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Some Remarks on the *iSd* tree, the Sacred tree of Heliopolis

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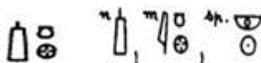
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Abstract

According to Ancient Egyptian myths, in Heliopolitan theology, it was in Heliopolis that the god Atum created the world, and the ancient group of the nine gods known as the Ennead were worshipped there. Heliopolis was the main cult center of the sun god Ra who took the leader role in the Ennead of Heliopolis as early as the 5th dynasty. In Heliopolis the cult of stone symbols and sacred animals was known as the bnbn, iwn pillar, the bnw, Mnevis bull and mongoose. Another important symbol of Heliopolis was a sacred Persea tree called iSd. The iSd tree supplemented the cult of stone symbols and sacred animals and became a very important sacred symbol that exceeded the borders of Heliopolis to become a central subject which contained the keys to divine order. The tree appeared in coronation scenes and scenes related to the Hb- festival, in the Book of the dead, besides its importance as a fruit, leaves and flowers. This paper aims at investigating the importance of the iSd tree and its appearance in scenes and texts. This paper begins with an introduction of the importance of the city of Heliopolis and the origin of the iSd tree, then focuses on the practical use of the tree, as well as its religious and spiritual importance. The study ends with a main conclusion.

Introduction

The city of Heliopolis which is a Greek name meaning the “city of the sun”, was called “*iwnw*”

“ in the ancient Egyptian language, meaning “The pillars” (wb I) (Erman, 1971). Heliopolis nowadays lies under Ain Shams and Matariya, and it was the capital of the 13th lower Egyptian Nome. It was located at the south-east of the Nile Delta, north of the city of Memphis (Verner, 2013), (Sabbahy, 2019). The city was connected to the Nile by a canal which went west from Heliopolis and proceeded in the south into a Nile harbor, at the mouth of the canal stood the temple of the god of the Nile *h̄pi* (Verner, 2013). The location of Heliopolis was probably chosen as the solar cult center due to its location near Gebel El Ahmar, a mountain of red quartzite, of which its brilliance was connected to the sun (Sabbahy, 2019). It was in Heliopolis, according to the Heliopolitan theology, that god Atum created the world and with the help of his female counterpart Saosis, the personification of the god’s hand, Shu and Tefnut were born. Saosis had a shrine in the neighborhood of Heliopolis (Buhl, 1947). Shu and Tefnut gave birth to Geb and Nut, and then Geb and Nut gave birth to Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephtys, completing the nine gods or Ennead of Heliopolis. The creation by Atum is mentioned in the

Pyramid texts in utterance 527 (Alford, 2004). It was in Heliopolis that the court of gods heard the case of Seth's crime against his brother Osiris and the debate between Seth and Horus over the throne of Egypt (Verner, 2013). Already in the Old Kingdom under the 5th dynasty, god *R* took over the leading role of Atum in the Ennead of Heliopolis and acquired all his cosmogonic aspects in a single image, this substitution is clear in Chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead (Tarasenko, 2016). Atum seemed to have been the remote god who created the universe, while *R* became the close one, who appears every day in the eastern horizon and is much closer and real for humans (Tarasenko, 2016). Besides the two temples at Heliopolis dedicated to Ra Horakhty and Atum, the representations of *R* at dawn and sunset, there were other temples including sanctuaries to Hathor, Horus, Amun and the Mnevis bull (Sabbahy, 2019). There is evidence of burials at Heliopolis as early as the Predynastic period. The sanctuary of Heliopolis seems to have prospered during the New Kingdom where a large number of obelisks were erected. Those obelisks are now outside of Egypt in Europe and North America like the two obelisks of Thutmose III in London and New York (Sabbahy, 2019). Unfortunately, the only remains in the city is an obelisk of Senusret I of red granite in honor of the celebrations of the 30th *hb- sd* festival. Monuments in Heliopolis were removed, rubbed, or erected elsewhere. Ramesses II took obelisks, statues, and sphinxes from Heliopolis to be re-erected in Per-Ramesses. Moreover, more monuments were removed to the city of Tanis in the 3rd intermediate period, and to Alexandria in the Greco-Roman period (Verner, 2013). The importance of Heliopolis as a learning center is shown in the schools founded by Plato and Eudoxus and its visiting by Herodotus, Alexander the great and Strabo. Moses was educated in Heliopolis where he became mighty in word and in deed. The city's spiritual importance is found in the Bible which relates that Joseph of the Old testament was given the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis to be his wife (Genesis 41: 50), (Verner, 2013), (Mackenzie, 1925).

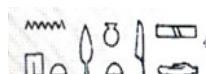
The sun god at Heliopolis was worshipped in the form of a stone called "bnbn," which in later Egyptian religious texts was compared to Atum's semen. Egyptologists think that the *bnbn* was a stone of cone-shape. The *iwn* pillar was worshipped in Heliopolis. It was a wooden pillar on top of which is a bull's skull with horns which might be related to the sacred bull Mnevis, an embodiment of the *b3* of the god *R*. Another important sacred animal in Heliopolis was the Egyptian mongoose or *iḥnumun*, sometimes known as the "pharaoh rat" (Verner, 2013). Another sacred bird in Heliopolis was the water bird *bnw* that was originally represented as a small bird and later as a heron with two long plumes on its head. It stood on an object coming out of water as the primeval hill. The *bnbn* represented the primeval hill and the *bnw* represented the sun god rising upon it, both became symbols of resurrection and eternal life (Lloyd, 1994). The cult of stone symbols and sacred animals were supplemented in Heliopolis from earliest times by the veneration of the sacred *išd* tree.

This paper aims at answering the following questions:

- Why was Heliopolis- the origin of the *išd* tree- an important religious and spiritual center?
- When and where did the *išd* tree appear in texts and scenes?
- What was the religious and spiritual importance of the *išd* tree according to texts and scenes?
- What was the relation between the *išd* tree and the king?

The *išd* tree

A lot of human cultures used tree symbols and had a tree of life concept that was spiritual and religious. Liya refers to the tree as a universal symbol found in the myths and sacred writings of all nations (Liya, 2004). Trees symbolize eternal life: their roots go down into the primeval water from which life has started (Brown, 2001). Trees, groves, even woods were regarded as dwellings of deities. The association of trees with gods was related to fertility, life, and death. The tree represents the universe. As a “cosmic tree”, it stands in the middle of the cosmos and connects the three worlds: the netherworld, earth, and heaven. Thus, its roots go down, its crown goes up to the sky, while its trunk is the axis of the world (Czellar, 1979). The *išd* tree is generally known as the Persea tree “*Mimusops Laurifolia*”, (wb identifies it with Balanites, wb I (Erman, 1971), also some refer to it as Acacia), which is a medium size tree up to 20 meters high (Brown, 2001). The *išd* tree was later called “Lebak” tree by Arabs (Meyboom, 1995). The ancient Egyptians sometimes brought the two species of the *išd* tree and *nht* (sycamore) together as in:



, *nht int išd* (Lefebure, 1902). The Persea tree was described in the list of sacred groves in 17 nomos of upper and lower Egypt (Hall, 2014). It grew in the temple complexes of Heliopolis, Herakleopolis, Memphis and Edfu (Tyldesley, 2010). The *išd* tree of Heliopolis is:



, (wb I) (Erman, 1971). is found , among the examples on a scarab of Sodeinga (Nubia), reign of Amenhotep IV as “ *išd imy iwnw* ”, the *išd* tree which is in



Heliopolis (Murnane, 1995), and is found as on Brooklyn 47.218.84 , “ *išd m iwn* ” , *išd* tree in Heliopolis. The *Išd* tree was known as a symbol of the *bnw* bird (Kees, 1977). The *Išd* tree played an important part in the cult of *R*^c. On an alabaster stela of Seti I in Karnak, “*Išd šps m hwt bnbn iwn* ”, “The Ished tree in the temple of Benben of Heliopolis” (Davies, 1997). On the other hand, the tree surrounded and shaded the tomb of Osiris in Bousiris. The sacred tree of Heliopolis had a trunk that was believed to burst each morning to give the way for the rising sun. It was also the place where the sun god *R*^c in the form of a wild cat won his battle everyday over evil in the form of a serpent (Verner, 2013).

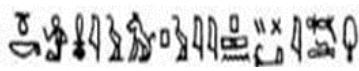
The fruit and Flowers of the *išd* tree

The fruit of this tree, which died out in Egypt in the Roman period, is edible. It is rounded in shape with a pointed tip. The fruit resembles a heart and comes to maturity at the time of the Nile rise, and thus associated with fertility since the annual flood brought re-growth, fertility, and new life to the land (Brown, 2001). It was found among the offerings since the Old Kingdom as in Mastabas of Anchus in Giza from the 4th Dynasty (PM III, 100f , Junker , Giza V) (Junker, n.d.), in Mastaba of Mersuankh in Giza from the 5th dynasty (PM III, 269,270,) (Hassan, 1930), in Mastaba of Nefer in Giza from 5th-6th dynasty (PM III, 137f, Junker, Giza VI,) (Junker, 1943), Mastaba of Seneb, in Giza from the 6th dynasty (PM III, 101, Junker, Giza V) (Junker, n.d.), and in Mastaba of Meruka from the 6th dynasty (PM III, p.118, Junker Giza IX) (Junker, n.d.). It was also found in the temple of Ptah in Memphi during the reign of Amenemhat II, the 12th dynasty, an inscription “ *irp pr n išd* ”, “wine from the house of *išd* tree” (Farag, 1980). The fruit was also

found in tombs like that of Tutankhamun and the leaves were identified in the New Kingdom garlands like that of Ramesses II in Medinet Habu, Deir el Medina and in workmen's village at Amarna (Brown, 2001), (Allon, 2019). Roots of the *išd* tree are found in the entrance to Hatshepsut's funerary temple (Allon, 2019). The fruit's use as a remedy for abdominal complaints is mentioned in Papyrus Ebers 2, line 24,11 (Ebers, 1875). In the New Kingdom, the flowers of the sacred *Išd* tree were highly appreciated by the Egyptians who considered them life-giving and called them "flowers of life". The *Išd* and the Lotus flowers were used for funerals (Buhl, 1947). Statues and coffins of the deceased were decorated with garlands of flowers (Carter, 2008).

The *išd* tree in Religious contexts

At Dandera, in the ritual concerning the mysteries of Osiris in the month of Khoiak, last day of the 4th month of *3ht*, the festal calendar mentioning his sacred tomb is called "the crypt under the *išd* tree" (Khoiak, n.d.), (Neumann, 2020). On a papyrus from 13th-14th dynasty BM EA 10757 line c 20 "*išd pw n wsir*," The *išd* tree of Osiris (Thierry, 1995). The *b3* of Osiris was thought to arise on the leaves of the tree, maybe before returning to the tomb and joining the divine Ka. "The august leaves on the *išd* tree of Ra, on which rises the *B3* of Osiris" (Maspero, n.d.).

In spell 335 of the Book of the Dead  "ink miw pwy pšn išd", "I am the tomcat which split the *išd* tree" (Budge, 2010) which is found in many examples as in: CG 51189 (Papyrus from reign of Amenophis III, KV 46, line 90, (Munro, 1994). In BM 10793, (papyrus from Deir el Bahari, line 6,10) "miw pwy 3 n ti pšn išd", "this big cat that splits the *išd* tree" (Munro, 1996). The tree splitting is also mentioned in the coffin texts. This splitting of the *išd* tree is sometimes known as the "Mut Ritual" (Brown, 2001). In papyrus of Nu BM EA 10477, reign of Amenophis II, from Thebes and in CG 51189 (Papyrus from reign of Amenophis III, KV 46) in line 764, the same inscription: "iw m33.n.i pšn išd", I saw the *išd* tree split (Lapp, 1997), (Munro, 1994). In spell 17 of the Book of the Dead, god Ra in the form of the Heliopolitan wild cat cuts off the head of the great serpent Apophis with a knife as it threatens the sacred *išd* tree symbol of the sun god Ra (Omran, n.d.). This scene can be found in many tombs at western Thebes as in BM EA 9901 (**fig.1**) from the tomb of *Pḥw -nfr* and BM EA 10470 (**fig.2**), both dating from the 19th dynasty (Tarasenko, 2016).

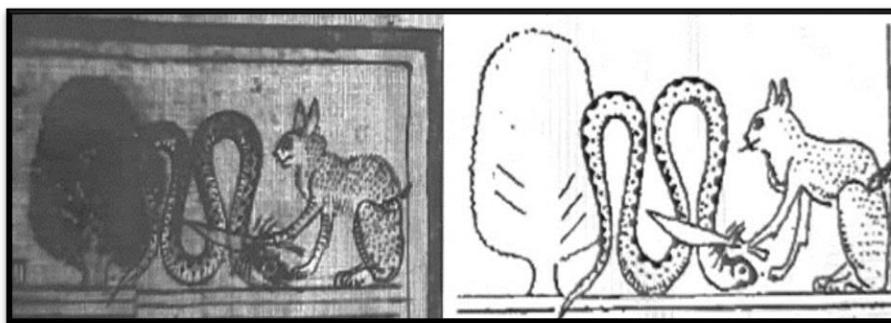


Fig.1. London BM EA 9901, 19th Dynasty (Tarasenko, 2016)

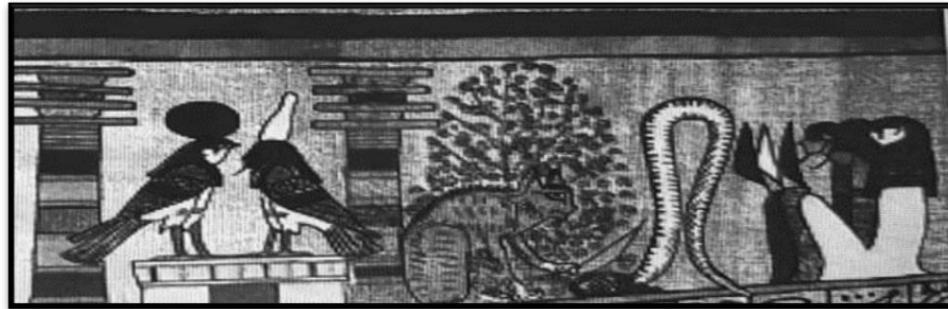


Fig.2. London BM EA 10470, 19th Dynasty (Tarasenko, 2016)

This chapter is also seen in the tomb of *sn-ndm* in Deir el Medina, 19th dynasty (**fig.3**) (PM 2, I ,1 1 5) (Porter, 1960-1971). Also, in tomb of *Ini hr h̄w* in Deir el Medina, Dynasty 20, (**fig .4**).



Fig.3.The tomb of Sn – Nedjem, Deir el Madina, 19th Dynasty, Ramesses II (Tarasenko, 2016)

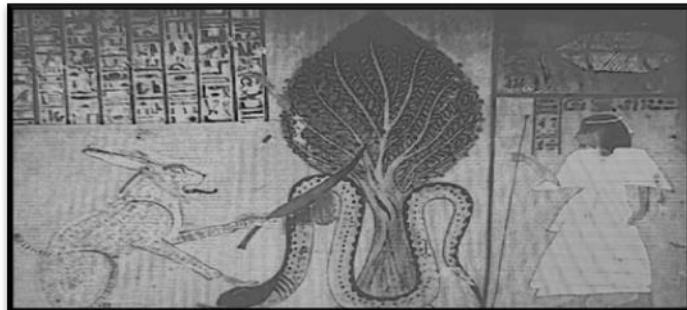


Fig.4.Tomb TT 359, Deir el -Madina, Ramesses III, IV (Omran, n.d.)

Commentary on scenes representing spell 335 and chapter 17 Book of the Dead

Both spells have main common items, **spell 335** has the tomcat (representative of the sun god *R*ꜥ) and the sacred *išd* tree, but here the tomcat does the splitting of the tree, while in **spell 17** an item is added which is the serpent (evil symbol), and the splitting is made by the tom cat to the serpent not to the tree. **Spell 17** is the one represented in scenes. It has been suggested that splitting of the *išd* tree is to allow the sun to rise (Brown, 2001). In chapter 17, three main participants are usually represented: a cat that symbolizes the god *R*ꜥ, the *išd* tree, and a serpent that symbolizes evil. **Cats** held a sacred place in ancient Egyptian mythology due to their association with the sun god *R*ꜥ along with other gods and goddesses like Bastet and Sekhmet. They represented protection, and the Sun god *R*ꜥ referred to them as “*Mi3*.” They were responsible for protecting the Persea tree from enemies of god when it was under attack. As shown in the previous figures

(1-4), the cat, the representation of *R^c* slays or cuts the serpent, the personification of evil in the presence of the *išd* tree. The cat was also considered a sacred animal to goddess Mut. It may be imagined that god *R^c* and his daughter fought the battle of Apophis together. This is evident from a passage in the ritual of Mut (papyrus Berlin 3014,3053) “when she was found at the splitting of the *išd* tree together with Ra in Heliopolis” (Te Velde, 1982). **The Serpent** symbolizes evil, and it is usually big in size. The size and location of the ***išd Tree*** varies. Its size can be small or big. In **fig.1**, it is relatively small, while in **fig.3** it is relatively big. Location also varies: sometimes the tree is behind the cat as in **fig.2** and **3**, other times it is behind the serpent as in **fig.4**, or it can be in the background as in **fig.1**.

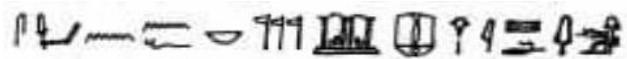
The *išd* tree and the king

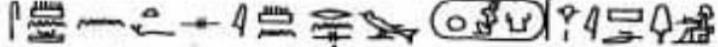
Nearly all the great temples of Egypt have a scene of the king kneeling, sitting, or standing beside or under a Persea tree, on the leaves of which a god is writing the royal cartouche on its leaves (Sety, 2008). The scene with the *išd* tree was represented in relation to the coronation and the Sd-Festival. Moreover, the ritual of presenting the leaves of the *išd* tree is linked to coronation ceremony, which is attested in the festival calendars in Edfu and Dendara (El Kordy, n.d.). The name of the king was written during the feast on the leaves of the *išd* tree by Thoth or another god (Iwaszczuk, 2014). Welvaert mentions that the *išd* tree was pictured for the first time during the reign of Thutmose I (Welvaert, 1996).

The following part aims at giving examples of scenes and texts in the New kingdom related to the coronation and Sd festivals in which the *išd* tree is pictured or mentioned.

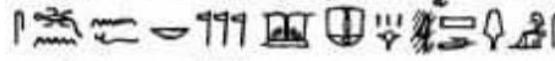
Examples of Scenes or Texts of the *išd* tree in the 18th Dynasty

The scene of the *išd* tree appeared for the first time in the treasury of **Thutmose I** in north Karnak. Unfortunately, few fragments of blocks are preserved (Jacquet, 1973). The representation of the *išd* tree is also preserved on 7 unpublished fragments of blocks from the temple of Thutmose I. On one of the fragments of blocks a short inscription is carved “*hb sd psdt R^c m Twnw*”, the sed-festival Ennead of Ra in Heliopolis (Iwaszczuk, 2014). On obelisks of **Thutmose I** and **Hatshepsut** are texts that mention the *išd* tree, that of **Thutmose I**:

 , *sdsr.n it.f nb ntrw hb sd hr išd*, the sanctifying of his father (Amun), lord of the gods, the Sd-Festival on the *išd* tree, (Urk.IV,93.11)

(Helck, 1958). That of **Hatshepsut**: 

smn.n it.s Imn rn.s wr M3t - K3 - R^c hr išd, her father Amun established the great name of Hatshepsut on the *išd* tree (Urk. IV,358,14-15) (Helck, 1958). A similar inscription to the previous one was on the western wall of the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el Bahari, now destroyed (Helck, 1957). In the temple at Speos Artemidos, the queen wrote about Amun that he is the one who inaugurated the *išd* tree (Gardiner, 1946). On the London obelisk of **Thutmose III**, erected originally in Heliopolis on the occasion of the king’s 4th Sed-Festival, the text on the

 northern and western walls , *s33 .n n it.f nb ntrw hb-sd hr išd .s*, his father, Amun, lord of the gods, multiplied his great name on the occasion of the sd festival on the *išd* tree (Urk IV , 591,10-12,16-17) (Helck, 1958). The first fully preserved

representation of the *išd* tree was depicted in Medinet Habu, on the inner south wall of the bark sanctuary (Helck, 1957). **Thutmose III** is led by Atum and Hathor, and approaches the tree placed in *hw-t-č3t* according to the inscription. On the opposite side Amun-*R* is sitting on a throne writing the name of the king on the leaves of the tree. The god Amun says to the king Thutmose III “I will write your name on the *išd* tree” (Lefebure, 1902).

Examples of Scenes or Texts of the *išd* tree in the 19th dynasty

In Karnak, temple of Amun *R*, in the east part of the passage of the 2nd pylon leading to the great hypostyle hall, decorated under Ramesses I and later usurped by Ramesses II, are four scenes where the king **Ramesses I** is represented receiving the jubilee. One of which is on the north wall, 3rd register, 2nd scene (KB 15), Ramesses I, receiving jubilees from god Atum during which goddess Seshat writes the name of the king on a leaf of the *Išd* tree (Costa, (2005)). In Karnak, temple of Amun, Hypostyle interior, north wall, east side-middle register, left (KB 285), **Seti I** kneeling in *the išd* tree (**Plate 1**) with Thoth inscribing the king’s name on a leaf (Costa, 2006). In the temple of Seti I at Abydos (**Plate 2**), on the western wall of the 2nd hypostyle hall, king Seti I is kneeling in the *išd* tree while Ra-Horakhty writes his name on the leaves. There is another scene of **Ramesses II** at the façade of the temple (Sety, 2008). In Karnak, temple of Amon, hypostyle entrance (the passage of the 2nd pylon) north wall, 3rd register , 2nd scene (KB 15), **Ramesses II** is kneeling in the *išd* tree, and receiving jubilees from Atum in the presence of Seshat who inscribes the king’s name on a leaf (scene originally of Ramesses I) (Costa, SAK 35, p.64). In Karnak, temple of Amon, hypostyle entrance (oriental half of the passage of the 2nd pylon), south wall , 3rd register 2nd scene (KB 6), Ramesses II is kneeling in the *išd* tree and receiving jubilees from Ra-Horakhty in the presence of Thoth who inscribes king’s name on a leaf (scene originally of Rameses I) (Costa, SAK 35, p.64). In Karnak, temple of Amun, Hypostyle interior, south wall, east half, bottom register, east end, (KB 121), king Ramesses II is kneeling in the *išd* tree (**Plate 3**) and receiving jubilee from Amun Ra in the presence of Mut and Khonsu, and Thoth inscribes king’s name on leaves of the *išd* tree (Porter, 1960-1971), (Nelson, 1981). At Luxor Temple, forecourt, south wall, east half ,1st register, first scene (LA68), Ramesses II is kneeling in the *išd* tree and receiving jubilees from Amon Ra in the presence of Thoth (Costa,2006). At Silsila, chapel of Ramesses II, king is kneeling in the *išd* tree, and Amun Ra is seated on a throne writing on one of the fruits of the tree, and behind him, god Thot is writing on his palette (Lefebure, 1902). At Abu Simbel, on the wall of the 1st hall, king Ramesses II is kneeling in the *išd* tree in the presence of Thoth (Lefebure, 1902). At Ramesseum, left of the 1st pylon, on the wall of the hall before the last (**Plate 5**), Ramesses II is sitting under the sacred *išd* tree, and Atum writes on the sacred tree in the presence of Thoth and goddess Seshat. The tree carries 2 fruits with the king’s name in the form of hearts: he has 2 names, thus 2 hearts (Lefebure, 1902). Besides the scenes of Ramesses II, there are 3 statuettes in the Cairo museum (No. 42142-42143-42144, **Plate 6-7**) representing the king crawling pushing before him his name written in sculptured hieroglyphs, no. 42143 of which fragments are only left, but the base of the statuette is clear to have been decorated with branches of Persea on the leaves of which cartouches of the king are written. Militza concludes from the inscriptions, the form of the name, the age of the king and the Persea branches bearing cartouches that these statuettes were made in the occasion of the coronation of the king (Mattieu, 1930), (Legrain, 1906). In Karnak, temple of Amon court 1, north of the 7th pylon, cachette court, west wall, north half, upper register 4th

scene (KG 57), **Seti II** is kneeling in the *išd* tree receiving jubilees from Amon *Rˁ* in the presence of Mut and Thoth, scene originally of Ramesses II (Costa, 2006).

Examples from the 20th dynasty

In Karnak, temple of Amun, 3rd court, block located in the floor (originally in the court of the cachette), **Ramesses IV** is wearing the nemes and is kneeling in the *išd* tree, receiving jubilees from Amon *Rˁ*, with Atum inscribing the king's name on a leaf (Costa, 2003). In Medinet Habu, great temple, 1st pylon, outer face, south face, (MHA 37), Ramesses IV is wearing a blue crown *hprš* and is holding the crook and flail. He is kneeling in the *išd* tree, receiving jubilees from Amon *Rˁ* while Atum is inscribing the king's name on a leaf in the presence of Mut and Khonsu



(Plate 9). The hieroglyphs above Atum reads, *išd* “writing for you your name on the *išd* tree” (Costa, 2003). In Medinet Habu, great temple, 1st pylon, outer face, north face, (Plate 10, MHA 33), Ramesses IV is kneeling in the *išd* tree and is receiving jubilees from Amon *Rˁ* in the presence of Ptah, Thoth, and Seshat (Costa, 2006). It is worth mentioning that the *išd* tree appeared in the tomb of Sennefer TT 96 B, Sheikh Abd El-Qurna (Plate 11), where he is shown seated on a chair in the *išd* tree, which proves that the tree was also used symbolically by non-royals to guarantee eternal life (Hodel-Hoenes, 2000).

Analysis

Egyptian cosmology mentions that at the beginning of the world, the sacred *išd* tree (tree of life) unfolded itself upon the appearance of the sun god. The leaves of the god set down the names and years of the kings of Egypt to serve their annals (Caroli, 2015). The tree may have been related to creation myths as its fruit has a heart-shape and its leaf has a tongue-shape (Brown, 2001). The scenes of the king kneeling in the presence of the *išd* tree and his name written on its leaves by Amun *Rˁ* seem to appear during the reign of Thutmose III as in Medinet Habu representation. A few variants of this scene also entrust writing to the hands of other gods like Thoth and Seshat. Later, Ramesses I, represented receiving jubilees under an *išd* tree, seemed to have used this scene to legitimize his ascent to the throne as the true successor of Horemheb. This wish has been accomplished by the presence of significant gods, the most important of which are Amun Ra, Atum, Thoth and Seshat. This granted him hundreds of thousands of years with *Sd* festivals by inscribing his name and the years of his reign on the leaves of the sacred *išd* tree. This way the king became responsible before the gods for the maintenance of the cosmic order. Heliopolis was regarded as the place for the main cult of the *išd* tree as is proved by an



inscription on the London obelisk, *išd m hnt bnw*, “The *išd* tree in the midst of the Bennu house” (Buhl, 1947). The *bnw* was connected with the *išd* tree. Since the bird was associated with the beginning of life—according to the Heliopolitan theory—and since the accession to the throne and the *Sd*-Festival is considered a new cycle of which the *išd* tree was related, thus the *bnw* and the *išd* tree were connected in the sense that both are symbols of a new era (Lloyd, 1994). This cult did not stop with the loss of Heliopolis' importance but continued into the Ptolemaic period. In the king's accession and *Sd*-Festivals, the *bnw* sometimes receives the title “Lord of Sed Festivals” (Lloyd, 1994). The *išd* tree is holy to the sun god Ra and symbolized long life and kinship, thus writing the king's name on its leaves symbolizes a long reign (Allon, 2017). It seems that originally when the king ascended the throne, his name was

recorded on a golden leaf of a cult object in the shape of a tree (Verner, 2013). The writing of the king's name on a leaf of the *išd* tree is generally associated with the crowning of the pharaoh, and gave justification to his ascension to the throne as a legitimate successor, reaffirming his kingship and also its continuity through the Sd-Festival (Redford, 2003). It was believed that for each leaf the deity inscribed, the king would rule for one year (Sety, 2008). Writing king's names and deeds in the *gnwt* is comparable to writing on the *išd* tree. It symbolizes king's proper name in history (Allon, 2017). The relation could be seen in Thutmose III representing himself writing the *gnwt* together with Thoth in the main building of the temple of Semna (Allon, 2019).

Table 1

Displaying the *išd* tree several appearances in texts and scenes

	Date	Location
<i>išd fruit as offering</i> (Examples, see p.4)	4 th Dynasty 5 th Dynasty 5 th -6 th Dynasty 6 th Dynasty 6 th Dynasty 12 th Dynasty 18 th Dynasty	-Mastabas of Anchus in Giza -Mastaba of Mersuankh in Giza. -Mastaba of Nefer in Giza. -Mastaba of Seneb, in Giza. - Mastaba of Meruka -Temple of Ptah in Memphis. -Fruit found in tomb of Tutankamun
<i>išd fruit as remedy</i>		in Papyrus Ebers 2, line 24,11.
<i>išd flowers/ garlands</i>	New Kingdom	- Garlands like that of Ramesses II. - Medinet Habu, - Deir el Medina - workmen's village at Amarna -Flowers used for funerals
<i>išd tree in Book of the Dead/ spell 335</i>	Reign of Amenophis III Dynasty 18 Reign of Amenophis II Reign of Amenophis III	-Papyrus CG 51189. -Papyrus BM 10793, line 6,10 -Papyrus of Nu BM EA 10477 from Thebes. -Papyrus CG 51189 in line 764. - Papyrus of Nu BM EA 10477.
<i>išd tree in Book of the Dead/spell 17</i>	19 th Dynasty 20 th Dynasty	-BM EA 9901 from the tomb of <i>Phw-nfr</i> . - BM EA 10470 - Tomb of <i>sn-ndm</i> in Deir el Medina. -Tomb of <i>Ini hr h'w</i> in Deir el Medina.
<i>išd tree as part of coronation and jubilee festivals</i>	18th Dynasty Thutmose I Hatshepsut 19th Dynasty Ramesses I Seti I Ramesses II Seti II 20th Dynasty Ramesses IV	- Obelisk - Obelisk, Temple of Deir el Bahari, Speos Artemidos. -Obelisk, Medinet Habu/bark sanctuary. - Karnak, passage of 2 nd pylon. - Karnak, Hypostyle hall, Abydos - Karnak, hypostyle hall Abydos Luxor temple Silsila Abu Simbel Ramesseum -Karnak,temple of Amun Ra. - Temple of Karnak,3 rd court Medinet Habu, great temple.

Conclusion

The *išd* tree is a sacred tree that appeared originally in the city of Heliopolis, a city of great religious and spiritual importance. The tree appeared in texts as early as the Old Kingdom. Its fruits were used in offerings, which is proved by its mention in offerings in several Mastabas of the Old Kingdom. The flowers and leaves of the *išd* tree were used in funerals and garlands like that of Tutankhamun and Ramesses II. The tree also appeared in the Book of the Dead in spell 335 and 17 related to the sun god *R*^c. The *išd* tree was related to the *bnw* by being symbol of a new cycle. The *išd* tree also played an important role in the scenes related to coronation and Sd-festivals, where the names of the kings were written on its leaves to assure them eternal life, and sometimes to legitimize the king's ascent to the throne as in the case of Ramesses I. It seems that originally when the king ascended the throne, his name was recorded on a golden leaf of a cult object in the shape of a tree. Writing on the *gnwt* was also considered related to writing on the *išd* tree. Many gods were related to the *isid* tree: Atum, *R*^c, Osiris, Mut, Thoth, and Seshat, along with other gods who appeared occasionally in scenes like Amun *R*^c, Khonsu, Ptah, Sekhmet. These gods gave the *išd* tree more significance. Non-royals seemed to have adopted the appearance within the *išd* tree. This is proved by the scene in the tomb of Sennefer.

Plates



Plate 1: Seti I, Temple of Amun Ra, Karnak, hypostyle hall (Helck, 1957)



Plate 2: Seti I, Temple of Abydos (Verner ,2019)



Plate.3. Ramesses II, Hypostyle hall, interior wall south, temple of Amun Ra, Karnak, (Helck , ZAS 82)



Plate.4. Ramesses II at temple of El Derr
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rivertay>

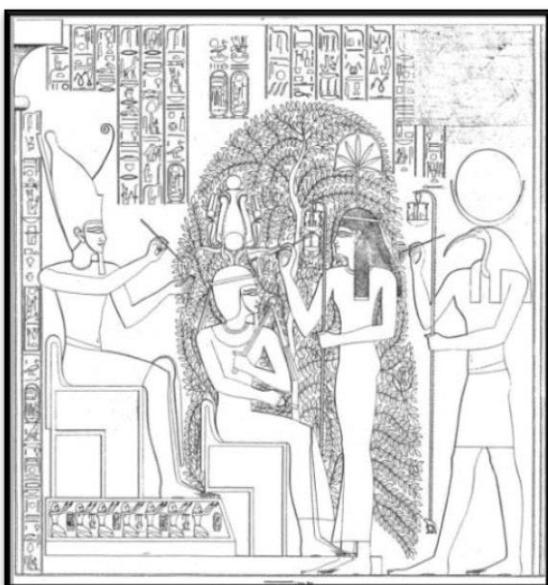


Plate.5. Ramesses II, Temple of Ramesseum, hypostyle hall, Ramesses II, under Ished tree (Stadler, 2012),
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2xj8c3qg>



Plate.6. Base of Statuette of Ramesses II
 Cairo no.42,143 (Militza, n.d.)



Plate.7. Base of Statuette of Ramesses II
Cairo no.42,143 (Militza, n.d.)



Plate.8. Thebes, Karnak, Temple of Amun-Ra,
Rameses IV, (Costa, 2003)



Plate.9. Ramesses IV, Medinet Habu,
(Epicgraphic Survey, 1932)

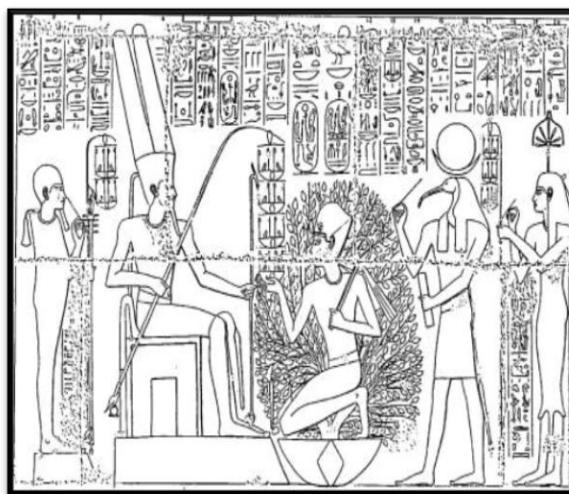


Plate.10. Ramesses IV, Medinet Habu (MHA 33),
(Costa, 2003)



Plate.11. Tomb of Sennefer TT 96 B , Sheikh Abd El- Qurna (Abdelhamid, 2017)

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بعض الملاحظات عن شجرة الأيشد، الشجرة المقدسة في هليوبوليس

ترنيم بيومي

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المؤلف

وفقا للأساطير المصرية القديمة، فإن آلة الخلق أتوم - طبقاً لنظرية هليوبوليس هو الذي خلق الكون وكون مجموعة تاسوع الآلهة التي كان يتم عبادتها في هذه المدينة. كانت مدينة هليوبوليس هي مركز عبادة الشمس حيث قام الإله رع بالدور القيادي للتاسوع منذ عصر الأسرة الخامسة. كان هناك الكثير من الرموز الدينية المقدسة في المدينة مثل البنين، عامود ايون، طائر البنو والثور منيفس. من الرموز الهامة أيضاً لهليوبوليس الشجرة المقدسة الأيشد التي حلّت محل كل الرموز الأخرى وتعود حدود المدينة ليصبح لها دور رئيسي يحتوى على مفاتيح النظام الكوني الإلهي. ظهرت هذه الشجرة في مناظر التتويج، في مناظر لها اتصال باحتفال الحب سد كما ظهرت في كتاب الموتى بجانب الأهمية كثمار، أوراق وزهور. تبدأ الدراسة بمقدمة عامة عن مدينة هليوبوليس المركز الرئيسي لهذه الشجرة ثم ترکز الدراسة على الأهمية العملية، الدينية والروحية لها، وتنتهي الدراسة بالخاتمة.

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

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