically states that the announcement is made by Atum, who does not 'reject it' even as he speaks, meaning that he gives his official approval of the information contained therein. The announcement itself is a set of instructions to Thoth and the Ennead for the creation of the rightful king's titulary, how it should look, and where it should be placed so that all inhabitants of both the divine plane and the human plane can see it and know it (*KRI* VI 5.5–5.8). The testimony makes the official name of the rightful king known publicly and validates the king's claim to the throne. After this, the

deities are instructed to explain the titulary in ‘places of judgement’ where the people pass, so the population of Egypt could be informed. The result is that heaven, earth, and the netherworld are informed of the official name of the rightful king across the divine plane and the human plane.

Within these instructions several other things occur. At the end of line 5.2, and through 5.3, the great festival (*hḥ.t ʿ3.t*) comes into being on the happy day and rejoicing comes forth from the Great Mansion, meaning that because of the proclamation of the name there is cause for happiness in the country. This celebration occurs because the name is recorded, thus creating a starting point for the anniversary of the *sd* festivals—a ritual of status elevation.

Lines 5.8–5.11 contain the announcement by Thoth and the Ennead of what they will do (create the titulary and the cartouches linking the new king to all the other rightful kings who came before him) and the gifts they will grant to the king (long life and military victories). The last portion of their statement is how proud they are that their sons (the kings) protect them and the cult centres of Thebes, Heliopolis, and Memphis, and then reiterate that Ramesses IV is the rightful king (*KRI* VI 5.9–5.10). That Thebes is listed first in the Heliopolitan section of the text may simply be an acknowledgement to the stela being erected in Thebes.

After two large lacunae containing some of the king’s epithets, he is granted (again) a long lifetime that is compared to that of (Ptah) Tatenen (*KRI* VI 5.11). Line 5.12 iterates a level of secrecy of what happens on the divine plane. A new gift is granted to the king (*sd* festivals) while the people of Egypt and every other land are asleep, and Ra is crossing in the Night barque opposite Heliopolis.

On the human plane, a group of people, the *dꜣi*, approach the temple and are silent (*KRI* VI 5.13–5.14). A thorough understanding of who the *dꜣi* were is not clear. For the purposes of this work, I use the term ‘crowd’ simply to indicate a group of people. The silent crowd sees the doors of the temple closed (*KRI* VI 5.14) further indicating that something is happening in secret (the preparations for the festival were made away from public view) on the human plane—creating a parallel with the divine plane. Since *KRI* VI 5.13 mentions the Night barque of Ra, the Ennead and those inside the temple are making these preparations at night so that with the new day, the crowds walked up to the temple before it opened its doors for the day’s festivities. Even though the divine proclamation requires the information to be made public, the preparations for the announcement are kept secret.

A large lacuna in lines 6.2 and 6.3 may indicate that the anticipated announcement has been made to the expectant crowds. In line 6.2, the people cry out in adoration to Ra and to the sun disc indicating they are happy about the announcement. Line 6.3 relays words of the crowd that the king’s name has been written on the *išd* tree by the god himself and that tree may be in the Great Mansion at Heliopolis. Another large lacuna obscures the information between the name being on the tree and the mention of the Great Mansion (*KRI* VI 6.3–6.4). Line 6.3 is the first open statement that the people of Egypt know that the king’s name is written on the tree.

Line 6.4 reveals the king’s first appearance to the crowds on the human plane during the ritual. He appears in a chariot, glowing as if radiating divine light and illuminating all of Egypt—a further reiteration of his rightful claim to the throne and his relationship to the sun god (*KRI* VI 6.4–6.5). The crowds then request that gifts be



presented to the king—heaps of silver and gold, lots of long- and short-horned cattle, praise, love, joy, and a long life (KRI VI 6.5–6.7). In line 5.2, the gods decree a festival. Here in lines 6.5–6.7, the people mirror those desires by saying, ‘Let there be prepared . . .’ and then listing what is to be offered at the festival: heaps of gold and silver and lots of cattle. The cattle listed here are important because they are long- and short-horned cattle of particular species, domesticated and used for food (*iw3.w*, *rnn.w*, *ng3.w*, and *wnd.w*) (Mastropaolo 2013: 27–30, 49–51, and 69–70). The *iw3.w* are long-horned cattle that are docile and fattened up for food, sometimes documented as *Bos Africanus* (Mastropaolo 2013: 6 and 28). The *rnn.w* are young *iw3.w* or veal (Mastropaolo 2013: 70). The *ng3.w* are a different species of long-horned cattle used specifically for food at festivals in the Theban area (Mastropaolo 2013: 69). In the case of *wnd.w*, these are short-horned cattle often mentioned in conjunction with *iw3.w* and sometimes translated as ‘goats’ (Mastropaolo 2013: 50). In addition, these are particular animals offered to the gods and sacrificed by the king to symbolize Egypt’s victories over her enemies. Based on information from Sara Mastropaolo, I would restore part of the lost groups of KRI VI 6.8 as *wnd.w nfr.w n stw.t* meaning ‘beautiful parade bulls’ (2013: 50). These types of cattle listed in the Festal Wall Stela main text further demonstrate the unity of Egypt under one king since the Lower Egyptian, Heliopolitan section of the text (as carved in Thebes) mentions sacrificial bovids from Upper Egypt, Thebes.

These bovids are specifically food from across Egypt meant to show that all the people of Egypt wanted to celebrate their rightful king. These are not sacrificial or divine animals meant to be messengers between the divine plane and the human plane. *Isd* tree scenes generally do not have offering lists as part of their design plan.

One exception may be the *išd* tree scene of Thutmosis I (DOC 1) as its fragments were discovered near other fragments of an offering list. The balance of *KRI* VI 6.7 lists what the king will receive in exchange for the precious metals and bovids. Those items are praise, love, joy, and most importantly—a long life.

Lines 6.8 and 6.9 mention reciprocal gift giving and it must occur on both the divine and human planes. Due to two large lacunae in these lines, the speaker is unclear, but the extant text makes it clear that the gifts (on the human plane) are pleasing to Atum (on the divine plane) and he has made the king's name endure.

Line 6.10 is the first mention of the king entering the temple of Ra-Horakhty and walking around inside the temple to discover the tree with his names written on it (human plane) (*KRI* VI 6.10–6.12). The names are described in lines 6.11–6.12 with almost magical properties: mysterious colours, gold, and inlaid images. The text reads *ḥmw pr rʕ*, but here the interior of the temple must refer to the temple grounds within the enclosure wall but not indoors. As mentioned in section 3.6, the trees could not survive indoors.

Line 6.13 is an indication of the possibility that what was happening inside the temple was not meant to be entirely concealed from the general population. It says, 'They cried out to the height of heaven so the whole (group) heard it.' Which indicates that a group of people (possibly the *dʕi*?) were tasked with relaying information from inside the temple to the large crowds outside the temple walls. This crying out may mean that much like descriptions of other national festivals (such as the Opet Festival), there is a cacophony of street performers, musicians, dancers, chantresses, and singers outside the temple (L. Bell 1997: 160–176). In addition, it may indicate a standard of decorum of literacy in ancient Egypt requiring a group of people whose

specific function was to read texts aloud so that a largely illiterate public could be better informed (Baines and Eyre 1983: 72).

The next lines state there is an inspection of the king lists going back to the first king of Egypt, at least theoretically, and a determination that the name of Ramesses IV rightfully deserves to be on that list (*KRI* VI 6.14–6.15).

Lines 6.15 to 7.2 specifically state that the foliage (*g<sup>3</sup>b.t*) in the Temple of Ra contains the cartouches of Ramesses IV with two spellings (*KRI* VI 7.1). The first instance of *wsr-m<sup>3</sup>ḥ.t-r<sup>c</sup>* is carved using the seated god with a solar disc for Ra, and the second uses the solar disc alone for Ra. Since twenty groups are lost at the end of *KRI* VI 7.1, it is difficult to know who the subject of the verb is in the next line; however, due to the structure of the text, it is likely to be Ramesses IV. Line 7.2 lists epithets of the king in Heliopolis.

At the end of line 7.2 and through line 7.5, there is another change of venue from the Temple of Ra-Horakhty to the palace, specifically the king proceeds to the *mnḥ* room in the palace. Scholars do not agree on the function of this room. Raymond Faulkner and the Leskos list *mnḥ* as ‘come to an end’ (Faulkner 1996: 110; Lesko and Lesko 1984: 223) possibly the end of a passageway. The Berlin Wörterbuch lists it as ‘Raum im Palast’ (*Wb* II 90). Rainer Hannig lists it as a ‘storeroom’ or ‘magazine’ (1995: 342). Perhaps it is a room at the end of a corridor within the palace. It is not likely that in this context of the king discovering his name on the august *išd* tree that he would walk into a storeroom or a bedroom. It is much more likely that the room is used in some official capacity, perhaps for presentations or receptions of the nobility or a place to store the reciprocal gifts mentioned in lines 6.5 to 6.7. The king then gives offerings as a reciprocal gesture for his divine gifts in *KRI* VI 7.4. In *KRI* VI 7.5,

the offerings of bread are distributed to the army. The Heliopolitan segment of the text ends at line 7.7, with the people in joy inside the Temple of Ra and overseers quickly taking the baskets and bread from the previous two lines for the army. This section is the only one of the three to mention the army. It is possible that it was mentioned in other sections, and those sections are now lost. The mention of the army is important especially in times of civil unrest for it was the army's loyalty to the king that aided in quelling uprisings and lending an air of legitimacy to a king's claim to the throne.

### Main Text—Memphis

7.7 [t3-mry] (27) *r w3ḥ ḥtp.w-ntr n ntr.w m hrw n nhb rn wr n*

[Egypt] to set down divine offerings to the gods on the day of the assigning  
the great name of

7.8 *ḥm=f i.ir dhwtj ds=f r<sup>c</sup> r-gs=f is[t rf]* [3 groups lost] [*nt*] *r.w iwnw pth ḥr w3w3 sh  
ḥn<sup>c</sup>*

His Majesty that Thoth himself made, (with) Ra beside him. Now [while]  
[. . .] [the g]ods of Heliopolis and Ptah counselled together

7.9 *ib=f r-dd ink p3 [k]m3 r [. . .]* (28) *km3 nn ḥr nfy dit n.t<sup>c</sup>=s(n) gmy.t*

with his heart, saying, 'I am the [Cre]ator (who) [. . .] created this and that  
and who causes their customs which are found—

7.10 *mn.w nb m n3y=i pss ḥr ir m rnp[.t-sp 1 3bd 2 šmw]<sup>11</sup> sw [23] iw=tw m ḥ<sup>c</sup> špsy n  
pr wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn*

<sup>11</sup> Date restored per the date listed in the header of offering list column ii.

of every sort—by my efforts.’ In yea[r 1, second month of summer], day  
 [23], One (the king) was in the august palace of the estate of  
 Userma’atra Setepenamun

7.11 *sḏm nh ḥ<sup>c</sup>i.n ḥm[=f] m [hrw pn] hr ir.t ḥs.t nb.t n it=f (29) špsy pth rsy inb nb ḥ<sup>c</sup>nh-  
 3.wy ii im r*

Who Hears Prayers. [His] Majesty appeared in glory on [this day] doing all  
 that was favoured by his august father, Ptah, South of his Wall, Lord of  
 Ankh-tawy, having come here to

7.12 *swtwt m pr pth m p3 ḥ nty w<sup>c</sup>b hr p3 iṣd gm.n=f g[3b.t] [4 groups lost] [. . .] nb  
 [. . .]*

walk about in the Temple of Ptah in the pure region where the *iṣd* tree is.  
 He found the fo[liage] [4 groups lost] [. . .] All [. . .]

7.13 *[m mn]š.w n nb [ḥ. w.] s. m sš.w ntr ḏs=f [wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn s3 r<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw ḥk3-  
 m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn] rn=sn (30) m mit.t ḥb.t ḥ3.t iw mn-nfr*

the [car]touches of the lord, [LP]H, in the writing of the god himself  
 [Userma’atra Setepenamun, Son of Ra, Ruler of Ma’at, Ramesses,  
 Beloved of Amun] their names likewise at the great festival. Memphis  
 is

7.14 *twt hr m33 bw-nfr dd=tw n=sn mkiw=w m rh.t ḥ3.t ḥw pr pth m [8 groups lost]  
 [rest of line lost]*

assembled and seeing the good place/things. One gave to them (their)  
 rewards in many lists and (even) exemption (from dues/taxes to) the  
 Temple of Ptah in [. . .] [. . .]

8.1 (31) [wsh.]<sup>t12</sup> n wn-hr hb[.w] n hm=f n nfr-hr hm.w hm.wt m h<sup>c</sup>k.t r mh sh-ntr=f<sup>c</sup>š  
m3<sup>c</sup> n h3s.t=f r wi3=f [rest lost]

[forecourt]t of the ‘Open-of-Face’ festival[s] of His Majesty, for ‘Fair-of-Face’ (Ptah)—male servants and female servants as plunder to fill his shrine, and true cedar wood from his foreign land, for his sacred barque  
[. . .]

The Memphite version of the ritual of the *išd* tree (KRI VI 7.7–8.1) has the same overall stations, but the details are different. Line 7.7 begins with Egypt giving offerings to the gods on the day that the titulary is assigned to the king. The titulary is still recorded as being created by Thoth; however, instead of doing so with the Ennead, in the Memphite section of the text, he creates it with Ra (KRI VI 7.8). In place of Atum making the decree, Ptah meets with the gods of Heliopolis and states that he is the creator of everyone and everything (KRI VI 7.8–7.10). Lines 7.10 and 7.11 preserve the date of accession (year 1, second month of summer, day 23) and the name of the palace from which the king appears to his people—Userma’atra-Setepenamun-Who-Hears-Prayers.

From the palace, the king goes to the Temple of Ptah to see the *išd* tree and find the foliage (KRI VI 7.12). This line indicates that there is another living example of an *išd* tree, this time in the pure region of the Temple of Ptah. This section must also refer to an area out of doors. The cartouches he finds on the leaves are written by Ptah (line 7.13) instead of Thoth, as recorded in Heliopolis. The people of Memphis

<sup>12</sup> Both Peden (1994a: 140–141) and Kitchen (KRI VI 8, fn 1a) reference Helck’s restoration of wsh.t, although Helck (1957: 103) does not mention it.

assemble and see all the king's gifts (KRI VI 7.14). Another difference in this section of the text is an exemption from paying dues/taxes to the Temple of Ptah, a luxury not afforded to the people of Heliopolis, at least in the extant sections of the text. Other reciprocal gifts from the Memphite section of the text that do not occur in the Heliopolitan section are male and female servants for the temple and imported cedar wood for the sacred barque (KRI VI 8.1). The rest of this section is lost.

### Main Text—Thebes

- 8.2 (32) *w3s.t r[-dd]* [6 groups lost] *m[n] w3h rn wr n h[m=f]* [*ntr nfr*] [*nsw-bit*] *nb*  
*[t3.wy]* *nb* [*ir ht*] *wsr-[m3<sup>c</sup>.t]-r<sup>c</sup>* [*stp.n-imn s3 r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw h3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn*] [rest  
of line lost]

Thebes, say[ing], [. . .] abiding and enduring is the great name of Hi[s  
Maje]sty, [the Good God,] [King of Upper and Lower Egypt,] Lord of the  
[Two Lands], Lord of [Rituals], User[ma'at]ra [Setepenamun, Son of  
Ra, Ruler of Ma'at, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun] [. . .]

- 8.3 (33) *rn[p.t-sp]* [rest of line lost] (34) [21 groups lost] [*wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn*]  
*[mry]* [. . .] *nb imn-r<sup>c</sup>* [. . .]  
ye[ar] [. . .] [. . .] [Userma'atra Setepenamun] [beloved of] [. . .] every [. . .]  
Amun-Ra [. . .]

- 8.4 [*imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw*] [*nt*] *r.w* [*m*] *hb* [*hr*] *w pn iw s3rw iry hr* (35) [17 groups lost] [*nb*] *h<sup>c</sup>w*  
*[r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw h3-m3<sup>c</sup>.t mry imn]* *m pr imn*

[Amun-Ra, King] of the [God]s, [on] the festival of this [da]y, the corn  
therefore coming from [. . .] [Lord] of Crowns, [Ramesses, Ruler of  
Ma'at, Beloved of Amun] in the Temple of Amun.

8.5 *iw b3k=tw hr šn[<sup>c</sup> n pr imn-r<sup>c</sup>] nsw ntr.w m pr imn mn w3h n d.t*

They work in the work[shop of the Temple of Amun-Ra], King of the Gods,  
in the Temple of Amun established and enduring for eternity.

The third and final section of the Festal Wall Stela main text is the enactment of the ritual at Thebes (lines 8.2–8.5), the shortest of the three main text sections, and possibly a similar sequence of events to those at Heliopolis and Memphis. Unfortunately, it is the most heavily damaged section of the wall, missing many lines and groups of text. What does remain lists some of the epithets of the king (*KRI* VI 8.2). Line 8.3 once contained a date. Line 8.4 mentions a festival with corn supplied from the Temple of Amun. And finally, line 8.5 mentions some unnamed people who work in ‘pure’ workshops at the Temple of Amun, and that said temple will endure for ever. There is no extant mention of a meeting of gods, any specific gifts, the *išd* tree, or the finding of the king’s names on the foliage. Hopefully that information still exists on blocks that have yet to be found or restored to the courtyard near the stela.

The remainder of the text is four columns of offering lists for the king’s reciprocal gifts to the Temple of Amun (*KRI* VI 8.36i–9.64iv).



## Main Text—Offering Lists

### Column i

36i–38i Lost

39i	[ <i>bi.t</i> ]	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[40]	[ <i>m ḥk3.t</i> ]	70	1 3/4 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	[ <i>bi.t</i> ] bread	baking	40	per oipe	70	1 3/4 oipe
40i	[ <i>p</i> ] <i>sn</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	4	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	8	2 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	<i>psn</i> bread	baking	4	per oipe	8	2 oipe
41i	<i>psn</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	5	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	50	2 <i>ḥ3r(.w)</i> , 2 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	<i>psn</i> bread	baking	5	per oipe	50	2 sacks, 2 oipe
42i	<i>psn</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	10	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	100	2 <i>ḥ3r(.w)</i> , 2 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	<i>psn</i> bread	baking	10	per oipe	100	2 sacks, 2 oipe
43i	<i>psn</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	20	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	200	2 <i>ḥ3r(.w)</i> , 2 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	<i>psn</i> bread	baking	20	per oipe	200	2 sacks, 2 oipe

44i Lost

45i	[ <i>t</i> ]	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[1]2	[ <i>m ḥk3.t</i> ]. <i>t</i>	6	1/2 [ <i>ḥk3.t</i> ]
	[bread]	baking	[1]2	per oipe	6	1/2 [oipe]
46i	<i>t ḥd</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	2[0]	[ <i>m</i> ] <i>ḥk3.t</i>	4[0]	[2] <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	White	baking	2[0]	[per] oipe	4[0]	[2] oipe
	bread					

47i–60i Lost

61i	<i>sn[tr]</i>		25	blank	blank	blank
-----	---------------	--	----	-------	-------	-------

	ince[nse]	25			
62i	<i>sn[tr]</i>	20[?]	blank	blank	blank
	ince[nse]	20 + x			
63i–64i	Lost				

## Column ii

36ii	[ <i>m3<sup>c</sup> n imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w m hb</i> ] <i>hrw pn m rnp.t-sp 1 3bd 2 šmw sw 23</i> [Offering to Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, on this festival] day, year 1, second month of summer, day 23				
37ii	[. . .] <i>t</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	14	<i>m hk3.t</i>	[1]40 2 <i>h3r.w</i> , 2 <i>hk3.t</i>
	[. . .] bread	baking	14	per oipe	[1]40 2 sacks, 2 oipe
38ii	[ <i>m3<sup>c</sup> n imn-r<sup>c</sup>] nsw [ntr.w m hb] hrw pn hr t3 hw.t n.t hh.w n rnp.wt</i> [Offering to Amun-Ra], King of the [Gods, on] this [festival] day, from the Temple of Millions of Years,				
39ii	<i>n nsw-bit [wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn] m [pr im]n iw b3k hr šn<sup>c</sup> w<sup>c</sup>b n pr imn</i> of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, [Userma'atra Setepenamun], in [the Temple of Am]un, being prepared in the pure workshop in the Temple of Amun				
40ii	<i>t hd</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	4	<i>m hk3.t</i>	2,000 125 <i>h3r.w</i> , 1 <i>hk3.t</i>
	White bread	baking	4	per oipe	2,000 125 sacks, 1 oipe
41ii	<i>t wdn</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[20]	<i>m hk3.t</i>	2,000 25 <i>h3r.w</i>
	Offering loaf	baking	[20]	per oipe	2,000 25 sacks
42ii	<i>t hd</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[40]	<i>m hk3.t</i>	100 2 1/2 <i>hk3.t</i>

	White bread	baking	[40]	per oipe	100	2 1/2 oipe
43ii	<i>šꜥ.t ipd</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[10]	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	100	2 <i>ḥ3r.w</i> , 2 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
	cakes	baking	[10]	per oipe	100	2 sacks, 2 oipe
44ii–	Lost					
59ii						
60ii	<i>m3ꜥ n imn-rꜥ nsw ntr.w m ḥb hrw pn</i> [rest lost]					
	Offering to Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, on this festival day [. . .]					
61ii	<i>iw sšr iry [ḥr šnw.t ḥw.t ḥḥ.w n rn]p.wt n nsw-bit wsr-m3ꜥ.t-rꜥ stp.n-imn m pr imn</i>					
	Corn thereof [from the temple granary of the Mansion of Millions of Ye]ars,					
	King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'atra Setepenamun, in the					
	Temple of Amun					
62ii	<i>šꜥ.t thn.w</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	1[. . .]	<i>m ḥk3.t</i>	2	1 <i>ḥ3r</i>
	Obelisk cakes	baking	1+x	per oipe	2	1 sack
63ii	<i>šꜥ.t</i> [lost]	<i>psi(.w)</i>	[. . .]	<i>m [ḥk3.t]</i>	10	<i>ḥk[3.t]</i>
	[Obelisk]	baking		per oipe	10	x oipe
	cakes					
64ii	Lost	<i>psi(.w)</i>	Lost	<i>m [ḥk3.t]</i>	Lost	Lost
		baking		per		
				[oipe]		

### Column iii

36iii	<i>šꜥ.t shn.t</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	4	<i>m</i>	5	1 1/4 <i>ḥk3.t</i>
				<i>ḥk3.t</i>		

	<i>šhn.t</i> cakes	baking	4	per	5	1 1/4 oipe
						oipe
37iii	<i>š<sup>c</sup>.t ipd.t</i>	<i>psi(.w)</i>	10	<i>m</i>	25	2 1/2 <i>hk3.t</i>
						<i>hk3.t</i>
	<i>ipd</i> cakes	baking	10	per	25	2 1/2 oipe
						oipe
38iii	<i>dmd š<sup>c</sup>.t ipd.t</i>	<i>šbn.w</i>			42	<i>iri n 2 h3r.w 2</i>
						1/4 <i>hk3.t</i>
	Total= <i>ipd</i>	various			42	Making 2 sacks,
	cakes					2 1/4 oipe
39iii	<i>sntr k3 5</i>	<i>sntr 3pd 5</i>	<i>sntr nd3 2</i>	<i>sntr thn.w 1</i>	<i>sntr psn 15</i>	
	Incense, bull	Incense,	Incense,	Incense,	Incense,	<i>psn</i>
	form, 5	goose	slab stone,	obelisk	form, loaf	form, 15
		form, 5	2	1		
40iii	<i>sntr r šfd.t dbn</i>	<i>sntr snw dkr.w</i>	<i>mndm</i>		40	
	5	<i>dbn 2</i>				
	Incense in a	Incense in	fruit	baskets	40	
	chest, 5	<i>sn-jars, 2</i>				
	deben	deben				
41iii	<i>m3<sup>c</sup> n imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w m hb hrw pn hr t3 hw.t n hh.w &lt;m&gt; rnp.wt n nsw-bit</i>					
	Offering to Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, on this festival day in the Temple					
	of Millions of Years, of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt,					
42iii	<i>nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imn m pr imn iw b3k</i> [rest lost]					

Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenamun, in the Temple of Amun,  
it being prepared [. . .]

43iii    *t* [*hd*]                      *ps* [*i*](.w)    1[0]                      lost                      lost  
[White] bread    bak[ing]    1(0)

44iii–    Lost

60iii

61iii    *h.t-nsw n it=fšpsy* [rest lost]  
Royal offerings for his august father [. . .]

62iii    *mh.wt bik 260 hr pr-hd n* [*pr-ʕ3*] [rest lost]  
falcon feathers, 260, from the Treasury of [Pharaoh] [. . .]

63iii    [traces only] [rest lost]

64iii    Lost

#### Column iv

34ii<sup>13</sup>    [*mʕ n imn-r nsw nt*] *r.w* [*m*] *hb* [*hr*] *w pn iw sšr i* [*ry*] *hr*  
[offerings to Amun-Ra, King of the Gods], [on] this festival d[ay], the corn  
there[of] from

35ii    [*šnw.t n imn-r*] [*nsw*] *ntr.w m pr imn mn w3h n d.t*  
[the granary of Amun-Ra], [King] of the Gods, from the Temple of Amun  
established and enduring for eternity.

36iv    [lost] *n htp.w-ntr* 5,533

<sup>13</sup> Lines 34ii and 35ii are repeated here since placement on the wall is not clear if the text belongs to Column ii or Column iv.

	[. . .] of sacred offerings, 5,533					
37iv	[lost] 172		<i>ḥk.t</i>	<i>ḥn.w</i>	200	
	[. . .] 172		beer	vessels	200	
38iv	[lost]	<i>sšr.w</i>	226	<i>ḥk3.t</i>	[lost]	20[0]
	[. . .]	corn	226	oipe	[. . .]	20[0]
39iv	<i>[ng]3w iw3.w</i>		2			
	[long-hor]ned cattle		2			
40iv	[lost] <i>iw3.w</i>		2			
	[. . .] cattle		2			
41iv	<i>[w]n[d.w] iw3.w</i>		4			
	[sh]ort-hor[ned] cattle		4			
42iv	[lost] <i>k3(.w)</i>		4			
	[. . .] bull(s)		4			
43iv	<i>[dmḏ] iw3.w šbn</i>		12			
	[total] cattle		12			
44iv	[lost]		20+x			
	[. . .]		20+x			
45iv–	Lost					
64iv						

Columns ii and iv share a header that includes a date (year 1, second month of Shomu, day 23) and two locations where the offerings came from (the Temple of Millions of Years of Ramesses IV and the Treasury of Pharaoh). If the mortuary temple is already established and able to supply so many of the offerings, then it is

doubtful that the date on which the festival occurs is the date of Ramesses IV's ascension to the throne. The receiving location is the Temple of Amun-Ra (Karnak) and is specific to the location where the Festal Wall Stela is carved. The offerings themselves are various types of breads (eleven entries) and cakes (six entries), incense (four entries), falcon feathers (one entry), beer (one entry), corn (one entry), and cattle (five entries). Due to the damage to the wall, this list is not complete. It is likely that this accounting of offerings is specific to the Theban account of the ritual since it is carved in Thebes, which may also explain why many of the specific types of cattle used here as well as those listed in the Heliopolitan section of the text (*KRI* VI 6.6–6.7) are Theban.

It is important that the offerings are listed here because they speak to 'a redistributive economic transaction that always involved the king' (Bleiberg 1996: 4) and list where the offerings came from (the mortuary temple complex of Ramesses IV in lines 38ii, 61ii, and 41iii) and how they were to be disbursed (to provision the army in *KRI* VI 7.5–7.6). The text in the Heliopolitan section specifically mentions provisioning the army, where the fragmented texts denoting the Memphite and Theban locations do not now but may have when the text was complete. This may be part of a political action to guarantee the army's support of the king and secure his claim to the throne, since 'the giving of a gift strengthens and cements a social relationship and requires an affirmation of a participant's place in a social hierarchy' (Bleiberg 1996: 97). To strengthen the differences in the social hierarchy, the givers are described as 'bowing down' in deference to the entity receiving the offering (Bleiberg 1996: 96) as in *KRI* VI 3.13 and 5.9 where the text describes the Nine Bows as bowing down to the king. The reciprocal gifts of the gods to the king (life, titulary,

and *sd* festivals) and the king to the gods (the monuments commissioned by the king and foodstuffs later redistributed to the army) demonstrate a type of economic system that Kemp and Haring also called 'redistributive' (Kemp 1989: 232–60; Haring 1997: v).<sup>14</sup>

As early as Dynasty V, tomb and temple lists include offerings of fowl, mammals, fish, and baskets of bread (Bleiberg 1996: 49). Those same instances also list specifically where the offerings came from, and that they were for the king or a member of his family. In the New Kingdom, it became clear through texts of Thutmosis III and Thutmosis IV that the king could, and did, distribute offerings from festivals 'for specific royal purposes rather than as part of a wider redistributive system' (Bleiberg 1996: 91). Here in the Festal Wall Stela, similar offerings include breads, cakes, long- and short-horned cattle, as well as more elite items such as falcon feathers (*KRI* VI 62iii), which are a symbol of kingship (Silverman 1991: 68).

The use of symbols and symbolic actions, such as those discussed above, are a way to unify the communication of ideas within a group. Rituals, such as the ritual of the *išd* tree, function 'as a symbol of the king's legitimacy' and act 'as a sign of political and divine legitimacy' (Teeter 1997: 1). However, symbols have no inherent meaning but they are given meaning by the society or culture that uses them. The meanings conveyed by symbols are unique to each society.

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<sup>14</sup> The king's gifts to the gods are encapsulated in the action of giving as recorded on the monuments. The physical items given to the temples and redistributed to the people make up a large part of the economic system in Egypt as discussed in the above-cited sources.



#### 4.4 A Possible Sequence of Events for the Ritual of the *ỉšd* Tree

Much of what is inscribed on the Festal Wall Stela occurs on the divine plane with the final stations on the human plane and some events taking place on both planes concurrently. The stela does not give a complete, step-by-step account of the ritual, perhaps because the wall text was intended to give highlights from an important type of event rather than function as an instruction manual. From it one can discern the following stages taking place on the divine plane: a creator god calls a group of gods to meet; that creator issues a proclamation for the creation of the king's titulary and that it be recorded where people can see it; the gods record the titulary on the leaves of the tree; there is a festival; the king is granted his lifetime, annals, *sd* festivals, and victories; the king is led to the tree.

The stages that occur on the human plane from the stela are: a festival; the king discovers the tree and kneels in front of it; the king receives the titulary and *sd* festivals; the king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler; the king gives offerings to the gods in a reciprocal act for his gifts from them; and the army is given provisions. These eight human-level stages are found in the Festal Wall Stela text and are noted in very few of the texts or reliefs of other *ỉšd* tree scenes. They are; however, important stages in uniting the people of Egypt behind the king. As Bleiberg (1985/6: 11) mentions, the government bureaucracy and the priesthood are interrelated organizations that the king could use to maintain interest in his cause (being the ruler of a unified Egypt) and to cement allegiance. Therefore, provisioning the army as part of a ritual makes Egypt and, by definition, the king stronger.

Due to the nature of the images in the *išd* tree scenes and their related captions, there is no clear determination of the order of events. Simple logic may dictate that something must be offered before it can be received, but a figure being in a specific place may have no bearing on the timing of another action. The actions must occur individually because the captions of the scenes often list one or more of the stages but not all of them together. The divine actions and gifts are listed first in this thesis due to the grammatical structure of the texts. The perfect tense of the *di.n=i n=k* construction in the divinities' speeches of offering scenes 'clearly indicates that the activity of the god precedes any ritual action of the donor' (Teeter 1997: 70). The gods must give the king their gifts before he can give them his or her gifts in return.<sup>15</sup>

The following is the sequence of events for the *išd* ritual which is applied to the scenes in this thesis:

**Stage 1:** A creator deity calls a group of deities to meet. (divine plane)

**Stage 2:** The creator deity issues a proclamation to create and record the king's names where they can be seen. (divine plane)

**Stage 3:** Deities (including the respective creator god) record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree. (divine plane)

**Stage 4:** There is a festival. (divine plane and human plane)

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<sup>15</sup> Emily Teeter (1997: 69–73) discusses this concept and the competing theories at length.

**Stage 5:** The king is granted his lifetime. (divine plane)

**Stage 6:** The king is granted his annals. (divine plane)

**Stage 7:** The king is granted his *sd* festivals. (divine plane)

**Stage 8:** The king is granted victories. (divine plane)

**Stage 9:** The king discovers or is led to the tree. (divine plane and human plane)

**Stage 10:** The king kneels in front of the tree. (human plane)

**Stage 11:** The king receives his names from the deities (divine plane and human plane)

**Stage 12:** The king receives *sd* festivals from the deities. (divine plane and human plane)

**Stage 13:** The king is crowned by the deities. (divine plane)

**Stage 14:** The king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt. (human plane)

**Stage 15:** The king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities. (human plane)

**Stage 16:** The army is given provisions. (human plane)

The events will be clarified as more captions and relief carvings are discussed in chapters 7, 8, and 9.

## Chapter 5: The *išd* Tree Scenes: A Catalogue

This chapter lists all the *išd* tree scenes currently known that can be understood to show some information that might illuminate the understanding of the ritual of the *išd* tree. They are described, translated, and analysed with each entry beginning on a new page. They are organized by reign, then from north to south and east to west. Other monuments (stelae, obelisks, statues) with *išd* texts are included here by reign after the *išd* tree scenes for the rulers to whom they are attributed. Each one is given a document number (DOC) for ease of reference in later chapters. Figures are given the same number as the section number and if there is more than one image in each section, those images are given lower case letters beginning with 'a', for example, DOC 32 has two images labelled fig. 5.32a and b. Each entry is organized to include the dynasty, the ruler, the location of the monument, an image of the monument (if available), a discussion of its physical condition, a detailed description of the activities portrayed in the relief carving, a transliteration and translation of any extant text, and a reference to which stages of the ritual are portrayed within the relief carving and the text. This way it will be easier for the reader to refer to this chapter while reading the future chapters of analysis.

The *išd* tree scenes depict a sequence of events in a ritual used to publicize the divine origins of the king's titulary, his annals, and his *sd* festivals. The problem for modern viewers' understanding of the *išd* tree scenes is that they do not depict the full ritual, stage by stage. Instead, they represent only selected moments from a full sequence of events which would have been known to the ancient Egyptians. Some of the stages are described in the captions associated with the scenes. Some of the

stages; however, are not depicted or mentioned in the captions. Those missing stages are supplied to modern viewers by the Festal Wall Stela of Ramesses IV in the Cour de la Cachette of Karnak Temple discussed in chapter 4.

The scenes appear to have been used to legitimate the incoming pharaoh's right to rule by stressing the divine origins of his name, his annals, and his *sd* festivals. Donald Redford has asserted that the *isd* tree scenes conjure a 'cultic context' (D. Redford 1986: 82), but he associates it only with the *sd* festival (D. Redford 1986: 180). It will be argued here that the scenes are indeed cultic, as Redford surmised, but that the coronation is a more likely context for them because the texts include a wider array of royal subjects than the *sd* festivals.

These scenes appear in mortuary temples and ordinary cult temples, but do not appear in tombs. *Isd* scenes would usually be placed in courtyards or rooms that would be accessible by lay priests and the general population at some point during the year (Bleiberg 1985/6: 5–13 and L. Bell 1985: 270–271). Other texts and the relief carvings of the *isd* scenes portray some of the same portions of the ritual as the Festal Wall Stela, but they also portray other segments which are not mentioned in the stela. An examination of the corpus of *isd* scenes and their captions reveals some of the same events as the Festal Wall Stela, but also some additional events (not in order of occurrence).

There are thirty-two extant *isd* tree scenes and an additional nine monuments with *isd* texts that will be examined here. The oldest yet discovered is from the reign of Thutmose I, and the most recent extant monument dates to the reign of Hadrian some fifteen hundred years later. There may have been more, but the destruction of structures over time may have covered or erased their existence.

The following kings have only one extant *išd* tree scene to their credit: Thutmosis I at Karnak Temple (DOC 1), Thutmosis III at the Dynasty XVIII Temple at Medinet Habu (DOC 5), Thutmosis IV at the Temple of Amun-Ra and Ra-Horakhty at Amada (DOC 7), Ramesses III at the Great Temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (DOC 32), Osorkon III/Takelot III at the Osiris Hekadjet Temple at Karnak (DOCS 35a and b), Darius I at the Temple of Hibis at el-Kharga Oasis (DOC 37), and Hadrian at the Temple of Khonsu at Esna (DOC 40) totalling eight scenes.

The following kings have more than one extant *išd* tree scene: Amenhotep III, Sety I, Ramesses II, Ramesses IV, and Ptolemy IV. Amenhotep III has two and both are at Luxor Temple (DOCS 8 and 9). Sety I has two extant scenes: one at the Temple of Sety I at Abydos (DOC 10) and the other in the Great Hypostyle Hall of Karnak Temple (DOC 11). Ramesses II has fifteen scenes—more extant scenes than any other ruler. They are at Mit Rahina (DOC 13), the Temple of Ra-Horakhty at Derr (DOC 14), two at the Temple of Sety I at Abydos (DOCS 15 and 16), one at the Temple of Ramesses II at Abydos (DOC 17), the Cour de la Cachette in Karnak Temple (DOC 18), three in the Great Hypostyle Hall in Karnak Temple (DOCS 19–21), one at Luxor Temple (DOC 22), two at the Ramesseum (DOCS 23 and 24), one at the rock chapel at Gebel el-Silsila (DOC 25), one at the Great Temple of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel (DOCS 26), and one at Aksha (DOC 27). Ramesses IV has three extant scenes; one is the relief that accompanies the Festal Wall Stela at Karnak Temple and is discussed in chapter 4; the other two are at the Great Temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (DOCS 33 and 34). Ptolemy IV has three extant scenes, all of them at the Temple of Horus at Edfu (DOC 37–39).

The other texts examined in this thesis are from the reigns of Thutmosis I (DOC 2), Hatshepsut (DOCS 3 and 4), Thutmosis III (DOC 6), Sety I (DOC 12), and Ramesses II (DOCS 28–31), totalling nine texts.

The following scenes are not discussed in this thesis but are mentioned here for thoroughness. Welvaert includes two scenes in his 1996 article on *išd* tree scenes that will not be translated or analysed (Welvaert 1996: 102). Those two scenes are from the reign of Ptolemy IV and are at the Temple of Horus at Edfu. The captions clearly label the tree as *im3* rather than *išd*. Welvaert may have included the scenes in his discussion because of the relief of the king sitting in front of the tree; however, the deities are not shown writing on the leaves and the text does not mention the act of writing or recording the king's name, his *sd* festivals, or his kingship (Chassinat 1897: II 290, 296–297) as mentioned in the other *išd* texts. In addition, the *im3* tree is discussed at length by Nathalie Baum in her book *Arbres et arbustes de l'Égypte ancienne* (1988: 183–196). Baum states that the sources for an *im3* tree are abundant and varied, that it is sacred at Kom Ombo and Edfu during the Greco-Roman Period, has many medical and funerary uses, but it cannot be comfortably identified to the level of genus and species (Baum 1988: 183–196).

One more possible *išd* tree scene was published in 2016 by Linda Chapon (2016: 47–56). Unfortunately, it consists of only eleven fragments of relief from the Temple of Millions of Years of Thutmosis III at Western Thebes. One piece has the lower portion of an *ꜥnh* next to what might be the nose of a figure; another contains portions of four hieroglyphs. The rest are not large enough to show any specific information other than branches and leaves. Since an analysis of the relief and text will not add to the information obtainable from the other *išd* scenes in the documents



section, and the fragments are not conclusively *išd* in nature—it is possible but not likely that the fragments are of another *im3* scene—it is not included in this thesis.

In 2017–2018, Sébastien Biston-Moulin published a limestone fragment discovered in the foundation of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple. It shows the leaves of a tree, one of which has the throne name of Thutmosis IV carved on it. The discovery was published after the major analysis on the rest of the monuments in this thesis was done, thus it is not in the catalogue included in this thesis and does not add significant information to the scene analysis.

In addition, there are four other texts that are part of temple walls and do not contain an image, which mention writing on the *išd* tree. One dates to the reign of Thutmosis III from el-Bersha. Two date to Ramesses II: one from Luxor Temple and the other from a different wall in the Ramesseum near DOC 24. And one dates to the reign of Ramesses III from Karnak Temple. These texts came to my attention too late in the writing up process to be included in the analysis of the thesis and do not change my results, but will be included in the final publication and are mentioned here for the sake of thoroughness.

## DOC 1

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Thutmosis I

Location: Karnak Temple, west wall, courtyard, fragments

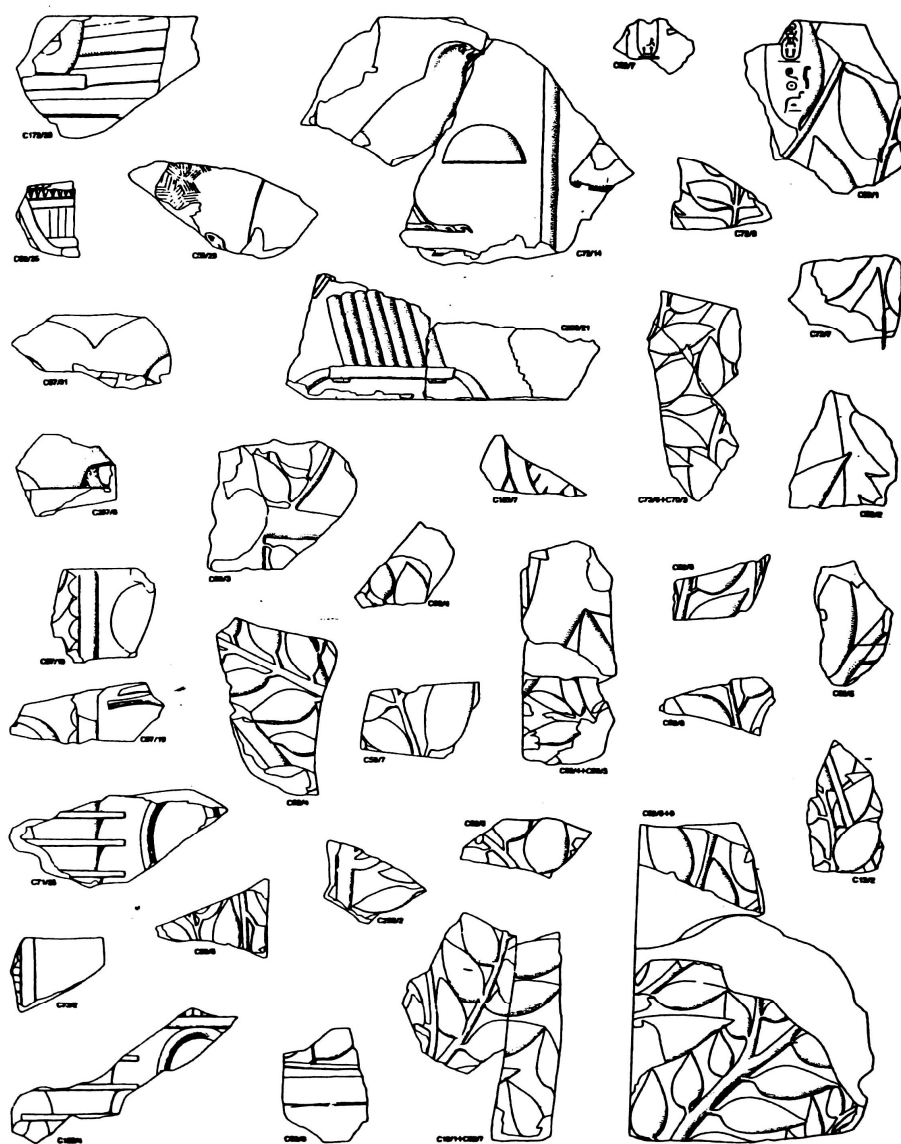


Fig. 5.1 Thutmosis I fragments, from Jacquet-Gordon 1988: pl LXV

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene consists of thirty-four small fragments of limestone in finely carved, raised relief (Jacquet 1973: 214). Twenty-three of the fragments show either branches or leaves of the tree. Each shows long, thin branches that curve upward with ovoid leaves that are evenly spaced along the full length of the branches. Ten of the fragments show segments of the text carved in sunk relief, but none of the pieces is large enough to show the king in or near the tree or the identities of any deities writing on its leaves. Jacquet (1973: 214) mentions other fragments of an offering list and a list of conquered countries found in the same location. An offering list near or part of the *išd* tree scene would make the formula similar to that of the Festal Wall Stela in Karnak Temple. One fragment shows carving on a slightly enlarged leaf which reads *hpr-k3-rꜥ* ꜥꜥꜥ *d.t*, Kheperkara, (. . .) forever (Jacquet-Gordon 1988: 214 and pl. LXV; Welvaert 1996: 103).<sup>16</sup> Another two fragments show portions of damaged cartouches containing the name of Sesostris I. This *išd* tree scene is the oldest discovered to date and the only one to have text associating two pharaohs carved on the leaves, Thutmosis I and Sesostris I.

**Text:** following Jacquet-Gordon 1988: pl. LXV

*hpr-k3-rꜥ* ꜥꜥꜥ *d.t*

Kheperkara, (. . .) forever

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<sup>16</sup> There is a possibility that the prenomen written on the leaves is ꜥꜥꜥ-*hpr-k3-rꜥ* (Thutmosis I) rather than *hpr-k3-rꜥ* (Sesostris I), but I have not been able to examine the fragments first hand to verify.

### Reference to Stages:

On these fragments of wall relief, the king's name appears on the leaves of the *išd* tree. After having examined the other monuments in this thesis (see other DOCS in this chapter), enlarged leaves with the king's name written on them do not appear unless there is also a deity depicted writing on leaves,<sup>17</sup> therefore this relief carving depicts stage 3 of the ritual.

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<sup>17</sup> Also note that deities do appear writing on the leaves of the tree without enlarged leaves showing on the tree.

## DOC 2

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Thutmosis I

Location: Karnak Temple, obelisk of Thutmosis I, south face



Fig. 5.2 Obelisk of Thutmosis I, Karnak Temple, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

The text on the obelisk of Thutmosis I is a single column of sunk relief carved down the centre of the south face of the obelisk (PM II<sup>2</sup> 75). There is little damage to the text on the top half with an increasing amount of damage towards the bottom of the line of text. It is formulaic and lists the five names of the king. It goes on to state that the Lord of the Gods has decreed *sd* festivals for the king, and that they, and not the king's name, are upon the tree. There is no mention of foliage (*g3b.t*). The name of the particular god making the decree is not listed in the text; however, since Thutmosis I is 'beloved of Ra' and 'crowned like Ra', it is likely that Ra is the particular Lord of the Gods in the text. This obelisk is in a temple to Amun in Thebes, leading the reader to suppose the king should be 'beloved of Amun'. With Ra being the god of Heliopolis in Lower Egypt, the text parallels an example in the offering list of the Festal Wall Stela, which lists animals from Lower Egypt in offerings in a temple in Upper Egypt. As discussed in chapter 4, this text construction may be employed to demonstrate the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt under one ruler. Thutmosis I is the first king of whom there is extant evidence of texts associating his name with *sd* festivals and the *išd* tree (Welvaert 1996: 103).

**Text:** Following *Urk.* IV 93.9–13

(9) *ḥr k3-nḥt-n-r<sup>c</sup> nb.ty i.t.w t3.w nb(.w)* (10) *ḥr nbw ḥw psd. t-pd.wt nsw-bit nb t3.wy ʿ3-ḥpr-k3-r<sup>c</sup> mr.n-r<sup>c</sup>* (11) *sdsr.n n=f nb ntr.w ḥb(.w)-sd ḥr išd špsy* (12) *s3 r<sup>c</sup> dḥwtj-ms ḥw-mi-r<sup>c</sup>* (13) *imn-r<sup>c</sup> mry k3 mw.t=f [di ʿnh d.t]*

(9) Horus, the strong bull of Ra. The Two Ladies, he who takes possession of all the lands. (10) Golden Horus, he who smites the Nine Bows. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Aakheperkara, beloved of Ra. (11) The lord of the gods consecrated for him *sd* festivals upon the august *išd* tree. (12) Son of Ra, Thutmosis, crowned like Ra, (13) Amun-Ra, bel[oved] of the bull of his mother, [given life forever.]

### **Reference to Stages:**

In this text, the king is granted his *sd* festivals. This monument's short text refers to stage 7 of the ritual.

### DOC 3

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Hatshepsut

Location: Karnak Temple, obelisk, north face



Fig. 5.3 Obelisk of Hatshepsut, Karnak Temple, courtesy of the author



## Physical Description and Condition:

The text on the north face of the obelisk of Hatshepsut consists of one large column of text (PM II<sup>2</sup> 81 (E)) and subsequent side columns of text all in sunk relief. The text is in good condition with the exception of a short section near the bottom. It is formulaic and lists the Horus name and the Two Ladies name of the king. The text specifically lists the name of the deity (Amun) who granted the king's name to be written on the tree. There is no mention of foliage (*g<sup>3</sup>b.t*), nor is there any indication of an associated ritual or of the king discovering her name on the tree. There is a mixture of both the masculine and the feminine pronouns and suffix endings, which indicates that Hatshepsut is both the son and the daughter of Amun (Lichtheim 1976: II, 25).

**Text:** Following *Urk.* IV 358.12–17 and 359.1–2

(12) *hr wsr.t-k3.w nb.ty w3d.t-rnp.wt hr-nbw ntri.t h<sup>c</sup>w* (13) *nsw-bit nb t3.wy m3<sup>c</sup>.t-k3-r<sup>c</sup>* (14) *smn.n it=s imn rn=s wr m3<sup>c</sup>.t-k3-r<sup>c</sup> hr isd špsy* (15) *gn.wt=s m-hh.w n.w rnp.wt sm3<sup>c</sup>nh dd w3s* (16) *s3 r<sup>c</sup> h3.t-šps.wt hnm.t-imn* (17) *mry.t m imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w m [iw<sup>c</sup>w mnw pn nfr rwd mnh] iri.n=s n=f* (1) *sp tpy hb-sd* (2) *ir.w=s di nh<sup>c</sup> d.t*

(12) Horus, Strong of Kas, the Two Ladies, flourishing of years, Golden Horus, divine of crowns, (13) King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Ma'atkara. (14) Amun, her father, established her great name, Ma'atkara, upon the august *isd* tree. (15) Her annals are of millions of years united in life, stability, and dominion. (16) Son of Re, Hatshepsut, who unites with Amun,

(17) beloved of Amun-Ra, King of the Gods [as the heir of this beautiful, durable, and excellent monument] that she made for him (1) on the first occasion of the *sd* festival (2) so that she is given life forever.

### **Reference to Stages:**

In this text, the creator god decrees the king's name and puts it on the *išd* tree, the king is granted her annals and lifetime, and then offers the obelisk in reciprocity for the divine gifts. This monument's short text refers to stages 3, 5, 6, and 15 of the ritual.

## DOC 4

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Hatshepsut

Location: Deir el-Bahari, Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut, Hathor Chapel, Hypostyle  
Hall, northwest wall

Image: None

### Physical Description and Condition:

The text in the Hathor Chapel of the Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut is part of a larger scene that shows images of Hatshepsut changed to Thutmose II (PM II<sup>2</sup> 351 (33)). The text is severely damaged. However, the tree determinative and the *špsy* signs are clear according to Sethe (*Urk.* IV 276.11–12). The text states that Amun ‘sanctified’ the king’s name on the tree and uses the feminine suffix pronoun for Hatshepsut. There is no mention of foliage (*g3b.t*), nor is there mention of the act of writing, simply that her name is on the tree.

**Text:** Following *Urk.* IV 276.11–12

(11) *sdsr.n* [*it=s*] *imn rn[=s]* *wr hr i[šd]* *špsy* (12) [*gn*].*wt[=s]* *m-ḥḥ.w nw rnp.wt mi r*

(11) [Her father] Amun has made sacred [her] great name upon the august i[shed]  
tree. (12) [Her annal]s are of millions of years like Ra.

**References to Stages:**

In this text, the creator god places the king's name on the tree and grants her annals to her. This short text refers to stages 3 and 6 of the ritual.

## DOC 5

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Thutmosis III

Location: Medinet Habu, Small Temple, south wall, Bark Chapel interior, second register



Fig. 5.5 Thutmosis III, Medinet Habu, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *isd* tree scene dates to the reign of Thutmosis III (PM II<sup>2</sup> 469 (46 II 4)) but was re-carved in the Ptolemaic Period<sup>18</sup> as is apparent in the rounded and fleshy figures on the females. This is most clear on the figure of Hathor. The scene and its

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<sup>18</sup> *Urk.* IV 597.

caption are in raised relief. After the re-carving, the scene received additional damage, probably by iconoclasts in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, because the limbs and faces of all the figures are hacked out. Other damage to the scene is slight and occurs mainly at the joins between blocks. At the base of the tree there is a block missing, and from its placement, it might have been a plug for a fissure in the rock that occurred at the quarry or while carving the relief. This damage is clear upon physical inspection, and there is no painted decoration remaining.

This scene shows the king being led by Atum and Hathor to Amun-Ra who is writing on the *išd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 469 (46)). None of the leaves of the *išd* tree is enlarged to show the king's name written on them. The *išd* tree stands in the centre of the scene. Amun-Ra sits on a low-backed throne on top of a base and holds a stylus in his far (right) hand toward the tree to write on the leaves. His head, upper torso, and upper arms have been hacked out and damage at a join between two blocks has caused the base of his throne and part of his lower legs to be missing. Part of a broad collar is still visible on his torso. The upper portions of the two plumes of his headdress are still visible as well. He wears a short, straight kilt and has no bull's tail showing in the scene. On the left of the scene stands Thutmosis III being led to the tree by Hathor (behind) and Atum (front). Atum's head is damaged by hacking, but enough remains to show he is wearing a short wig, curved beard of divinity, and a broad collar. His far (left) hand holds a *w3s* sceptre in front of him and his near (right) hand holds the king's hand. His head is turned to look at the king. He wears the short, straight kilt and a bull's tail, which hangs down from his waist at the back. Thutmosis III stands between Atum and Hathor wearing a short, straight kilt, a broad collar, and his bull's tail hangs at his back. The broken remains of a *hprš* crown and a *uraeus* are still visible above

the king's brow. His face is hacked out. Nekhbet is in her zoomorphic form above the king. Most of her figure is damaged. Hathor stands behind the king and faces forward. Her arms, face, and the lower portion of her headdress have been hacked out. She wears a double-plumed headdress and a broad collar with her tripartite wig hanging over it. Her long, straight dress is banded below the waist. Her far (left) hand is out in front of her and holding the king's near hand. Her near (right) arm is behind her.

The tree in this scene looks as though it has a border around it, which may mean that the rest of the wall was re-carved deeper than the original. At the bottom of the tree there are a few stray leaves which protrude from the border underneath. There is also an odd, diagonal break in the rock on the left of the tree trunk that makes the tree look as though it were on a hill. The base of the tree has been cut off at an angle by the base support of Amun's throne.

This is the only extant *išd* tree scene that shows the king being led to the tree (Welvaert 1996: 103). This action may depict divine guidance and may not have happened in the human plane of existence, thus justifying the king entering the temple and discovering his titulary on the leaves of the tree. All the other *išd* tree scenes show the king kneeling in the tree, standing in the tree, or seated on a throne next to the tree. Only three other scenes show the king standing (DOCS 8, 14, and 18).

**Text:** Reconstructed from Helck 1957: 117–118, Champollion [1844] 1973: 714–715,  
*Urk.* IV 596–597, and author's photograph.

**Amun-Ra:**

*dd mdw in imn-r<sup>c</sup> s3(=i) nb t3.wy mn-hpr-r<sup>c</sup> smn(=i) rn=k hr išd špsy m hw.t-<sup>c</sup>3.t [mi]<sup>19</sup> r<sup>c</sup>*

Recitation by Amun-Ra, My son, Lord of the Two Lands, Menkheperra, I establish  
your name upon the august *išd* tree in the Great Mansion [like] Ra.

**In Front of the Tree:**

*iw.t šm.t nsw šm(.w) r hw.t-<sup>c</sup>3.t*


Coming and going of the king who goes to the Great Mansion.

**Nekhbet:**

*nḥb.t ḥd.t nb.t p.t di s[nb] ḥnh*

Nekhbet the White, Lady of Heaven who gives he[alth] and life.

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<sup>19</sup> Sethe restores a  (Gardiner W19) at the end of the line, see *Urk.* IV 597.



### Atum:

*di[=i n=k] ʕnh nb dd w3s nb (i)tm(w) nb t3.wy iwnw(y)*

[I] give [to you] all life, and all stability and dominion. (A)tum, Lord of the Two Lands,  
the Heliopolitan.

### Thutmosis III:

*ntr nfr nb t3.wy nb ir-h.t nsw-bit mn-hpr-rʕ di ʕnh*

Good God, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Rituals, King of Upper and Lower Egypt,  
Menkheperra, given life.

### Hathor:

*dd mdw in di[=i n=k ʕnh] nb snb nb hw.t-hr<sup>20</sup>*

Recitation: [I] give [to you] all [life] and all health. Hathor.

### Behind Hathor:

*dd mdw in psd.t ʕ3.t [. . .] ip.t[-s.wt] m hnw [. . .] 3w.t-ʕ mnw nfr pn iri.n mn-hpr-rʕ*

---

<sup>20</sup> This word order is unexpected in that the name of the goddess is written at the end of the statement rather than following the *dd mdw in*.

Recitation by the Great Ennead [. . .] of Karnak, in the interior of [...], this beautiful monument which(?) was made by Menkheperra.

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree and the king being led to the tree. In the caption, the creator god grants the king his name and places it on the tree, his lifetime is granted, and the king gives gifts in reciprocity. This relief carving illustrates stages 3 and 9 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 3, 5, and 15 of the ritual.

## DOC 6

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Thutmosis III

Location: Obelisk, left side, centre column

Original: Heliopolis

Current: London, Victoria Embankment



Fig. 5.6 Obelisk of Thutmosis III, London, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

The text on the left side of the obelisk from Heliopolis, now on the Victoria Embankment in London, does not have a corresponding visual scene of the *išd* tree. There is great damage to the central line of text due to more than a century of weather exposure in England's damp climate (Selim 1991: 169). The red granite has not fared well on the banks of the Thames. The text is a single column of sunk relief carved down the centre of the left face of the obelisk (Engelbach 1923: 111). Ramesses II added text to either side of the central column listing his titles (Engelbach 1923: 111). The Thutmosis III text is formulaic and lists the Horus name and the *nsw-bit* name of Thutmosis III. It states that the Lord of the Gods has multiplied *sd* festivals for the king and that they, and not the king's name, are on the tree (*Urk.* IV 591.16). The name of the particular god making the decree is not listed in the text; however, since the obelisk was originally erected at Heliopolis in the Temple of Ra, it is likely that the particular 'Lord of the Gods' in the text is Ra or Ra-Horakhty. The text states that the king is 'beloved of Ra-Horakhty' (*Urk.* IV 592.3), thus it is likely that the 'Lord of the Gods' and the 'Lord of the Universe' in the text (*Urk.* IV 592.2) are also references to Ra-Horakhty. There is no mention of the action of writing, nor is the tree's foliage (*g3b.t*) mentioned. This text is the first of only two mentions of the Phoenix temple in *išd* texts. The next one occurs in the reign of Sety I (DOC 12).

**Text:** Following *Urk.* IV 591.15–17, and 592.1–3

(15) *ḥr k3-nḥt-ḥ<sup>c</sup>i-m-m3<sup>c</sup>.t nsw-bit mn-ḥpr-r<sup>c</sup>* (16) *nb ntr.w s<sup>c</sup>š3.n n=f<sup>21</sup> ḥb(.w)-sd ḥr [i]šd špsy*

(17) *m ḥnw [ḥw.t-bnw]* (1) *rḥ nt.t s3=f pw[smsw]* (2) *ntry ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w pr[.w] m nb-r-dr* (3) *s3*

*r<sup>c</sup> dḥwtj-ms ḥk3-iwnw mry r<sup>c</sup>-ḥr-3ḥty <sup>c</sup>nḥ d.t*

(15) Horus, Kanekhet-Khaemma'at, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menkheperra.

(16) The Lord of the Gods has multiplied for him *sd* festivals upon the august

[*i*]šd tree (17) in the interior of [the Phoenix-temple] (1) knowing that it is his

eldest son (2) of divine body, who came forth from the Lord of the Universe,<sup>22</sup>

(3) son of Ra, Thutmosis, Ruler of Thebes, beloved of Ra-Horakhty living

forever.

### References to Stages:

In this text, the creator god grants the king his *sd* festivals on the *išd* tree. This brief text refers to stage 7 of the ritual.

<sup>21</sup> After many discussions with Claus Jurman and Edmund S. Meltzer, we decided that the *s<sup>c</sup>š3.n* indicated a *sdm.n=f* form with the subject *nb ntr.w* in honorific transposition.

<sup>22</sup> According to Gardiner (1957: §100) *nb-r-dr* is a title given to the sun god or the king. In this instance it is most likely Ra-Horakhty.

**DOC 7**

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Thutmosis IV

Location: Amada, Temple of Amun-Ra and Ra-Horakhty, Hypostyle Hall, north wall,  
face of pillar XV and wall between pillars XIV and XV

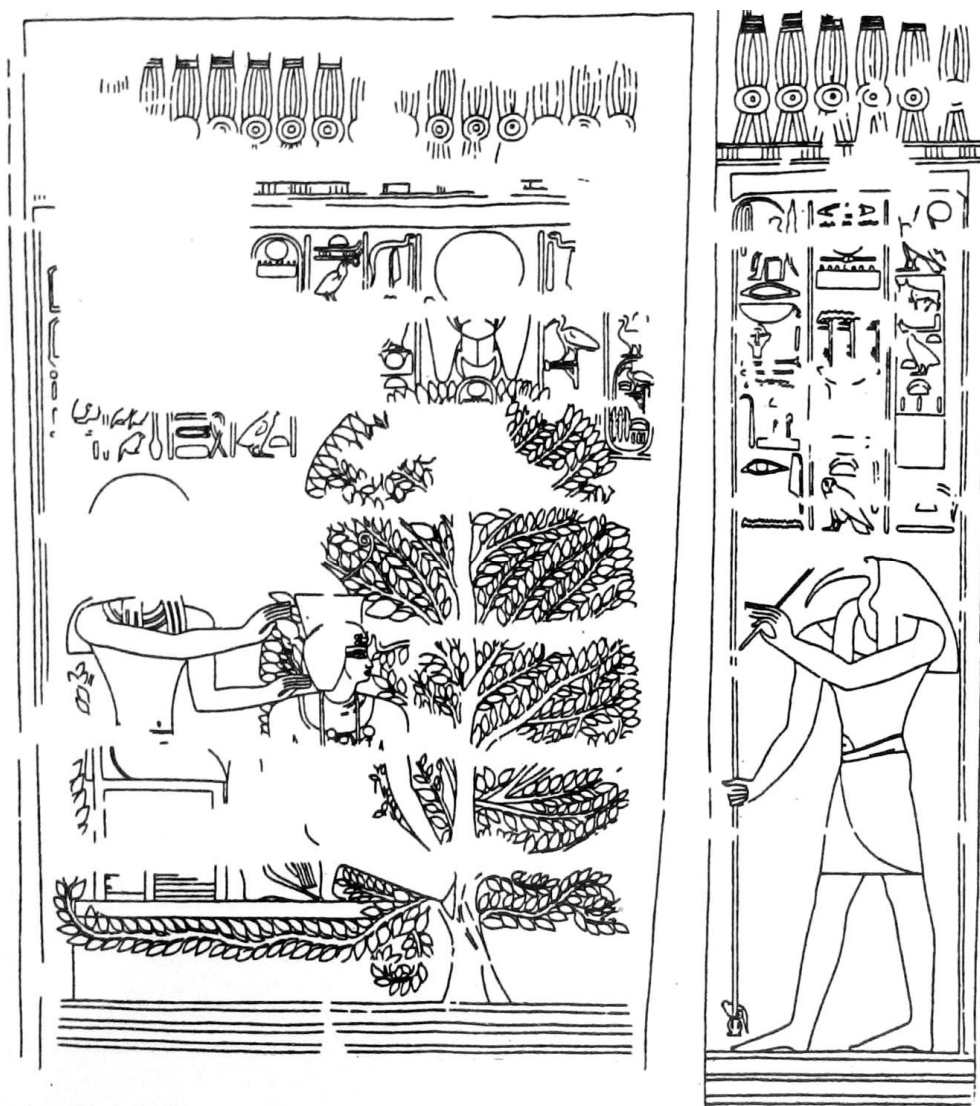


Fig. 5.7 Thutmosis IV, Temple at Amada, from Barguet and Dewachter 1967: pl. C7.

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene is heavily damaged; the text, the seated deity, and the king have received the most damage. Thoth is depicted holding a palm branch in his far (right) hand while he notches it with the stylus in his near (left) hand. The palm branch terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Thoth wears a broad collar, a tripartite wig, and a wrapped, short, straight kilt (PM VII 68 (16–17)). Thutmose IV kneels partly on a platform with an enthroned deity and faces away from that deity. A branch of the *išd* tree extends out to support the platform. Most of the king's torso, arms, legs, and headdress are missing. The remains of a double crown over a Nubian wig with a *uraeus* are visible on the king's head. He wears an ornate pectoral over the broad collar which has sun-disc-topped cobras on it. The seated deity behind Thutmose IV wears a tripartite wig and a broad collar. The remains of a possible sun disc can be seen over the deity's head in line with the text's identification as Ra-Horakhty-Atum. His arms are out in front of him with palms down and toward the king.<sup>23</sup> He is placing the crown on the king's head. The base of the low-backed throne has horizontal stripes on it. The king's name is not written on any of the tree's leaves but a cartouche spelling out Thutmose can be read above and to the right of the tree and part of a cartouche reading Men[kheperu]ra can be read above the centre of the tree. Above that cartouche is a winged scarab beetle pushing a solar disc which reinforces the solar interpretation of the *išd* tree. While Porter and Moss list Atum as the figure with

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<sup>23</sup> This arm gesture is discussed in R.H. Wilkinson 1992: 49 as the *k3* gesture and his figure 4 on p. 48 is the same gesture as in the accompanying plate in this text. For a discussion of the role of the *k3* see L. Bell 1985: 251–294.

the king (PM VII 68 (14–18)), Barguet and Dewachter (1967: III, 7) identify the figure as Ra-Horakhty, and the text labels the figure as Ra-Horakhty-Atum. This scene has an unexpected placement in relation to the other *išd* tree scenes. Most of it is on a wall between two pillars (pillars XIV and XV) but the balance of it is on the face of one of the pillars (pillar XV). It is carved in raised relief.

**Text:** Following Barguet and Dewachter 1967: III, C6–8; L. *D. text* V. 100; and Gauthier 1926: I, 165–167.

**Thoth:**

[d]d mdw [in] [dḥw]ty [nb ḥmnw] s3 [r<sup>c</sup>] dḥwty-ms ḥ<sup>c</sup>i ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w sndm r=k ḥr t[nt]3.t iri.n=i rn[=k]  
smn.n gnw.t[=k] [. . .]=k ḥ<sup>c</sup>.tī m ḥr k3-nḥt twt ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w d.t

Rec[itation by] [Tho]th, [Lord of Hermopolis], son of [Ra], Thutmosis-appearing-in-glory, Make yourself comfortable upon the dais. I made [your] name (and) established [your] annals and your [. . .] while you have appeared as the Horus, strong bull, perfecting in glory forever.

**Ra-Horakhty-Atum:**

dd mdw i[n] [r<sup>c</sup>-ḥr-]3ḥty-itmw [three groups] mn-[ḥpr.w]-r<sup>c</sup> [two groups] tw [four groups]  
šni=t [three groups] [n]fr.w [ḥ]fn.w [1 group] [ḥ]b.w-[s]d tp [1 group]



Recitation [b]y [Ra-Hor]akhty-Atum, [. . .] Men[kheperu]ra [. . .] you [. . .] You encircle  
[. . .] hundreds of thousands of beautiful [. . .] *sd* festivals upon [. . .]

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity notching a palm branch and the king kneeling in the tree and being crowned. In the caption, a deity creates the king's name, establishes his annals, and grants him *sd* festivals. This relief carving illustrates stages 5, 10, and 13 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 6, and 7 of the ritual.

## DOC 8

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Amenhotep III

Location: Luxor Temple, Columned Hall, between the Bark Sanctuary and room XVII,  
above the door

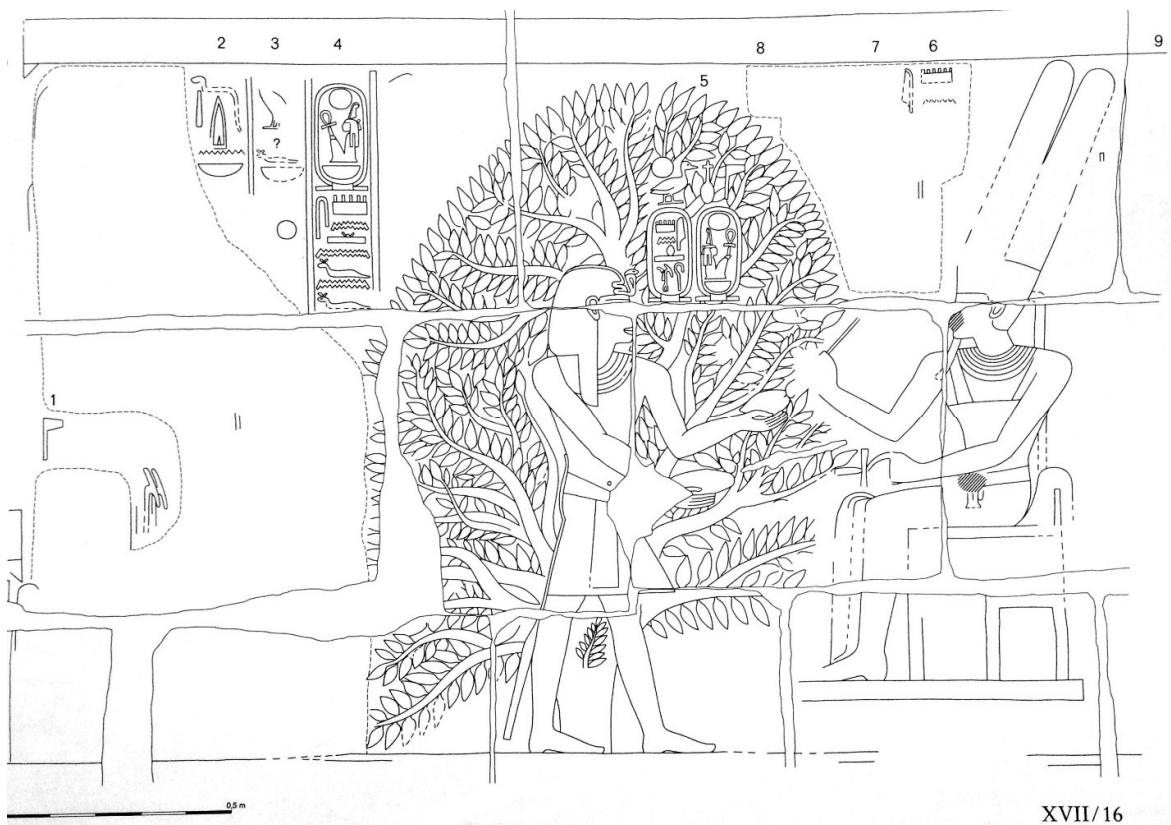


Fig. 5.8 Amenhotep III, Luxor Temple, from Brunner 1977: pl. 49

### Physical Description and Condition:

The texts of this scene are heavily damaged (Welvaert 1996: 103). Chicago Oriental Institute Epigraphic Survey negative 9569 shows such damage to the texts

that they are unreadable. However, Hellmut Brunner was able to record some segments of text that indicate that someone established something for someone else (Brunner 1977: pl. 49), possibly the creator deity establishing some of the divine gifts for the king. The only figures that remain are Amenhotep III and Amun (PM II<sup>2</sup> 331 (186)). Welvaert (1996: 103) lists the wrong page number in the topographical bibliography. Upon physical inspection in the spring of 2010, very little of the raised relief carving can still be seen. The remaining portion of the scene shows Amenhotep III wearing a *nemes* headdress with a *uraeus*, a broad collar, and a short kilt with his bull's tail behind him. The king is standing in front of an *išd* tree holding leaves of the tree toward a seated deity who is inscribing one of the leaves with a stylus. The king's name is not shown on the leaves but two cartouches appear in the tree in front of the king's head which read: Good God, Nebma'atra, Son of Ra, Amenhotep, Ruler of Thebes (Champollion 1844: pl. CCCXLVII and Brunner 1977: pl. 49).

The enthroned deity facing the king can be identified as Amun from his double-plumed headdress. The deity's throne is low backed and no decoration remains. His bull's tail extends from between his knees and down in front of his legs. He wears a long, tight fitting garment which is banded at the waist. It covers much of his torso and has two straps, one extending over each shoulder. He wears a broad collar and a curved beard. His headdress consists of two plumes on a modius that has a cord extending from the bottom of the plumes down behind his back. He holds an *ꜥnh* in his near (left) hand towards the king and a stylus in his far (right) hand extended toward the leaf in the king's far (left) hand.

The trunk of the tree splits low to the ground, and the branches are wavy with leaves staggered along their length. The leaves are ovoid in shape.

**Text:** following Brunner 1977: pl. 49

(1) *ntr* [. . .] (2) [*d*]*d mdw in nb* [. . .] (3) [*m* ?]*fn[b]* [. . .] *r*<sup>Ⓢ</sup> [. . .] (4) *nb-m3<sup>Ⓢ</sup>.t-r<sup>Ⓢ</sup> smn.n=f n=f*  
[. . .] (5) *ntr nfr nb-m3<sup>Ⓢ</sup>.t-r<sup>Ⓢ</sup> s3 r<sup>Ⓢ</sup> imn-ḥtp-ḥk3-w3s.t* 6) [*i*]*mn* [. . .] (7) [. . .] (8) [. . .] (9)  
[. . .]

(1) god [. . .] (2) [Reci]tation by the Lord of [. . .] (3) [as ?] his lo[rd] [. . .] Ra [. . .] (4)  
Nebma'atra established for him [. . .] (5) the Good God, Nebma'atra, Son of  
Ra, Amenhotep, Ruler of Thebes (6) [A]mun [. . .] (7) [. . .] (8) [. . .] (9) [. . .]

#### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates the king standing in front of the *išd* tree receiving his name and a deity writing on the leaves of the tree and holding an *ḥnh*. This relief illustrates stages 3 and 5 of the ritual. The partial remaining text mentions someone, probably the deity, establishing something for someone, referring to his giving divine gifts to the king, making reference to either stages 6, 7, or 8 of the ritual.

DOC 9

Dynasty: XVIII

Ruler: Amenhotep III

Location: Luxor Temple, fragments

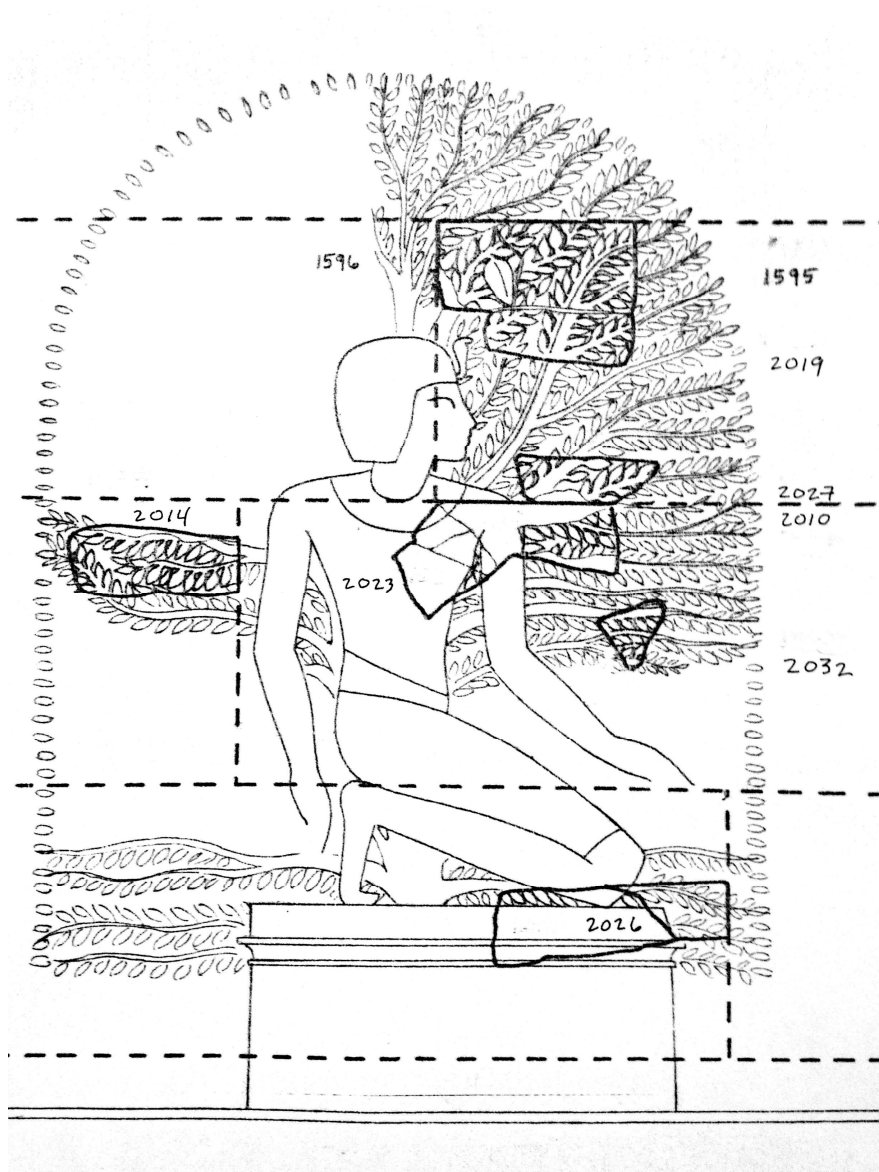


Fig. 5.9 Amenhotep III, Luxor Temple, unpublished drawing, courtesy W.R. Johnson

**Physical Description and Condition:**

This scene consists of only a few block fragments. Jacquet-Gordon (1988: VI 214 n.2) and Welvaert (1996: 102) attribute it to Tutankhamun, but according to W.R. Johnson, director of Oriental Institute Epigraphic Survey at Luxor Temple, it belongs to Amenhotep III. Welvaert notes the Jacquet-Gordon source as volume V, but it is in volume VI.

Based on the unpublished drawings supplied by Johnson in 2019, some information can be inferred about the scene. One fragment shows a bent knee and a flat area under it with leaves behind the knee, indicating that a figure was kneeling in front of the tree. Six fragments show wavy branches with leaves alternating along their length, confirming a similar leaf and branch depiction to other *išd* tree scenes. Four other fragments depict a shoulder, upper arm, and part of a torso with leaves between it and the upper arm, further indicating a figure kneeling in front of a tree.

**Text:** None preserved.

**Reference to Stages:**

Showing the king kneeling in front of the *išd* tree, these fragments indicate stage 3 of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

**DOC 10**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Sety I

Location: Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Inner Hypostyle Hall, west wall, upper scene,  
between the Chapels of Ra-Horakhty and Ptah



Fig. 5.10 Sety I, Temple of Sety I, Abydos, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene is carved in the delicate raised relief which is indicative of Sety I's reign. Most of the caption above the scene is missing as well as the solar disc-topped cobra frieze which caps off the pavilion under which Ptah is seated. Much of the text is damaged. Sety I is shown kneeling in front of an *išd* tree, on a *ḥb* basket, wearing a *šndwt* kilt. The king has bands on his upper arms, bracelets, and an elaborate broad collar with a *shebyu* collar over it. In his near (left) hand he holds a crook and a flail up to his near (left) shoulder. His far (right) arm is extended to receive a *ḥḥ* symbol connected to and below a rebus of his prenomen, Menma'atra, which has *rnp.t* signs terminating in tadpoles and *šn* rings to indicate millions of years for the name of the king. He wears the *ḥprš* crown with a *uraeus*.

Behind Sety I, Ra-Horakhty is seated on an elaborate, low-backed throne decorated with a *rishi* pattern. In the lower right corner of the throne base is a heart-and-lungs hieroglyph tied together with a lotus plant and a papyrus plant symbolising the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt. Ra-Horakhty wears the short, straight kilt with a *tīt* knot at the waist and the bull's tail extending from between his knees down in front of his legs. He wears decorative arm bands, bracelets, and anklets. He has a broad collar over a pectoral and the front lappets of his tripartite wig cover much of the broad collar. His near (left) arm is bent holding a scribal palette and his far (right) arm holds a stylus and is extended toward the tree to write on a leaf (PM VI 8 (92)). Much of his headdress is missing, but enough remains to show the bottom of the solar disc and *uraeus*.



Ptah is seated on an elaborate throne facing the king with his right (near) arm holding a stylus in a mirror image to Ra-Horakhty. Both thrones are on bases that are divided by the *hb* basket upon which the king kneels and they bring the base of the seated deities' feet to the same ground line as the base of the king's feet. Ptah is in his usual shrouded form with his arms free from the mid-forearm down. He, too, is adorned with elaborate bracelets and a broad collar. He wears a pectoral that hangs down over a broad collar and is decorated with a rebus of Sety I's prenomen, Menma'atra. This is a sportive writing of the king's name using the obelisk<sup>24</sup> in place of the *mn* sign. On either side of the pectoral is a cobra; one wears the red crown, and the other wears the white crown. In Ptah's far (left) hand he holds an oval-shaped item, possibly an ink well. In his near (right) hand he holds a stylus, but it is aimed toward the rebus writing of Sety I's name in his far (right) hand. Ptah wears his usual head covering: the skull cap, and a straight beard that has its strings from it to Ptah's ears visible in the carving.

This scene is different from many of the others in this genre in several ways. First, both deities are seated, usually only a chief or presiding deity is seated and the others remain standing. This may be due to this scene being positioned between two chapels, one to each of the seated deities. The only other *isd* tree scene to portray both deities seated is Ramesses II at Abydos (DOC 17). Second, all the figures in the scene are heavily decorated. Third, all of the figures are divine, as even Sety I wears the *shebyu* collar indicating his divinity.

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<sup>24</sup> Gardiner sign list O 25.

**Text:** Following *Abydos* IV, pl. 25 and Capart 1912: pl. IX.

**In Front of Ptah:**

*pth nb m3<sup>c</sup>.t it ntr.w hry-ib hw.t mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>*

Ptah, Lord of Truth, Father of the Gods, residing in the temple of Menma'atra

**Ptah:**

*[di=i] n=k [. . .] hfn.w [. . .] s3 3h mi-kd=k [m]nd r iti iw<sup>c</sup>{.t} t3.wy di=i hpš=k wsr m nht r t3  
nb m bw-w3 s3 r<sup>c</sup> sty-mr-n-pt<sup>h</sup> mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t*

[I give] to you [. . .] hundreds of thousands [. . .] son beneficial like you (?) . . . breast  
in order to take possession of the inheritance of the two lands. I give your  
powerful strong arm to every land together, Son of Ra, Sety-Merneptah, like  
Ra eternal.

**Ra-Horakhty:**

*[. . .] hry-ib hw.t mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> wnn=k m hk3 nh.w hw.t=k mi rwd p.t nsw-bit mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> [. . .]*

[. . .] residing in the Temple of Menma'atra. You exist as the ruler of the living, your  
temple is like the power of the sky, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menma'atra  
[. . .]

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing the king's name on the tree, a deity writing out the king's lifetime, and the king kneeling in the tree and receiving his name and lifetime. In the caption, a deity states that the king is the rightful king, which can be understood as stage 14 of the ritual. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 5, 10, and 11 of the ritual.

## DOC 11

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Sety I

Location: Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, north wall, east side, middle register



Fig. 5.11 Sety I, Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene is really a double scene because Sety I appears in it twice (PM II<sup>2</sup> 45 (154 II 4). It displays possibly two different points in time from the same ritual. The damage to this scene is mostly evident in the band of text across the top along with isolated points where the sandstone blocks meet. The scene is carved in raised relief.

Sety I first appears kneeling in the *išd* tree holding a crook in his near (right) hand and a leaf from the tree inscribed with Menma'atra in his far (left) hand. He wears the *hprš* crown with a *uraeus* and the ties of the crown stream behind him. He also wears the pleated and straight *šndwt* kilt. Thoth stands behind Sety I with his far (left) arm outstretched and his near (right) arm holding a stylus and writing on a leaf. He wears a short, wrapped kilt with an extra line that may be a bull's tail behind him. Thoth is wearing the tripartite wig and a fabric band that stretches from his far (left) shoulder across his chest to his near (right) hip. In front of the *išd* tree, with her back to it, is Weret-Hekau. Over her lioness head she wears the tripartite wig with a solar disc and cobra as her headdress. She wears a long, straight dress. Her far (left) arm is stretched forward with her palm away from her while her near (right) hand holds a notched palm branch which has *hb*, *ꜥnh*, and *w3s* symbols suspended from it and terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Weret-Hekau stands on the same ground line as the Sety I figure behind her. Sety I appears again kneeling on a small platform in front of the goddess and facing away from her. The small platform rests on the base of a pavilion. Sety I holds the crook and flail in his near (right) hand over his near (right) shoulder. His far (left) hand is extended in front of him to receive *hb-sd* symbols from an enthroned deity. Sety I wears the straight beard of kingship and a 'Nubian' wig with a *uraeus* at his brow and another one over his near (right) ear. His headdress is an elaborate *3tf* crown which is double plumed and has ram's horns topped by a solar disc that spread out and support two cobras, which in turn have solar discs on their heads. He appears not to wear a kilt at all here but rather a belt with elaborate folds of cloth over his pelvic region with the top centre fold terminating in a double cobra.

Seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne under a pavilion is Ra-Horakhty who faces the entire double scene. The pavilion has a sun-disc-topped cobra frieze across the top. Ra-Horakhty wears a short, straight kilt with a *tīt* knot at the front and his bull's tail is suspended from his knees and falls in front of his legs. His far (right) arm is outstretched in a mirror image to Weret-Hekau. They are steadying the crown on the king's head. In his near (left) hand, he holds a palm branch with *hb-sd* symbols alternating with *ḥnh* and *w3s* symbols suspended from it and terminating in a tadpole and *šn* ring. The *hb-sd* symbols that alternate with the *ḥnh* and *w3s* symbols are enclosed on each side with a *rnp.t* sign. He also holds a *w3s* sceptre in his near (left) hand. This feature does not appear often but is associated with Ra-Horakhty when it does.<sup>25</sup> Over his falcon head, Ra-Horakhty wears a tripartite wig and a sun disc and cobra headdress.

**Text:** Following Helck 1957: 118–119 (for the text of Thoth) and Nelson 1981: pl. 192 (for the balance of the text and all line numbers)

**Thoth:**

(1) [*dd mdw in*] (2) [*dḥwty*] *wdn*. (3) [*n=i nhb.t=*] *k m* (4) [*hr k3 nḥt mr m3<sup>c</sup>.t*] (5) *hr išd špsy m iw]nw m-b3ḥ (i)tm(w)*

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<sup>25</sup> Personal observation after comparing all extant *išd* tree scenes.

(1). [Recitation by] (2) [Thoth I have] instat[ed] (3) your [titulary] as (4) [Horus, Strong Bull, Beloved of Ma'at (5) upon the august *išd* tree in Helio]polis, in the presence of Atum.

**Above the tree:** (A rebus writing of Menma'atra follows this segment.)

(6) [ntr] ʕ [n]b [p.]t (7) di ʕnh dd w3s

(6) Great [God], [Lo]rd of the Sky, (7) as he gives life, stability, and dominion.

**Weret-Hekau:**

(8) dd mdw in wr.t-ḥk3.w [n]b.t [ḥw].t-ʕ3.t s3=i (9) mr nb t3.wy mn-m[ʕ].t-rʕ (10) [smn(=i) n=k] ḥḥ.w [ḥb].w-sd ḥfn.w m (11) rnp.wt ḥtp.w (12) smn(=i) n=k ḥʕw n (13) rʕ ḥkr mn (14) ḥr wp.t=k (15) di=s ʕnh nb ḥ3=f

(8) Recitation by Weret-Hekau, [La]dy of the Great [Tem]ple, My beloved son, (9) Lord of the Two Lands, Menma'atra. (10) [I establish for you] millions of *sd* festivals and (11) hundreds of thousands of peaceful years. (12) (I) establish for you the crown of (13) Ra as an ornament (14) established on your brow. (15) As she gives all life surrounding him.

### **Ra-Horakhty:**

(16) *dd mdw in* (17) *r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty ntr ʕ3* (18) *smn(=i) n=k [h<sup>c</sup>]w hr tp=k h3s.t nb(.t) hr tbw.ty=k*  
(19) *ntr nfr mn-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> hk3 w3s.t di ʕnh* (20) *s3 r<sup>c</sup> sty-mr-imm mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t* (21) *s3 ʕnh dd*  
*w3s snb nb 3w.t-ib nb(.t) h3=f {nb} mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t*

(16) Recitation by (17) Ra-Horakhty, Great God, (18) (I) establish for you the [crown] on your head, all the foreign lands beneath your two sandals. (19) The Good God, Menma'atra, Ruler of Thebes, given life, (20) Son of Ra, Sety beloved of Amun, like Ra. (21) All protection, life, stability, and dominion, all health, and all joy are behind (surrounding) him like Ra, forever.

### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates the king kneeling in the tree and receiving his name, a deity writing on the tree, a deity offering *sd* festivals to the king, and the king is crowned. In the caption, a deity writes the king's name on the tree, establishes the crown on the king's head, and grants him his life and *sd* festivals. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 7, 10, 11, and 13 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 3, 5, 7, and 13 of the ritual.



**DOC 12**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Sety I

Location: Current: Egyptian Museum in Cairo

Original: Karnak, Temple of Amun, Cour de la Cachette

CG 34501



Fig. 5.12 Sety I, Stela of Sety I, CG 34501, from IFAO

### Physical Description and Condition:

This stela was discovered in the Cour de la Cachette (*RITANC* I, 44). It has a lunette at the top and finely carved body text which may have been painted, but no trace remains (Brand 1998: 250). The image in the lunette does not depict the *išd* tree. It does depict Sety I making offerings to deities (Brand 1998: 249). The first few lines of the text are formulaic and list the abbreviated forms of Sety I's titulary (*RITANC* I, 44). The date on the stela is 2 *3h.t* 1 making it early in the king's reign (Brand 1998: 249; *RITANC* I, 44). The text discusses what the stela is made of (pure alabaster) and why the king had it made (in reciprocity for the gifts of kingship, long life, and *sd* festivals) (*RITA* I, 32). The text states that it is the lifetime and kingship, rather than the king's name, which are on the *išd* tree (*KRI* I, 39.13). There is no mention of the foliage (*g3b.t*) in the text.

**Text:** Following *KRI* I, 39

*iri.n hm=f m ib mrr m pr it=f imn di.n=f n=f h<sup>c</sup>.w n r<sup>c</sup> nsy.t nt itm<sup>w</sup> mn(.w) w3h(.w) hr išd  
špsy m hw.t bnb<sup>n</sup> imi iwnw nh<sup>h</sup> m hb.w-sd d.t m nh<sup>c</sup>.w hf<sup>n</sup>.w m rnp.wt t3.w nb.w h3s.wt  
nb(.w) dmd(.w) hr tb.ty=f mi r<sup>c</sup>*

[The stela] which His Majesty made with a loving heart in the temple of his father Amun, after he had given to him the lifetime of Ra and the kingship of Atum, established and enduring upon the august *išd* tree in the Phoenix Temple that is in Heliopolis, (with) an eternity of *sd* festivals and an eternity of lives,

hundreds of thousands of years, all the lands and all the foreign lands brought together under his two sandals like Ra.

**Reference to Stages:**

In this text, the king announces that he has made the stela as a reciprocal gift for the divine gifts he has received. These gifts are his lifetime and kingship, *sd* festivals, and victories. Thus, this short text refers to stages 5, 7, 8, 13, and 15 of the ritual.

## DOC 13

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Mit Rahina, block yard

Image: None available

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* scene is one partial block. Daressy describes it as depicting a partial figure of Ptah writing Ramesses II's name on a leaf of the *išd* tree (cited as the persea tree) (Daressy 1920: 169). Porter and Moss (III 872) indicate a figure of Ptah and do not mention that the figure is partial. Waelvaert (1996: 101, n. 7) lists the Daressy source as volume 53 from 1953, while the ASAE lists volume 53 as published in 1955. The actual Daressy publication that discusses this block is ASAE 20 published in 1920 and is noted correctly in Porter and Moss.

**Text:** None

### Reference to Stages:

This partial block shows a deity writing on the leaves of the *išd* tree illustrating stage 3 of the ritual.

DOC 14

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple of Ra-Horakhty, Derr, north wall, Second Pillared Hall, scene three

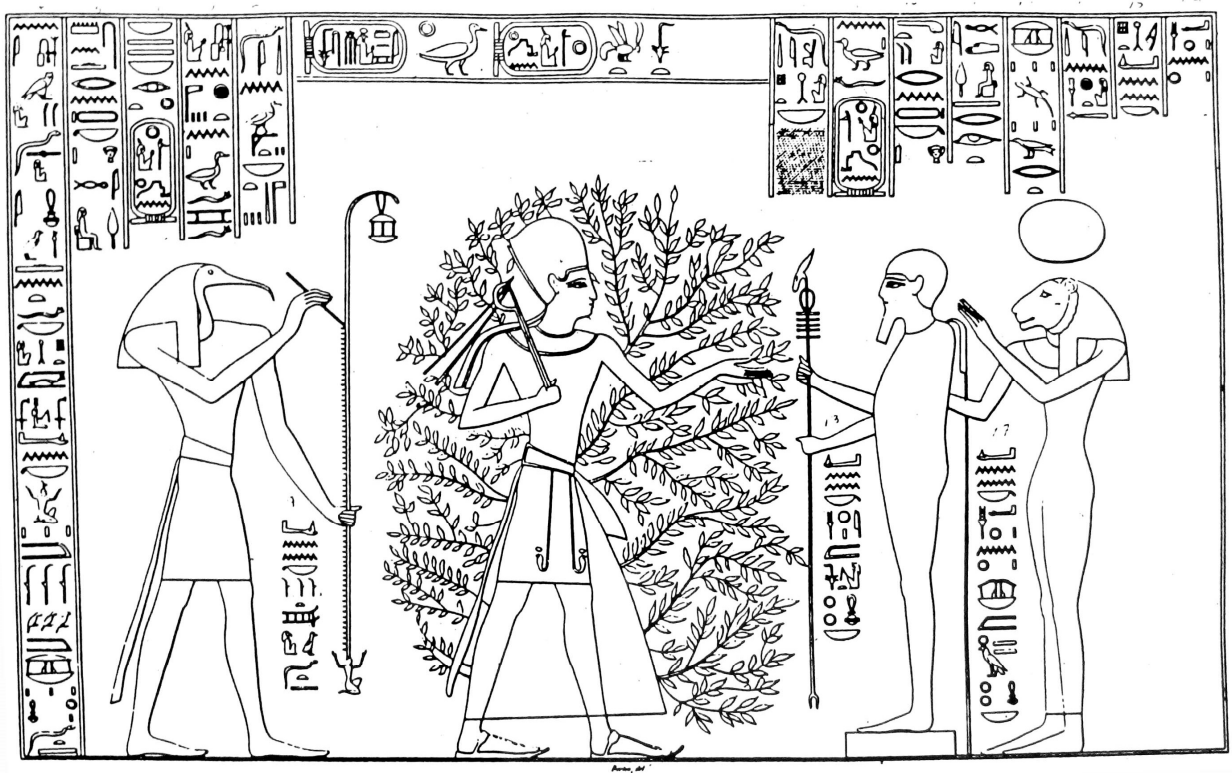


Fig. 5.14a Ramesses II, Temple of Ra-Horakhty, Derr, from Champollion 1845: pl. XLIII



Fig. 5.14b Ramesses II, Temple of Ra-Horakhty, Derr, from Blackman 1913: pl. XXXIV

### **Physical Description and Condition:**

The Temple of Ra-Horakhty at Derr (PM VII 87 (13)) was built by Ramesses II in the second half of his reign (Baines and Malek 1980: 183). Very little damage shows

in Champollion's rendering of the scene (Champollion 1845: pl XLIII). This *išd* tree scene is somewhat different in composition from the others by Ramesses II. The king is still the main focal point but instead of kneeling in the tree, he stands next to it indicating a different stage of the ritual, possibly the point when he walks around inside the temple grounds and finds the tree (*KRI* VI 7.12). His near (right) hand still holds the crook and flail over his near (right) shoulder and he wears the *hprš* crown with its ties streaming behind him. He wears no *uraeus* but does wear a broad collar. His kilt is elaborate and has a belt that hangs in front and terminates in two sun disc topped cobras while his bull's tail hangs down from his waist at the back. The king is also shown wearing sandals, a feature that is rare in these scenes. His far (left) arm is extended with the palm up in a gesture of receiving. Standing behind the king is Thoth with a tripartite wig over his ibis head and no headdress. As usual in these scenes, his only accoutrements are a short, straight kilt and the bull's tail. His far (left) arm holds a notched palm branch that has a *hb* symbol hanging from the top and terminates in a *hh* sign. His near (right) hand holds a stylus and he is notching the palm branch. Neither Thoth nor the other deities in this scene are depicted writing on the leaves, and none of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name; but the text does mention writing the king's name on the leaves by Ptah and Thoth. Facing Ramesses II is Ptah who stands on a base in his usual shrouded form. The photograph in Blackman's volume is dark and does not show the entire scene, but does show Ptah's hands raised in blessing better than the Champollion drawing (Blackman 1913: pl. XXXIV) (fig. 5.14b). None of the deities is seated in this scene. Ptah has a wide, straight beard, not the usual curved beard of divinity, and a close-fitting skull cap. His arms, which are shown free of the bandages, hold an *ʿnh-dd-wʾs*

sceptre. His consort, Sakhmet, stands behind him with her far (left) arm around him and her near (right) arm raised with her palm towards the king. She has a lunar disc above her head and wears the tripartite wig over her lioness head. Her only adornment, other than her straight, sheath dress, is a broad collar. None of the deities is seated in this scene; none is depicted writing on the leaves; and none of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name.

Blackman's description of this scene (Blackman 1913: 45) does not match the line drawing from Champollion (1844: pl. XLIII) or the photograph in the Derr volume in that Blackman's description lists Ptah and Sakhmet both writing Ramesses II's name on the leaves of the tree.

**Text:** Following Blackman 1913: 45–46

**Above the king:**

*nsw-bit wsr-m³t-r̥ stp.n-r̥ s3 r̥ mr imn r̥-ms-sw di ʕnh*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'atra Setepenra, Son of Ra, Ramesses,  
beloved of Amun, given life.

**Thoth:**

*dd mdw in dhwti nb mdw-ntr sš m³t.t n psd.t n s3=f mr=f nb t3.wy nb iri-h.t wsr-m³t.t-r̥ stp.n-r̥ smn(=i) rn=k hr išd špsy sš=i m db̥.ty=i ds=i mi wd.n it=k pth-t3-tnn di.n[=i n]=k  
hh.w m rnp.wt hfn.w m hb.w-sd mi r̥ d.t*



Recitation by Thoth, Lord of the Sacred Writings, True Scribe of the Ennead for his son, his beloved, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Offerings, Userma'atra Setepenra, (I) establish your name upon the august *išd* tree. I write with my own two fingers as commanded by your father, Ptah-Tatenen. [I] have given [to] you millions of years and hundreds of thousands of *sd* festivals like Ra eternally.

**In front of Thoth:**

*di.n(=i) n=k rnp.wt itm(w) d.t*

(I) have given to you the years of Atum eternally.

**Ptah:**

*dd mdw in pth nb m3<sup>c</sup>.t n s3=f wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup> mtr=i rn=k hr išd špsy r ir.t hb.w-sd <sup>c</sup>š3.w  
wr.t di.n(=i) n=k <sup>c</sup>h<sup>c</sup>.w m nsw mi r<sup>c</sup> nb*

Recitation by Ptah, Lord of Truth, for his son, Userma'atra Setepenra: I record your name upon the august *išd* tree in order to make a great many *sd* festivals. (I) have given to you lifetimes as king like Ra every day.

### **Sakhmet:**

*dd mdw in shm.t 3(.t) mr(y.t) pth di.n(=i) n=k ḥw n ṛ di.n(=i) n=k ḥ n ṛ hb(.w)-sd m ṛ-  
hr-3hty mi ṛ ṛ nb*

Recitation by the Great Sakhmet, beloved of Ptah, (I) have given to you the lifetime of Ra. (I) have given to you the lifetime of Ra, *sd* festivals like Ra-Horakhty, like Ra every day.

### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity granting *sd* festivals to the king. In the caption, two deities write the king's name on the *išd* tree and grant him his lifetime and *sd* festivals. This relief carving illustrates stage 7 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 3, 5, and 7 of the ritual.

## DOC 15

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court, west wall, upper register



Fig. 5.15 Ramesses II, Temple of Sety I, Abydos, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene is carved in sunk relief and there is damage at the block joins. There is paint left on several figures, mostly red, yellow, and light blue. It is listed

with the incorrect Porter and Moss reference by Welvaert. The page number has been omitted from the reference. Instead of reading PM VI 5 (39) it reads PM VI 39 (Welvaert 1996: 101, n. 8). The incorrect reference leads the reader to the discussion of the exterior of the Temple of Ramesses II at Abydos.

In this scene, Ramesses II stands in front of the *išd* tree. The branches of the tree are wavy, and the leaves are ovoid and staggered along both sides of the branches. The king wears the blue crown with a *uraeus*. The red paint of his skin is still extant as is the blue and yellow paint of his bracelets and arm bands. The king wears a white kilt with a long belt that terminates in a row of sun disc-topped cobras, and his bull's tail hangs down behind him. His far (right) arm is bent at the elbow and the palm is face up in a gesture of receiving. His near (left) arm is bent up with the palm facing away from him to take hold of the regalia of kingship being offered by Ra-Horakhty (PM VI 5 (39)).

Behind the king stands Ptah holding a scribal palette and an *ᵚnh-dd-w3s* sceptre in his near (left) hand. In his far (right) hand he holds a stylus and is writing on a leaf of the tree. It is the only leaf enlarged to show the king's name. He is in his usual shrouded form and is standing on a plinth that in turn rests on the same ground line the king stands on.

Thoth stands behind Ptah wearing a *nemes* headdress. The red stripes of the paint are still visible. He also wears a broad collar, bracelets, arm bands, and a kilt. His near (left) arm is bent at the elbow with the palm facing up and holding three *mp.t* symbols. His far (right) arm is bent at the elbow and his hand holds a stylus. He is notching the *mp.t* symbols from which dangle *ᵚnh*, *dd*, and *w3s* symbols.

Ra-Horakhty stands facing the king. He wears a *nemes* headdress with a sun disc and a *uraeus*. The paint remains on the red and blue stripes of the *nemes* headdress. He also wears blue bracelets and arm bands in addition to a blue shirt over his torso with straps that extend over both shoulders. He has a short kilt with a belt and his bull's tail hangs down behind him. His near (right) arm is raised and he is presenting the regalia of kingship to the king. His far (left) arm is lower and holds a staff; however, the lower end is hidden behind the king's kilt and the upper end terminates behind the king's far (right) arm. Osiris stands behind Ra-Horakhty. This is the only extant *isd* tree scene with him. He wears the white crown, a curved beard, and holds the crook and flail with a *w3s* sceptre in both of his hands. The blue of his skin still shows in the paint. He stands on a plinth that is the mirror image of Ptah's.

**Text:** Unpublished

#### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree and another deity granting the king's lifetime. There is no published text for this *isd* tree scene. This relief carving illustrates stages 3 and 5 of the ritual.

## DOC 16

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall, north wall, upper register

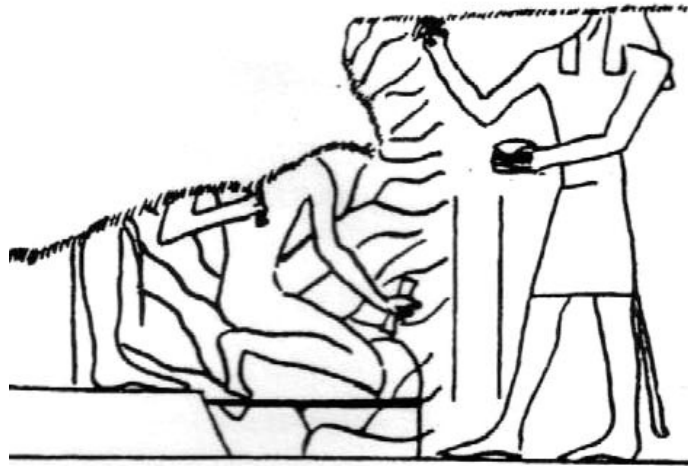


Fig. 5.16 Ramesses II, Temple of Sety I, Abydos, from Capart 1912: pl. V as displayed in Helck 1957: 119.

### Physical Description and Condition:

Capart (1912: pl. V) lists this scene on the north wall of the first hypostyle hall of the temple. Helck (1957: 119) lists it on the west wall but references the same plate from the Capart volume. Porter and Moss (VI 6 (58)) list the scene on the north wall confirming Capart's label. My own visual inspection in March 2010 confirms the Capart and Porter and Moss entries.

This *išd* tree scene is heavily damaged. Very little of the text remains, but at the bottom of the one partial column of text is a cartouche of Userma'atra Setepenra,

which confirms the identity of Ramesses II as the owner of this scene (Capart 1912: pl. V).

The tree is shown by branches only; the leaves are not drawn in. The king kneels in the tree in front of and facing away from an enthroned deity. There is nothing remaining of the king's figure above his chest. From the damage to the scene it is difficult to tell what type of kilt the king wears and what he holds in his near (right) hand which is bent as if he were holding a crook and flail up to his near (right) shoulder. In his far (left) hand he holds a cylindrical object. His bull's tail extends from between his knees down to ground level.

All that remains of the enthroned deity behind the king are the legs below the knees, the bull's tail, and part of the base of the throne. The deity may be Ra-Horakhty but there is no evidence for this conclusion except that those deities appear in the two other *išd* tree scenes within the same temple (DOCS 10 and 15).

Standing and facing the king is Thoth. All that remains for a positive identification of Thoth is the base of his ibis neck. He wears a tripartite wig, a short, straight kilt, and his bull's tail. In his near (left) hand he holds what could be an *išd* leaf or a scribal palette as in DOC 10. His far (right) arm is raised and holding a stylus toward the tree. There is not enough of the text remaining to know if the writing of the name of the king was mentioned. Only Thoth is shown writing on the leaves of the tree.

**Text:** Following Capart 1912, pl V.

. . . smn.n(=i) rn=k nsw-bit nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup>

. . . (I) have established your name, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenra.

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree and the king kneeling in front of the tree. In the fragmentary caption, a deity established the king's titulary. This relief carving illustrates stages 3 and 10 of the ritual. The caption refers to stage 2 of the ritual.



## DOC 17

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos, First Octostyle Hall, west wall, north end



Fig. 5.17 Ramesses II, Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene is carved in sunk relief and the upper portion of the scene is missing. This scene depicts the knees and feet of a kneeling king on a *ḥb* basket which sits on a decorated *serekh* symbol in front of an *išd* tree (PM VI 36 (40)). The king's bull's tail protrudes in front of his knees and flows down in front of the *ḥb* basket.

There are lines carved across the king's feet indicating that he wore sandals in this image, and there is red paint remaining on the legs and feet.

The leaves of the *išd* tree are of various sizes, ovoid in shape, and are staggered along both sides of the wavy branches. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name.

Behind the king and facing in the same direction are the legs of a figure seated on a throne that rests on an angled base. The red, blue, and yellow paint on the throne is still visible. Next to the throne is the bottom of a staff that terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. It is not clear what type of staff it is without the top. There is a partial column of text behind this throne.

In front of the king and facing him are the legs of another figure seated on a throne that rests on a squared base. This figure's legs show traces of blue paint and red and yellow anklets. In front of the legs are the bottom of a notched palm branch and the bottom of a staff that terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Again, without the tops, it is not possible to determine what the palm branch had suspended from it, if anything, and the type of staff. Each throne is supported by a base that is level with the base of the opposite throne.

Behind this enthroned figure are the red feet of a standing figure. In front of the feet is the base of a staff terminating in a tadpole and *šn* ring.

This scene is set up much the same as the scene of Sety I in his temple at Abydos (DOC 10).

There is painted decoration remaining on the extant blocks. None of the leaves (preserved) of the tree is enlarged to show the king's name.

**Text:** Following author's photo above

. . . *m šs=i db<sup>c</sup>.ty=i ds=i mnš=i rn=k nht m hry.t mi s3h m wi3 n h<sup>c</sup>w(=i?)*

. . . in the writing of my own two fingers. I impress your strong name in the sky like  
Orion in the bark of (my) body.

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving shows the king kneeling in front of the tree, illustrating stage 10 of the ritual. The broken caption mentions writing and the king's name in a cartouche, thus possibly referring to stage 3 of the ritual.

## DOC 18

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette, interior of west wall, north half



Fig. 5.18 Ramesses II, Cour de la Cachette, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene belongs to Ramesses II (Helck 1968: 136). It is carved in sunk relief and is heavily damaged. The king kneels on a *ḥb* sign in front of an *išd* tree

and wears a kilt with a belt that has several elaborate folds at the front. His near (right) arm is raised and bent at the elbow as if holding a crook and flail in his hand. His far (left) arm is also raised and bent at the elbow but out in front of him and receiving *sd* festivals in his hand. There is nothing left of the king above the upper chest.

The *isd* tree has a trunk that sprouts from the *hb* basket and splits low to the ground. Its branches are wavy and have ovoid leaves on both sides of them. None of the remaining leaves is enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

Facing the king is Amun seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne. He wears a kilt, his double-plumed headdress, and a curved beard. His near (left) arm is bent and holds an *nh* towards the king, offering him his lifetime. His far (right) arm is bent and holds a notched palm branch with *nh*, *w3s*, and *hb-sd* figures suspended from it at the top, and it terminates in a tadpole and *sn* ring.

Mut stands behind Amun wearing a double-crown headdress, a tripartite wig, and a tight-fitting dress that stops just above her ankles. Her near (left) arm is raised and bent at the elbow with her palm facing the king in a gesture of blessing. Her far (right) arm holds a notched palm branch with *nh*, *w3s*, and *hb-sd* figures suspended from it at the top, and it terminates in a tadpole and *sn* ring. Amun and Mut are under a sun disc-topped cobra frieze in a pavilion-like construction.

All that remains of the standing figure behind the king is a pair of legs below the knees to the feet and a bull's tail. It is possible that this figure is Thoth since this is the position where Thoth tends to appear in other *isd* tree scenes. If the figure were Seshat or another female deity, the bottom of a dress would be evident in the carving, and it is not. This figure could also be Atum as he would fit the same criterion from the waist down as Thoth and sometimes does perform the same functions in *isd* tree

scenes. Amun and Atum are portrayed together in another *išd* tree scene from Dynasty XX (DOC 34). Due to damage, it is not possible to know if the standing deity is writing on the leaves of the tree. However, it is likely that he is because there are no remnants of a notched palm branch in front of him. Neither Amun nor Mut are writing on the foliage.

In their description of the west wall, Porter and Moss (II<sup>2</sup> 132 (490 I 4)) list the decoration as Sety II usurped by Ramesses II. This order goes against the accepted chronology and must be an error in the printing of the volume.

The fragmented text does not mention if the king's name is recorded on the tree.

**Text:** Following Helck 1968: 135–136

### **Amun-Ra:**

*dd mdw di.n(=i) n=k ḥḥ.w m rnp.wt dd mdw di.n(=i) n=k ḥfn.w m ḥb.w-sd imn-r<sup>c</sup> nb ns.wt  
t3.wy ḥnty ip.t-s.wt*

Recitation: [I] have given to you millions of years. Recitation: [I] have given to you hundreds of thousands of *sd* festivals. Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands in front (foremost) of Karnak

## Mut:

*mw.t nb.t p.t ḥnw.t ntr.w [d]i.n(=i) n=k ᵑnh dd w3s nb ᵑnh w3s n ḥb.w-sd di.n(=i) n=k [. . .] m  
[. . .]*

Mut, Mistress of the Sky, Lady of the Gods. (I) have [gi]ven to you all life, stability, and  
dominion. Life and dominion of *sd* festivals. (I) have given to you [. . .] as [. . .]

## Reference to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates the king kneeling in front of the tree and receiving  
*sd* festivals, and a deity offering *sd* festivals and life to the king. In the caption, deities  
grant the king his *sd* festivals and life. This relief carving illustrates stages 5, 7, 10,  
and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5 and 7 of the ritual.



## DOC 19

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, Second Pylon, doorway, north side



Fig. 5.19 Ramesses II, Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, doorway north side, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene and its mate on the south side are carved in raised relief with the cartouches carved in sunk relief (PM II<sup>2</sup> 42 (148 g)). According to Porter and Moss (II<sup>2</sup>



42 (148 g)), these registers are usurped space from Sety I. However, the decoration at this end of the hall was begun by Ramesses I, and the cartouches were changed to sunk relief by Ramesses II when he usurped the decoration in the hall (Costa 2003: 193). This scene is heavily damaged, and there is no paint that remains on this scene.

Ramesses II is kneeling in an *išd* tree and holds a crook and a flail in his near (right) hand. He wears a *hprš* crown. The king's near (right) hand, face, neck, and feet are missing. The figure looks as though it was wearing a broad collar. The kilt is straight and has a pleated panel covering the front thigh area. The figure's far (left) arm is extended to receive *sd* festivals and lives from an enthroned deity. A large cartouche is in the tree above and in front of the figure identifying him as Userma'atra Setepenra. No leaves are enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

Facing the king is an enthroned figure whom the text labels Atum. He is seated on a low backed, undecorated throne. The figure's hands, feet, and face are missing from the scene. The near (right) hand presents *hb-sd* symbols to Ramesses and the far (left) hand holds an *ꜥnh* and a palm branch. *hb* and *ꜥnh* symbols are suspended from one end while the other end of the palm branch terminates in a tadpole seated on a *šn* ring. On his head Atum is wearing the double crown.

Standing behind the king and facing toward Atum is Seshat. Her face and feet are also hacked out. In her near (right) hand she holds a stylus and is writing on the leaves of the tree. Her far (left) arm is bent at the elbow and is holding something, possibly a leaf of the tree. She wears a tripartite wig with her usual headdress of a seven-leaved palm branch with downturned horns. She is wearing a straight sheath dress which appears to be banded below the breast, but is not wearing the leopard

skin over it. The text clearly labels her as the Great Seshat, *sš3.t wr.t*, but Porter and Moss (II<sup>2</sup> 42 (148 g)) label her as Sefkhet-abui, which must be an error.

The trunk of the tree splits low to the ground and the branches are wavy with ovoid leaves staggered on both sides of the branches. No leaves are enlarged to show the king's name but the text mentions Atum writing on the tree. It is clear in the scene that Seshat is writing on the leaves but not clear as to whether Atum is also, as he is clearly writing on the leaves in the scene from the Astronomical Room in the Ramesseum (PM II<sup>2</sup> 440 (25); DOC 24).

**Text:** Following Myśliwiec 1980: 351–352, supplemented from raw drawings and photographs from W.J. Murnane and author's own photographs

**Atum:**

*d[d mdw i]n (i)[tm(w) nb t3].wy iwnwy [hry-ib ip.t-s].wt s3(=i) mry n h.t=i nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-  
r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup> šsp.n=k nḥ r fnd=k [. . .] [. . .] šrt [. . .] gn.wt[=k] nb m r<sup>c</sup> k3-nḥt mry m3<sup>c</sup>.t  
[. . .] n=k n ḥḥ.w m rnp.wt r-gs nb w3s.t rn=k ḥti m mn.tn m dd(.w) ntr ds=f s3 (nb) nḥ  
w3s [sn]b nb 3w.t-ib nb kn.t nb nḥt nb ḥ3=f mi r<sup>c</sup> d[.t]*

Re[citation b]y A[tum, Lord of the Two] Lands, the Heliopolitan, [who is residing in  
Kar]nak. My beloved son of my body, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra  
Setepenra. You have accepted the life into your nose. [. . .] [. . .] all (your)  
annals like Ra, Strong Bull, Beloved of Ma'at. [. . .] to you of millions of years  
at the side of the Lord of Thebes. Your name is carved and fixed in the words

of the god himself. (Every) protection of all life, dominion, and [hea]lth, all joy, all valour, all strength is behind (surrounding) him like Ra, etern[ally].

### Seshat:

*d[d mdw] in ss[3.t w]r.t nb.t sš hnty(.t) [. . .] s3=i mr nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mry-imn di <sup>c</sup>nh w3s[. . .]  
ns.t [. . .] h3s.t nb hr tb.ty=k mi r<sup>c</sup> s3 [nb] <sup>c</sup>nh dd w3s 3w.t-ib nb h3=s nb mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t*

Re[citation] by Great Seshat, Lady of Writing, Pre-eminent [. . .] My beloved son, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses Beloved of Amun, given life and dominion [. . .] throne [. . .] Every foreign land is under your two sandals like Ra. (Every) protection of all life, stability, dominion, all joy are behind her like Ra, eternally.

### Reference to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates the king kneeling in the tree, a deity writing on the tree, and a creator deity offering *sd* festivals and life to the king. In the caption, the creator deity issues the proclamation to write the king's name and he is granted his lifetime, annals, and victories. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 5, 6, and 8 of the ritual.

## DOC 20

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, Second Pylon, doorway, south side



Fig. 5.20 Ramesses II, Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, Doorway south side, courtesy W.J. Murnane

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene is also heavily damaged and carved in raised relief. In the centre of the scene is the figure of Ramesses II kneeling in an *isd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 42 (148 (h))). Most of the figure of the king is missing except for the *uraeus* on the *hprš* crown, the tip of his far (right) elbow, his near (left) hip, his bent knees, and near (left) ankle. The

tip of Ramesses II's elbow indicates he is receiving the *hb-sd* and *ꜥnh* symbols from Ra-Horakhty. A faint line just above the knee indicates the king was wearing a kilt. Thoth stands behind the king. The head is missing, but the ibis neck that shows at the base of the tripartite wig is definitely that of Thoth. In addition, he is named in the text. His near (left) arm is slightly bent as if steadying a leaf of the tree to write on it. His far (right) arm is missing thus it is unknown if he were writing on the leaves. He wears a belt, and his bull's tail hangs behind him. Seated on a throne in front of the king is the figure of Ra-Horakhty. His head and shoulders are also missing, but his characteristic solar disc and cobra headdress remains. His belt is evident but no other adornments remain on his figure. His far (left) arm is bent as if giving something to the king, but the hand is missing. His near (right) arm holds a notched palm branch that has *hb-sd* and *ꜥnh* symbols suspended from it, and it terminates in the remains of a tadpole and *šn* ring.

The king's body blocks the view of the trunk of the tree making it impossible to know if the depiction of the trunk differs from that of other *išd* tree scenes. The branches are wavy and the leaves are ovoid and staggered on both sides of the branches. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name. From the damage to the scene, it is impossible to tell if both deities are writing on the leaves. The text mentions only Ra-Horakhty writing on them.

The caption of this *išd* tree scene is the first, chronologically, to mention the king's name being in the *ḥw.t-sr* as seen in the Festal Wall Stela (KRI VI 5.3).

**Text:** Following Myśliwiec 1980: 352, W.J. Murnane personal notes and photographs,  
and author's notes

**Ra-Horakhty:**

*dd mdw in r<sup>c</sup>[-hr-3h]ty hry ntr.w [s3=i m]r(y) n h.t=i [ntr nfr] nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup>  
di.n(=i) n=k [h]h.w m rn[p.wt] m hb.w-sd di.n(=i) sš nhb.t=k m [hr-]k3-nht mry m3<sup>c</sup>.t  
rn=k mn [hr] išd [šp]sy m sš nb hmnw s3 nb <sup>c</sup>nh dd w3s nb snb nb 3w.t-ib nb kn.t nb  
h3=f[mi r<sup>c</sup>]*

Words spoken by Ra-[Horakh]ty, Chief of the Gods.[ My bel]oved [son] of my body,  
[the Good God,] Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenra. (I) have given  
to you [mil]lions of yea[rs] of *sd* festivals. (I) have caused the writing of your  
titulary as [Horus,] Strong Bull, Beloved of Ma'at. Your name is established  
[upon] the [aug]ust *išd* tree in the writing of the Lord of Hermopolis. (Every)  
protection, all life, stability, dominion, all health, all joy, all valour, is behind  
(surrounding) him [like Ra].

**Thoth:**

*dd mdw in nb hmnw i[w w]d] r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty smn.t rn wr hm=f r-gs nb.w iwnw m h[w.t-wr.]t d[i.n=i)  
n=]k h[h.w rnp].wt rn=k mn m hw.t-sr n d.t s3 (nb) <sup>c</sup>nh dd w3s nb h3=f nb mi r<sup>c</sup>*

Recitation by the Lord of Hermopolis. Ra-Horakhty h[as command]ed the establishing  
of His Majesty's Great Name beside the Lords of Heliopolis in the gr[eat

temp]le. (I) hav[e given to] you mil[lions of yea]rs, your name being established in the Mansion of the Noble for eternity. (Every) protection of all life, stability, dominion is behind (surrounding) him like Ra.

### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates the king kneeling in the tree, a creator deity offering *sd* festivals and lifetime to the king, and the king receiving his *sd* festivals and lifetime. In the caption, the creator god grants the king his titulary and places his name on the tree, his lifetime and *sd* festivals are granted. This relief carving illustrates stages 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 3, 5, and 7 of the ritual.

**DOC 21**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, south wall, east half, bottom register,  
east end

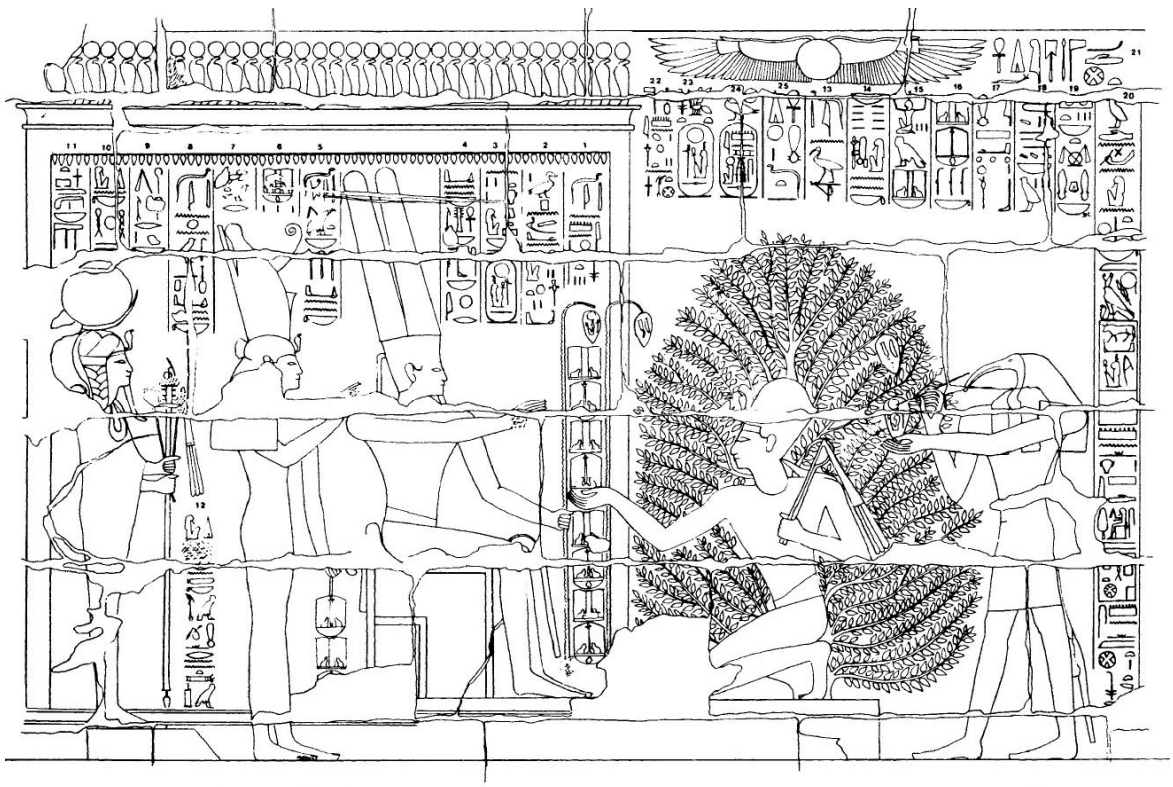


Fig. 5.21 Ramesses II, Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall, from Nelson 1981: pl. 79

**Physical Description and Condition:**

This scene has very little damage, but the damage that exists occurs at the joins between the blocks. Ramesses II is depicted kneeling in an *isd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 48



(159 III 4)) with his far (right) arm extended to receive *sd* festivals offered by the enthroned deity facing him. He faces the Theban Triad. In Ramesses II's near (left) hand he holds a crook and flail at his near (left) shoulder. He is dressed in a short, straight kilt with no ornamentation shown. He wears the *hprš* crown with a *uraeus* and the ties of the crown stream out behind his head. He is identified in the text and on two leaves of the tree with the early form of his prenomen, Userma'atra. This scene must have been carved in the first eighteen months or so of Ramesses' reign as the finalized form of the prenomen, Userma'atra Setepenra, was adopted late in regnal year two (Murnane 1975: 161).

Behind the king is Thoth, standing and writing on a leaf with his far (right) hand while holding the leaf in his near (left) hand. He wears the short, straight kilt and has his bull's tail at the back, hanging down from his waist. He wears a tripartite wig over his Ibis head.

Seated on a throne and facing the king is Amun. His throne is low-backed and shows no decoration. He wears a short, straight kilt and his bull's tail extends from his knees down in front of his legs. His near (right) arm is extended with his palm toward the king. In his far (left) hand he holds a notched palm branch from which is suspended an enlarged *išd* leaf with Userma'atra written on it and several *hb-sd* symbols. This staff ends in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Amun is wearing a double plumed headdress on a modius with the ties falling at the back of his head. He wears a beard which should be curved but the bottom portion is missing so it cannot be seen. Standing behind Amun is Mut wearing the double crown and a *uraeus*. She also wears a long sheath dress. Her near (right) arm is raised with her palm towards the king. In her far (left) hand she holds *hb* and *sd* symbols suspended from a cord. Standing

behind Mut is the third and final member of the Theban Triad, Khonsu. Khonsu is a standing, shrouded figure with his hands exposed and gripping a crook and flail together with a *w3s* sceptre and an elongated *dd* pillar. He has the braided side-lock of youth and the curved, divine beard. His headdress is a lunar disc with a crescent under it and a uraeus. The triad are all depicted under a cobra-topped pavilion.

The *išd* tree is shown with a wide trunk that splits low to the ground. The branches are wavy and are depicted with ovoid leaves that are staggered on both sides of the branches. Two leaves are enlarged to show the name of the king written on them.

**Text:** Following Helck 1952: 119–120; Nelson 1981: pl. 79; Brand, Feleg, and Murnane 2018: 146–147; and author's photo

### **Amun-Ra:**

*dd mdw in imn-r<sup>c</sup> [n]sw [n]tr.w s3 pn m3<sup>c</sup> n [h.t]=i nht nty hr ns.t=i n[b t3].wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>  
di.n[=i] n=k n<sup>c</sup>h dd w3s nb snb nb hr=i*

Recitation by Amun-Ra, [K]ing of the [G]ods, as for this true son of my body, Strong One who is upon my throne, Lo[rdr of the Two] Lands, Userma'atra [I] have given to you all life, stability, dominion, and all health under me.

### **Mut:**

*dd mdw in mw.t nb.t w3d.w di.n(=i) n=k hb.w-sd [ʔ]š3 wr.t*

Recitation by Mut, Mistress of the Pap[yrus], (I) have given to you a [gr]eat many *sd* festivals.

**Khonsu:**

*dd mdw in hn[s]w-nfr-[h]tp di.[n=i n]=k hk3.t nhh.w [c]nh w3s r fnd=[k] di=i n=k nhh m im.t-pr m-b3h nb ntr.w di[n]=i [mn] n rn=k m w3s.t mi rwd rn n (i)tm(w) m iwnw*

Recitation by Khon[s]u-Nefer[ho]tep, (I) [have] given [to] you the sceptre and flail, [li]fe and dominion to [your] nose. I give to you an eternity as testament in the presence of the Lord of the Gods. I [have] caused the [establishment] of your name in Thebes like the permanent name of Atum in Heliopolis.

**Above the scene:**

*bhdy ntr 3 s3b šw.t di=f<sup>c</sup>nh*

The Behedite, Great God of Variegated Plumage as he gives life.

**Above the king:**

*ntr nfr s3 imn ndty n imy-w3s.t nsw-bit wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> s3 r<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw di c<sup>c</sup>nh mi r<sup>c</sup> d.t*

The Good God, Son of Amun, Protector of who-is-in-Thebes, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'atra, Son of Ra, Ramesses, given life like Ra eternally.

### Thoth:

*dd mdw in dhwti nb hmnw sš.n=i n=k hḥ.w m ḥb.w-sd rnp.wt=k mi šꜥy wdb t3.w nb.w ḥ3s.wt  
nb.t dmd ḥr tbt.ty=k wdn.n=i n[hb].t=k m ḥr k3-nḥ.t mry m3ꜥ.t mn ḥr išd špsy m ḥw.t-  
k3-ptḥ smn m niw.t rsw.t*

Recitation by Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis, I have inscribed for you millions of *sd* festivals, your years being like sand of the shore, all lands and all foreign lands united under your two sandals. I have fixed your titulary as Horus, Strong Bull, Beloved of Ma'at, established upon the august *išd* tree in Memphis, fixed in the Southern City.

### Reference to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree, the granting of *sd* festivals to the king and his receiving them, and the king kneeling in the tree. The caption records six stages of the ritual: The establishment of the king's name, the recording of his titulary, the granting of his lifetime, *sd* festivals, and victories, and the king being the rightful ruler on the throne. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 14 of the ritual.

## DOC 22

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II, south wall, second register



Fig. 5.22 Ramesses II, Luxor Temple, from Oriental Institute negative 13752

### Physical Description and Condition:

This scene is heavily damaged. Amun's throne, half of the *išd* tree, and much of the body of the king are missing. From Schwaller de Lubicz's (1957: pl XXVII) rendition, there is another larger scene from the reign of Horemheb over which this *išd* tree scene was carved (Schwaller de Lubicz 1957: pl. XXVII). This *išd* tree scene

is in an upper register at the same level as the column capitals (PM II<sup>2</sup> 307 (27 I 1)) and is carved in sunk relief. The text of the scene is unpublished but two cartouches do appear in the tree with the names of Ramesses II.

Across the top of this entire scene is a *p.t* sign, centred under which is a winged solar disc. Under the solar disc is the *išd* tree with no leaves enlarged or showing the king's name. The two cartouches which show among the branches read: Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenra, Lord of Diadems, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun. The king is kneeling on the left end of what looks like a stylobate at the right end of which is an enthroned deity. The king's lower jaw, neck, far (left) shoulder and arm, torso, and far (left) leg are missing. He wears a *hprš* crown with a uraeus. His near (right) arm is bent and holds a crook and flail up to his near (right) shoulder. The king kneels in the tree with his near (right) leg behind him, possibly indicating movement. All that remains of the king's attire is the row of sun disc topped cobras at the base of his belt. Schwaller de Lubicz has restored the outline of the king's body and his far (left) arm to be outstretched to receive *hb-sd* symbols from the seated deity.

From the double plumed headdress, the seated deity is Amun, who is seated on a low-backed throne, which is probably undecorated. He wears a curved beard and holds an *ꜥnh* in his near (left) hand. His far (right) arm is missing below the elbow. The remains of a notched palm branch, which has *hb-sd* signs suspended from it, can be seen in front of him. Most of Amun's throne and his legs below the knee are missing.

Behind the king stands Thoth. He wears a tripartite wig over his ibis head and a short, straight kilt. In his far (left) hand he holds a notched palm branch which has *hb-sd* signs suspended from it and terminates in a tadpole perched on a *šn* ring. With

his near (right) hand he holds a stylus and is notching the palm branch.

The trunk of this tree is damaged, but the branches are wavy with ovoid leaves that are staggered along their length. No leaves are enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

One of the unique aspects of this scene is the *p.t* sign across the top with a winged solar disc at the top of the scene above the *išd* tree. Another unique aspect of this scene is the fact that it is usurped space. Although Ramesses II is known for usurping work from his predecessors, this is the first *išd* tree scene where traces of the previous scene to occupy the space can be seen. Ramesses III carved over a previous *išd* scene of his at Medinet Habu (DOC 32) dividing the scene into two; however, that is an *išd* tree scene carved over another *išd* tree scene by the same king that was done when later renovations divided the room into two parts.

**Text:** The text from this scene is not published. This translation is from hand-copied hieroglyphs done by the author assisted by Otto J. Schaden, June 1997, and supplemented by photographs from the Oriental Institute and W.R. Johnson.

**Above the king:**

*nb t3.wy wsr-mꜥ.t-rꜥ stp.n-rꜥ nb hꜥ.w rꜥ-ms-sw mry imn*

Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenra, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, beloved of Amun.

### **Below the winged solar disc:**

*ntr ʕ3 bḥd.ty*

The Great God, the one of Edfu

### **Amun-Ra:**

*ḏḏ mdw in imn-rʕ nb ns.wt t3.wy šsp.n=k ḥḥ.w m rnp.wt ḥfn.w m ḥb.w-sd smn.n(=i) rn=k ḥr  
išd špsy ḥt(i.w) n m- $\{n\}$ ḥt nḥḥ ḏḏ.w m r n ʕnh.w ḏ.t sp-sn*

Words spoken by Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, You have accepted millions of years and hundreds of thousands of *sd* festivals. (I) have established your name upon the august *išd* tree, engraved for the future eternally forever and enduring in the speech of the living eternally, eternally!

### **Thoth:**

*ḏḏ mdw in ḏḥwty nb ḥmnw sš=i n=k ḥfn.w m ḥb.w-sd mn.w ḥr išd špsy mtn.n(=i) rn=k m  
ḥḥ.(w) rnp.wt mi wḏ.n it=k ḏḏ(.w) m iwnw iri.w m w3s.t mn(.w) m ḥw.t-k3-ptḥ [. . .]*

Recitation by Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis: I inscribe for you hundreds of thousands of *sd* festivals established upon the august *išd* tree, I have inscribed your name in millions of years as commanded by your father. What was said in Heliopolis, made in Thebes, endures in Memphis [. . .]



**Reference to Stages:**

In this relief carving a deity holds an *ʿnh*, offers *sd* festivals to the king, the king kneels in the tree and receives the *sd* festivals from the deity. The associated text mentions the king's name being written on the tree, that he is given life and granted his *sd* festivals, and that he has accepted his *sd* festivals. This relief illustrates stages 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 3, 5, 7, and 12 of the ritual.

**DOC 23**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Ramesseum, First Pylon, South Wall, Third Register, Fragment



Fig. 5.23 Ramesses II, Ramesseum, First Pylon, from Myśliwiec 1980: 352

**Physical Description and Condition:**

One fragmentary block of this scene is all that is extant (PM II<sup>2</sup> 432 (I b)).

Myśliwiec (1980: 352) has identified this scene as belonging to Ramesses II because

it is from the Ramesseum and because the remains of a cartouche ending with Setepenra are visible near the upper left of the block. The block is heavily damaged but enough remains to see that the scene was carved in sunk relief. The text in the upper left corner has been completely obliterated. The lower left corner of the block shows some branches and leaves of an *išd* tree. The branches are wavy with ovoid leaves staggered along their length. Across the top of the block are broken segments of text which name Atum as the seated deity. The right portion of the block has the torso, head, and arms of Atum beneath the text. He wears the double crown and the remains of a belt can be seen at his waist. In his far (right) hand he holds a stylus and is poised to write on the leaves of the tree. His near (left) arm is bent and holding what may be an *išd* leaf.

Since only this block remains, it cannot be known if another deity originally appeared in the scene. It would be expected based on all other *išd* tree scenes having at least two deities in addition to the king. There is not enough of the text that remains to identify the other deities that might have been in the scene; to know if writing on the leaves was mentioned in the text; or to know if any leaves were enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

**Text:** following Myśliwiec 1980: 352

**Atum:**

[*dd*] *mdw in [i]tm[w] nb B.wy iwnwy* [ . . . ] [*dī=i n=k*] *ḥb.w [nb]* [ . . . ] *iri.n[=i]*

[Recitation] by Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, The Heliopolitan [. . .] [I give to you] [all]  
*sd* festivals which [I] made.

**Above *išd* tree:**

*ntr* [*n*]*fr nb t3.wy nb ḥpš* [*wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>t-r<sup>c</sup>*] *stp.n-r*[<sup>c</sup>] *di ḥnḥ* [*mi*] *r<sup>c</sup>*

[The Go]od God, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord (possessor) of the Strong Forearm,  
[Userma'atra] Setepenr[a], given life [like] Ra

**Reference to Stages:**

The fragmentary relief shows a deity writing on the leaves of the tree, thus stage 3 of the ritual. The caption mentions the granting of *sd* festivals, thus stage 7 of the ritual.

## DOC 24

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Ramesseum, Astronomical Room, north wall, east side



Fig. 5.24 Ramesses II, Ramesseum, Astronomical Room, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *isd* tree scene is carved in sunk relief and is mostly intact. Upon physical inspection in March 2010, faint traces remain of green and blue paints on the king's

chest and throne, on Amun's chest and throne, and on the branches and leaves of the tree.

Ramesses II is seated on a throne next to an *išd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 440 (25)). This is the only preserved *išd* tree scene showing the king seated on a throne. The throne is low backed and has no decoration. The king holds a crook and a flail across his chest in his far (left) hand and an *nḥ* in his near (right) hand across his lap. He wears the short Nubian wig with a uraeus at his brow, the straight beard of kingship, and a double plumed headdress with ram's horns, a solar disc, and two cobras each wearing a double plumed crown with a solar disc. The outline of his kilt is visible around his legs. The king is easily identified by the two large cartouches at the top centre of the scene using the final form of his prenomen, Userma'atra Setepenra.

Behind the king and seated on a throne, which is low backed and has as its only carved decoration seven kneeling figures with arms raised in adoration on its base, is Atum wearing the double crown and a curved beard. These kneeling figures carry the labels *ntr.w p.t* and *ntr.w B*. The painted decoration of the throne is in faded red, dark blue, and light blue in a rishi pattern. Atum holds a leaf of the *išd* tree in his far (left) hand and a stylus in his near (right) hand. He is depicted writing on the leaf. His bull's tail projects from his lap above his knees and falls in front of his lower legs.

Standing in front of and facing Ramesses is Sefkhet-abui. In her far (right) hand she holds a stylus and is writing on an *išd* leaf. In her near (left) hand she holds a notched palm branch which has *ḥb-sd* symbols suspended from it and a seated figure with upraised arms underneath it symbolising an eternity of *sd* festivals. The branch also has leaves carved on it. She is wearing her usual long sheath dress but does not have the leopard skin over it. The leopard skin may have been in paint. On her head

she is wearing her standard headdress except that it only has five palm leaves instead of its usual seven.

Standing behind Sefkhet-abui and facing the king is Thoth. In his far (right) hand he is holding a stylus and is writing on a leaf. In his near (left) hand he holds a notched palm branch with a single *ḥb-sd* symbol hanging from it. At the base of the palm branch is a tadpole sitting on top of a *šn* ring. Since the base of Sefkhet-abui's palm branch is behind the king's kilt, it is impossible to know if it also ended in a tadpole and a *šn* ring; however, it is likely that it did. Thoth is wearing a short, straight kilt and a tripartite wig. The very top of his head and most of his headdress is missing except for the front of the crescent moon extending over his beak.

**Text:** Following Helck 1957: 120–121, supplemented by Champollion 1845: pl. cccxxxiv and author's photos.

### **Sefkhet-abui:**

*dd mdw in sfḥ.t<sup>c</sup>b.wy nb[.t] sš.w ḥm.t pr-md3.t sw3ḥ=i n=k rnp.wt=k tp t3 dmd m ip.t ḥḥ di=i  
rwd [. . .] r ḥ[<sup>c</sup>] n [p.t] mn.w m ḥw.[t=k] w<sup>c</sup>.t [. . .] [. . .] ḥr smnh sšy.t*

Recitation by Sefkhet-abui, Lad[y] of Writing, Mistress of the Library, I cause the endurance for you of your years on earth, united as the country of a million. I cause the enduring of [. . .] more than the life[time] of [the sky] enduring as [your] mansion. One [8 groups lost] [5 groups lost] on the effective execution of that which is written.

### Above the king:

*nsw-bit wsr-m3̣.t-ṛ stp.n-ṛ s3̣ ṛ nb ḥ.w ṛ-ms-sw mr imn*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'atra Setepenra, Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns,  
Ramesses, Beloved of Amun.

### Atum-Ra:

*dd mdw in [i]tm[w]-ṛ nb t3̣.wy iwnwy n s3̣=f wsr-m3̣.t-ṛ stp.n-ṛ sš=i rn=k hr išd špsy m sš.w  
dḅ=i ds=i sr=i n=k dr wn.t hr mnd r nsw hr ns.t=i wnn=k r ̣ḥw n p.t mi rwd rn=i  
d.t sp sn.wi dd mdw in imn-ṛ-[i]tm[w] nb ḥw.t-3̣.t hry-ib ḥw.t-wsr-m3̣.t-ṛ stp.n-ṛ  
hnm.t-w3̣.s.t n s3̣=f ṛ-ms-sw mry imn m=k smnh(=i) rn=k r nḥ mn hr išd špsy*

Recitation by Atum-Ra, Lord of the Two Lands, The Heliopolitan, of his son,  
Userma'atra Setepenra, I inscribe your name upon the august *išd* tree in the  
writing of my own finger. I predicted, since you were upon the breast, you would  
become king upon my throne. You will be until the lifetime of the sky, even as  
my name is firm, eternally, eternally! Recitation by Amun-Ra-Atum, Lord of the  
Great Mansion in the heart of the Temple of Userma'atra Setepenra at Thebes,  
of his son, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun. Behold! I have established your name  
for eternity, enduring upon the august *išd* tree.



**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates all three deities writing on the tree, two deities granting him his *sd* festivals, the king receiving his lifetime, and the king sitting on the throne. In the caption, the creator god grants the king his lifetime, writes his name on the tree, and places him on the throne as rightful ruler. This relief illustrates stages 3, 5, 7, and 14 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 3, 5, and 14 of the ritual.

**DOC 25**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Rock Shrine of Ramesses II, Gebel el-Silsila, north wall, top register



Fig. 5.25 Ramesses II, Gebel el-Silsila, courtesy of the Mission at Gebel el-Silsila Epigraphic Survey Project

**Physical Description and Condition:**

According to the description in Porter and Moss (V 217), Amun-Ra and Thoth are writing the king's name on the leaves of a tree with the king kneeling in front of the tree and facing Ptah and Ra (?). Closer examination of the photographs supplied by the Gebel el-Silsila Epigraphic Survey Project in December 2015 reveal that this

*išd* tree scene is heavily damaged. Much of the damage is concentrated in the upper right quadrant of the scene. The extant text is on the left side above the seated figure of Amun-Ra.

The *išd* tree has straight branches that sprout along the entire height of the trunk. There are pointed ovoid leaves along the length of both sides of the branches. Many of the leaves have faded blue paint remaining. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

The king kneels in front of the tree with his back to an enthroned figure of Amun-Ra. The king faces the figures of Ra and Ptah who stand on a plinth that also supports the king's knees. These figures are damaged above the waist. Closest to the king is Ra. He wears a short kilt, and there are traces of yellow paint along the edges of it. The outline of Ra's solar disc and beak remain in the carving, but damage to the wall makes it unclear if he was shown stylus in hand, writing on the leaves of the tree.

Ptah stands behind Ra. White paint remains on Ptah's shrouded legs. He holds a staff in front of him. Faint traces of blue paint remain on one of his hands.

Behind the king, Amun-Ra is seated on a throne that is resting on a plinth that also supports the king's feet. He holds a stylus in his near (right) hand, and his far (left) hand is turned palm up as if to steady a leaf to write on it. Behind Amun-Ra stands Thoth on the ground line on which the plinth is resting. He holds a stylus in his near (right) hand and is writing on the leaf held in his far (left) hand. There are *ḥb-sd* symbols hanging from his far (left) elbow with a tadpole and *šn* ring below them. Traces of yellow paint are on the lunar orb and horns of his headdress, his kilt, and

the *hb-sd* symbols. Traces of black paint are visible on the rear of his belt, and red paint is visible on his torso and legs.

**Text:** unpublished and unavailable as of 2020

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree, a deity granting the king his *sd* festivals, and the king kneeling in the tree. This relief illustrates stages 3, 7, and 10 of the ritual.

**DOC 26**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Great Temple of Ramesses II, Abu Simbel, Great Hall, south wall, upper register, fourth scene



Fig. 5.26 Ramesses II, Great Temple of Ramesses II, Abu Simbel, from Oriental Institute negative 1490

**Physical Description and Condition:**

Welvaert (1996: 101) lists this scene as belonging to Ramesses II, but references Helck (1857: 122) who lists it as that of Ramesses III. Porter and Moss (VII 102–103 (39–40)) list the scene as belonging to Ramesses II, and the enlarged

leaves bear the name Userma'atra Setepenra, therefore the reference in Helck must be in error. This scene shows minimal damage.

Ramesses II kneels on a *hb* basket in an *isd* tree facing an enthroned Ra-Horakhty. The king wears a blue crown with a uraeus, a broad collar, and a short kilt with a sash down the front. The king holds a crook and flail in his near (right) hand close to his chest and over his near (right) shoulder. His far (left) hand is bent at the elbow, and he holds up his hand to receive a leaf of the tree. Some scholars may argue that the item in the king's hand is the bottom of a *hb-sd* symbol; however, there are clearly leaves of the *isd* tree above the item that separate it from surrounding relief carving.

Facing the king is Ra-Horakhty who is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne. The throne rests on a plinth raising the deity's feet to the same ground line as the king. Ra-Horakhty wears a long, tight fitting garment which is banded at the waist. It covers much of his torso and has two straps, one extending over each shoulder similar to the garment worn by Amun in DOC 8. He wears a broad collar and a tripartite wig over his falcon head. In his near (left) hand, he holds a notched palm branch that has a single *hb-sd* symbol suspended from the top and terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. His far (right) arm is bent with the palm facing toward the king as if to steady the crown.

Thoth stands behind the king on the same ground line that the *hb* basket and the plinth also rest on. He wears a short kilt with a bull's tail hanging at the back. There is damage to the wall at his neck, thus it is not clear if he was wearing a broad collar. His near (right) arm is bent and holding a stylus to write on the leaves. His far (left)

arm is bent and terminates in the foliage, but damage occludes what that hand was doing.

The trunk of this *išd* tree is taller than in most depictions, but it still splits low to the ground. The branches are wavy and have ovoid leaves staggered along their length. Some of the leaves are enlarged to show the king's prenomen written on them. Over the king is a large, crudely carved winged scarab with a small cartouche bearing the king's name under it.

The available photographs of this scene show only the two deities discussed above; however, Lepsius (1897: V 152–153  $\alpha$ – $\beta$ ) gives the text for a speech by Seshat, who must be either behind Thoth or behind Ra-Horakhty. Porter and Moss (VII 102–103 (39–40)) list Sefkhet-abui in the scene, although the text in the Lepsius volume clearly identifies her as Seshat.

**Text:** Following L. D. *V text*. pp. 152–153  $\alpha$  –  $\beta$ , supplemented by OIC negative 1490.

#### **Ra-Horakhty:**

*dd mdw in r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty smn=k ḥd.t hr tp=k*

Recitation by Ra-Horakhty, May you set in place the white crown upon your head.

### Thoth:

*dd mdw in dhwti nb hmnw ntr ʕ3 hnty hsr.t di.n[=i] n=k ʕnh dd w3s hb.w-sd ʕš3 iw wd(.n) n=k  
it=k rʕ hʕ=k m hḳ3 šnn itn shm.ty hr s.t hr=k nsw-bit nb t3.wy mry wsr-[m3ʕt]-rʕ s3 rʕ n  
h.t=f nb hʕ.w rʕ[-ms-s] mry [imn] di ʕnh mi rʕ d.t*

Recitation by Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis, the Great God, Preeminent in Hesret, [I]  
have given to you life, stability, dominion, and *sd* festivals. Your father, Ra, has  
commanded for you that you appear in glory as ruler of what the sun disc  
encircles the double crown occupying the seat/place upon you. King of Upper  
and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Beloved, User[ma'at]ra, Son of Ra  
of his body, Lord of Crowns, Ra[messes] Beloved on [Amun], given life like Ra  
eternally.

### Seshat:

*dd mdw in nb(.t) sš.w nb.t p.t hnw.t ntr.w di.n(=i) n=k hḳ.w m rnp.wt nhḳ d.t m hb.w-sd ʕš3  
wr.t [. . .] ti šw hr s.t hr n.t ʕnh.w mi it=k rʕ nsw-bit wsr-[m3ʕ.t]-rʕ di ʕnh*

Recitation by the Lady of Writing, Lady of the Sky, Mistress of the Gods: (I) have given  
to you millions of years for ever and ever with a great many *sd* festivals [. . .]  
appeared upon the Horus Throne of the Living like your father Ra, King of  
Upper and Lower Egypt, User(ma'at)ra given life.



**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree, the king being granted his *sd* festivals, the king kneeling in the tree and receiving his titulary, and the king being crowned. In the caption, the king is granted his life and *sd* festivals and is being crowned. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 7, 10, 11, and 13 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5, 7, and 13 of the ritual.

## DOC 27

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple dedicated to the living statue of Ramesses II, Aksha, forecourt



Fig. 5.27 Ramesses II, Aksha, from Breasted 1906: 17, fig. 9

### Physical Description and Condition:

Helck (1957: 125) lists this *isd* tree scene as consisting of two damaged blocks; however, the Breasted photo in the archives of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago shows a wall that is quite damaged but consists of many blocks. Porter and Moss (VII 127 (12)), do not mention a tree in the description for this scene. The text simply states, 'kneeling King [sic.] crowned (?) by a goddess before a god' (PM VII 127 (12)). Breasted's photo clearly shows six figures: four standing, one enthroned, and one kneeling on a *hbw* basket. I believe this scene to be a double scene parallel to DOC 11 from the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple. Helck (1957:

125) records the text as mentioning the *išd* tree. Sayce and Müller record only the Syrian name rings across the bottom of the scene (Sayce 1895:160–164 and Müller 1897: 73–74). Breasted's photo does not show text surrounding the figures but does show a column of text behind the enthroned figure. Unfortunately, the image is not clear enough to translate from and the text is not recorded in his notes. In addition, the photo quality does not show a tree in this scene. I have not been able to inspect the blocks for myself to determine whether the carving shows remains of an *išd* tree.

From the left, the enthroned figure is male and shown from the shoulders down. His far (left) arm is raised toward the king possibly to steady the crown as shown in DOCS 7 and 36. His near (right) arm is bent and holding something toward the kneeling king. Facing him, the king kneels on a *hb* basket and his far (right) arm is outstretched as if to receive something. His near (left) arm is bent to his shoulder and holds the crook and flail. He kneels on a *hb* basket that rests on the raised dais that the throne also rests on. The top of his head is missing, but streamers or ribbons hanging from the headdress are shown.

Behind the king is a standing goddess shown from the shoulders down. She wears an ankle-length sheath dress and holds a staff in her near (left) hand up to her shoulder. Her far (right) hand is raised in a mirror image of the enthroned figure as if to steady a crown or headdress.

Behind her is a group of three standing figures: two male and one female. The males are shown from the shoulders down. Both wear short kilts with bull's tails hanging down behind them. The female is shown from the waist down due to missing blocks. She wears an ankle-length sheath dress. The front and back figures of the trio

hold hands with the centre figure as if leading him to the enthroned figure as shown in the Medinet Habu scene of Thutmosis III (DOC 5).

**Text:** following Helck (1957: 125)

[. . .] *rnp.wt gn.wt=f hfn.w hr išd špsy di ʿnh d.t*

[. . .] years, hundreds of thousands of his annals upon the august *išd* tree, given life forever.

#### **Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates the king being led to the tree and the king kneeling in front of the tree, in addition to the king being crowned. In the caption, the king is granted his annals. This relief carving illustrates stages 9, 10, and 13 of the ritual. The partial caption refers to stage 6 of the ritual.

**DOC 28**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Temple of Amun, Luxor, Obelisk, east face, centre column



Fig. 5.28 Obelisk of Ramesses II, Luxor Temple, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

The obelisk of Ramesses II at Luxor Temple is in good condition. There is no visual scene that corresponds with the *išd* text in the centre column of the east face (Selim 1991: 156). The text shows little damage and is formulaic, listing the Horus name, the *nsw-bit* name, and the nomen of Ramesses II. It clearly states that Ptah established the kingship, rather than the king's great name, upon the *išd* tree and that the tree resides in Memphis rather than in Thebes where the obelisk was erected, thus continuing to demonstrate a unity of Upper and Lower Egypt. There is no mention of the action of writing, nor is the foliage (*g3b.t*) mentioned in the text.

In Helck's reproduction of the text (Helck 1957: 129), he uses the usual determinative (Gardiner M1) for the *išd* tree. In Selim's reproduction of the text (Selim 1991: 156), the bearded ear of emmer (Gardiner M34) is used as the determinative for the *išd* tree. Upon physical inspection in March 2017, Helck has the correct determinative.

**Text:** following Helck 1957: 129, *KRI* II 599.11–13, and supplemented by author's photographs and notes

(11) *ḥr k3-nḥt mr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t nsw-bit wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup> smn.n pth nsy.t=f ḥr išd* (12) *špsy m ḥw.t-k3-ptḥ r nsw it.w t3.w nb.w 3w ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w nb ḥb(.w)-sd mn(.w) w3ḥ n ḥḥ.w* (13) *m rnp.wt s3 r<sup>c</sup> nb ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mry imn ḥnḥ d.t*

(11) Horus, Strong Bull, Beloved of Ma'at, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'atra Setepenra, whose kingship Ptah established upon the august (12) *isḏ* tree in Memphis more than (any other) king, he who conquers all the lands. Long in lifetime, Lord of *sd* Festivals, enduring in the duration of millions (13) of years, the Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun, living eternally.

#### **References to Stages:**

This text mentions a deity establishing the king's claim to the throne, the granting of his *sd* festivals and his lifetime, and the king's military victories, thus referring to stages 5, 7, 8, and 13 of the ritual.

## DOC 29

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Current: Egyptian Museum in Cairo

Original: Karnak, Temple of Amun, Cour de la Cachette

CG 42142



Fig. 5.29 Ramesses II, from Freed 1987: 136

### Physical Description and Condition:

This small figurine (in addition to those in DOCS 30 and 31) was discovered in the Cour de la Cachette as part of a cache of almost one thousand sculptures in a large pit in the courtyard in front of the Seventh Pylon in the Temple of Karnak (Freed 1987: 136). It shows Ramesses II kneeling outstretched with his left knee beneath his body and his right leg stretched behind him. Between his hands he offers an altar-shaped box (Freed 1987: 136). The base has text surrounding it that mentions the *ỉšd*



tree and the top of the base has leaves of the *išd* tree incised into it (Freed 1987: 136). Large portions of the text are missing. The remaining text does not mention the foliage (*g3b.t*) but does mention that the king's records are on the tree (*KRI* II 587.8 and 10). The leaves incised on the statue's base contain the king's name (Matthew 1930: 31). The text mentions that the king is strong in years (*KRI* II 587.8). This brief text is also one of the few that alludes to Egypt's military (*KRI* II 587.11).

**Text:** following *KRI* II 587.6–11 and supplemented by Freed 1987: 136

**On *išd* leaves, front of base:**

(6) *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> nb ḥpš [wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>] ti.t-r<sup>c</sup>*

(6) Userma'atra, Lord of Strength, [Userma'atra], the image of Ra

**On *išd* leaves, top of base, near left knee:**

(7) *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> nb ḥpš wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> ti.t-r<sup>c</sup>*

(7) Userma'atra, Lord of Strength, Userma'atra, the image of Ra

**Base, right half:**

(8) [*ḥr ʿnh*] *k3-nḥt mr m3<sup>c</sup>.t {mn}<s>nn=f ḥfn.w ḥr išd špsy ḥr nbw wsr rnp.wt ʿ3 nḥt* (9) *dī km.t m rš.w m nsy.t=f imi-is m ḥ<sup>c</sup>.w n mry r<sup>c</sup> n=f nsu-bit nb=f 3w.t ḥr [ . . ]*

(8) [May Horus live], the Strong Bull, beloved of Ma'at, whose records are hundreds of thousands upon the august *išd* tree. The Golden Horus, strong in years, the Strong One, (9) given to Egypt the joys of his kingship. The counsellor rejoicing in his name the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, his lord in perpetuity. Horus [. . .]

**Base, left half:**

(10) [*hr*] [*k3*] *nht* [*mr m3<sup>c</sup>.t nb hb*].w[-*sd*] *mi r<sup>c</sup> wr nht.w* {*mn*}<*s*>*nn=f hfn.w hr išd špsy* (11)  
*nb.ty mk km.t w<sup>c</sup>f hs.wt ir.w t3š.w mri.n=f m rt<sup>n</sup>w nsw-bit wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>[*t*]-r<sup>c</sup> [*s3 r<sup>c</sup>*] [. . .]*

(10) [Horus], the Strong [Bull], [beloved of Ma'at, Lord of *sd* Festival]s, like Ra, great in victories, whose records are hundreds of thousands upon the august *išd* tree. (11) The Two Ladies who protects Egypt, who bends down the foreign lands, who makes the boundaries as he pleases in Retenu, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Userma'[at]ra, [Son of Ra (broken cartouche)]

**Reference to Stages:**

This text mentions the king being granted his victories, thus it refers to stage 8 of the ritual.

**DOC 30**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Current: Egyptian Museum in Cairo

Original: Karnak, Temple of Amun, Cour de la Cachette

CG 42143



Fig. 5.30a Ramesses II, from Matthiew 1930: 31, fig. 1



Fig. 5.30b Ramesses II, from Matthiew 1930: 31, fig. 2

**Physical Description and Condition:**

This small figurine (as well as those in DOCS 29 and 31) was discovered in the Cour de la Cachette as part of a cache of almost one thousand sculptures in a

large pit in the courtyard in front of the Seventh Pylon in the Temple of Karnak (Freed 1987: 136). It shows Ramesses II kneeling outstretched with his left knee beneath his body and his right leg stretched behind him. Between his hands he offers a ram's head with his name on it (PM II<sup>2</sup> 142). The figure is broken into five pieces (Legrain 1909: II 8, pl. V). The base has text surrounding it that is missing large sections. Any mention of the *išd* tree is missing, but the top of the base has leaves of the *išd* tree incised into it that contain the prenomen of Ramesses II (Matthiew 1930: 31). The branches are wavy, and the ovoid leaves are staggered along the length of the branches. The text mentions Amun and Ptah, and may have a parallel structure to CG 42142 (DOC 29) due to the mention of the borders with Syria (KRI II 588.1).

**Text:** following KRI II 587.12–16 and 588.1

**Base, front:**

(13) *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mry imn*

(13) Userma'atra, Ramesses beloved of Amun

**Cartouches on *išd* leaves, on (near) top of base:**

(14) *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> nb ḥpš [wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>t-r<sup>c</sup>] [. . .]*

(14) Userma'atra, Lord of Strength (occurs twice) [Userma'atra] [. . .]

**Base, left side:**

(15) [. . . wr šf.t mi it=f B]-tnn nb ḥb.w-sd wsr-m<sup>3</sup>̣.t-ṛ̣ tit-ṛ̣ s3-n-ṛ̣ mi m<sup>3</sup>̣.t (16) twt=f pw ṛ̣-  
ms-sw mr imn [. . .]

(15) [. . . the great ram-headed god (Amun) like his father (Ptah) Ta-]tenen, Lord of  
sd Festivals, Userma'atra, (16) the Image of Ra, the Son of Ra, like Ma'at in  
his image, Ramesses, beloved of Amun [. . .]

**Base, right side:**

(1) [. . . ir.t t3š.w mry rn=f m ṛ̣]n.w nsw-bit wsr-m<sup>3</sup>̣.t-ṛ̣ [. . .]

(1) [. . . make the boundaries, beloved is his name in Ret]enu, the King of Upper and  
Lower Egypt, Userma'atra [. . .]

**Reference to Stages:**

This fragmentary text refers to stage 8 of the ritual in that it alludes to Retenu  
having been conquered.

**DOC 31**

Dynasty: XIX

Ruler: Ramesses II

Location: Current: Egyptian Museum in Cairo

Original: Karnak, Temple of Amun, Cour de la Cachette

CG 42144



Fig. 5.31 Ramesses II, from Legrain 1909: II, pl.VI

### Physical Description and Condition:

This small figurine (as well as those in DOCS 29 and 30) was discovered in the Cour de la Cachette as part of a cache of almost one thousand sculptures in a large pit in the courtyard in front of the Seventh Pylon in the Temple of Karnak (Freed 1987: 136). It is listed by Helck as having *išd* leaves on the base of the statue (1957: 127 [3]) that contain the king's name. It shows Ramesses II kneeling with his hands outstretched offering a naos with three deities on its lid in an anaglyph of his name (PM II<sup>2</sup> 142e). There is no mention of the *išd* tree or its foliage in the text.

**Text:** following KRI II 588.2–7

### Text on front of naos:

(4) *wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-r<sup>c</sup> imn-r<sup>c</sup> nb ns.wt t3.wy nb p.t mry r<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mr imn-r<sup>c</sup> mry r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty  
ntr 3 nb p.t*

(4) Userma'atra Setepenra Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands Lord of the Sky, beloved of Ra, Ramesses, beloved of Ra-Horakhty, Great God, Lord of the Sky.



**Base, right half:**

(5) *ʕnh ntr nfr s3 imn nd.ty n imi w3s.t pr.t 3h.t swḥ.t dsr.t wtt.n* (6) *nsw ntr.w nsw-bit ḥk3 psd.t-pd.wt nb t3.wy wsr-m3ʕ.t-rʕ stp.n-rʕ* [. . .]

(5) May the Good God live, the Son of Amun, protector of him who is in Thebes, beneficial seed, august egg, whom the (6) King of Gods has begotten, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ruler of the Nine Bows, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenra [. . .]

**Base, left half:**

(7) *ʕnh ntr nfr miti rʕ shd t3.wy mi itn nsw-bit ḥk3 3w.t-ib nb t3.wy nb ir.t-h.t nb ḥ3s.wt nb [ḥps]*  
*wsr-m3ʕ.t-rʕ stp.n-rʕ s3* [*rʕ* . . .]

(7) May the Good God live, likeness of Ra, (who) illuminates the Two Lands like the sun disc. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ruler of Joy, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Rituals, Lord of the Foreign Lands, Lord of [Strength], Userma'atra Setepenra, Son of [Ra . . .].

**Reference to Stages:**

The text of this statuette is fragmented and does not preserve any information beyond epithets.

**DOC 32**

Dynasty: XX

Ruler: Ramesses III

Location: Great Temple of Ramesses III, Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall, west wall, Rooms 21a and b



Fig. 5.32a Ramesses III, Medinet Habu, courtesy of the author



Fig. 5.32b Ramesses III, Medinet Habu, courtesy of the author

### **Physical Description and Condition:**

This *šd* tree scene was re-carved during the active life of the temple (The Epigraphic Survey 1954: pl. 448 caption). A wall was added to the hall that subdivided room 21 into parts a and b. It does not join to the back wall of the room, thus it is possible to see parts of the original carving being blocked by the wall. The position of the new wall is directly over the original figure of the king, thus the tree was re-carved and another figure of the king was added facing in the opposite direction to the original and in a slightly reduced scale. Some of the branches of the tree were also recut to

go the opposite direction. Part of the king's torso is covered by the masonry of the additional wall. There are two large cartouches, one of them is also behind the later wall, above the larger figure of the king that reads Ramesses, Ruler of Thebes.

The original scene (figs. 5.32a and b) shows Ramesses III kneeling on a *hb* basket placed atop a *serekh* in front of the *isd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 510 (148 g)). The trunk of the tree splits low to the ground and the wavy branches have ovoid leaves staggered along their length. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name written on them.

The king wears a *nemes* headdress with a uraeus at the brow. He also wears a broad collar. Both of his arms are bent at the elbow with the palms up as if to receive something. There is a *hb-sd* symbol in his near (right) hand.

Amun faces the king and is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne that rests on a plinth. He wears a short, straight kilt with the remnants of a *tit* knot at his waist. His bull's tail extends from between his knees and down in front of his legs. His torso, head, and near (left) arm are damaged. An *nh* and a notched palm branch are visible in the remnants of his near (left) hand. This same hand also holds an *nh* symbol. The upper portion of the palm branch is missing but enough remains to show a *hb-sd* symbol suspended from its top and the lower portion shows a tadpole and *sn* ring at the bottom. Amun's far (right) arm is mostly destroyed. The arm is raised toward the king as if to write on the leaves of the tree. The double plumes and a small part of the modius are all that remain of his headdress. The column of text on this portion of the wall looks as if it was added after the completion of the scene because branches from the tree intertwine through the text. It is also spaced very close to the surrounding elements of the relief.

Thoth stands behind the king. Much of his head, torso, and near (right) arm are severely damaged. His lunar headdress, part of a sash, belt and short, straight kilt remain. His bull's tail hangs down behind him. Thoth's near (right) wrist is visible and so is a portion of the reed pen in his near (right) hand. His far (left) biceps and elbow are visible and raised as if to steady a leaf being written on.

The newer carving affected only the figure of the tree and the king. Some of the branches cross over each other indicating the re-carving. The figure of the king was re-carved in a reduced scale to fit the available space. He still kneels on a *hb* basket. He wears a blue crown and has his far (right) arm raised as if to receive something.

**Text:** following The Epigraphic Survey 1954: VI, pl. 448, supplemented by Helck 1957: 122

#### **Amun-Ra:**

*dd m[dw i]n imn-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w wnn h<sup>w</sup>.t-wsr-m<sup>3</sup>c.t-r<sup>c</sup> [. . .] imn [. . .] htp m hnw=s r<sup>c</sup>-m[s-s mry]  
 imn sš=i rn=k hr išd špsy m sš db<sup>c</sup>.ty=i ds=i r sr=i <f>w dr wn=k hr mnd r nsw hr  
 ns.t=i wnn=k r h<sup>c</sup>w n p.t mi rwd? rn=i d.t*

Recita[tion b]y Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, the Temple of Userma'atra is [. . .] Amun  
 [. . .] who rests in it. O Rame[sses beloved of] Amun. I write your name upon  
 the august *išd* tree in the writing of my own two fingers in order that I might

fore[tell] you were at the breast to (become) king upon my throne, while you  
will exist until the lifetime of the heaven like the durability of my name, eternally.

#### Above the tree:

[wsr-]m3[<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>] m[ry im]n r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw ḥk3 iwnw

[User]ma'[atra] bel[oved of Am]un, Ramses, Ruler of Heliopolis

#### Thoth:

*dd mdw in dhwtj nb ḥmnw sš m3<sup>c</sup>.t n psd.t n s3 r<sup>c</sup> r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw [ḥk3-iwnw] [. . .] smnh [. . .] sš.yt n  
db<sup>c</sup>.ty=i m rn=[k] w[r] [. . .] iśd m iwnw [. . .] mnḥ=i n=k [1 column lost] [r]n=k [ḥr  
iśd š]psy m d3t.t (sp3.t) n.t ḥw.t-(k3)-pth pri m r3 n [rest lost]*

Recitation by Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis, True Scribe of the Ennead, to the Son of Ra,  
Ramesses, [Ruler of Heliopolis], [. . .] confirm [. . .] the writing of my two fingers  
as [your gr]eat name [. . .] the *iśd* tree in Heliopolis [. . .] I make excellent for  
you [1 column lost] your [na]me [upon the aug]ust [*iśd* tree] in the district of  
Memphis, which (?) comes forth from the beginning of [. . .]

#### Reference to Stages:

These relief carvings illustrate two deities possibly writing on the leaves of the  
tree, the king kneeling in the tree, his life and *sd* festivals being granted, and the king

receiving his *sd* festivals. The reliefs illustrate stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual.

The caption mentions the writing of the king's name by two deities, he is granted his life and crowned. The caption refers to stages 3, 5, and 13 of the ritual.



**DOC 33**

Dynasty: XX

Ruler: Ramesses IV

Location: Great Temple of Ramesses III, Medinet Habu, exterior, first pylon, north tower, bottom register



Fig. 5.33 Ramesses IV, Medinet Habu, North Pylon, courtesy of the author

**Physical Description and Condition:**

This scene was first carved by Ramesses IV; however, 'there are extensive plaster traces in the cartouche, and it is likely that Ramesses VI appropriated this scene' (Edgerton 1936: 117, n. 3a). Physical inspection by the author in 1997, 1998,



2009, 2010, 2011, 2017, and 2018 confirm plaster remains and changes to cartouches for Ramesses VI. There is some damage to the text and to some figures.

Ramesses IV kneels in an *isd* tree on a *hb* basket. He holds a crook and flail in his near (left) hand up to his near (left) shoulder. His far (right) hand is extended, palm up with the elbow bent, to receive *hb* and *sd* symbols from Amun. He wears the *hprš* crown with a *uraeus* and a *shebyu* collar. There is a belt at his waist, and his bull's tail extends from between his knees out in front of him.

The trunk of the tree splits low to the ground. The branches are wavy and have ovoid leaves staggered along their lengths. Two leaves are enlarged to show the king's name written on them, and there are two large cartouches above the tree labelling the king as Userma'atra Setepenamun.

Thoth stands behind the king. He wears his usual headdress of a lunar disc over a crescent moon, a tripartite wig, and a short, straight kilt with his bull's tail hanging at the back. He holds a scribal palette in his near (left) hand and a stylus in his far (right) hand as he writes on the leaves of the tree.

Standing behind Thoth is Seshat. She wears a tripartite wig and a long, tight, straight sheath dress with a leopard skin over it and her usual headdress of a seven-pointed palm branch with two down turned horns over it and a *shebyu* collar. She holds a notched palm branch that has three *hb* signs hanging from it at the top in her near (left) hand. In her far (right) hand she holds a stylus and is notching the palm branch.

Facing the king, Thoth, and Seshat are Amun and Ptah. Amun is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne (PM II2 489–490 (49)). He wears a short, straight kilt and his bull's tail extends from between his knees down in front of his legs. He wears

a *shebyu* collar and a headdress of two tall plumes on a modius with the ties hanging down his back, and a curved beard. In his far (left) hand he holds a *w3s* sceptre. In his near (right) hand he holds a notched palm branch which terminates in a tadpole and a *šn* ring and has four *hb* and *sd* symbols suspended from it. The bottom sign rests in the king's far (right) hand.

Ptah, in his usual shrouded form, stands behind Amun. He holds a stylus in his near (right) hand and his far (left) hand is holding the notched palm branch in front of him together with an *nh-dd-w3s* sceptre. The notched palm branch has two *hb* and *sd* symbols suspended from it, and the bottom of it terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Ptah wears a *shebyu* collar, a straight beard, and a skull cap. He also has a lotus flower hanging down behind him and suspended from his collar.

This scene and its counterpart on the south pylon are oddly placed on the temple walls. They are on exterior walls on the outer face of pylons and are seen in only a few of the *išd* tree scenes in the corpus of this work (see also DOCS 23 and 40). This is a place which is usually reserved for battle scenes not coronation or justification scenes. Both scenes occupy small spaces at ground level which were left vacant by the patron of the temple, Ramesses III. The associated scenes on the pylon show mainly Ramesses III in battle, fighting alongside his *k3* and smiting captives (PM II<sup>2</sup> 489–490 (48, 49, 51)). The *išd* tree scene has mast grooves on both sides and dedication texts showing superimposed cartouches of Ramesses IV and VI.

**Text:** Following Edgerton 1936: 147–148, supplemented by Helck 1957: 122–123  
and Breasted 1932: pl. 119b

**Above the tree:**

[*nsw-b*] *it nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-imm s[3 r]<sup>c</sup> nb h<sup>c</sup>.w r<sup>c</sup>-ms-sw mry imm-r<sup>c</sup>*

[King of Upper and L]ower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenamun,  
So[n of R]a, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun-Ra.

**Amun-Ra:**

*d[d mdw i]n imm-r<sup>c</sup> nsw ntr.w nb p.t [hk3] ntr.w n s3=f<sup>26</sup> n h.t=f [mr]y=f nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup>  
stp.n-imm<sup>27</sup> ink it=k špsy nb ntr.w mry tw m h3w r nsw nb iw=i di n=k nhh m [nsw]  
t3.wy*

Re[citation b]y Amun-Ra, King of the Gods, Lord of the Sky, [Ruler] of the Gods, to  
(his) son of his body, his beloved, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra  
Setepenamun, I am your august father, the Lord of the Gods, who loves you  
more than all (other) kings, while I give to you an eternity as [King of] the Two  
Lands.

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<sup>26</sup> Helck adds an f here that is not in the Breasted source but is in the Edgerton translation.

<sup>27</sup> Helck reproduces *stp.n-r<sup>c</sup>*, but Edgerton and Breasted do not.

### **Ptah:**

*d[d md]w in pth nb p.t nsw t3.wy di.n(=i) n=k hb.w-sd ʕs3 wr.t d.t m kny nht nhtw n s3 nw.t  
nsy.t hr m p t3 nb hr tb.ty=k*

Re[citat]ion by Ptah, Lord of the Sky, King of the Two Lands, (I) have given to you a great many *sd* festivals, the eternity in strength and valour, the victories (or strength) of the son of Nut, the kingship of Horus in Pe, and every land under your two sandals.

### **Thoth:**

*dd md[w i]n dhwtj nb hmnw sš=i n=k rnp.wt m h[h] m hb.w-sd di.n(=i) n=k d.t m nsw t3.w hr  
tb.ty=k šn-wr phr-wr m hfʕ=k hr.t inw=sn hr [. . .] kni nht*

Recita[tion b]y Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis, I write for you years with mill[ions] of *sd* festivals. (I) have given to you an eternity as king, lands under your two sandals, and the Great Circuit (ocean) and the *phr-wr* sea are in your grasp, with their tribute on [. . .] brave and strong.

### **Seshat:**

*[dd mdw i]n sš3.t [nb(.t) ntr].w sš=(i) n=[k] [hb.w-s]d n rʕ rnp.wt [nhh] d.t m nsw ʕhʕw=k mi  
itmwn nht ph.ty hr sth mi rwd p.t*

[Recitation b]y Seshat, [Lady of the God]s, (I) write for [you] *sd* festivals of Ra and years [forever and] ever as king, your lifetime like Atum, the strength and power of Horus and Seth, like the persistence of the sky.

### **Reference to Stages:**

These reliefs show a deity writing on the leaves of the tree, several deities granting the king his *sd* festivals, the king kneeling in the tree, and the king receiving his *sd* festivals. These reliefs illustrate stages 3, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The associated caption mentions the king being granted his lifetime, *sd* festivals, and his victories. The caption refers to stages 5, 7, and 8 of the ritual.

## DOC 34

Dynasty: XX

Ruler: Ramesses IV

Location: Medinet Habu, Great Temple of Ramesses III, exterior, first pylon, south tower, bottom register



Fig. 5.34 Ramesses IV, Medinet Habu, South Pylon, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene shows some damage to the figures and text as does its mate on the north tower. The cartouches show more of the plaster remains of Ramesses VI's usurpation of the scene than the scene on the north tower. From the

epigraphic survey records, the re-carving of the cartouches is apparent and the names of both kings can be read in some cartouches on this tower (Edgerton 1936: 147 n. 3a). This information is confirmed by the author's physical inspection in the same years as the north tower.

Ramesses IV kneels on a *ḥb* basket in front of the *išd* tree (PM II<sup>2</sup> 489 (47)). As in the scene on the north tower, the trunk splits low to the ground and the branches are wavy. Ovoid leaves are staggered along both sides of the branches. Only two leaves are enlarged to show the king's name, and they are in the palm of a deity who is writing on them. The king wears a *ḥprš* crown with a *uraeus* and a *shebyu* collar. He appears to wear no other garment except for his bull's tail which extends from between his thighs in front of his legs. His far (left) arm is extended, bent at the elbow, to receive *ḥb-sd* symbols from Amun-Ra. His near (right) arm is missing below the upper biceps but the crook and flail he would have been holding remains in the scene and are held up to his shoulder.

Facing the king is Amun-Ra, who sits on a low-backed, undecorated throne, which in turn rests on a platform. He wears his usual regalia of the double plumed headdress with the ties of the modius hanging down his back and a curved beard. In his near (left) hand he holds an *ꜥnh* and a notched palm branch which terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring and has suspended from its top three *ḥb-sd* symbols the last of which rests in the king's outstretched hand. In Amun-Ra's far (right) hand he holds a *w3s* sceptre.

Mut stands behind Amun-Ra. She stands on the ground line of the scene and not on the platform that supports Amun-Ra's throne. She wears a long, straight, tight-fitting dress and a tripartite wig. Over her wig rests a vulture headdress with its wings

suspended down the sides of her head and behind her ears. A cobra with horns and a solar disc is perched at the top of the headdress next to its vulture head. A double crown fits atop the vulture headdress. Her far (right) hand is down by her side and holds an *ḥnh*. Her near (left) hand is raised with palm out in a gesture of conferring honours, possibly to steady the crown on the king's head.

Khonsu stands on a plinth behind Mut. He is in his usual shrouded form with his hands free from the bandages and holding an *ḥnh-w3s-dd* staff and a crook and flail together in both hands. He wears a curved beard. Most of his head and the lower part of his headdress are destroyed. The front portion of a crescent under a full lunar disc is all that remains visible of his headdress. His sidelock is visible as well as what looks like a large, elaborate broad collar and a counterweight suspended behind him.

Standing behind the kneeling king and facing the Theban Triad is Atum. He is dressed in a short, straight kilt with his bull's tail falling behind him. He wears a *shebyu* collar, a curved beard, and the double crown. In his near (right) hand he holds a stylus to write on the leaves in his far (left) hand.

The sub-scene, here also, is the *išd tree* scene surrounded by mast grooves showing the superimposed cartouches of Ramesses IV and VI (PM II<sup>2</sup> 489 (47)). The other scenes on this half of the pylon mirror those of the north tower (see DOC 33).



**Text:** Following Edgerton 1936: 148–149, supplemented by Helck 1957: 123–124  
and Breasted 1932: pl. 119c

**Above the tree:**

*nsw-bit nb t3.wy wsr-mꜣ.t-rꜥ stp.n-imn sꜣ rꜥ nb ḥꜥ.w rꜥ-ms-sw mry imn-rꜥ*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra Setepenamun,  
Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, Ramesses, Beloved of Amun-Ra

**Amun-Ra:**

*dd mdw in [i]mn-rꜥ nb ns.wt t3.wy ḥnty ip.t-s.wt n sꜣ=f mry=f nb t3.wy wsr-mꜣ.t-rꜥ stp.n-imn  
šsp.n=k ḥb.w-sd ꜥšꜣ.w wr.w d.t m kni [. . .].w n šw tfn.t [r]np.wt n (i)tm(w) [m t3.w] nb  
hr tb.ty=k mi rꜥ rꜥ nb*

Recitation by [A]mun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, who is in front of  
Karnak, to his son, his beloved, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra  
Setepenamun, You have received a great many *sd* festivals, eternity in valour  
[. . .]s of Shu and Tefnut, [the y]ears of Atum [with] all [lands] under your two  
sandals like Ra every day.

**Mut:**

*dd mdw in mw.t nb.t p.t ḥnw.t ntr.w nb.w di.n(=i) n=k ꜥnh wꜣs nb*

Recitation by Mut, Lady of the Sky, Mistress of All the Gods, (I) have given to you all  
life and dominion.

**Khonsu:**

*dd mdw [in hns]w-m-w3s.t nfr-htp di.[n=(i) n]=k [df3].w nb h<sup>c</sup>py [h]r bw nfr*

Recitation [by Khonsu]-in-Thebes, Neferhotep, (I) [have] given [to] you all [provision]s  
of the Nile [w]ith all good.

**Atum:**

*dd mdw in [itm<sup>w</sup>] nb t3.wy iwnwy hry-ib hw.t<sup>c</sup>3.t n s3=f mry=[f] nb t3.wy wsr-m3<sup>c</sup>.t-r<sup>c</sup> stp.n-  
imn sš=i n=k rn=k hr išd špsy m p.t mn.ti hr shn.wt=s rnp.wt m [hb.w-sd] n t3-tnn h<sup>c</sup>w  
r<sup>c</sup> [. . .] r p.t d.t*

Recitation by [Atum], Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan, residing in the Great  
Mansion, of his son, [his] beloved, Lord of the Two Lands, Userma'atra  
Setepenamun, I inscribe for you your name upon the august *išd* tree in the sky,  
while it rests upon its posts, the years of [*sd* festivals] of Ta-tenen, the lifetime  
of Ra, [. . .] of the sky, eternally.

### Reference to Stages:

This relief shows deities writing on the leaves of the tree, the king being granted his lifetime and his *sd* festivals, the king kneeling in the tree, and the king receiving his *sd* festivals. These reliefs illustrate stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption of this scene mentions a deity writing the king's name on the tree, the king being granted his lifetime, his *sd* festivals, and his victories. The associated caption refers to stages 3, 5, 7, and 8 of the ritual.

## DOC 35

Dynasty: XXIII (Theban)

Ruler: Osorkon III/Takelot III

Location: Temple of Amun, Karnak, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet, east inner room, south wall



Fig. 5.35 Osorkon III/Takelot III, Osiris Hekadjet, courtesy of the author

### Physical Description and Condition:

The east inner room of the Osiris Hekadjet chapel at Karnak Temple houses a unique *išd* tree scene (PM II<sup>2</sup> 206 (22 I)). The scene occupies the whole of the top register on the south wall. Large portions of the wall are covered in plaster remains, but any pigment has long since faded. In the centre of the scene, there are two *išd*

trees next to each other with their foliage overlapping at the centre of the wall. Both trunks split low to the ground. The branches are wavy with ovoid leaves staggered along their lengths. The crown of the tree is almost square with rounded edges. Two leaves are enlarged to show the kings' names written on them—one for each king—and there are two cartouches in front of both kings with their names inside them. Unlike all the earlier *išd* tree scenes that show a kneeling king, neither king here is kneeling on a *ḥb* basket. Instead, they are kneeling on branches of the tree.

The left half of the scene (DOC 35a in the forthcoming analysis) shows Osorkon III wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt (PM II<sup>2</sup> 206 (22)), a broad collar, and a tight-fitting garment with a strap that goes over his near (left) shoulder. Both of the king's arms are raised in front of him and bent at the elbow; however, both hands are damaged and whatever was in his hands is gone. He is kneeling in front of the *išd* tree in front of and facing Amun-Ra.

Amun-Ra is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne. He wears his double-plumed headdress with the ties hanging down his back, a curved beard, a *shebyu* collar, and a belt. His bull's tail protrudes from between his thighs and hangs down in front of his lower legs. His near (right) hand holds a stylus and is writing on a leaf of the tree. His far (left) hand holds a leaf of the tree away from the tree. The leaf is enlarged and attached to the branch by a curved stem. Showing the leaf pulled away from the tree and still connected to it is unique in *išd* tree scenes.

On the far left of the scene stands Thoth. He wears a tripartite wig and a short, straight kilt. He holds a leaf in his near (right) hand. In his far (left) hand, which hangs down in front of him, he holds a scribal palette.

The right half of the scene (DOC 35b in the forthcoming analysis) shows Takelot III wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt (PM II<sup>2</sup> 206 (22)), a broad collar, and a tight-fitting garment with a strap that goes over his far (left) shoulder. He wears a bracelet on his near (right) wrist. Both of the king's arms are raised in front of him and bent at the elbow. His near (right) hand is damaged, but his far (left) hand is holding a leaf of the tree. He is kneeling in front of the *išd* tree in front of and facing Atum.

Atum sits on a low-backed, undecorated throne wearing the double crown, a broad collar, a tight-fitting garment with straps that go over both shoulders, arm bands, a belt, and his bull's tail projects from between his thighs and down in front of his lower legs. He grasps an enlarged leaf with his far (right) hand while his near (left) hand holds a stylus to write on the leaf. This leaf is also attached to the tree by means of a curved stem.

Shu stands behind Atum at the far right of the scene (not in the included image). The relief of Shu is damaged to the point that only his kilt and a scribal palette can be seen with any surety.

Upon physical inspection in March 2011 and September 2018, the raised relief carving is heavily damaged. There appear to be plaster remains at all the block joins. It is a double scene and based on compilation of all extant scenes, the only *išd* tree scene carved to honour two kings: Osorkon III and his son, Takelot III. Since part of Takelot III's reign was a coregency with his father, Osorkon III (Dodson 1995: 173 and 2012: 127–134), it is likely that this scene was created as part of the coregency.

The blocks appear to have been re-carved. The position of Atum's near (left) arm on the block seems to come down from his shoulder on his near (left) side and bend at the elbow. The plaster on top shows the near (left) forearm coming across his

torso to write on the leaf. This observation indicates a design shift for the right half of the scene since there is no such change observable on the left half of the scene.

**Text:** following Helck 1957: 124–125, supplemented by author's photo

**Left side (side 'a'):**

**Amun-Ra:**

*dd mdw in imn-r<sup>c</sup> nb ns.wt t3.wy hn.ty ip.t-s.wt mn wsrkn sš(=i) n=k hb.w-sd ʕš3 wr.t h<sup>c</sup>.ti hr  
s.t hr n ʕnh.w hr išd špsy imy ip.t-s.wt*

Recitation by Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, in front of Karnak,  
Stay, Osorkon, (I) write for you a great many *sd* festivals, while you appear  
upon the Horus throne of the living upon the august *išd* tree, which is in Karnak.

**Thoth:**

*dd mdw in [dhwti] nb hmnw 3w-ib=k s3 r<sup>c</sup> [mry]=f wsrkn sš(=i) n=k n it=k špsy imn-r<sup>c</sup> nb ns.t  
t3.wy nsy ʕ3 n.t r<sup>c</sup> hr [išd] špsy nw [. . .] m ntr.w tm.ti*

Recitation by [Thoth], Lord of Hermopolis, be joyful son of Ra, his [beloved], Osorkon,  
(I) write for you for your august father, Amun-Ra, Lord of the Throne of the Two  
Lands, the great kingship of Ra upon the august [*išd* tree] of [. . .] before all the  
gods.

### Right Side (side ‘b’):

#### Atum:

*dd mdw in itmwb nb t3.wy iwnwy s3(=i) mry tklt-mry-imn-s3-3s.t smn=i gn.wt=k m t3 r snn=i m  
iw<sup>c</sup> n šw rnp.wt=k rnp.wt=f m hw.t-sr [h<sup>c</sup>i.ti] hr s.t hr hti m db<sup>c</sup>=i hr išd špsy imy iwnw*

Recitation by Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan, my beloved son, Takelot, beloved of Amun, Son of Isis, I establish your annals on Earth according to my likeness as successor of Shu, your years are as his years in the Mansion of the Noble, [while you appear] upon the Horus Throne, engraved by my finger upon the august *išd* tree, which is in Heliopolis.

#### Shu:

*dd mdw in šw s3 r<sup>c</sup> nb t3.wy tklt-mry-imn-s3-3s.t s-hk3=i [. . .]=k m nsw-bit di.n=i n=k im.t-  
pr=i m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw=k m hw.t-sr hr hr nb p<sup>c</sup>.t*

Recitation by Shu, Son of Ra, Lord of the Two Lands, Takelot, beloved of Amun, Son of Isis, I cause you to rule [. . .] as King of Upper and Lower Egypt, I have given to you my testament that you are justified in the Mansion of the Noble in the presence of Horus, Lord of the Pat (people).



### Reference to Stages:

The left side (DOC 35a) reliefs depict a deity writing on the leaves of the tree and a king kneeling in the tree, thus stages 3 and 10 of the ritual. The left side caption mentions the king being granted his lifetime and his *sd* festivals, thus referring to stages 5 and 7 of the ritual. The right side (DOC 35b) reliefs also depict a deity writing on the leaves of the tree and a king kneeling in the tree, but also depict a king receiving his titulary from a deity, thus stages 3, 10, and 11 of the ritual. The right side caption discusses the king being granted his lifetime and his annals, thus referring to stages 5 and 6 of the ritual.

**DOC 36**

Dynasty: XXVII

Ruler: Darius I

Location: Temple of Hibis, Kharga Oasis, Third Hypostyle Hall, side room III, south wall, top register

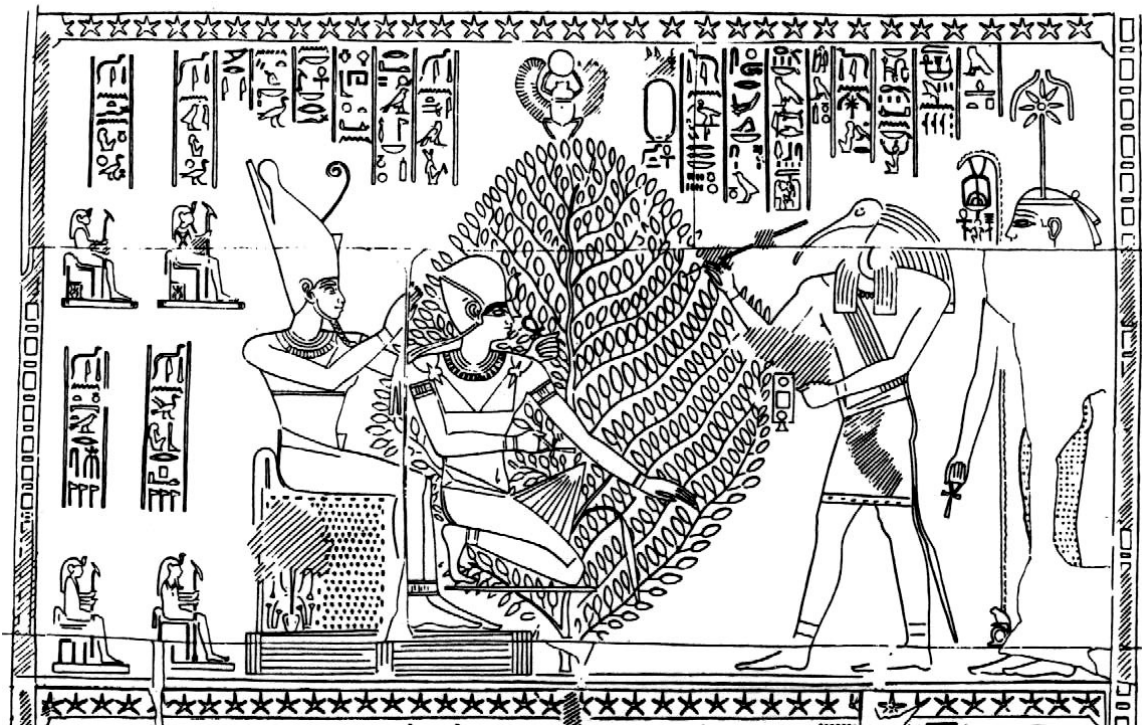


Fig. 5.36 Darius I, Hibis, from Davies 1953: pl. 17

**Physical Description and Condition:**

This *isd* tree scene is in the top register of the south wall (Davies 1953: pl. 17). The most damage is on the far right side, where the figure of Seshat is missing much of her torso and lower legs, but the text appears mostly undamaged.

The *išd* tree in this scene has a thin trunk. The tree has ovoid leaves running the full length of the tops of its thin, wavy branches. Only the branches at the bottom of the tree have leaves along both sides. The crown of foliage is diamond-shaped, and no leaves are enlarged to show the king's name. This change in iconography is unique in all representations of *išd* trees and may be the Persian influence of Darius I.

Darius I kneels on a register line above the scene's ground line in front of the *išd* tree with his back to and in front of Atum (PM VII 284 (94)). He wears a *hprš* crown with the ties winding from the back of the crown around in front of his ears, and then streaming behind him. He wears an elaborate broad collar, arm bands, bracelets, and anklets. His garment is close fitting and has a wide strap extending from below the pectoral area up over each shoulder and appears to be secured by a fibula or tie on each side. His kilt has a large triangular section at the front, and his bull's tail hangs in an arc in front of his knees. The king's far (left) arm is extended down and to the front while his near (right) arm is bent and holds an *ꜥnh*.

Behind the king, Atum-Ra-Horakhty sits on a low-backed throne that is up on a platform decorated with a rishi pattern and the heart and lungs hieroglyph, which is intertwined with a lotus plant and a papyrus plant. He wears the double crown and a braided, curved false beard. His broad collar, bracelets, and anklets are ornate. His close-fitting garment also has a short, straight kilt and straps which extend over his shoulders, but possible fibulae or ties are not visible. Atum-Ra-Horakhty holds up his near (right) hand with his palm toward the rear of the king's head, and his far (left) arm circles behind the king holding an *ꜥnh* to the king's nose and mouth. The two gestures together can be construed as placing the crown on the king's head.

Behind Atum-Ra-Horakhty sit four of the children of Ra (Shu, Tefnut, Geb, and Nut), also on low-backed thrones with small platforms. This is the first extant *išd* tree scene to show any of the Children of Ra looking on and may indicate the council of gods called together to meet as discussed in the Festal Wall Stela (KRI VI: 5.1–3 and 7.8–10).

To the right of the tree and facing the king, Atum-Ra-Horakhty, and the children of Ra stand Thoth and Seshat. Thoth stands in front of and faces Atum-Ra-Horakhty and Darius I. He wears an undecorated kilt which has a band at the hem and a sash that runs diagonally across his chest from his far (right) shoulder to his near (left) hip. His bull's tail hangs behind him. A small portion of his broad collar is visible beneath his tripartite wig. He wears bracelets and anklets. In his near (left) hand is a scribal palette, and in his far (right) hand he holds a stylus and is writing on the leaves of the tree. No leaves are enlarged to tell the viewer what Thoth is writing, but according to Davies (1953: 19), it is the king's name being written on the leaves of the tree. However, the caption lists the annals of the king recorded on the tree with no mention of the foliage.

Seshat stands behind Thoth and faces the king. Most of her figure is damaged. Her headband and headdress are clearly visible. Her far (right) hand hangs down and holds an *ʿnh*, and her near (left) arm is missing. The lower portion of her body is less damaged than the rest of her figure and shows her to be wearing a leopard skin over her long, straight dress. A notched palm branch stands in front of her with a *hb* symbol suspended from it and a figure of Ma'at holding an *ʿnh* and a *dd* pillar beneath it. The palm branch terminates in a tadpole perched on a *šn* ring. She is not writing on the tree.

This *išd* tree scene has a couple of unexpected features in it that make it different from those that have come before it. First, the king has a solid, separate ground line inside the tree. Kings usually either share the ground line with the standing deities or have no specifically drawn ground line. Second, this *išd* scene is the only one to show garment ties on the figures' dress. It is an archaising feature that may have been used by Darius I to create an illusion to the Egyptian people that he was not really a foreign ruler.

In addition, the iconography of the tree makes it appear insubstantial. The texts appear to be formatted in the standard template of *dd mdw in* [deity's name] [speech], but there is no speech following the deities' names and epithets.

**Text:** following Davies 1953: 19, pl. 17 and 74c

**Above the tree:**

*nsw-bit* [cartouche] *ʕnh d.t*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, [illegible cartouche]<sup>28</sup> living eternally

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<sup>28</sup> Line drawing in Davies (1953: pl.17) shows an empty cartouche; however, the photographic plate in the same volume (Davies 1953: pl 74c) shows a cartouche which may have some carving but no signs are legible.

**Atum-Ra-Horakhty:**

*dd mdw in itm-r<sup>c</sup>-hr-3hty ntr 3 nb iwnw hr(y)-ib hb.t di.n(=i) n=k ʕnh w3s nb r fnd=k s3(=i)  
mry*

Recitation by Atum-Ra-Horakhty, Great God, Lord of Heliopolis, who resides in Hibis,  
(I) have given to you all life and dominion to your nose, (my) beloved son.

**Shu:**

*dd mdw in šw s3 r<sup>c</sup>*

Recitation by Shu, Son of Ra

**Tefnut:**

*dd mdw in tfn.t s3.t r<sup>c</sup>*

Recitation by Tefnut, Daughter of Ra

**Geb:**

*dd mdw in gb iry-p<sup>c</sup>(.t) ntr.w*

Recitation by Geb, Heir of the Gods

### Nut:

*dd mdw in nw.t wr.t ms(.t) ntr.w*

Recitation by the Great Nut, bearer of the gods

### Thoth:

*dd mdw in dhwtj 3 3 nb hnmw sphr(=i) gnw.t=k m isd špsy m hwt.t-sr m iwnw*

Recitation by Thoth, double great, Lord of Hermopolis, (I) inscribe<sup>29</sup> your annals on  
the august *isd* tree in the Mansion of the Noble at Heliopolis.

### Seshat:

*dd mdw in sš3.t wr.t nb(.t) sš di.(i) n=k hh m ʕnh dd w3s nb hfn.w n rnp.wt m htp*

Recitation by the Great Seshat, Lady of Writing, (I) give to you a million of all life,  
stability, and dominion and hundreds of thousands of years in peace.

---

<sup>29</sup> Davies (1953: 19) uses *sphr* as an epithet of Thoth, but after discussions with E.S. Meltzer, we agree that it is instead a *sdm=f* form.

**Reference to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree, the king being granted his lifetime and *sd* festivals, the king kneeling in the tree, and his being crowned. In the caption, a deity grants the king his lifetime and annals. This relief carving illustrates stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 13 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5 and 6 of the ritual.



## DOC 37

Dynasty: Ptolemaic Period

Ruler: Ptolemy IV

Location: Temple of Horus, Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux, east wall, top register

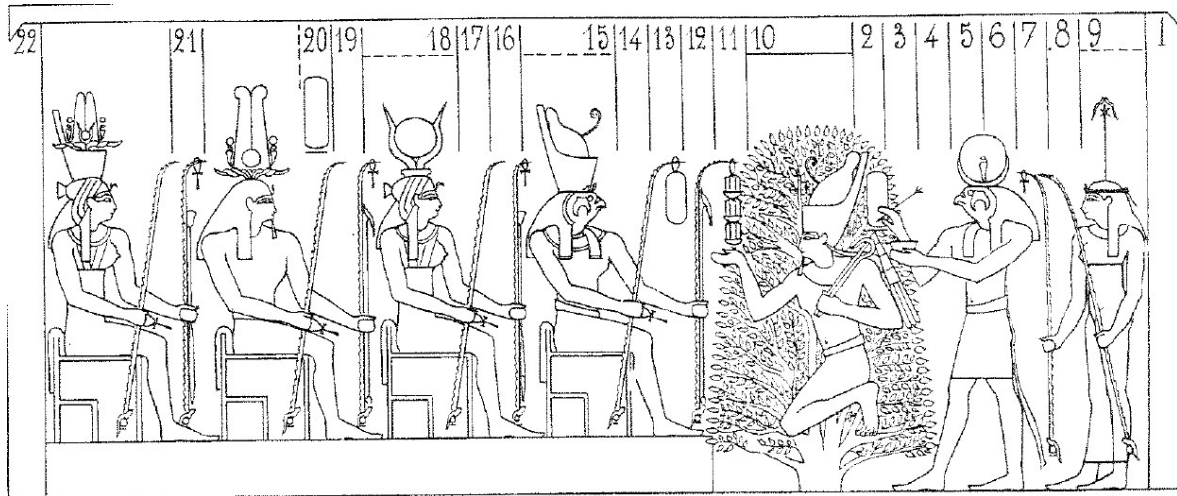


Fig. 5.37 Ptolemy IV, Temple of Horus, Edfu, from Chassinat 1897: pl. XIX right

### Physical Description and Condition:

In this *isd* tree scene Ptolemy IV kneels in front of the *isd* tree and faces an enthroned Horus. According to Porter and Moss (VI 148 (235–236)), Knons-Thoth [sic] and Sefkhet-weret stand behind the king and write his name on the *isd* tree. The caption clearly labels the goddess as Seshat-weret, and she is not shown writing on the tree. Enthroned behind Horus are Hathor, Ptolemy II, and Arsinoë II (wrongly called Khnum) (PM VI 148 (235–236)).

Physical inspection in 2017 shows the reliefs to have some damage and little if any pigment remaining; however, they are in the top register under a missing block at the roof line that causes such glare to the viewer that further inspection is not possible without scaffolding and artificial lighting. What can be seen is enough to corroborate the number and placement of figures to match those in the line drawing from Chassinat shown above (Chassinat: 1897: pl. XIX right).

The tree has a single thick trunk that splits low to the ground; its wavy branches have ovoid leaves sprouting from both sides of them. No leaves are enlarged to show the king's name, but there is a cartouche in the foliage being written on by a deity.

Ptolemy IV kneels in front of the *išd* tree. He does not kneel on a *hb* basket nor is he supported by a ground line or branch. He appears suspended in the air. The king wears the double crown, a beard, a broad collar, and a belt. His near (left) arm is bent and holding the crook and flail up to his near (left) shoulder. His far (right) hand is bent and held out palm up to receive *sd* festivals from Khonsu-Thoth.

Seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne is Khonsu-Thoth. He wears the double crown, a tripartite wig, a broad collar, and a belt. His far (left) arm is outstretched and holds a *w3s* sceptre and a notched palm branch toward the king. The palm branch terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring and has several *hb-sd* symbols suspended from it. His near (right) hand holds a notched palm branch that terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring and has a large cartouche suspended from it. In that same hand is also an *ꜥnh* symbol.

Hathor is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne behind Khonsu-Thoth. She wears a headdress of a solar disc and cow's horns over vulture wings and a tripartite wig with a uraeus. She also wears a broad collar over a tight-fitting, straight

dress that has straps ascending over each shoulder. In her far (left) hand she holds a lotus-topped sceptre and a notched palm branch with an *ʿnh* suspended from the top and terminating in a tadpole and *šn* ring. Her near (right) hand holds an *ʿnh* and a notched palm branch terminating in a tadpole and *šn* ring.

Seated behind Hathor is Ptolemy II, also on an undecorated, low-backed throne. He wears an *3tf* crown, tripartite wig, a beard, and a belt. There is a uraeus at his brow. In his far (left) hand he holds a *w3s* sceptre and a notched palm branch with an *ʿnh* suspended from the top and a tadpole and *šn* ring at the bottom. In his near (right) hand he holds an *ʿnh* and a notched palm branch with an *ʿnh* suspended from the top and terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring.

Arsinoë II is also seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne. She is behind Ptolemy II. She wears an *3tf* crown on top of a red crown; both of which are over vulture wings and a tripartite wig and uraeus. Her broad collar and gown match those of Hathor. The items in her hands also mirror those in Hathor's hands.

**Text:** following Cauville and Devauchelle 1984: I, 112

#### **Above the tree:**

*išd špsy m bḥd.t št3.t ḥ3.wt n ntr.w wr.w*

The august *išd* tree in Edfu, the shrine of the corpses of the great gods.

### Khonsu-Thoth:

*dd mdw in hnsu-dhwti ntr 3 hr-ib bhd.t hri-tp n ntr.w rmt sphr(=i) rnp.wt=k m hh(.w) hr hh.w  
hr isd špsy m bhd.t h3w=k pw h3w hr shn.wt rh.t=s tp=k h3b3s tp t3 n hm=k h(.w) hr  
srh hn.ty n hm*

Recitation by Khonsu-Thoth, Great God in the middle of Edfu, master of the gods and people: (I) write your years as millions upon millions upon the august *isd* tree in Edfu. Your lifetime is the lifetime ? (of) the (four) supports (of heaven). Its amount for you (is) the starry sky on the ground for your Majesty, appearing in glory upon the Serekh for an unknown eternity.

### Seshat:

*dd mdw in ss3.t wr.t nb(.t) ss.w wr.t hk3.w hn.wt pr-md3.t ini=i n=k hb.w-sd wr.w n t3-tnn hr  
tnt3.t=fm 3h.t st3.t [nsy.t] 3.t r-hr-3hty hr.t ns.t=fm sbh.t t3 pn h(.w) pw n hr hr shm.ty  
hr s.t=f hn.ty s.t-wr.t iw(.w) n h.t=i pr m h(.w)=i hry t3.wy hn.ty nh.w ib=i htp(.w) hr  
mnw(.w) ir(.w).n=k k=s m 3w.t-ib*

Recitation by the Great Seshat, Lady of Writing, Great of Magic, Mistress of the Library, I bring to you an excess of *sd* festivals of Tatenen on his dais in the secret horizon of the great [kingship] of Ra-Horakhty on his throne in the gateway of this land. It is the lifetime of Horus wearing the Double Crown upon his throne in front of the Great Seat. Heir of my body who comes out from my

members, chief of the two lands who is at the head of the living. My heart is pleased with the monuments you made, so that she enters (them) with joy.

#### Horus:

*dd mdw in hr-bhd.t ntr ʕ3 nb p.t hr snn in ntr m33=f sš3 ʕnh.t m33=f hp(r) hrw ʕh n ir.t=f st hp  
grh*

Recitation by Horus of Edfu, Great God, Lord of the Sky under the darkness, it is the god who will see the living pass by. He will see the day come to pass. His eye lifted up and it comes to pass at night.

#### Hathor:

*dd mdw in hw.t-hr wr.t nb.t hpr.t ir.t rʕ hry.t-tp m-h3.t=f hr=s sk<.s> nn šsp hđ.wty m m3.wy  
n[.t] wd3.ty=s nbi=k s.t wnp.t n hr bhd.t di=f n=k hrwy m kn.t=f*

Recitation by the Great Hathor, Lady of Kheperet, Eye of Ra, Uraeus on his brow. She (always) destroys the darkness. Shining Dawn renews by means of the radiance of her two Horus-eyes. You gild the seat of the triumph of Horus of Edfu that he may give to you the people by means of his valour.

#### Ptolemy II:

*dd mdw in nsw wtt ntr it=f ptwlmys m3ʕ-hrw nhp=k hw.t-hr niw.t n rʕ hr hr mtn.wt m ns.t nb.wy*

Recitation by the king, begotten by the god his father, Ptolemy, justified. You formed  
Hathor-town on your potter's wheel for Ra and Horus, you being rewarded with  
the throne of the Two Lords.

### Arsinoë II:

*dd mdw in mw.t-ntr ir.t hr it irsn3.t m3(.t)-hrw dd mdw in di=i n=k h.t mn.t m hr.w m mn.w=k  
imy.w=f nb(.w) h3(.w) m h.t n=k nh.wt nb(.w) sn im=k nn b3t im=sn r=k*

Recitation by the mother of the god, Eye of Horus, the father, Arsinoë, justified.

Recitation: I give to you enduring things, namely the people, as your  
monuments, who are all in him, being descended as property for you, and all  
the trees are there with you, there not being a bad word among them against  
you.

### Reference to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates a deity writing on the tree, the king being granted  
his lifetime and *sd* festivals, the king kneeling in the tree, and receiving his *sd* festivals.  
In the caption, the king is granted his lifetime and *sd* festivals, he sits on the throne as  
rightful ruler, and has given reciprocal gifts for his divine gifts. This relief carving  
illustrates stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5, 7, 14,  
and 15 of the ritual.

## DOC 38

Dynasty: Ptolemaic Period

Ruler: Ptolemy IV

Location: Temple of Horus, Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, north wall, top register

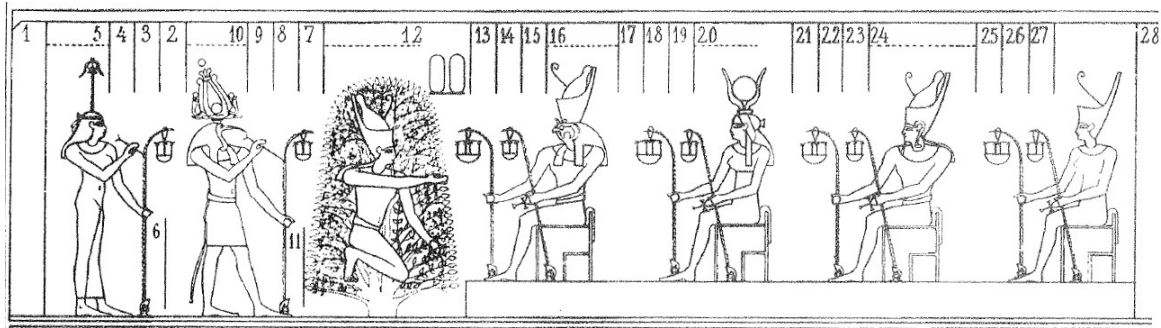


Fig. 5.38 Ptolemy IV, Temple of Horus, Edfu, from Chassinat 1929: IX, pl. XXIXa

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *isd* tree scene is on the north wall of the Chapel of the Throne of Ra (PM VI 152 (277)). It is carved in raised relief and shows relatively little damage to the blocks and no pigment remaining.

The tree has a broad, short trunk that splits low to the ground. Many branches are thick and have smaller, thinner branches growing from them. The leaves are ovoid and staggered along the full length of the branches. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name on them.

The king kneels in front of the *isd* tree, with no visible form of support, facing a group of gods who are all enthroned on a raised platform. He wears the double crown with ties that stream out behind him and a belt.

Horus is seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne facing the king. He wears the double crown and a uraeus over a tripartite wig. He also wears a broad collar and a belt.

Hathor sits behind Horus on the same type of throne. She wears a solar disc headdress with cow's horns and vulture wings over a tripartite wig, and a broad collar. The line for the bodice of her dress is just below her breasts.

Horsamtowy sits behind Hathor on the same type of throne. He is dressed the same way as Horus, although without the tripartite wig. His sidelock shows clearly in the relief carving.

Wadjet sits behind Horsamtowy at the far right side of the scene. She wears the red crown and a broad collar and is seated on the same type of throne as the other seated deities.

All four of the seated deities hold notched palm branches in both of their hands that have *ḥb-sd* symbols suspended from the tops and terminate in tadpoles and *šn* rings. In addition, they all hold *ḥnḥ* symbols in their near (right) hands.

Thoth and Seshat stand behind the king (Chassinat 1929: IX, pl. XXIXa; PM VI 152 (277)) and face the seated deities, although the text in Cauville and Devauchelle (1984: I, 291) label her as Safkhit-aboui [sic] while reproducing text that clearly lists her as Seshat-weret.

Thoth wears an *3tf* crown, a tripartite wig, a broad collar, a short, straight kilt, and his bull's tail hangs behind him.

Seshat wears her palm leaf and horn headdress with a broad collar and long, straight, close-fitting dress. Her headband is tied behind her head, and she does not wear a tripartite wig.



The standing deities each hold a notched palm branch in their far (left) hands and a stylus in their near (right) hands, which are bent and notching the palm branches.

**Text:** following Cauville and Devauchelle 1984: I, 291–292

### **The King:**

*nsw-bit nb t3.wy iw<sup>c</sup>-ntr-mnh s3 r<sup>c</sup> nb h<sup>c</sup>.w -p(tlmys) mry-3s.t*

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Heir of the Beneficent God,

Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, P(tolemy), beloved of Isis

### **Above the tree:**

*išd špsy m bhd.t*

The august *išd* tree in Edfu

### **Thoth:**

*sphr n=k h<sup>c</sup>.w n n<sup>c</sup>h dd w3s ns.yt=k p.ty m ns.t=k dd mdw in dhwtj nb hmnw nb mdw-ntr sš*

*m3<sup>c</sup> n psd.t ht rnp.wt nt h<sup>c</sup> m nsw nhb(.t) wš n h<sup>c</sup>3-srh nhb(.w) n=k hb.w-sd hnm n=k*

*irw d.t 3bh=k im=f*

(He) who caused the writing for you of millions of lives, stability, and dominion of your kingship and the two seats of your throne. Recitation by Thoth, Lord of Hermopolis, Lord of the Sacred Writings, True Scribe of the Ennead, who engraves the years of the one who appears as king. A titulary is necessary for the ruler of the palace, *sd* festivals are assigned to you. Unite to yourself the form of eternity so that you merge with him.

### Seshat:

*sphr.t gn.wt=k m ḥḥ.w n ḥb.w-sd dd mdw in sš3.t wr.t nb.t sš wr(.t) ḥk3.w ḥnty pr-md3.t ḥsb(.t)*  
*ḥt nb m t3 ḥr ndb=f ḥt wd.t nt nb-r-dr ḥt nsy.t=k r ḥnty r<sup>c</sup> rnp.wt n (i)tm(w) m ḥr(y)*  
*sḥm.ty dd mdw nḥb(.w) nsy.t=k m ḥḥ.w ḥr ḥḥ[.w] rnp.wt=k r dnw.t (i)tm(w) nḥḥ ḥr*  
*bḥd.t d.t sp sn ḥr wts(.t) ḥn.ty pw m s.t wr.t*

She who writes your annals consisting of millions of *sd* festivals. Recitation by the Great Seshat, Lady of Writing, Great of Magic, who is at the head of the library, who reckons everything in the entire world, who engraves the decree of the Lord of All, who engraves your sovereignty until the eternity of Ra, the years of Atum as possessor of the double crown. Recitation: Your sovereignty is assigned as millions upon millions of your years as far as the portion of Atum (as) an eternity in Edfu, forever and forever upon the throne; it is an eternity on the Great Seat.

### Horus:

*di[.n]=i wts=k nfr(.t) hnm=k nt h<sup>c</sup> nb.ty m tp=k dd mdw in hr bhd.t ntr 3 nb p.t b3 h(3)h msw(.t)  
pr m r<sup>c</sup> bik ntr.y hk3 m srh h3.t h mr n.t [sic] nsy.w*

I have caused you to put on the White Crown and that you join with the Red Crown,  
the Two Ladies appearing on your head. Recitation by Horus of Edfu, Great  
God, Lord of the Sky. Ba, fleet of form, who comes forth from Ra, Divine  
Falcon, ruler on the Serekh in front of the brazier, overseer of kings.

### Hathor:

*di[.n]=i n=k h<sup>c</sup>.w m nsw t3.wy hk3.t nh.w nb(.w) d.t dd mdw in hw.t-hr iwn.t nb(.t) p.t hr(.yt)-  
ib bhd.t nb.ty rhy.t hnw.t t3.wy stn.y mr=s r hk3 m srh n wd(.w) h<sup>c</sup>.w m-hm(.t)=s*

I have given to you crowns of the King of the Two Lands, rulership of all the living  
forever. Recitation by Hathor of Dendera, Lady of Heaven, who resides in Edfu,  
Two Ladies of the commoners, Mistress of the Two Lands, who crowns the  
one she loves to be ruler in the Serekh. The crowns cannot be given without  
her.

### Horsamtawy:

*di[.n]=i n=k rsy <r> r-<sup>c</sup> mh.ty <r> r-<sup>c</sup> kk.w dd mdw in hr-sm3-t3.wy ntr-3 hry-ib bhd.t s3 wsir  
ms n 3s.t bik ntr.y h<sup>c</sup> hr wts=f d(.w) i3.wt m s.t-wr.t*

I have given to you the South, as far as the North, as far as the darkness. Recitation by Horsamtawy, Great God, in the middle of Edfu, son of Osiris, born of Isis, Divine Falcon, who stands upon his throne, who gives offices on the great throne.

### Wadjet:

*di[.n]=i n=k pḥ.ty n ḥr m nsw it=k p.wy mi ḥm=f dd mdw in w3d.yt mḥn.t ḥr.y(t) w3d{.t}=s  
d.n=i n=k ks.t i3b.t n (i)tm(w) dd mdw di=i <n>=k ḥw n.ty nb.ty wts=k nfr n n wr(.ty)-  
ḥk3.w tw.t ḥm=k r[. . .] ḥr s3 rḥ wtṯ n 3sb.t*

I have given to you the strength of Horus as king, that you may take possession of the Two Thrones as his majesty. Recitation by Wadjet, Mehenet-serpent who is upon her papyrus plant, I have given to you the eastern coiled serpent of Atum. Recitation: I give <to> you the crowns of the Two Ladies and your beautiful throne of the Two Great Ones of Magic. Your majesty is more pleasing than [. . .], Horus, the son of Ra, begotten of Asbet.

### Reference to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates deities granting the king his *sd* festivals and lifetime, and the king kneels in the tree and receives his *sd* festivals. In the caption, the king's titulary is created and he is granted his lifetime, annals, and *sd* festivals. In addition, he is crowned and sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt. This relief

carving illustrates stages 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 2, 5, 6, 7, 13, and 14 of the ritual.

## DOC 39

Dynasty: Ptolemaic Period

Ruler: Ptolemy IV

Location: Temple of Horus, Edfu, Chapel of the throne of Ra, south wall, top register

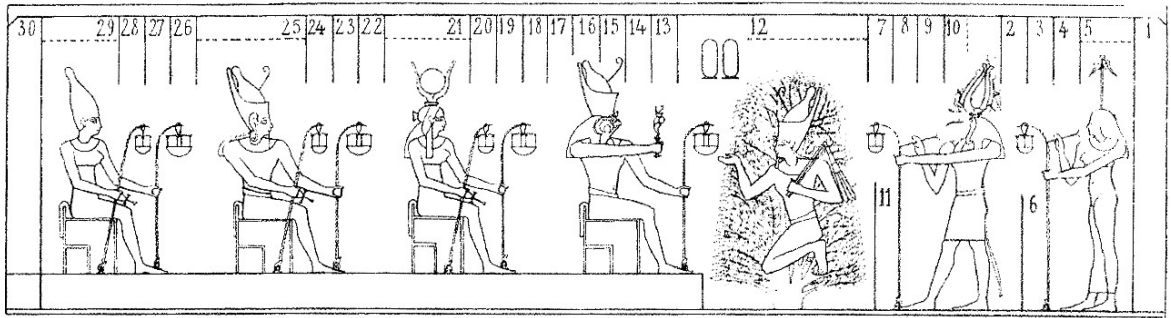


Fig. 5.39 Ptolemy IV, Temple of Horus, Edfu, from Chassinat 1929: IX, pl. XXIXa

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *isd* tree scene is on the south wall of the Chapel of the Throne of Ra (PM VI 152 (278)). It is carved in raised relief and shows relatively little damage to the blocks; no colour remains. In basic composition, this scene is a mirror image of its mate on the north wall.

The king kneels in front of the *isd* tree without a ground line. The tree has a broad trunk that splits low to the ground. Many branches are thick and wavy and have smaller branches coming off them. The leaves are ovoid and staggered along both sides of the branches. None of the leaves is enlarged to show the king's name on them.

The king wears the double crown, a broad collar, and a belt. His near (left) arm is bent and holds a crook and flail up to his near shoulder. His far (right) arm is also bent but out in front of him with the palm up to receive the *hb-sd* symbols being offered to him by a deity.

Facing the king and seated on a low-backed, undecorated throne is Horus. He wears the double crown and a tripartite wig and a belt. In his far (left) hand he holds a notched palm branch with a single *hb-sd* symbol suspended from it at the top, and it terminates in a tadpole and *šn* ring. In his near (right) hand he holds out in front of him towards the king a small sceptre with a rearing cobra wearing the red crown.

Hathor sits behind Horus on the same type of throne. She wears a solar disc headdress with cow's horns and vulture wings over a tripartite wig and a broad collar. The line for the bodice of her dress is just below her breasts.

Horsamtawy sits behind Hathor on the same type of throne. He is dressed the same way as Horus, although without the tripartite wig. His sidelock shows clearly in the relief carving.

Nekhet sits behind Horsamtawy at the far left side of the scene. She wears the white crown and a broad collar and is seated on the same type of throne as the other seated deities.

All four of the seated deities hold notched palm branches in their far (left) hands that have *hb-sd* symbols suspended from the tops and terminate in tadpoles and *šn* rings. However, Hathor, Horsamtawy, and Nekhet have the same notched palm branches in their near (right) hands as well. In addition, they hold *ꜥnh* symbols in their near (right) hands.

Thoth and Seshat stand behind the king (Chassinat 1929: IX, pl. XXIXa; PM VI 152 (278)) and face the seated deities, although Seshat is incorrectly identified as Sefkhet-nezet (PM VI 152 (278)).

Thoth wears an *3tf* crown, a tripartite wig, a broad collar, a short, straight kilt, and his bull's tail hangs behind him.

Seshat wears her palm leaf and horn headdress with a broad collar and long, straight, close-fitting dress. Her headband is tied behind her head, and she does not wear a tripartite wig.

The standing deities each hold a notched palm branch in their near (left) hands and a stylus in their far (right) hands, which are bent and notching the palm branches.

**Text:** following Cauville and Devauchelle 1984: I, 297–298

### **The King:**

*nsw-bit nb 3.wy ntr 3 iw<sup>c</sup>-ntr-mnh s3 r<sup>c</sup> nb h<sup>c</sup>w(.w) mry-p-3s.t*

The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Great God, Heir of the  
Beneficent God, Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, Beloved of the Throne of Isis

### **Above the tree:**

*išd špsy m bhd.t*

The august *išd* tree in Edfu



### Thoth:

*dd mdw in dhwti wp rh.wy t[r] shtp ntr.w sš m3<sup>c</sup> n psd.t nb wrš hsb rnp.wt sfh wnn=t nb(.t) m  
t3 d.t nhh hh.w hfn.w db<sup>c</sup>.w h3.w š.wt mdw šnw*

Recitation by Thoth, who judged the Two Combatants at the time of propitiating the gods, True Scribe of the Ennead, Lord who reckons the years, who sets in writing everything that exists in the world, forever and ever, millions, hundreds of thousands, tens of thousands, thousands, hundreds, and tens of infinity.

### Seshat:

*dd mdw in sš3.t nds(.t) hnw.t pr-md3.t sphr wrš n n psd.t hti rnp.wt nt h<sup>c</sup>.w wr m hk3 dr p3w.t  
tpy(.t) r-mn min nsy.t n (i)tm(w) hk3(.t) n šw ns.t gb dd mdw sphr=t(w) nsy.t=k r hb.w-  
sd n t3-tnn hr tn3.t=f m 3h.t t3.wy d(w).(w)=k h<sup>c</sup>.w hr ns.t šw m hn(w)=f nfr m h3 nfr m  
inb-hd*

Recitation by Little Seshat, Mistress of the Library, who writes a period of time for the Ennead, who engraves the years of a great lifetime as ruler since the first primeval age up to today the kingship of Atum, the rulership of Shu, the throne of Geb. Recitation: Your kingship is written as far as the *sd* festivals of Tatenen on his dais in the horizon of the Two Lands. You have been caused to appear on the throne of Shu, in his beautiful residence in the beautiful office in Memphis.

### Horus:

*di[.n](=i) n=k hpš=i nh.t ph.ty=k tw.t knw rn nh.t dd mdw in hr bhd.t ntr ʕ3 nb msn iwʕw n hh  
hk3 d.t nb i3w.t di n mr=f di nsy.t n šm hr mw=f*

(I) have given to you my strength that your strength may be victorious (?) perfect of  
valour, a mighty name, Recitation by Horus of Edfu, Great God, Lord of Mesen,  
Heir of eternity, Ruler of eternity (or forever) Lord of Offices, who gives because  
he loves, who gives the kingship to the one who is loyal to him.

### Hathor:

*mhn.yt hr tp=k mi nb-r-dr iw=k (hr) hd[y]=i (?) rʕ nb hnw.t rʕ dd mdw in hw.t-hr iwn.t ir.t rʕ  
hr-ib bhd.t s3.t=f pr m hʕw=f hry.t-tp=k m tp (i)tm(w) stny hm=f hnt šnw.t*

The Coiled One, on your head, like the Lord of Eternity, you, the Behedite, Mistress  
of Ra. Recitation by Hathor of Dendera, Eye of Ra in the middle of Edfu, his  
daughter who comes out from his members (body), who is on your head as the  
head of Atum, who elevates His Majesty at the head of the courtiers.

### Horsamtawy:

*di[.n]=i n=k nh.t n hr m <p> hk3=k t3.wy mi hm=f dd mdw in hr-sm3-t3.wy ntr ʕ3 hr-ib bhd.t  
s3 rʕ pr m hʕw=f hwn nfr [. . .] dmd mhr nsr.t m mnd.ty=s*

I have given to you the strength of Horus in <Pe><sup>30</sup> that you may rule the Two Lands as His Majesty. Recitation by Horsamtawy, Great God, in the middle of Edfu, Son of Ra, who comes forth from his body, beautiful youth [. . .] joined whom Nesret nurses from her two breasts.

### Nekhet:

*hrw=k rk wbn.w m p.t rnpī hm=k mi i<sup>c</sup>h ntr dd mdw in nhb.t št3 nb.t f<sup>c</sup>g tm3 pd.t imn.t mw.t n  
r<sup>c</sup> w3d.t nsr.t hd.t psd.w dgi t3.wy m wbn=s dd mdw stwt ph.ty=k r hm r<sup>c</sup> iw knw=k r s3  
3s.t d(w)=k hpš=k shr=k h3kw-ibw=k btš.w r=k hr š<sup>c</sup>.t=k*

Your day and time shines like the sky (heaven). Your Majesty is rejuvenated like the Moon. Recitation by Mysterious Nekhet, Lady of Claw Town, Strong one of the western bow, Mother of Ra, Wadjet, shining flame, who beholds the Two Lands when she rises. Recitation: Your strength resembles the majesty (person) of Ra so that your valour comes to the Son of Isis so that you place your strength, (and) so that you may overthrow your disaffected ones who rebel against you under your knife.

### References to Stages:

This relief carving illustrates deities granting the king his *sd* festivals and lifetime, and the king kneels in the tree and receives his *sd* festivals. The associated

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<sup>30</sup> Möller 1936: III 37.

caption mentions the king being granted his lifetime and victories and his being placed on the throne of Egypt. This relief carving illustrates stages 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5, 8, and 14 of the ritual.

## DOC 40

Dynasty: Roman Period

Ruler: Hadrian

Location: Temple of Khnum, Esna, Hypostyle Hall, exterior, north wall, bottom register

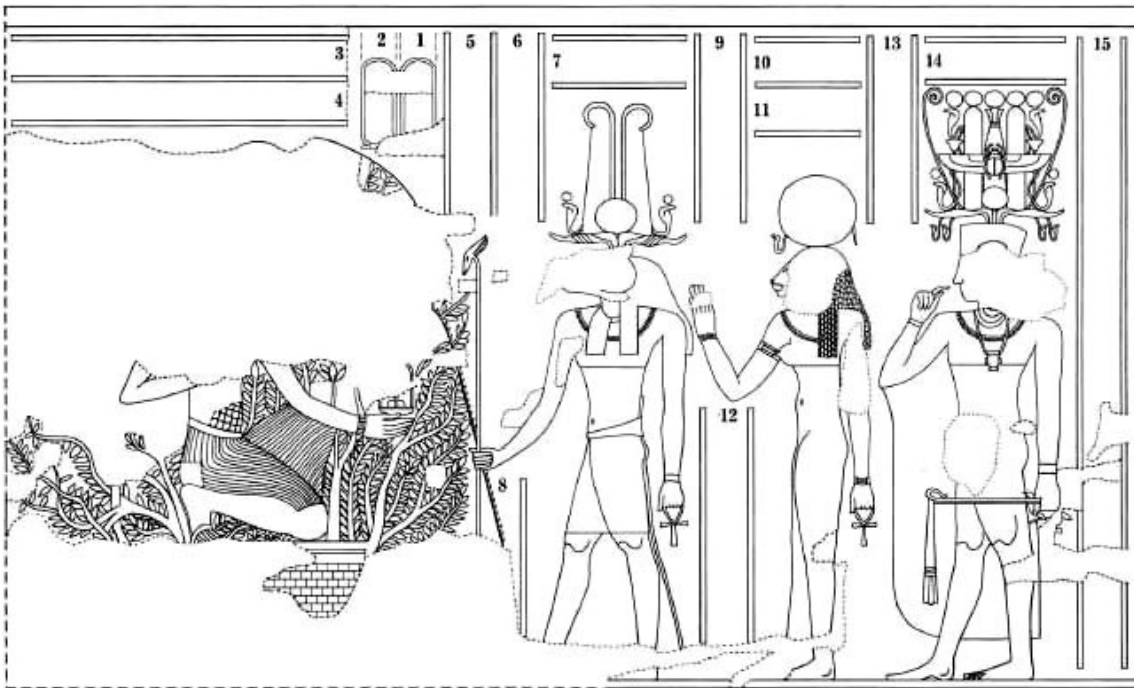


Fig. 5.40 Hadrian, Temple of Khnum, Esna, from Sauneron 1984: VII, 215

### Physical Description and Condition:

This *išd* tree scene is on the exterior of the north wall of the Hypostyle Hall at the Temple of Esna (PM VI 117 (40-41)). Portions of the text, the deities' faces, and most of the king above his chest are severely damaged.

On the far left of the scene looking to the right, the king kneels on a *ḥb* basket in front of the *isd* tree facing Khnum-Ra, Menhyt, and Heka. The tree has long, wavy branches with ovoid leaves that are staggered on both sides of the branches. Two damaged cartouches showing the name of Hadrian are above and to the right of the tree. The king wears a striped, knee-length kilt that has a solid rectangle at the buttocks, possibly indicating a leather kilt (Vogelsang-Eastwood 1993: 17). His near (right) knee is bent toward the ground, and his far (left) knee is bent up. Although much damaged, some of the king's tunic shows a rishi pattern above the belt. The king's near (right) arm is bent at the elbow across his chest. The hand and shoulder are missing. His far (left) arm is slightly bent out in front of him in a gesture of receiving. He wears a bracelet, and in his upturned palm is the bottom of a *ḥb-sd* symbol.

On the right half of the scene and facing the king are Khnum-Ra, Menhyt, and Heka. Khnum-Ra wears an *3tf* crown, his face is destroyed, and he wears a tripartite wig and a broad collar. His near (left) arm hangs at his side, and he holds an *ṛnh* in his hand. He wears a bracelet on this arm. His far (right) arm is slightly bent and he holds a *wṛs* sceptre and notched palm branch at an angle toward the king. Khnum-Ra also wears a *šndwt* kilt which ends above his knees with a belt, and his bull's tail hangs at the back. His feet are missing. Behind him stands Menhyt wearing her solar-disc headdress with a uraeus. Her tripartite wig is patterned as if braided. She also wears a broad collar, arm bands, and bracelets. Her near (left) arm hangs at her side and she holds an *ṛnh* in her hand. Her far (right) hand is raised in a gesture of blessing toward the king. Heka stands behind Menhyt wearing an elaborate *hmhm* crown, a broad collar and pendant, and bracelets. His near (left) arm hangs down straight at

his side and holds a crook, flail, and an  $\epsilon nh$  in his hand. His far (right) arm is bent towards his head with his index finger and thumb towards his nose.

None of the deities holds a stylus or are poised to write on the leaves of the  $i\check{s}d$  tree, and none of the extant leaves is enlarged to show writing on them.

**Text:** following Sauneron 1984: VII 214–216

### The King:

(1) *nsw-bit nb t3.wy* [3]t[w]krtr ks[rs . . .] (2) *s3 r $\epsilon$  nb h $\epsilon$ w* [ht]rins nty hw (3) [. . .] (4) [. . .]

(1) King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, [Au]t[o]krator Kais[aros] rest lost], (2) Son of Ra, Lord of Crowns, [Had]rianos, who is venerated (3) [. . .] (4) [. . .]

### Khnum-Ra:

(5) *dd mdw in hnm-r $\epsilon$  nb t3-s*[n.t . . .] pth-(6)*t3-tnn ms psd.ty* [. . .] *nw.t wr* (7) *it ntr.w grg t3*  
*pn sts s3=f npn* (8) *sk3 rnp.wt=k* [. . .]

(5) Recitation by Khnum-Ra, Lord of Es[na] [rest lost], Ptah-(6)Tatenen who fashioned the Two Enneads, [lost] the Great Nut, (7) Father of the Gods who establish this land, who raised up his son, Nepen, who prolongs your lifetime [. . .]

## Menhyt:

(9) *dd mdw in mnḥ.t wr.t nb(.t) t3-sn.t* (10) *mnḥ.t ʕ3.t mr pth ntr.t tm3.t* (11) *ḥr(yt)-tp ntr nb*  
*ḥʕr(.t) ḥr s.t r s3=s mr(.t) m t3 pn* (12) *ḥʕ(.t) m ntr.t ḥr shm.ty im(y)t tp=k r-gs psš.t*  
*mḥ3.t-t3.wy*

(9) Recitation by the Great Menhyt, Lady of Esna, (10) Great Menhyt, beloved of Ptah, goddess, mother, (11) Chieftainess of every god who smites down the enemy under the throne with respect to her son, who is beloved in this land, (12) who appears as the goddess upon the Double Crown, which is on your head at the side of the division of the Balance of the Two Lands.

## Heka:

(13) [*dd m*]dw in ḥk3w šri ʕ3 wr tp(y) n (14) *hnmw nfr-tm rn=f m inb-ḥd nsw-bit ḥk3 m srḥ s3*  
*3s.t wsir m k3(r)i=f* (15) *d.n(=i) rnp.wt m3ʕ=s n s3(=i) mr(=i) di(=i) n=f ḥb.w-sd ʕš3.w*  
*wr[.w] ḥs n [. . .] 3bḥ=f im=k [. . .] sk3(=i) rn=f ḥr p rʕ*

(13) [Recitation] by Heka, the great, eldest, first child of Khnum, (14) Nefertem is his name at Memphis, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, ruler in the serekh, son of Isis and Osiris, in his shrine. (15) (I) have given years; they are loyal to my son, my beloved. (I) give to him a great many *sd* festivals praised by [. . .] that he unite with you. [I] make his name high upon the throne of Ra.



### **References to Stages:**

This relief carving illustrates the king being offered his lifetime and *sd* festivals, him kneeling in the tree, and receiving his *sd* festivals. In the caption, the king is granted his lifetime, *sd* festivals and victories, and he is crowned. This relief carving illustrates stages 5, 7, 10, and 12 of the ritual. The caption refers to stages 5, 7, 8, and 13 of the ritual.

## Summary

The detailed discussion of all of the extant *išd* tree scenes in this chapter shows that many kings chose to show portions of the ritual in the relief carvings in the same way as other kings in a sort of unity of Egyptian kingship including the king kneeling in the tree, deities writing on leaves of the tree, and deities seated on thrones. However, it also shows that each king included some details in their scenes that other kings before them did not—possibly to demonstrate some degree of individuality. Thutmosis I (DOC 1) depicted his name alongside that of a previous king. Thutmosis III depicted Nekhbet in her zoomorphic form (DOC 5). Ramesses II depicted Osiris on one of his scenes (DOC 15). Osorkon III and Takelot III (DOC 35a and b) showed leaves pulled away from the tree. Ramesses IV (DOCS 33 and 34) mentioned Seth. Darius I (DOC 36) showed the foliage of the *išd* tree in a diamond shape.

Many kings also chose to relate similar information in the captions, including the gods recording the kings' names on the leaves of the tree and the kings being granted their lifetimes and *sd* festivals. As in the reliefs, some kings chose to express their individual desires in the captions. Those unique references include Ramesses II specifically listing his victories in Retenu (DOCS 29 and 30). Ramesses IV mentioned Seth (DOCS 33 and 34). Darius I mentioned Nut (DOC 36). And Ptolemy IV mentioned his ancestors Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II (DOC 37).

These documents also answer other questions. Based on the reliefs, when leaves are enlarged on the *išd* tree, they always show the king's name; however, the captions may record different information as having been written on the leaves. For example, the texts of DOCS 3, 4, 5, 14, 20, 22, 24, 32, and 40 do record that it is the

king's name that is written on the leaves. DOCS 2, 6, and 22 record *sd* festivals written on the leaves. The texts of DOCS 11 and 21 record that the king's titulary is written on the leaves. The texts of DOCS 12, 35a and b, and 37 record that it is the lifetime of the king that is recorded on the leaves. The texts of DOCS 1, 28, and 35a record that the kingship is written on the leaves. The texts of DOCS 27 and 36 record that it is the annals of the king that are the items written on the leaves. Finally, the text of DOC 29 records that the king's records are on the leaves. While the Festal Wall Stela records the king's name written on the leaves (*KRI* VI 6.3 and 6.15), older examples of *išd* tree scenes record the *sd* festivals, the titulary, the lifetime, the kingship, and the annals of the king, thus, the individual kings chose what documentary information in the texts should support the images.

The misconception that the *išd* tree resides (only) in Heliopolis is also clarified by these collected documents. The Festal Wall Stela records a specimen of an *išd* tree in Heliopolis (*KRI* VI 6.11), but it also records one in Memphis in the Temple of Ptah (*KRI* VI 7.12). The texts of DOCS 5, 11, 12, and 35b record the home of the *išd* tree as Heliopolis, but the texts of DOCS 21, 28, and 32 record it in Memphis. The text of DOC 35a records the tree in Thebes, and the texts of DOCS 37, 38, and 39 record its living in Edfu. Thus, there were probably examples of *išd* trees in many places in Egypt.

Egyptian reliefs combined images and inscriptions to communicate a message (Müller 2001: 132). The images and the texts together are called relief sculpture.

The next four chapters of this thesis will use the analysis set forth in this chapter to discuss more fully the similarities and differences within the images (chapter 7) and their captions (chapter 8) as well as the other monuments whose texts refer to the

ritual of the *išd* tree (chapter 9) in order to delve more deeply into the ritual information presented in the visual and textual formats.

## Chapter 6: Significance of Position of the *išd* Tree Scenes

The location of relief carvings on the inside and outside of a temple is thought to convey information relative to who can access that information or the function of the reliefs (Gundlach 2001: 372–373). For example, battle reliefs tend to occur on the exterior walls of temple to function apotropaically to keep chaos out of the divine plane that is inside the walls.

With respect to the amount of relief carving of *išd* tree scenes that has survived to the present day, this chapter looks at those scenes as a whole with respect to the type of temple the scenes are in, whether they are on the interior or exterior of the temple, the cardinal direction they face, and the register position of each scene to determine if there is any significance of the *išd* tree scenes based on position or location.

### 6.1 Complete and Incomplete Scenes

Of the thirty-three *išd* tree scenes extant as of 2019, twenty-one are incomplete consisting of either one or two blocks from a temple wall that no longer stands or a pylon that is severely damaged and is missing many blocks, are fragments of blocks from a destroyed wall, or are in registers that are missing many blocks (DOCS 1, 5, 7–9, 11, 13, 16–20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 32, 35a and b, 40, and FWS). The remaining twelve scenes (DOCS 10, 14, 15, 21, 24, 26, 33, 34, and 36–39) are considered complete for the purposes of this study because they are part of walls that still stand

or have been restored to a standing state by conservation efforts and contain complete images.

The twenty-one incomplete scenes are from the reigns of Thutmosis I (DOC 1), Thutmosis III (DOC 5), Thutmosis IV (DOC 7), Amenhotep III (DOCS 8 and 9), Sety I (DOC 11), Ramesses II (DOCS 13, 16–20, 22, 23, 25, and 27), Ramesses III (DOC 32), Ramesses IV (FWS), Osorkon III/Takelot III (DOCS 35a and b), and Hadrian (DOC 40). The complete scenes are from the reigns of Sety I (DOC 10), Ramesses II (DOCS 14, 15, 21, 24, and 26), Ramesses IV (DOCS 33 and 34), Darius I (DOC 36), and Ptolemy IV (DOCS 37–39). Each full or partial scene conveys at least one stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree and will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Complete	Incomplete
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon		X
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I		X
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu		X
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada		X
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary		X
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)		X
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	X	
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall (GHH), North Wall		X
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina		X
14	Ramesses II	Derr	X	
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court	X	
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall		X
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos		X
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette		X
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North		X
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South		X
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	X	
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II		X
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon		X
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room	X	
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila		X
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X	

27	Ramesses II	Aksha		X
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall		X
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower	X	
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower	X	
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet		X
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet		X
36	Darius I	Hibis	X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	X	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	X	
40	Hadrian	Esna		X

## 6.2 Type of Temple

One consideration for determining the information relayed by the visuals is the type of temple the scenes are in. Cult temples included cultic images, statues, and stelae and were meant to ensure ‘the rule of the reigning king’ (Gundlach 2001: 374). Mortuary temples functioned to allow the deceased king to participate in the offerings to the gods (Gundlach 2001: 375). Twenty-four of the *išd* tree scenes are located in cult temples, and the remaining nine scenes are in mortuary temples. Since the *išd* tree scenes occur in both types of temples, there was not a specific requirement for these legitimisation scenes to occur in one type or the other. The scenes in mortuary temples are from Sety I (DOC 10), Ramesses II (DOCS 15–17, 23, and 24), Ramesses III (DOC 32), and Ramesses IV (DOCS 33 and 34), while the scenes in cult temples come from some of those reigns as well as others from early Dynasty XVIII through the Roman Period (DOCS 1, 5, 7–9, 11, 13, 14, 18–22, 25–27, and 35a

and b–40). *Isd* tree scenes occur in both types of temples; therefore, the type of temple does not seem to encourage the use of the scenes.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Cult Temple	Mortuary Temple
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon	X	
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I	X	
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu	X	
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	X	
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary	X	
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)	X	
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos		X
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, GHH, North Wall	X	
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina	X	
14	Ramesses II	Derr	X	
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court		X
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall		X
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos		X
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette	X	
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	X	
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South	X	
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	X	
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II	X	
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon		X
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room		X
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	X	
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X	
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	X	
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall		X
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower		X
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower		X
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
36	Darius I	Hibis	X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	X	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	X	
40	Hadrian	Esna	X	



### 6.3 Interior or Exterior Walls

The next consideration for the information in the scenes is the concept of interior walls versus exterior walls. Certain types of information are presented only on exterior walls of temples such as the smiting scenes, which are believed to function as apotropaic or prophylactic devices to protect the temples (Luiselli 2011: 20). Kenneth Griffin (2007: 81) has put forth the idea that the common people, or *rekhyt*, were allowed into the temples metaphysically rather than physically (at least in the inner rooms where the *rekhyt* rebus is found), thus they could not have seen any of the interior art or texts other than those on exterior walls and pylon faces. Other scholars (L. Bell 1997: 135, Eaton 2013: 64 and A. Wilkinson 2000: 99) say that because a rebus of *rekhyt* birds is located within courtyards and columned halls, those members of society were physically allowed into parts of the temples at least during some festivals to join the celebrations. Four of the scenes are on exterior walls (DOCS 23, 33, 34, and 40), specifically the exterior faces of pylons or temple walls. One scene consists of partial blocks with no documentation clearly identifying it as interior or exterior (DOC 13). All exterior scenes come from the reigns of Ramesses II (DOC 23), Ramesses IV (DOCS 33 and 34), and Hadrian (DOC 40). It is from two of these reigns (Ramesses II and IV) that there is the most extant visual and textual information about *išd* tree scenes: Fifteen of the extant *išd* tree scenes are credited to Ramesses II (DOCS 13–27), and the most complete *išd* text, the Festal Wall Stela, is credited to Ramesses IV (KRI VI: 3–9).

Twenty-eight of the complete and incomplete scenes including the Festal Wall Stela are on interior walls (DOCS 1, 5, 7–11, 14–22, 24–27, 32, 35a and b–39, and

FWS), either in inner sanctums or in areas that could be accessed by the general population on special occasions following Lanny Bell's (1997: 135) idea of temple access. Those scenes appearing in courtyards, pillared halls, and hypostyle halls behind pylons but not within the sacred precincts are considered interior for the purposes of this text. They are in areas that were open to members of the public during festivals or at special occasions (L. Bell 1997: 135).

While it appears that the scenes might appear only on interior walls because they deal with a ritual, and the public did not usually participate in rituals practiced within the inner sanctums of temples, the Festal Wall Stela states that the titulary and cartouches of the king, thus his legitimate claim to the throne, should be placed 'where the people pass' (KRI VI 5.6–5.7) so that they may know the information. Therefore, some of the information contained within the visuals of the *īšd* tree scenes must have been in places where the common people could see it.

Looking at the distribution of scenes across time, all but one (DOC 5) of the *īšd* tree scenes from Dynasty XVIII are in areas that might have been seen by the population at some point in the year (L. Bell 1997: 135). The one from the reign of Thutmose III (DOC 5) would have been seen by only the king or the priesthood as it is in a bark chapel (Gundlach 2001: 366). The remaining four scenes (DOCS 1 and 7–9) are in courtyards or columned halls.

In Dynasty XIX, one scene (DOC 24) is in the rear of a temple and would not have been accessed by anyone but the king or priesthood (Gundlach 2001: 366). Fourteen scenes (DOCS 10, 11, 14–22, and 25–27) are in areas that might have been seen by the population at some time of the year (L. Bell 1997: 135). An additional scene (DOC 23) is on the exterior of a pylon and would have been visible to anyone

in society at any time. These fifteen scenes come from two rulers and are in temples in multiple locations across Upper Egypt, which indicates that these rulers wanted to disseminate the information contained in the visuals to a greater number of possible audience members. Regardless of who could enter the temples and when, having more locations meant greater access to a greater number of people, and that meant more support for the king (L. Bell 1997: 135).

In Dynasty XX, there are no extant *išd* tree scenes in the inner sanctums of temples. There is one (DOC 32) in a columned hall. However, there are three (DOCS 33, 34, and FWS) on exterior walls, all of which are in the Theban area and are limited to two rulers. This difference in locations indicates a change in the desired audience for these legitimisation scenes (Baines 1990a: 21). It appears that kings in Dynasty XX wanted more people to be able to see and know of their claims, and rather than put the information in areas where only select members of society could have access, the Dynasty XX rulers preferred to display the information more openly (L. Bell 1997: 135).

Later *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 35a and b–39) with the exception of that of Hadrian in the Roman Period (DOC 40) are placed within the sanctuaries of the temples meaning that only the king and the priesthood would have had access to the information contained within the visuals (Gundlach 2001: 366). This shift in location indicates another change in decorum (Baines 1990a: 21), perhaps a reaction to the previous rulers distributing information to the masses. Later rulers from Dynasty XXIII through the Ptolemaic Period seemed to prefer to keep information about the ritual of the *išd* tree away from the more public exposure, and from the eyes of foreigners, than it received in Ramesside times (Assmann 1996: 395). This change in decorum

appears to have switched back to a more open exchange of information once the Romans came to power in Egypt.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Interior	Exterior	N/A
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon	X		
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I	X		
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu	X		
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	X		
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary	X		
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)	X		
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	X		
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, GHH, North Wall	X		
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina			X
14	Ramesses II	Derr	X		
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court	X		
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	X		
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos	X		
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette	X		
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	X		
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South	X		
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	X		
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II	X		
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon		X	
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room	X		
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	X		
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X		
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	X		
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall	X		

33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower		X
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower		X
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
36	Darius I	Hibis	X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	X	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	X	
40	Hadrian	Esna		X

#### 6.4 Cardinal Direction of Walls with Scenes

The direction of the walls is another topic to be considered. Do the scenes appear predominantly on specific walls? If they do, then it may have some bearing on the information provided. If there is not a predominant or specific wall on which the *išd* tree scenes appear, then it probably does not have any bearing on the information disseminated by the scenes.

Two scenes are on an east wall (DOC 37 and FWS). Six scenes are on west walls (DOCS 1, 10, 15, 17, 18, and 32). Eleven scenes are on north walls (DOCS 7, 11, 14, 16, 19, 24, 25, 27, 33, 38, and 40). Twelve scenes are on south walls (DOCS 5, 8, 20–23, 26, 34, 35a and b, 36, and 39). And the final two scenes (DOCS 9 and 13) have no documentation for which wall the pieces came from, which lends more credence to the idea that there is no fixed placement within the temples for *išd* tree scenes.

DOC FWS	Ruler	Temple	North	South	East	West	Unknown
	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon			X		
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I				X	
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu		X			
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	X				
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary		X			
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)					X
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos				X	
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, GHH, North Wall	X				
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina					X
14	Ramesses II	Derr	X				
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court				X	
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	X				
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos				X	
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette				X	
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	X				
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South		X			
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall		X			
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II		X			
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon		X			
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room	X				
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	X				
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel		X			
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	X				
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall				X	
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower	X				
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower		X			

35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet		X	
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet		X	
36	Darius I	Hibis		X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux			X
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X		
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall		X	
40	Hadrian	Esna	X		

## 6.5 Register Position

A final consideration for relating the importance of location to the information contained in *isd* tree scenes is the register on the wall. Does the register in which the scenes are located have an influence on the information communicated in the scenes?

Thirteen scenes are located in top registers (DOCS 8, 10, 15, 16, 23, 25, 26, 35a and b, and 36–39). Eight scenes are located in middle registers (DOCS 11, 18–20, 22, 24, 27, and FWS). Nine scenes are located in bottom registers (DOCS 5, 7, 14, 17, 21, 32–34, and 40). The final three (DOCS 1, 9, and 13) are fragments that have no documentation for their original wall placement. There does not seem to be a fixed placement for these scenes on a temple wall. Therefore, the particular register must not have an influence on the scenes or the information they contain.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Top	Middle	Bottom	Unknown
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon		X		

1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I				X
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu			X	
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada			X	
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary	X			
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)				X
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	X			
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, GHH, North Wall		X		
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina				X
14	Ramesses II	Derr			X	
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court	X			
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	X			
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos			X	
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette		X		
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North		X		
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South		X		
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall			X	
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II		X		
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon	X			
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room		X		
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	X			
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X			
27	Ramesses II	Aksha		X		
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall			X	
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower			X	
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower			X	
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X			



35b	Takehot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
36	Darius I	Hibis	X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	X	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	X	
40	Hadrian	Esna		X

## 6.6 Conclusion

Now that the *išd* tree scenes have been looked at with respect to the type of temple and the placement inside or outside the temple with respect to cardinal direction and register position, one can see there is no evidence that the placement of the *išd* tree scenes was subject to a prescribed, ritual or political decision. For example, in Karnak Temple there are nine *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Thutmosis I, Sety I, Ramesses II, Ramesses IV, Osorkon III, and Takehot III (DOCS 1, 11, 18–21, 35a and b, and FWS). They vary in placement from pylon doorways to courtyards, to hypostyle halls. Examples are placed at all cardinal directions and in all register positions.

## Chapter 7: The Images

Scenes carved on temple and tomb walls function as a way for the ancient Egyptians to show an encapsulated story and relate information. Rather than showing a single action frozen in time, relief carvings can communicate several actions combined into a single image. They can also show more than one perspective or action within a single image, thus informing the viewer of a whole story. Relief sculpture consists of two parts that work together: a visual component and a caption (Müller 2001: 132 and 138). This chapter will discuss the visual components of the *išd* tree scenes. These images show symbolic actions from both the divine plane and the human plane allowing them to work together.

The thirty-three whole and partial *išd* tree scenes collected in this thesis give scholars a view into the ritual of the *išd* tree that supplements the information presented in the Festal Wall Stela. Not all the scenes are identical. They are similar enough to show that the same ritual is being performed, and yet they show enough variety to indicate that each scene depicts some different stages of the ritual. This chapter looks at the scenes as a whole with respect to their visual composition. The analysis of the captions in the next chapter will complement the information learned from the reliefs.

### 7.1 Position of the King

The king is an active participant in the ritual of the *išd* tree and therefore performs several actions during the ritual. Looking at the position or posture of the

king in these scenes allows for the determination of which general parts of the ritual are displayed. The king kneels in front of the *išd* tree in twenty-five of the scenes (DOCS 7, 9–11, 16–22, 25–27, and 32–40) indicating that part of the ritual is important. The king stands in four scenes (DOCS 5, 8, 14, and 15), and is enthroned in one more (DOC 24). The remaining three scenes (DOCS 1, 13, and 23) do not contain enough information to determine the king's posture. The largest number of *išd* tree scenes depicts the king kneeling in front of the *išd* tree, indicating that it is a vital component of the visual composition of the scenes. The fact that five other scenes show the king in a different position (standing or enthroned), indicates that those kings (or someone appointed by them) elected to show a different stage of the ritual.

DOC FWS	Ruler	Temple	Kneeling	Standing	Enthroned	Unknown
	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon	X			
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I				X
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu		X		
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	X			
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary		X		
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)	X			
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	X			
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall (GHH), North Wall	X			
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina				X
14	Ramesses II	Derr		X		
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court		X		
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	X			
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos	X			

18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette	X	
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	X	
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South	X	
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	X	
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II	X	
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon		X
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room		X
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	X	
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X	
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	X	
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall	X	
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower	X	
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower	X	
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X	
36	Darius I	Hibis	X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	X	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	X	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	X	
40	Hadrian	Esna	X	

## 7.2 Crowns Worn by the Kings in the Scenes

The type of crown worn by the king in the *išd* tree scenes may shed light on the importance of the placement of the scenes in relation to the surrounding reliefs. Of the thirty-five instances where the figure of the king is extant in the carving, eleven of them are damaged and do not show the king's crown (DOCS 1, 9, 13, 16–18, 20, 23, 25, 27, and 40). Of the remaining twenty-four examples, there are one instance each of the red crown and the white crown (DOCS 35a and b). There are two instances of the *3tf* crown (DOCS 11 and 24); three instances of the *nemes* headdress (DOCS 8, 32, and FWS); and four instances of the double crown (DOCS 7, and 37–39). The remaining thirteen instances are of the *hprš* crown (DOCS 5, 10, 11, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 26, 32–34, and 36).

Interestingly, the singular examples of the red and white crowns occur in the double scene of Osorkon III and Takelot III, which may be further support of a coregency between those rulers. The *3tf* crowns are worn by Sety I and Ramesses II. The *nemes* headdresses are worn by Amenhotep III, Ramesses III (in the original carving of the scene before the room was subdivided and the scene recarved), and Ramesses IV in the Festal Wall Stela. The double crowns are worn by Thutmose IV and Ptolemy IV. The *hprš* crown (also called the blue crown or the war crown) is worn by Thutmose III, Sety I, Ramesses II, Ramesses III (in the recarved scene), Ramesses IV, and Darius I.

As mentioned previously in chapter 6, the type of temple (section 6.2), the location inside or outside of the temple (section 6.3), the cardinal direction (section 6.4), and the register position (section 6.5) show no conclusive proof for a prescribed

location for the *išd* tree scenes. So, too, it appears that there is no requirement for the type of crown or headdress the king wears in these scenes. It is interesting to note that before, during, and after the Ramesside Period, many but not all kings preferred the *hprš* crown whether or not they were known for their military prowess. As mentioned in DOCS 33 and 34, the *išd* tree scenes of Ramesses IV were carved in empty space left by Ramesses III on the pylons of the temple at Medinet Habu. They are surrounded by war scenes, but Ramesses IV is not known for his military campaigns, yet he wears the *hprš* crown in those *išd* tree scenes. In DOC 22, for example, the scene is in the Ramesside Porch area of Luxor Temple. Ramesses II wears the *hprš* crown and had that *išd* tree scene carved over a space occupied by a smiting scene originally carved by Horemheb. Both of those kings are known for their military conquests.

Future research is needed to determine if the use of the type of crown worn by the king in ritual relief carving is related to the ideology within the particular ritual or if the type of crown was meant to tie one subject in the carvings with the surrounding ones or if there is no relation at all.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Red	White	Double	<i>hprš</i>	Nemes	<i>3tf</i>
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon					X	
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu				X		
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada			X			
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple					X	
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos				X		
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall (GHH), North Wall				X		X
14	Ramesses II	Derr				X		
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court				X		

19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North			X	
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall			X	
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II			X	
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room				X
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel			X	
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall			X	X
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower			X	
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower			X	
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet		X		
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X			
36	Darius I	Hibis			X	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux		X		
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall		X		
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall		X		

### 7.3 Identity of Deities in Scenes

The number of deities in each *īšd* tree scene varies from one to seven. There does not seem to be a requirement for a specific number of deities. Which deities are depicted also does not seem to depend on the temple or the region in which the temple resides but may be a political choice to link reigns or administrative centres with cult centres. For example, some *īšd* tree scenes (DOCS 7, 8, 18, 21, 22, 35a and

b, 37–40, and FWS) do have the patron deity of the temple as the principal deity in the *išd* tree scene. Other *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 5, 10, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20, 23–26, 32–34, and 36) have different deities as the principle deity in the scenes. The principal deity in the *išd* tree scenes is most often not the patron deity of the particular pharaoh demonstrated by the examples of the Thutmosis and Ramesses kings, whose patrons are Thoth and Ra, and who are not the principal deities in the *išd* tree scenes.

When there are pairs of scenes on opposite walls or when two scenes are on adjoining sections of walls, the deities will sometimes mirror each other to depict elements from both Upper and Lower Egypt to demonstrate the unification of Egypt (Gundlach 2001: 369). Examples of this situation include those of Ramesses II on the north and south sides of the doorway of the Great Hypostyle Hall (DOCS 19 and 20), which show Amun opposite Ra-Horakhty and Thoth opposite Seshat; the scenes of Osorkon III and Takelot III (DOCS 35a and b) where Amun and Atum balance each other; and two scenes of Ptolemy IV at the Temple of Horus at Edfu (DOCS 38 and 39) where the north and south walls of the Chapel of the Throne of Ra have six deities and only Nekhbet and Wadjet are different. In these situations, the scenes have the same deities with the exception of an Upper Egyptian deity opposite a Lower Egyptian deity. Gundlach (2001: 369) believed the use of the Upper and Lower Egyptian deities as decorative elements on adjoining walls was demonstrative of control over a united Egypt.

From this analysis, it appears the deities who appear in the *išd* tree scenes are the choice of the particular ruler or his or her appointed representative.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	No. of Deities	Identities of Deities
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FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon	5	Amun, Mut, Khonsu, Atum, Seshat (?)
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I	Unknown	Unknown
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu	3	Atum, Hathor, Amun
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	2	Ra-Horakhty, Thoth
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary	1	Amun
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)	Unknown	Unknown
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	2	Ra-Horakhty, Ptah
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, GHH, North Wall	3	Ra-Horakhty, Weret-Hekau, Thoth
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina	Unknown	Ptah and ?
14	Ramesses II	Derr	3	Ptah, Sakhmet, Thoth
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court	4	Osiris, Ptah, Ra-Horakhty, Thoth
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	2	Unknown, Thoth
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos	2	Unknown
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette	3	Amun, Mut, Thoth (?)
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	2	Atum, Seshat
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South	2	Ra-Horakhty, Thoth
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	4	Amun, Mut, Khonsu, Thoth
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II	2	Amun, Thoth
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon (exterior)	1	Atum and unknown
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room	3	Atum, Thoth, Sefkhet-abui
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	4	Amun-Ra, Ptah, Ra, Thoth
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	2	Ra-Horakhty, Thoth
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	2	Unknown
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall	2	Amun, Thoth
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower	4	Amun, Ptah, Thoth, Seshat
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower	4	Amun, Mut, Khonsu, Atum
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	1	Amun
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	1	Atum
36	Darius I	Hibis	7	Atum-Ra-Horakhty, Thoth,

37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	6	Seshat, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut Horus, Hathor, Khonsu-Thoth, Seshat, Deified Ptolemy II, Arsinoë II
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	6	Horus, Hathor, Horsamtawy, Wadjet, Thoth, Seshat
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	6	Horus, Hathor, Horsamtawy, Nekhet, Thoth, Seshat
40	Hadrian	Esna	3	Khnum, Menhyt, Heka

#### 7.4 Deities Who are Depicted Writing in the *īšd* Tree Scenes

As discussed above, there does not appear to be a fixed number of deities in the *īšd* tree scenes, nor does it appear that specific deities must appear in them. It remains to be determined who does the writing in the reliefs. Of the thirty-three extant *īšd* tree scenes (including the Festal Wall Stela) that have a visual component, six of them (DOCS 1, 9, 17, 18, 20, and 27) do not have enough of the figures remaining to determine their identities. Another one (DOC 40) does not show any deities writing. In the remaining twenty-six reliefs, there is at least one deity depicted with a stylus in his or her hand, whether notching a *rnp.t* symbol or writing on the tree. Of those scenes, DOCS 10, 15, 33, 35a, 38, and 39, have two deities writing, and DOC 24 has three deities writing.

Conventional discussions (Lesko 2001: II 298 and Wente 1995: IV 2214) relate that Seshat is frequently in the *īšd* tree scenes, and she and Thoth are the ones doing the writing since they are the scribal deities. Analysis of these reliefs indicates otherwise. Of all the deities who appear in the *īšd* tree scenes, only ten are depicted

stylus in hand. Of those deities, five appear only once. They are Amun (DOC 8), Ra-Horakhty (DOC 10), Sefkhet-abui (DOC 24), Atum-Ra (DOC 24), and Khonsu-Thoth (DOC 37).

Amun-Ra appears in three scenes (DOCS 5, 20, and 35a). Ptah (DOCS 10, 13, 15, and 33), Seshat (DOCS 19, 33, 38, and 39), and Atum (DOCS 23, 24, 35b, and FWS) appear four times each. Thoth appears in a total of sixteen *īšd* tree scenes (DOCS 7, 11, 14–16, 21, 22, 24–26, 32, 33, 35a, 36, 38, and 39). If frequency of appearance is a criterion for the importance of actors or information, then the most important deity in the reliefs of *īšd* tree scenes is Thoth.

## 7.5 Leaves Enlarged to Show Writing

Of the thirty-three extant *īšd* tree scenes (including the Festal Wall Stela), twenty-three scenes (DOCS 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18–21, 23–26, 32–37, and FWS) show deities writing on the tree. Only eight scenes (DOCS 1, 11, 21, 24, 26, 35a and b, and FWS)<sup>31</sup> show leaves of the *īšd* tree enlarged with the king's name on them. Based on these observations, if the *īšd* tree is depicted with enlarged leaves showing the king's name written on them, there is also a deity depicted writing on the leaves. However, if a deity is depicted writing on the leaves, there is not always an enlarged leaf showing the king's name. The Festal Wall Stela (*KRI* VI 6.3 and 6.15) records that it is the king's name that is written on the foliage of the *īšd* tree. Since this information is mentioned in the text of the Festal Wall Stela and shown in its relief

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<sup>31</sup> DOC 1 is included here because it shows enlarged leaves. Unfortunately, it is so fragmented that no human or divine figures remain. With the evidence presented here, it is likely that a figure was depicted stylus in hand and may be restored, assuming those pieces still exist.

carving but not shown in the majority of the other *išd* reliefs, it must not have been of major importance in the visual vocabulary for the presentation of the ritual.

DOC	Ruler	Temple	Leaves Enlarged
FWS	Ramesses IV	Karnak Temple, Eighth Pylon	X
1	Thutmosis I	Karnak Temple, Treasury of Thutmosis I	
5	Thutmosis III	Small Temple, Medinet Habu	
7	Thutmosis IV	Amada	
8	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Barque Sanctuary	
9	Amenhotep III	Luxor Temple, Porch (?)	
10	Sety I	Temple of Sety I, Abydos	
11	Sety I	Karnak Temple, Great Hypostyle Hall (GHH), North Wall	X
13	Ramesses II	Mit Rahina	
14	Ramesses II	Derr	
15	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, Second Court	
16	Ramesses II	Temple of Sety I, Abydos, First Hypostyle Hall	
17	Ramesses II	Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos	
18	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, Cour de la Cachette	
19	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway North	
20	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, Doorway South	
21	Ramesses II	Karnak Temple, GHH, South Wall	X
22	Ramesses II	Luxor Temple, Court of Ramesses II	
23	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, First Pylon	
24	Ramesses II	Ramesseum, Astronomical Room	X
25	Ramesses II	Gebel el-Silsila	
26	Ramesses II	Abu Simbel	X
27	Ramesses II	Aksha	
32	Ramesses III	Medinet Habu, Second Hypostyle Hall	
33	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, North Tower	
34	Ramesses IV	Medinet Habu, First Pylon, South Tower	
35a	Osorkon III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X
35b	Takelot III	Karnak Temple, Chapel of Osiris Hekadjet	X
36	Darius I	Hibis	
37	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Couloir Mystérieux	
38	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, North Wall	
39	Ptolemy IV	Edfu, Chapel of the Throne of Ra, South Wall	
40	Hadrian	Esna	

## 7.6 Analysis Stage by Stage

The stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree discussed previously in chapter 4 are illuminated by the images discussed in this chapter and defined below with reference to the ideas of archive and canon discussed in chapter 2.

**Stage 1:** A creator deity calls a group of deities to meet (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 2:** The creator deity issues a proclamation to create and record the king's names where it can be seen (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 3:** Deities (including the respective creator deity) record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twenty-three times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 1, 5, 8–11, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, 23–26, 32–37, and FWS). It is easily distinguished from other acts of writing within the *išd* tree scenes by the deity's hand holding a stylus pointed at or terminating on a leaf of the tree. Due

to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified as part of both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 4:** There is a festival (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 5:** The king is granted his lifetime (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs sixteen times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 7, 8, 10, 15, 18–20, 22, 24, 32, 34, and 36–40). This stage of the ritual is determined by an *ʿnh* being held in a deity's hand. Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified as part of both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 6:** The king is granted his annals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 7:** The king is granted his *sd* festivals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs nineteen times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 11, 14, 18–22, 24–26, 32–34, 36–40, and FWS). This stage of the ritual is determined by a deity holding a notched palm branch with

one or more *ḥb-sd* symbols suspended from it or by having *ḥb-sd* symbols suspended from a crook in his or her elbow. Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified as part of both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 8:** The king is granted victories (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 9:** The king discovers or is led to the tree (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 5 and 27). Due to the limited number of times this stage occurs, it is classified as part of both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 10:** The king kneels in front of the tree (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twenty-four times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 7, 10, 11, 16–22, 25–27, 32–40, and FWS)—the most of any of the sixteen stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree, making it part of both the archive and the canon.

**Stage 11:** The king receives his names from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs three times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 10, 11, and 35b). This stage of the ritual is determined by the king reaching toward a deity, holding his palm up, and receiving either a rebus of his name or a leaf of the *išd* tree while a deity writes the king's name on the leaf. Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified in both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 12:** The king receives *sd* festivals from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twelve times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 18–22, 32–34, and 37–40). This stage of the ritual is determined by the king reaching toward a deity, holding his palm up, and receiving *hb-sd* symbols. Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified in it is classified in both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 13:** The king is crowned by the deities (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs five times in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOCS 7, 11, 26, 27, and 36). This stage of the ritual is determined by the image of a deity placing a crown on the head of the king as he kneels in front of the tree or while the king is seated on a throne. Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified in both the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.



**Stage 14:** The king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs only once in the preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes (DOC 24). The *išd* tree scene of Ramesses II in the Astronomical Room at the Ramesseum is the only extant example showing the king seated on a throne. Due to the limited number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 15:** The king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved visuals of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the ritual material.

**Stage 16:** The army is given provisions (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any preserved relief carvings of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage is part of the archive but not the canon of the ritual material.

## 7.7 Conclusion

Of the sixteen stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree identified in chapter 4, seven do not occur in the images at all (stages 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 15, and 16), meaning that they are not included in the archive but are assumed to be available for artists to draw

upon for inclusion in depictions of the ritual of the *išd* tree. One stage occurs once (stage 14), and the rest (stages 3, 5, and 9–13) occur at least twice. Five of the stages occur twelve times or more (stages 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12). These stages that appear most often may be those that indicate to the viewer the most basic of items to convey the message of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

DOC <sup>32</sup>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
FWS			X				X			X						
1			X													
5			X						X							
7					X					X			X			
8			X		X											
9			X													
10			X		X					X	X					
11			X				X			X	X		X			
13			X													
14							X									
15			X		X											
16			X							X						
17										X						
18					X		X			X		X				
19			X		X		X			X		X				
20					X		X			X		X				
21			X				X			X		X				
22					X		X			X		X				
23			X													
24			X		X		X							X		
25			X				X			X						
26			X				X			X			X			
27									X	X			X			
32			X		X		X			X		X				
33			X				X			X		X				
34			X		X		X			X		X				
35a			X							X						
35b			X							X	X					
36			X		X		X			X			X			
37			X		X		X			X		X				
38					X		X			X		X				
39					X		X			X		X				
40					X		X			X		X				

<sup>32</sup> After the Festal Wall Stela, the scenes are organized first by reign, then north to south, and east to west.

Having looked at the information available to the audience in the visuals of the *išd* tree scenes, several pieces of information become clear. Most often, the king is depicted kneeling in front of the tree. The deity who appears most often is Thoth. The *išd* tree scenes are not restricted to a particular part of the temple or a particular temple. And when something is depicted on the leaves it is the king's name.

The next two chapters will discuss the captions and other monuments with *išd* texts. The integration of the visual aspects with the captions and texts will come in the conclusion of the thesis (chapter 10).

## Chapter 8: The Captions

### 8.1 Introduction

As discussed in the Introduction and chapters 4 and 5, there are thirty-three *išd* tree scenes carved on temple walls thus far discovered in Egypt. Of those, most contain caption text that coordinates with the reliefs, but only twenty-seven can be analysed here. The fragments that belong to Amenhotep III from Luxor Temple (DOC 9) do not show any text preserved. The block belonging to Ramesses II at Mit Rahina (DOC 13) has no preserved text. The caption of the scene belonging to Ramesses II at the Sety I temple at Abydos (DOC 15) was not published by Kitchen, and I have not been able to collate it. And the scene belonging to Ramesses II at Gebel el-Silsila (DOC 25) is currently under study by the Gebel el-Silsila Survey Project and the text has not been collated as of 2018.

Parallel to the visual discussion in chapter 7, this chapter looks at the captions in the *išd* tree scenes to determine which stages of the ritual are demonstrated by them and how often each one is referred to in order to determine the overall distribution of knowledge of the ritual in society. This chapter examines those captions for attestations of the stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree and the number of times each one is mentioned in them. It will also look at location information in the captions in comparison to the Festal Wall Stela. A more complete comparison of the differences between what is depicted in the visual components and what is referred to in the captions will be provided in the conclusion chapter. As in the reliefs, the captions are similar enough to each other to illustrate that the same ritual is being performed, and

yet they have enough variety to indicate that each caption depicts several different parts of the ritual.

## **8.2 Importance of Captions in Relief Carvings**

Literacy, the percentage of a population who could read and write, is a difficult concept to gauge in ancient Egypt (Lesko 2001: 297–298). It would depend on the scholar's definition of what it means to be literate: does someone read and write, read only, or just write his or her name? Some scholars rate the number of ancient Egyptians who were literate (without a specific definition) at between 1 and 5 percent by the Greco-Roman Period and less than that in the previous periods (Lesko 2001: 297–298 and Baines and Eyre 1983: 69). Other scholars believe that there is no way to know for certain, but due to influences from Mesopotamian cultures through trade and military conquest, the numbers could be higher in ancient Egypt (Vanstiphout 1995: 2187). All agree that texts were important first for administrative functions (Vanstiphout 1995: 2193) and later for ritual functions and coordinated with the visuals (Müller 2001: 138 and Vanstiphout 1995: 2188).

Information available in text form is thought to have been restricted to the upper levels of society including the priests, and the royal family. Looking at the ritual of the *išd* tree, this restricted information includes a direct order given to a group of beings (the deities) to establish power for another individual (the king), offerings from that individual back to the group, and supplies to the army; it implies that the general

population (those not in the upper levels of society) were not to know the real details of their divine kings' human beginnings.

The Festal Wall Stela records that the king's cartouches were to be placed 'where the people pass by' so that they will know (*KRI* VI 5.6–5.7). These lines give some insight to modern scholars that indicates that some portion of the population could read and internalize the information contained in the writings on the walls. Thus, a portion of the population was literate. Understanding what has been read and being able to apply it to a separate context requires more training than simple understanding. As discussed in chapter 4, a step-by-step explanation of most rituals from ancient Egypt has not come down to modern scholars through the millennia. Indeed, such explanations may not have been written down at all. Much of the instructional information may have been passed on orally (Baines 2007: 290) and was subject to change over time. The small segments that were written down were the formalised portions of the ritual of the *išd* tree that are analysed in this chapter.

### **8.3 The Location of the *išd* Tree**

Referring to the discussion in section 3.7 regarding a living tree in the ritual of the *išd* tree, it is not likely that a living specimen could survive inside the temple building. It is possible that a living specimen was maintained elsewhere on the temple grounds. Which temple and where? The three main cult centres of Heliopolis, Memphis, and Thebes are likely locations, but it is possible that other cult centres maintained an *išd* tree as well. As seen in the Festal Wall Stela in chapter 4 and the

other monuments discussed in chapter 5, not every text mentions a location. Those that do mention four geographic locations and five temples by name.

The Festal Wall Stela mentions the tree residing in Heliopolis (*KRI* VI 6.11) and in Memphis (*KRI* VI 7.12). If it mentioned Thebes, that section is now lost. DOCS 5, 11, 12, and 35b also mention the tree residing in Heliopolis. DOCS 21, 28, and 32 mention the tree residing in Memphis. DOC 35a mentions the tree residing in Thebes. One more cult centre is mentioned in the texts, that of Edfu, which is mentioned in DOCS 37–39.

In addition to geographic locations, specific temples are mentioned in some of the texts. The Festal Wall Stela notes three temples or locations within temple complexes where there was an *išd* tree: the Great Mansion, the Mansion of the Noble, and the Temple of Ra. The Great Mansion (*ḥw.t-ʕ.t*), agreed by many scholars (Helck 1957: 112 and Raue 1999: 10) to be part of the Temple of Ra at Heliopolis, is mentioned twice in the Festal Wall Stela (*KRI* VI 5.2 and 6.4). It is also mentioned in the caption of the Thutmosis III scene at Medinet Habu (DOC 5). The caption from the Ramesseum (DOC 24) mentions the *ḥw.t-ʕ.t* as part of the Temple of Userma'atra Setepenra at Thebes. Thus, it is possible that the *ḥw.t-ʕ.t* is a specific part of more than one temple.

The Festal Wall Stela mentions another location thought to be within the Temple of Ra at Heliopolis—the Mansion of the Noble (*ḥw.t-sr*) (*KRI* VI 5.3) (Helck 1957: 112). The captions of DOCS 20 and 35b also mention the Mansion of the Noble as being part of the Temple of Ra at Heliopolis. A temple location for the *išd* tree that does not come from the Festal Wall Stela is the Phoenix Temple (*ḥw.t-bnw*). It is mentioned in DOCS 6 and 12, both freestanding monuments and not *išd* tree scenes.

A final temple location for the *išd* tree is mentioned only in the Festal Wall Stela. The Temple of Ra (*pr rʿ*) is mentioned four times (*KRI* VI 5.4, 6.10, 6.15, and 7.6) and may be a generalisation of some of the above-mentioned locations.

Even though a specific location for the *išd* tree is not mentioned in every text, based on the above discussion, it appears that the *išd* tree in Heliopolis is but one of many.

#### **8.4 What is Actually Written on the Leaves of the *išd* Tree?**

Another of the preconceived ideas regarding the *išd* tree is the king's name is always written on the foliage (Lesko 2001: II 298 and Wente 1995: IV 2214). In the Festal Wall Stela, that is the case (*KRI* VI 6.3 and 6.15). However, in the other *išd* texts, there are five more options used by the kings, and none of them seems restricted to a particular dynasty or reign.

In addition to the Festal Wall Stela, nine other *išd* tree scenes and monuments record that it is the king's name written on the tree (DOCS 3–5, 14, 20, 22, 24, 32, and 34). The *sd* festivals are recorded on the tree in DOCS 2, 6, and 22. The king's titulary is on the tree according to DOCS 11 and 21. In four other texts (DOCS 12, 35a and b, and 37), it is the king's lifetime that is recorded on the tree. The particular ruler's kingship is recorded on the tree in DOCS 12, 28, and 35a. His records are recorded on the tree in DOC 29. Finally, DOCS 27 and 36 record the annals of the king on the tree.

These documents range from Dynasty XVIII to the Ptolemaic Period. For the most part, only one item is mentioned as being on the tree in each document, although



three documents list two items on the tree as gifts from different deities (DOCS 12, 22, and 35a). From this discussion, it is clear the king's name appears most often, but it is not the only thing to be documented on the leaves of the *išd* tree.

DOC	Name	<i>hb-sd</i>	Titulary	Lifetime	Kingship	Annals	Records
FWS	X						
2		X					
3	X						
4	X						
5	X						
6		X					
11			X				
12				X	X		
14	X						
20	X						
21			X				
22	X	X					
24	X						
27						X	
28					X		
29							X
32	X						
34	X						
35a				X	X		
35b				X			
36						X	
37				X			

## 8.5 Deities Who Speak vs. Those Who Appear

The images of the *išd* tree scenes show who the actors were who participated in the ritual of the *išd* tree but not what the actors said or did. In order to display a more complete message between actors and audience, the captions must refer to some portion of the liturgy or the speech of the participants creating a fusion of image and text (Baines 2007: 283). Most *išd* tree scenes show a figure who has a recitation (*dd mdw in*). A few show figures who have only titles or epithets, their own or the king's.

The scope of this discussion is limited by the amount of preservation of the various temples.

There are twenty-five *išd* tree scenes that have identifiable figures of deities who have speeches attributed to them (DOCS 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 18–24, 26, 32–40, and FWS). Three of those (DOCS 5, 36, and 40) have figures of deities who do not have a speech but do have a sometimes long list of titles or epithets in addition to at least one figure who actually speaks.

## 8.6 Deities Who Mention Gifts

Within the above-referenced captions, twenty scenes contain speeches of deities who offer gifts to the king, usually in a *di=i* or *di.n=i n=k* construction. The gifts range from the expected: hundreds of thousands of *sd* festivals, a lifetime of millions of years, and dominion, to the unexpected: ‘the South as far as the North’, ‘the eastern coiled serpent’, ‘all the provisions of the Nile’, and an eternity. The unexpected gifts are mainly referenced in the Ptolemaic Period (DOC 38), although the gift of ‘an eternity’, not specifying an eternity of what, comes from the reign of Ramesses II (DOC 21). The ‘provisions of the Nile’ come from the reign of Ramesses IV (DOC 34).

The two gifts mentioned most often are those also displayed in the images. They are *sd* festivals and lifetime or years (see chapter 7). Through the use of image and text to reinforce each other, the audience is better included in the important gifts of the message (Baines 2007: 285). The *sd* festivals are mentioned thirteen times in eleven scenes, meaning that three scenes have two deities who mention that particular gift (DOCS 11, 14, 18, 20, 21, 23, 26, 33, 40, and FWS). Lifetime or years

are mentioned seventeen times in ten scenes, meaning that this gift is mentioned twice each in three scenes and three times in two scenes, and once in the remaining five scenes (DOCS 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26, 34, 36, 40, and FWS).

The remaining gifts are those that cannot be depicted in the images with any degree of ease. They are kingship (DOCS 33 and 38), health (DOCS 5, 21, and FWS), stability (DOCS 5, 18, 21, 26, and 36), dominion (DOCS 5, 18, 21, 26, 34, and 36), annals (DOCS 7 and 26), crowns (DOCS 11 and 38), strength (DOCS 38 and 39), joy (FWS), victories (DOC 33), and years in peace (DOC 36).

From the analysis of these captions, it appears that the most important gift from the deities to the king is missing—the king's great name. It is mentioned as a gift only once (DOC 7); however, it is mentioned many times as something that is written (*sš*) or copied (*sp<sup>h</sup>rr*) for the king rather than given as a divine gift.

### **8.7 The King's Reciprocal Gifts**

The Festal Wall Stela mentions that the king gives gifts to the deities in reciprocity for the divine gifts given to him or her, which include male and female servants and cedar wood (*KRI* VI 8.1). In the captions, only Thutmose III mentions a gift to the deities (DOC 5). It is the Barque Shrine at Medinet Habu where the *išd* tree scene is carved. One other caption mentions a gift given in reciprocity; however, it is the reverse. At the Temple of Horus at Edfu, the speech of Horus says he gives the kingship 'to the one who is loyal to him' (DOC 39), making it appear that the legitimacy of Ptolemy IV's claim to the throne is conditional upon his loyalty to Horus. This

restriction does not appear in any of the other remaining *išd* texts and may be a reflection of the turbulent political times of the early Ptolemaic Period.

## 8.8 Deities Who Mention Writing

Within the twenty-five *išd* tree scenes with captions, nineteen mention at least one deity writing. The constructions are often either  $sš=i n=k$ , 'I write for you', or  $smn=i n=k$ , 'I establish for you'. On four occasions, the writing verb is followed by  $m sš db^c.ty=i$ , 'by the writing of my two fingers' to emphasise that the deity is doing his or her own writing, rather than the possibility of dictating to another deity (DOCS 14 [twice], 17, and 22).

In section 7.3, the identities of the deities who are depicted writing were discussed. The analysis in that section revealed that what was generally thought to be true regarding the most-often depicted deity, was not, in fact, the reality.

An analysis of the captions reveals that of the ten deities who say they are writing something, Thoth is the one who mentions writing the most at nine times (DOCS 7, 11, 14, 20–22, 33, 35a, and 36). The two deities who mention writing second most often are Amun-Ra (DOCS 5, 32, and 35a) and Seshat (DOCS 33, 38, and 39), who mention writing three times each—only one-third as often as Thoth. Atum-Ra (DOCS 22 and 24) and Atum (DOCS 34 and 35b) each mention writing twice. Ptah (DOC 14), Ra-Horakhty (DOC 20), Khonsu (DOC 21), and Khonsu-Thoth (DOC 37) each mention writing once. Two other deities whose identities are lost to lacunae also mention writing (DOCS 16 and 17).

Those deities who have a speech may mention writing, may mention gifts, or may not do either. As indicated in the captions, ‘I write for you’ (*ss=i n=k*) is different from ‘I have given to you’ (*di.n=i n=k*) because they indicate different activities and instructions. The caption from Ramesses II’s *isd* tree scene in the Great Hypostyle Hall of Karnak Temple, doorway south (DOC 20) makes this difference clear. In that text, Ra-Horakhty states that the king’s name is established on the *isd* tree by the Lord of Hermopolis. Later, in the speech of Thoth, he states that Ra-Horakhty told him to do it. This caption is the only one in the catalogue of *isd* texts to clearly explain an order of hierarchy.

## 8.9 Analysis Step-by-Step

Each stage of the ritual is examined in this chapter as it is mentioned in the captions. The stages of the ritual of the *isd* tree discussed previously in chapter 4 are illuminated by the captions discussed in this chapter and defined below with reference to the ideas of archive and canon discussed in chapter 2. Just as in the images, not all stages of the ritual are mentioned in the captions. Unlike in the visuals, all the stages of the ritual are mentioned in the Festal Wall Stela, meaning no additional notations of it are necessary here. The table below shows the distribution of occurrences.

DOC	Stage															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
FWS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5		X	X		X										X	
7		X				X	X									
8															X	



**Stage 3:** Deities (including the respective creator deity) record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs ten times in the captions from the reigns of Thutmosis III through Ramesses IV (DOCS 5, 11, 14, 17, 20–22, 24, 32, and 34). Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 4:** There is a festival (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any of the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 5:** The king is granted his lifetime (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twenty times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Thutmosis III through Hadrian (DOCS 5, 11, 14, 18–22, 24, 26, and 32–40). This stage occurs more often than any other in the captions and spans the largest time period of any of the stages of the ritual, from Dynasty XVIII to the Roman Period. And although mentions of the king's lifespan appear ubiquitous in Egyptian texts, it is important to point out that not every *išd* caption contains a mention that the king is granted his or her lifetime. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 6:** The king is granted his annals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs six times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes in the reigns of Thutmose IV through Ptolemy IV (DOCS 7, 19, 27, 35b, 36, and 38). Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 7:** The king is granted his *sd* festivals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs fifteen times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Thutmose IV through Hadrian (DOCS 7, 11, 14, 18, 20–23, 26, 33–35a, 37, 38, and 40). Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 8:** The king is granted victories (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs six times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Ramesses II to Hadrian (DOCS 19, 21, 33, 34, 39, and 40). Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 9:** The king discovers or is led to the tree (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any of the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 10:** The king kneels in front of the tree (human plane).



This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any of the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 11:** The king receives his names from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any of the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 12:** The king receives *sd* festivals from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs once in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. Thus, this stage belongs to the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 13:** The king is crowned by the deities (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs five times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Sety I to Hadrian (DOCS 11, 26, 32, 38, and 40). Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 14:** The king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs six times in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes from the reigns of Sety I to Ptolemy IV (DOCS 10, 21, 24, and 37–39). Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 15:** The king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes during the reigns of Thutmose III and Ptolemy IV (DOCS 5 and 37). Due to the frequency with which the action occurs, it is classified in the canon of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

**Stage 16:** The army is given provisions (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur in any of the preserved captions of the *išd* tree scenes. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

### 8.10 Ritual Stages within the Captions

Of the sixteen stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree discussed in chapter 4, six of them are not discussed at all in the captions (Stages 1, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 16). One stage occurs once (stage 12); one stage occurs twice (stage 15). All the remaining stages occur at least five times each in the captions. Stage 13 occurs five times.

Stages 6, 8, and 14 occur six times each. Stage 2 occurs seven times. Stage 3 occurs ten times. Stage 7 occurs fifteen times, and stage 5 occurs twenty times.

The stages that appear ten times or more appear to be those that indicate to the viewer the most basic of items to convey the message of the ritual of the *išd* tree (stages 3, 5, and 7): the deities writing the king's name on the tree, the king being granted his lifetime, and then his *sd* festivals. Those stages that occur only in the text of the Festal Wall Stela (stages 1, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 16) belong to the archive of the ritual of the *išd* tree, or those items from which the decision makers could draw to extend the information given to the viewer.

The following chapter discusses the other *išd* monuments, those texts on monuments that are not connected to reliefs on temple walls. Once that is complete, the Ritual of the *išd* tree will come into focus and make more sense.

## Chapter 9: The Additional Monuments

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at only those texts that occur on freestanding monuments that are not cult or mortuary temples. The exception here is DOC 4 from the reign of Hatshepsut. It is a text from her monument at Deir el-Bahari but not from an *išd* tree scene. There are nine of these extant monuments with texts that mention something related to the ritual of the *išd* tree that are not associated with a wall relief that depicts the ritual. When other scholars have looked at *išd* tree texts, including Helck (1957: 98–140), Myśliwiec (1980: 349–356), and Welvaert (1996: 101–107), some of these additional texts are mentioned, but no scholars have collected and analysed all of them in one place and compared them to the *išd* tree scenes in cult and mortuary temples as this work does. These additional monuments are not part of mortuary or cult temple walls, and the texts are not associated with a relief carving to supplement their meaning. In addition, eight of the nine monuments originated in the Theban area, with the ninth originally from Heliopolis. The group consists of four obelisks from the reigns of Thutmose I, Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, and Ramesses II (DOCS 2, 3, 6, and 28), three statues from the reign of Ramesses II (DOCS 29, 30, and 31), a stela from the reign of Sety I (DOC 12), and a segment of text from a chapel at Deir el-Bahari from the reign of Hatshepsut (DOC 4). Obelisks and stelae were meant as public monuments in areas open to the public, and as such, the information in the texts is publicly displayed so that any member of Egyptian society who was literate

had access to the information. The availability of the information was somewhat restricted since these texts do not have a visual component.

Of the sixteen stages of the ritual established in the Festal Wall Stela, eight of them are not mentioned on these monuments. They are stages 1, 4, 9–12, 14, and 16. The remaining stages (2, 3, 5–8, 13, and 15) are mentioned from two to four times each. Similar to the visual analysis in chapter 7 and the caption analysis in chapter 8, those stages not mentioned belong to the archive of possible actions for the ritual, and those mentioned, while still being part of the archive, also make up part of the canon of actions for the ritual (A. Assmann 2010: 100–104).

## 9.2 Complete and Incomplete Texts

Of the nine *išd* tree texts discussed in this chapter, three are incomplete consisting of portions of statues with text around the base (DOCS 29–31). The remaining six texts (DOCS 2–4, 6, 12, and 28) are considered complete for the purposes of this study.

The complete texts are from the reigns of Thutmose I (DOC 2), Hatshepsut (DOCS 3 and 4), Thutmose III (DOC 6), Sety I (DOC 12), and Ramesses II (DOC 28). Each full or partial text conveys at least two stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree and will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

DOC	Ruler	Object	Complete Text	Incomplete Text
2	Thutmose I	Obelisk	X	
3	Hatshepsut	Obelisk	X	
4	Hatshepsut	Text portion	X	
6	Thutmose III	Obelisk	X	
12	Sety I	Stela	X	

28	Ramesses II	Obelisk	X	
29	Ramesses II	Statue		X
30	Ramesses II	Statue		X
31	Ramesses II	Statue		X

### 9.3 Other Monument Locations

The original locations of these monuments may have affected the information displayed in the texts. More restricted locations would have a smaller audience than more publicly placed monuments. Unfortunately, of the nine monuments, four of them were buried in the Cour de la Cachette in Karnak Temple (DOCS 12 and 29–31), thus the original locations and display of these monuments are pure conjecture. Of these four monuments, one is a stela (DOC 12) dedicated by Sety I. It is the only stela that has been discovered to date which contains *išd* text. Since it was found within the Karnak Temple precincts, it was most likely set up as a votive monument to commemorate a special event (Hölzl 2001: II 319). The remaining three of these four are small sculptures from the reign of Ramesses II (DOCS 29–31). They are a combination of 3-dimensional sculpture, or sculpture in the round, and 2-dimensional sculpture, or relief sculpture, and are the only such pieces discovered to date with *išd* texts. The 3-dimensional figures of the king are meant to be seen from all angles. They are surrounded by *išd* branches and leaves in relief carving, which is meant to be seen only from one angle. These forms of sculpture combine to show the king kneeling in front of the *išd* tree. The texts that surround the bases do not contain speeches. One of these texts is a small part of a wall text in a chapel at Deir el Bahari (DOC 4), which likely had little if any public viewing (Griffin 2007: 81).

The remaining four monuments in this section of analysis are obelisks (DOCS 2, 3, 6, and 28). Obelisks functioned within ancient Egyptian culture as a visual link to Ra in his many manifestations (Amun-Ra, Atum-Ra, Ra-Horakhty, and the sun itself) as to his cult centre in Heliopolis (Van Siclen 2001: II 561). They were usually erected in pairs on either side of the entrance to a temple (Van Siclen 2001: II 562–563). They were placed out in front of the temple pylons and could be seen by any member of the population at any time.

While it was thought that ritual information might appear only on interior walls because it was sacred, two specific portions of the ritual of the *išd* tree appear on all four of the obelisks: the king being granted his lifetime and his *sd* festivals (stages 5 and 7). The Festal Wall Stela states that the titulary of the king, thus his legitimate claim to the throne, should be placed ‘where the people pass’ (*KRI* VI 5.6–5.7) so that they may know the information. Therefore, it must have been necessary for at least some of the information contained within these ritual texts to be in places where the common people could have seen it, or where a ‘town crier’ could relay it. Regardless of who could enter the temples and when, having more locations and examples of the text in various locations meant the texts were more likely to be seen by a greater number of people, and that meant more awareness, knowledge, and public support for the king (L. Bell 1997: 135).

#### **9.4 Names of Deities in Texts**

As discussed in chapter 7, the number of deities in each *išd* tree scene varies from one to six. In the texts of these other monuments, the number varies from two to

four, meaning there also does not seem to be a requirement for the number of deities to appear in relief or be referenced in the texts on these monuments as well as in the images. Which deities are represented also does not seem to depend on the monument or the region in which the monument was originally erected. For example, Ra is mentioned in every example with the exception of the Thutmosis III obelisk (DOC 6) originally from Heliopolis. Perhaps it was enough to have any deity oversee or participate in the ritual for efficacy.

The majority of examples of the deities' names occur in the titularies of the kings or in a formulaic construction such as 'NN beloved of Amun'. The few examples in these texts that list a deity reference that deity participating in a part of the ritual.

On the Hatshepsut obelisk (DOC 3), Amun is listed as establishing the king's name on the tree. On the Thutmosis III obelisk (DOC 6), the Lord of the Gods (without a specific name) establishes the king's *sd* festivals on the tree. And on the Ramesses II obelisk (DOC 28), Ptah establishes the king's kingship on the tree.

From this analysis, it appears that the selection of deities who participate in the various *isd* tree texts is the choice of the particular ruler, along with what item those deities place on the tree.

DOC	Ruler	Deities Mentioned in Text
2	Thutmosis I	Horus, Ra, Amun-Ra
3	Hatshepsut	Horus, Ra, Amun-Ra, Amun
4	Hatshepsut	Amun, Ra
6	Thutmosis III	Horus, Ra-Horakhty, The Lord of the Gods
12	Sety I	Amun, Ra
28	Ramesses II	Horus, Ra, Amun, Ptah
29	Ramesses II	Ra, Horus
30	Ramesses II	Ptah, Ra, Amun
31	Ramesses II	Ra, Amun-Ra, Ra-Horakhty



## 9.5 Writing the King's Name

Of the nine monuments discussed here, no texts mention the foliage (*g³b.t*) of the *išd* tree, and none mention the act of writing (*sš*). The three statues of Ramesses II (DOCS 29–31) have leaves with the king's name carved on the top of the base and surrounding the figure of the king. The Festal Wall Stela (KRI VI 6.3 and 6.15) records specifically that it is the king's name that is written on the foliage (*g³b.t*) of the *išd* tree. However, these other texts mention different items on the tree. For example, both the Hatshepsut texts (DOCS 3 and 4) mention that her name is on the tree but without the act of writing or foliage. The texts of Thutmose I and Thutmose III (DOCS 2 and 6) mention the kings' *sd* festivals on the tree. The Sety I text (DOC 12) mentions both the king's lifetime and his kingship on the tree. The Ramesses II obelisk (DOC 28) mentions his kingship on the tree while one of his statues (DOC 29) mentions that it is his records that are on the tree. The texts of the other two Ramesses II statues (DOCS 30 and 31) do not mention anything on the leaves or the leaves themselves.

By comparing the items and the number of times these items are mentioned in these texts with the captions discussed in section 8.3, what becomes clear is that there is a slightly greater variety of items in the captions (they also mention the titulary) than in these texts. And the king's name occurs more often in the captions.

Since the ideas of writing (*sš*) and foliage (*g³b.t*) are mentioned in the text of the Festal Wall Stela (KRI VI 6.15 and 7.13) but not discussed in these other texts, they must not have been of major importance in the alternate textual vocabulary for the presentation of the ritual.

DOC	Name	<i>hb-sd</i>	Lifetime	Kingship	Records
2		X			
3	X				
4	X				
6		X			
12			X	X	
28				X	
29					X

## 9.6 Divine and Royal Gifts

Gifts from the gods to the king are mentioned in three of these other monuments. They are two obelisks (DOCS 2 and 6) and the stela (DOC 12). On the obelisks, the divine gifts are the king's *sd* festivals. On the stela, it is the lifetime and kingship that are mentioned in the texts. A reciprocal gift from the king is mentioned in two of these texts. The obelisk of Hatshepsut (DOC 3) mentions the obelisk on which the text is carved as her gift. The stela of Sety I (DOC 12) mentions the stela on which the text is carved as his gift.

Based on the above analysis, just under half of the texts in this chapter mention gifts in comparison with the divine and royal gifts in sections 8.5 and 8.6; it becomes clear that these items are not as important in the shorter texts that do not have a visual accompaniment. It is possible, indeed quite likely, that when space is limited, these stages of the ritual are not as important to be communicated as the list of the king's names and epithets.

## 9.7 Step-by-Step Analysis

Each stage of the ritual is examined in this chapter as it is mentioned in the captions according to frequency of use. The stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree discussed previously in chapter 4 are illuminated by the texts discussed in this chapter and defined below with reference to the ideas of archive and canon discussed in chapter 2. The table below shows the distribution of occurrences.

**Stage 1:** A creator deity calls a group of deities to meet (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 2:** The creator deity issues a proclamation to create and record the king's names where they can be seen (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 3:** Deities (including the respective creator deity) record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 3 and 4) from the reign of Hatshepsut. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 4:** There is a feast (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 5:** The king is granted his lifetime (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs three times in the texts of this chapter (DOCS 3, 12, and 28) from the reigns of Hatshepsut, Sety I, and Ramesses II. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 6:** The king is granted his annals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 3 and 4) from the reign of Hatshepsut. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 7:** The king is granted his *sd* festivals (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs four times in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 2, 6, 12, and 28) from the reigns of Thutmose I, Thutmose III, Sety I, and Ramesses II. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 8:** The king is granted victories (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs four times in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 12 and 28–30) in the reigns of Sety I and Ramesses II. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 9:** The king discovers or is led to the tree (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 10:** The king kneels in front of the tree (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 11:** The king receives his names from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 12:** The king receives *sd* festivals from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 13:** The king is crowned by the deities (divine plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 12 and 28) from the reigns of Sety I and Ramesses II. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 14:** The king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

**Stage 15:** The king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree occurs twice in the texts discussed in this chapter (DOCS 3 and 12) from the reigns of Hatshepsut and Sety I. Due to the number of times this stage occurs, it is part of the archive and the canon of the *išd* tree material.

**Stage 16:** The army is given provisions (human plane).

This stage of the ritual of the *išd* tree does not occur on any of the monuments discussed here. As such it belongs to the archive of the *išd* tree material but not the canon.

## 9.8 Conclusion

Of the sixteen stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree identified in chapter 4, nine do not occur on these additional monuments at all (stages 1, 2, 4, 9–12, 14, and 16), meaning that they are not included in the canon but are in the archive and available for scribes, artists, and decision makers to draw upon for inclusion in discussions of the ritual of the *išd* tree. One stage occurs three times (stage 5). Four stages occur twice each (stages 3, 6, 13, and 15), and two occur three times (stages 5 and 6). Two stages appear four times each (stages 7 and 8). These seven stages that appear more than once indicate to the viewer that they are the most important pieces of information being relayed in these particular texts. They are: the deities record the king's titulary on the tree (stage 3); the king is granted his lifetime (stage 5); the king is granted his annals (stage 6); the king is granted his *sd* festivals (stage 7); the king is granted his victories (stage 8); the king is crowned or is granted his kingship (stage 13); and the king offers reciprocal gifts (stage 15). Since the texts discussed in this chapter do not accompany a relief carving, it must have been important to these New Kingdom rulers that the ideas of their names, lifetimes, annals, *sd* festivals, victories, and kingship be reinforced among literate society in Egypt as having been given to them by the deities as well as their gifts to the deities.

When these texts are compared to the captions (see section 7.1), a similar pattern can be seen with stages 5–8 appearing most often, which indicates a similar level of importance across textual information.

DOC	Stages															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2							X									
3			X		X	X									X	
4			X			X										
6							X									
12					X		X	X					X		X	
28					X		X	X					X			
29								X								
30								X								
31																



## Chapter 10: Conclusions

This thesis has brought together all the extant *išd* tree scenes and the texts known to date (with the exceptions noted in chapter 5) that mention the *išd* tree in a ritual situation for the first time in order to discuss the ritual of the *išd* tree.

The working definition of ritual discussed in this thesis explains that the ideal of ritual includes both action and sound and that both are formalized and controlled. For the actions and sounds to have an effect, they must be performed by an actor in front of an audience in a set, prescribed manner. In addition, both the actor and the audience must be initiates of the same culture. The actions and sounds must be familiar to the audience for the ritual significance to become grounded/effective. The place in which those actions and sounds are performed functions as a link between the actors and the audience.

Time plays a role in ritual as well. It links the ritual experience across generations. The definition of ritual as used in this thesis is any set, defined actions or words that must be performed a particular way, in a specific place or at a specific time for an audience that may or may not be present in order to achieve a desired outcome.

The result of not adhering to these actions is chaos. The vocabulary of importance within the discussion is 'actor', 'audience', 'action', 'place', and 'time'. From that same discussion, Victor Turner described two types of rituals: status reversal and status elevation (Turner 1969: 167). From the discussion of the Festal Wall Stela, the ritual of the *išd* tree is a ritual of status elevation. This type of ritual also functions as propaganda (Bleiberg 1985/6: 5–13) and as a format for legitimisation.

The king (actor) is being promoted (action) officially to the office of king by specific deities (actors) by means of a ceremony to announce to the people of Egypt (audience) the king's official names and grant him divine gifts including *sd* festivals, his lifetime, annals, and victories within the temple precincts (place) at the time of his coronation (time).

The item on which the king's names (and sometimes divine gifts) are written is a tree sacred to the sun god Ra. This tree is called '*išd*' by the Egyptians and is depicted in the *išd* tree scenes as having a trunk that is squat and splits low to the ground with a crown of foliage that is tall and rounded. The branches are wavy and sprout ovoid leaves staggered along their full lengths.

The most complete text yet discovered that discusses this royal ritual is the Festal Wall Stela at Karnak Temple. The information it provides is supplemented by the *išd* tree scenes and a few other monuments with *išd* texts. Even combined with images and other texts, modern scholars cannot know all possible sequences of events for the ritual. The following analysis of each of the stages of the *išd* tree ritual may help determine which segments of the ritual were general knowledge and which segments were hidden knowledge available to selected members of the society. Yet despite these restrictions, the same analysis shows that the general rules of decorum changed during the period from the early New Kingdom through the late Ramesside Period and again during the Ptolemaic Period and again in the Roman Period allowing greater access to once-restricted knowledge.

What has been presented herein is one possible sequence for the dissemination of knowledge for the Egyptian population. The concepts of restricted

knowledge (Baines 1990a: 1–23) relate to how knowledge is conveyed and to which segments of society.

**Stage 1:** A creator deity calls a group of deities to meet (divine plane).

This declaration occurs only in the Festal Wall Stela. Since this stage is mentioned only in text form, it falls into the category of partially revealed knowledge. It demonstrates that a creator god holds the power to call the other gods to assemble but that a decision involving the king could not be made by a single deity. Although scenes of divine assembly are rare in Egyptian art, there are precedents. The Divine Conception and Birth of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari (Naville 1896: pl. XLVII-LIV, LXI) depicts Amun in the scene with the ability to make the proclamation of the names himself. The noticeable change in power of the chief god of Thebes from Dynasty XVIII to Dynasty XX mirrors the change in political power of the king during the same period. In Dynasty XX, the power of the throne continued to weaken progressively and became less cohesive. The literature of the Late Ramesside Period demonstrates this loss of power. In ‘The Contendings of Horus and Seth’, the loss of strength among deities who were once powerful mirrors the power struggle experienced by Ramesses IV–XI (Simpson 1973: 108–126). This decline culminates in the altercation between the High Priest Amenhotep and Ramesses XI at the end of Dynasty XX (Wente 1966: 73–85). ‘The Contendings of Horus and Seth’ narrates a conflict between the gods over who has the right to rule in Osiris’ place. This is determined by a council of gods. No single god could or would make the decision as to who was the rightful heir. Since Egyptian literature often is a reflection of actual events, one can surmise that actual power was more diffused in the reign of Ramesses IV than in the reigns of Dynasty

XVIII kings such as Thutmosis I and III. The Festal Wall Stela reflects the decentralizing and diffusion of power, in contrast to the time of Hatshepsut who, even as a usurper, only needed the declaration of a single god to rule as king.

**Stage 2:** The creator deity issues a proclamation to create and record the king's names where they can be seen (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela and in the captions of the *isd* tree scenes (seven instances). Stage 2 also belongs in the category of partially revealed knowledge. The Festal Wall Stela records Atum issuing the proclamation; the speech of Thoth from Derr mentions Ptah giving the command (DOC 7); the speech of Thoth in the Great Hypostyle Hall, doorway south, mentions Ra-Horakhty issuing the command (DOC 20). These examples show that it is the chief god of the geographic area who issues the command to decide upon the titulary at each cult centre. These captions also attest that although the chief god of the temple gives the decree to establish the names, it is not his decision alone as to the content of the names. This example may also indicate that each of the cult centres had to establish and promote the king's titulary in order to receive the offerings from the king as mentioned in stage 15. Each cult centre would want to be thought of favourably by the king. This is not to say that the names of the king were part of the partially revealed knowledge. Rather, the fact that the names were established by a council of gods belongs to the category of partially revealed knowledge. The names themselves belong to the category of revealed knowledge because the king's titulary was highly promoted and known to everyone of all levels of society. Yet, the way the names were determined belongs to

the category of hidden knowledge because the process of determination was never revealed in text or relief.

**Stage 3:** Deities (including the respective creator deity) record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *išd* tree scenes (twenty-three instances), their captions (ten instances), and the texts from the other monuments (twice). This action is in the texts and the images and must have been a very important portion of the ceremony and a focus of the king's propaganda campaign. Thus, it would have served as legitimation for the king's rule especially when one considers the desires of Thutmose I and III to be associated with Sesostri I. After all, who else could have his name written on the leaves of the sacred tree of Ra but the rightful king? The connection between the *išd* tree and Ra may be the official link of the king to Ra, making the king related to the gods and, thus, divine.

**Stage 4:** There is a festival (divine plane and human plane).

This declaration occurs only in the Festal Wall Stela, and because of that it must have been a portion of the partially revealed knowledge and available only to those persons who were participants in the ceremony. According to the Festal Wall Stela, the festival was held for those divinities who determined the titulary and possibly for the king and his retinue.

**Stage 5:** The king is granted his lifetime (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *išd* tree scenes (sixteen instances), their captions (twenty instances), and the texts from the other monuments (three instances). When an *ṣnh* is shown in the *išd* tree images, it always appears in the hand nearest to the viewer. This emphasizes the importance of the king's lifetime and the idea that it is given to the king by the gods. Giving the king an *ṣnh* is a common occurrence even in earlier periods. It demonstrates that this stage is part of the revealed knowledge.

**Stage 6:** The king is granted his annals (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the captions of the *išd* tree scenes (six instances), and the texts from the other monuments (three instances). The fact that the king would have annals recorded would have been part of the revealed knowledge. It must be the way they were recorded or details therein that must have been part of the hidden knowledge.

**Stage 7:** The king is granted his *sd* festivals (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *išd* tree scenes (nineteen instances), their captions (fifteen instances), and the texts from the other monuments (four instances). According to the Festal Wall Stela, the actual granting of the *sd* festivals was done in secret, indicating hidden knowledge. The fact that they were granted to the king by the deities would have been part of the revealed knowledge, but the details concerning the granting of the *sd* festivals would have been part of the hidden knowledge.

**Stage 8:** The king is granted victories (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the captions of the *išd* tree scenes (six instances), and the texts from the other monuments (four instances). The victories granted to the king are mentioned once in passing in the Festal Wall Stela. It is not depicted at all in the reliefs because battle scenes are not associated with coronation scenes. All battle scenes are meant to depict the king as victorious. This detail does not necessarily dictate a change in decorum because the king as victor was common in other propaganda campaigns and not hidden knowledge. What may have been hidden knowledge was the idea that all the king's victories were pre-ordained by the gods and granted to the king at the same time his titulary was decided.

Stages 5, 6, 7, and 8, where the king is granted his lifetime, annals, *sd* festivals, and victories respectively, are the divine gifts given to the king by the deities. It is these divine gifts which make the king the true king. In later stages the king is shown receiving his name and *sd* festivals but not his lifetime or victories. These four stages are items which may need to be given out one by one at the proper moments in the future. For instance, the victories which are displayed with the *išd* tree scenes of Ramesses IV on the First Pylon of the Ramesses III Temple at Medinet Habu may be the victories granted to the king during the *išd* ritual.

**Stage 9:** The king discovers or is led to the tree (divine plane and human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela and the images of the *išd* tree scenes (twice). The Festal Wall Stela and the Thutmose III relief (DOC 5) portray stage 9 differently. This should be the moment when the king first discovers his full titulary

and the moment of realization that he has been chosen as the true king. Whether the king was led to the tree or found it on his own changed over time. In the early New Kingdom the king is led to the tree by the gods thus indicating a need for divine assistance. In the Ramesside period, the king walks through the temple and finds the tree with no divine assistance. In between the two kings, there is no mention of how the king discovered the tree. The lack of mention may mean that this stage was not important enough, in relation to the other stages, to show continuously. It may also be a conflation of an obvious stage with what followed. More likely, the idea of how the king came upon the tree was part of the hidden knowledge and was not made available to the general population until a change in decorum was brought about in the Ramesside Period.

**Stage 10:** The king kneels in front of the tree (human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela and the images of the *išd* tree scenes (twenty-four instances). The caption texts do not mention the posture of the king either standing or kneeling, but the posture of the king is depicted in each relief. Because this posture is depicted in so many reliefs, both early New Kingdom and into the Ramesside Period, it cannot belong to the category of hidden knowledge; it must be part of the revealed knowledge that was available to all members of the society able to view the reliefs. The Festal Wall Stela mentions the king walking about in the temple (KRI VI 7.1). This may indicate a change in the actions of the ceremony from the early New Kingdom to the Late Ramesside Period. In the early scenes the king is standing or walking near the tree but in most of the scenes the king is kneeling, which may be



a telescoping of several actions into one. The king may have had to kneel in front of the tree to receive the divine gifts.

**Stage 11:** The king receives his names from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela and the images of the *isd* tree scenes (three instances). This stage is mentioned in the Festal Wall Stela where the king comes upon the leaves as he walks through the temple. This stage appears early in the reliefs and then disappears until its mention in the text of Ramesses IV. It is the moment when the titulary is passed to the king and he can take hold of it as his own.

**Stage 12:** The king receives *sd* festivals from the deities (divine plane and human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *isd* tree scenes (twelve instances), and their captions (once). This stage differs from stage 7 in the images. This difference demonstrates that there was a desire to depict the granting of *sd* festivals and the receiving of *sd* festivals as separate actions. The king receiving *sd* festivals from the deities is mentioned on only one caption. This indicates that it is part of the revealed knowledge available to the audience and also that it was an important part of the propaganda campaign to indicate that there was a special quality belonging to the individual receiving the divine gifts.

**Stage 13:** The king is crowned by the deities (divine plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *isd* tree scenes (five instances), their captions (five instances), and the texts from the other monuments (twice). This stage occurs in all four categories in this thesis, and must have belonged to the revealed knowledge. In the scene of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel, Ra-Horakhty mentions placing the white crown on the king's head (DOC 26). This may point to a matching lost scene on an adjoining or opposite wall which would mention the king receiving the red crown. With this stage the king is actually the king. The crown is placed on the king's head directly by the gods. From this point in the ritual there can be no doubt in the minds of the audience that the current king is the true and rightful king.

**Stage 14:** The king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt (human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the images of the *isd* tree scenes (once), and their captions (six instances). Stage 14 is the point that the king can function as king and hold the seat of power. This stage reinforces the concept of who is in charge and would definitely be part of the revealed knowledge.

**Stage 15:** The king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities (human plane).

This action occurs in the Festal Wall Stela, the captions of the *isd* tree scenes (twice), and the texts from the other monuments (twice). There are three lengthy references to offerings accompanied by four columns of offering lists at the end of the Festal Wall Stela. This stage and stage 4, the festival, are a self-feeding circle of

events. The deities grant the previously mentioned divine gifts to the king because the king has glorified them with offerings. The king brings offerings to the temples and the deities because they have promoted his titulary and his claim to the throne.

**Stage 16:** The army is given provisions (human plane).

This declaration occurs only in the Festal Wall Stela. The army is given part of the offerings from the temple because they are part of the king's retinue and help to promote the king's claim to the throne.

Those stages of the ritual of the *išd* tree that appear only in the Festal Wall Stela are 1, 4, and 16. In stage 1, a creator deity calls a group of deities to meet. In stage 4, there is a festival. And in stage 16, the army is given provisions. The Egyptians were capable of depicting those actions in images; however, it was not feasible to do so in the confines of space on temple walls within the parameters of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

Those stages that appear only in the images (not including the Festal Wall Stela) are 9, 10, and 11. In stage 9, the king discovers or is led to the tree. In stage 10, the king kneels in front of the tree. And in stage 11, the king receives his names from the deities.

Those stages that appear only in the texts (including the FWS) are 2, 6, 8, and 15. In stage 2, the creator deity issues a proclamation to create and record the king's names where they can be seen. In stage 6, the king is granted his annals. In stage 8, the king is granted victories. And in stage 15, the king gives offerings to the deities of the temple in a reciprocal act for the receiving of his names and gifts from the deities.

Those stages that occur in both image and text but do not occur in all four categories are stages 12 and 14. In stage 12, the king receives *sd* festivals from the deities. And in stage 14, the king sits on the throne as the rightful ruler of Egypt. Not every piece of information can be portrayed across all formats at all instances. These stages are some of them.

Those stages that occur across all four platforms are conceivably the ones thought to contain the most important information to be transmitted to the widest audience in Egypt. They are stages 3, 5, 7, and 13. In stage 3, the deities record the king's names on the leaves of the *išd* tree. From the discussion in chapter 2, the writing of information grants control over that information to the author and requires someone who can read what is written. These actions work together to create a level of decorum within the society. In stage 5, the king is granted his lifetime. Presented as a divine gift, the granting of the ruler's lifetime creates a level of stability and reassures the population that the king will be able to protect them for a long time. In stage 7, the king is granted his *sd* festivals. These celebrations also functioned as a way to reassure the population of the king's ability to govern and protect them from harm. In stage 13, the king is crowned by the deities. This final action that is shown in all four formats of *išd* material is the ultimate piece of propagandistic information. If the deities crown a specific individual as king, then the people should also accept and support his or her claim to the throne. In addition, because those stages are continually reinforced from the reigns of Thutmosis I to Hadrian (approximately 1,500 years), they are the parts of the ritual that are the least changed.

The biggest differences between the information communicated in the images and the texts are most easily seen in the tables of sections 7.6 and 8.9. The stages

that are most often displayed in the images are stage 3, deities record the king's names on the tree (with twenty-three occurrences), and stage 10, the king kneels in front of the tree (with twenty-four occurrences). Although stage 3 occurs in the divine plane and stage 10 occurs in the human plane, the fact that these items occurred was part of the revealed knowledge and they were easy to display in a visual manner. The stages that are most often mentioned in the captions are stage 5, the king is granted his lifetime (with twenty-one occurrences), and stage 7, the king is granted his *sd* festivals (with 16 occurrences). Both these stages occur in the divine plane. The fact that the king's lifetime and *sd* festivals were granted to the king was widely known, thus part of the revealed knowledge, but *how* these stages were completed would have been part of the hidden knowledge and thus available only to those in the limited part of the society that was literate. In addition, the *how* would not be a simple action to depict in the space or context of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

On the whole, the *išd* tree scenes function as propaganda to promote the validity of the reigning king's claim to the throne and justify his coronation. The reliefs tell the story to the widest possible audience.

The combination of the Festal Wall Stela and the relief carvings involving the *išd* tree allow the reconstruction of a sequence of events that makes it easier for modern scholars to understand a portion of ancient Egyptian social and political activities. Most students of Egyptology today can easily identify an *išd* tree scene, but few have studied the available clues as to its meaning or where it fits into the idea of kingship. Helck probably came closest to assembling the sequence of events when he analysed the text of the Festal Wall Stela (Helck 1957: 131–132), but he did not put the scenes back into their context as has been done in this thesis. Where this

work differs from that of Helck is with the context of the scenes. Helck listed the scenes out of context and concentrated on the Festal Wall Stela. He effectively took the scenes out of time and space. This thesis puts the scenes back into their context within the temples. It does this by showing that the scenes were placed so that the availability of knowledge increased over time. The relaxation of decorum is related to the decentralization of power. When power becomes more diffused, knowledge becomes more available.

The importance of this ritual is to promote the reigning king's titulary in a manner consistent with that of a god incarnate, and to promote the idea that kingship was a gift of the gods.

After the king is on the throne, a legitimising scene like the *īšd* tree scene would be used to announce that the king had really been king all along. In the case of a usurper or someone who was not in the direct line of succession, like Thutmosis I or Hatshepsut, this piece of 'hindsight proof' or legitimisation would be a necessary piece of propaganda, the mythological story of the granting of kingship to a particular person by the gods, causing an otherwise mere human being to rule as the son of Ra. A good example of this use of the *īšd* tree scenes is the desire of Thutmosis I to link himself with Sesostris I.

This omission reveals that the target audience in the Late Ramesside Period was familiar enough with the events of the ritual, either from seeing it themselves or from what they were told, to be able to fill in the missing stages in their minds when they saw the relief carvings. Very few of the stages are depicted or mentioned in the texts of the early New Kingdom scenes. This terseness, contrasted with the Festal Wall Stela's abundant detail, indicates a change in decorum and a widening

availability of knowledge. The rules became more relaxed, as it were, so that more information would be available to more and different members of society. Each of the stages here reinforces the true identity of the king in the minds of the king's subjects. Each stage demonstrates that the ruling king was chosen by the gods to be the true king of Egypt.

It is hoped that more *išd* tree scenes and texts, including a possible liturgy, will be discovered by future scholars and that more pieces of the extant scenes will be discovered and reincorporated into the temple walls. In that case, it might be possible to create a more detailed reconstruction of the ritual of the *išd* tree.

### **Cues for Further Research**

Egyptology, both the philology and the archaeology, is an ever expanding subject. As has been demonstrated in chapter 4 where the restoration of the Festal Wall Stela has changed in the years I have been studying it, new evidence is constantly being discovered. Those new discoveries add to the information available for scholars and sometimes changes what we thought we knew in the history, culture, and language of ancient Egypt. Below are some cues for further research that have come to light during the course of my research. Given the space, I would add some of those discussions here.

As more archaeological work is done across Egypt, the newly discovered and translated texts and captions might add to the base of hidden knowledge vs. revealed knowledge with respect to *išd* tree scenes. If more blocks are revealed in the reassembly of temples, it is possible that more *išd* tree images may be discovered

that might expand the discussion of the information that is available through iconography.

If newly discovered temples in Lower Egypt contain *išd* tree scenes, they may reveal information about any differences in the visual communication between Upper and Lower Egypt. Those scenes may also answer the question of whether the ritual of the *išd* tree was specifically a Heliopolitan festival that developed into a pan-Egyptian one.

It would also be interesting to look at how *išd* tree scenes relate to other depictions of royal rituals inside and outside of Egypt, especially in connection with the coronation or the *sd* festivals and those containing sacred trees.



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