

The Contendings of Horus and Seth

[There came to pass] the adjudication of Horus and Seth, mysterious in (their) forms and mightiest of the princes and magnates who (ever) came into existence. Now it was a young [god] that was seated in the presence of the Universal Lord, claiming the office of his father Osiris, beautiful in (his) appearances, the [son of Ptah, who illumines [the west with] his [complex]ion, while Thoth was presenting the uninjured Eye to the great prince who is in Heliopolis. Then said Shu, the son of Re, in the presence of [A tum], the great [prince] who is in Heliopolis: Justice is a possessor of power. {administer} it by saying, "Award the office to [Horus]."/ Said Thoth to the [Ennead: It is correct a million times. Thereupon Isis let out a loud [shriek rejoicing exceedingly, and she came to before the Universal [Lord] and said: North wind, (go) to the west. Impart the good news to Onnophris, I.p.h. Then said Shu, the son [of Re]: [The] one who presents the uninjured Eye is loyal to the Ennead.

Statement by the universal Lord: Indeed, what is the meaning of your exercising authority alone by yourselves? [Onuris] said: he shall [assum]e the cartouche of Horus, and the White Crown shall be [placed] upon his head. The Universal Lord was silent a long [whi]le, [being] furious [at] this Ennead. Then Seth, the son of Nut, said: Have him dismissed outside/ with me that I may let you see my hand(s) prevail <over> his hand(s) [in the presence of the Ennead, since there is not known [any] (other methods [of] dispossessing him. Said Thoth to him: Shouldn't we ascertain (who is) the imposter? It is while Osiris's son Horus is still living that his office is to be awarded to Seth.

Pre-Harakhti became exceedingly furious, for Pre's wish was/ to give the office to Seth, great in virility, the son of Nut. Onuris let out a loud shriek before the face of the Ennead, saying: What shall we do? Then Atum, the great prince who is in Heliopolis, said: have Banebdjede, the great living god, [summon]ed that he may judge between the youths. Banebdjede, the great god who resides in Sehel, and Ptah-Tatenen were brought before Atum, and he told them: Judge between the two youths and stop them from being engaged so in quarreling every day. Thereupon/ Banebdjede, the great living god, answered what he had said: Do not have us exercise (our) authority ignorantly. Let a letter be sent to Neith the Great, the God's Mother. As for what she will say, we shall do it.

The Ennead said to Banebdjede, the great living god: It is (already) a first time that they have been adjudged in the "One are the Truths" court. Then the Ennead said to Thoth in the presence of the Universal Lord: Please compose a letter to Neith the Great, the God's Mother, in the name of the Universal Lord, the Bull who resides in Heliopolis. Thoth said: I'll do so, surely; I'll do so, I'll do so. Then he sat down to compose the letter and wrote: The King of Upper and Lower Egypt,/ Re-Atum, beloved of Thoth, the Lord of the Two Lands, the heliopolitan, the solar disk that illumines the Two Lands with its hue, the Nile mighty in

flooding, Re-Harakhti (while Neith the Great, the God's Mother, who illumined the first fee, is alive, in health, and rejuvenated), the living manifestation of the Universal Lord, the Bull in Heliopolis, being the good King of Egypt.

To wit: (i), your humble servant, spend all night on Osiris's behalf consulting the Two Lands every day while Sobek endures forever. What shall we do for these two individuals who have been in the tribunal for eighty years now, but/ neither of whom can be judged? Please write us what we should do.

Then Neith the Great, the God's Mother, sent a letter to the Ennead, saying: Award the office of Osiris to his son Horus. Don't commit such blatant acts of inequity, which are illegal, or I shall become so furious that the sky will touch the ground. The Universal Lord, the Bull who resides in Heliopolis, ought to be told that Enrich Seth is in his possessions. Give him Anath and Astarte, your two daughters, and/or install Horus in the position of his father, Osiris.

And so, the letter of Neith the Great, the God's mother, reached this Ennead as they were sitting in the "Horus with the projecting Horns" court, and the letter was delivered into Thoth's hand. Thereupon, Thoth read it out in the presence of the Universal Lord and the entire Ennead, and they declared unanimously: This goddess is correct. Then the Universal Lord became furious at Horus and told him: You are despicable in your person, and this office is too much for you, you lad, the flavor of whose mouth is (still) bad.

Onuris became furious to the nth degree, and so did the entire Ennead constituting the Council of the Thirty, I.p.h. Bebon, the god, got right up and/or told Pre-Harakhti: Your shrine is vacant. Pre-Harakhti took offense at the insult that was said to him and lay down on his back, very much saddened. And so, the Ennead went outside and let out a loud cry before the face of Becton, the god. They told him: Get out; this offense that you have committed is exceedingly great. And they departed to their huts. And so, the great god spent a day/ lying on his back in his pavilion, very much saddened and alone by himself.

After a considerable while, Hathor, Lady of the Southern Sycamore, came and stood before her father, the Universal Lord, and she exposed her vagina before his very eyes. Thereupon, the great god laughed at her. Then he got right up and sat down with the Great Ennead. He said to Horus and Seth: Speak concerning yourselves. Seth, great in virility, the son of Nut, said: As for me, I am Seth, greatest in virility among <the> Ennead, for I slay the/ opponent of Pre daily while I am at the prow of the Bark of the Millions, whereas not any (other) god is able to do it. I should receive the office of Osiris. Then they said: Seth, the son of Nut, is correct. Onuris and Thoth let out a loud cry, saying: Is it while a bodily son is still living that the office is to be awarded to a maternal uncle? Then said Banebdjede, the living great god: Is it while Seth, his elder brother, is still living that the office is to be awarded to the (mere) lad?

The Ennead let out a loud cry before the face of the Universal Lord and said to him: What is the meaning of the words that you have said which are unfit to be heard? Said Horus, son of Isis: It is no good. This is cheating me in the presence of/ the Ennead and depriving me of the office of my father, Osiris. Thereupon Isis became furious at the Ennead and took an oath by (the) god in the presence of the Ennead as follows: By my mother Neith, the goddess, and by Ptah-Tatenen, with lofty plumes, who curbs the horns of gods, these matters should be submitted before Atum, the great prince who is in Heliopolis, and also (before) Khepri, who resides in his bark. And the Ennead said to her: Don't become angry. The rights will be given to the one who is in the right. All that you have said will be done.

Seth, the son / of Nut, became furious at the Ennead when they had said these words to Isis the Great, the God's Mother, So Seth said to them: I shall take my scepter of 4,500 nemset-weight and kill one of you a day. And then Seth took an oath by the Universal Lord, saying: I shall not go to law in the tribunal while Isis is (still) in it. Said Pre-Harakhty to them: You shall ferry across to the Island in the Middle and decide between them there and tell Nemty, the ferryman, not to ferry / any woman across resembling Isis. And so the Ennead ferried across to the Island in the Middle and sat down and ate bread.

Then Isis came and approached Nemty, the ferryman, as he was sitting near his boat, after she had transformed herself into an old woman who walked with a hobble and (wore) a small golden signet ring on her hand. She said to him: It is in order that you might ferry <me> across to the Island in the Middle that I come to you, because it is for the young lad that I have come carrying this bowlful of porridge, I since he has been tending some cattle on the Island in the Middle for five days now and is hungry. He said to her: I have been told not to ferry any woman across. But she said to him: It is with reference to Isis that you have been told this which you have (just) mentioned. He said to her: What will you give me in order that you may be ferried across to the Island in the Middle? Said Isis to him: I will give you this cake. He said to her: What good is it to me, your cake? Is it in exchange for your cake that I shout ferry you across to the Island in the Middle when I have been told not to ferry any woman across?/ Then she said to him: I will give you the golden signet-ring which is on <my> hand. And he said to her: Hand over the golden signet-ring. And she gave it to him. Then he ferried her across to the Island in the Middle.

Now, as she was walking under the trees, she looked at the Ennead, sitting and eating bread in the presence of the Universal Lord in his pavilion. Seth looked and saw her when she had come closer from afar. Then she conjured by means of her magic, transforming herself/ into a maiden whose body was beautiful and whose like did not exist in the entire land. Thereupon, he desired her most lecherously. Seth got right up from sitting and eating bread with the Great Ennead and proceeded to overtake her, no one having seen her except himself. Then he stood behind a sycamore tree and called to her. He said to her: I am here with you, beautiful maiden.

And she said to him: Reflect, my great lord. As for me, I was a wife (ling) with a cattleman to whom I bore an on. My husband died, and the lad started tending his father's cattle. / But then a stranger came and settled in my stable. He said thus in speaking to my son, "I shall beat you and confiscate your father's cattle and evict you," said he in speaking to him. Now, it is my desire to have you afford him protection. Thereupon Seth said to her: Is it while the son of the male is still living that the cattle are to be given to the stranger?

And so, Isis transformed herself into a kite and flew up and perched on top of an acacia tree. She called to Seth and said to him: Be ashamed of yourself. It is your own mouth that has said it. It is your own cleverness/ that has judged you. What comeback do you have now? And so he became ashamed and went to where Pre-Harakhti was, (still) ashamed. Then Pre-Harakhti said to him: What's bothering you still? Said Seth to him: That wicked woman has come to me again. She has tricked me again, having transformed herself into a beautiful maiden before my eyes. She said to me, "As for me, (was a wife (living) with a cattleman. He died, and I bore him a son who is tending to some of his father/s cattle. A stranger took lodging in my stable with my son, and I had his meals. Now, after many days following this, the visitor then said to my son, 'I shall beat you and confiscate your father's cattle, and they will become mine,' he said in speaking to my son." So, she said to me.

Then Pre-Harakhti said to him: And what did you say to her? And Seth told him: I said to her, "it is while the son of the male is still living that the cattle are to be given to the stranger? Sol said/ to her. "This visitor's face should be smitten with a rod, and he should be evicted, and your son put in his father's position." So I said to her. Thereupon Pre-Harakhti said to him: Now look here, it is you yourself that has judged your own self. What comeback do you have now? So Seth said to him: Have Nemty, the ferryman, brought and severe punishment inflicted upon him, saying, "Why did you let her be ferried across?" So it shall be said to him. Then Nemty, the ferryman, was brought before the Ennead, and the forepart of his feet removed. So / Nemty abjured gold even to this day in the presence of the Great Ennead, saying: Gold shall be because of me an abomination unto my city. Then, the Ennead ferried across to the western tract and sat down on the mountain.

Now <afterward> at evening time Pre-Harakhti and Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan wrote to the Ennead, saying What are you doing still sitting here? As for the two youths, you will be having them finish our their lifetime in the tribunal! When my letter reaches you, you shall place the White Crown upon the head of Horus, son of Isis, and appoint him to the position of his father I Osiris.

Thereupon Seth became terribly furious. And so the Ennead said to Seth: Why have you become so furious? Isn't it in accordance with what Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan, and Pre-Harakhti have said that (things) should be carried out?

Then the White Crown was set upon the head of Horus, son of Isis. Seth, being very angry, let out a loud shriek before the face of this Ennead, saying: Is it while I am still living as his elder brother that the office is to be awarded to my younger brother? Then he took an oath as follows: "The White Crown shall be removed from the head of Horus, son of Isis, and he shall be thrown into the water in order that I may contend with him for the office of Ruler. Pre-Harakhti acquiesced.

Thereupon Seth said to Horus: Come, let's both transform <ourselves> into hippopotamuses and submerge in/ the deep waters in the midst of the sea. Now as for the one who shall emerge within the span of three whole months, the office should not be awarded him. Then they both submerged. And so Isis sat down and wept, saying: Seth has killed Horus, my son. Then she fetched a skein of yarn. She fashioned a line, fetched a deben-weight's (worth) of copper, cast it in (the form of) a harpoon, tied the line to it, and hurled it into the water at the spot where Horus and Seth had submerged./ But then the copper (barb) bit into the person of her son Horus. So Horus let out a loud shriek, saying: Help me, mother Isis, my mother. Appeal to your copper

(barb) to let go of me. I am Horus, son of Isis. thereupon Isis let out a loud shriek and told <her> copper (barb): Let go of him. See, it is my son Horus. He is my child. So her copper (barb) let go of him.

Then she again hurled it back into the water, and it bit into the person of Seth. So Seth let out a loud shriek, saying: What have I done against you, my sister Isis? / Appeal to your copper (barb) to let go of me. I am your maternal brother, Isis. Then she felt exceedingly compassionate toward him. Thereupon Seth called to her, saying: Do you prefer the stranger to <your> maternal brother Seth? So Isis appealed to her copper (barb), saying: Let go of him. See, it is Isis's maternal brother whom you have bitten into. Then the copper (barb) let go of him.

Horus, son of Isis, became furious at his mother Isis and went out with his face as fierce as an Upper Egyptian panther's, having his cleaver of 16 deben-weight in his hand. he removed the head of his mother Isis, put it in his arms, and ascended the mountain. Then Isis/ transformed herself into a statue of flint which had no head. Said Pre-Harakhti to Thoth: What is that which has arrived having no head? So Thoth told Pre-Harakhti: My good lord, that is Isis the Great, the God's Mother, after Horus, her son, removed her head. Thereupon / Pre-Harakhti let out a loud cry and said to the Ennead: Let us go and inflict severe punishment upon him. Then the Ennead ascended those mountains in order to search for Horus, son of Isis.

Now, as for Horus, he was lying under a shenusha tree in the land of the oasis. Seth found him, seized hold of him, threw him down upon his back on the mountain, removed his two eyes from their sockets, and buried them on the mountain so as to illumine the earth. The two balls of his

eyes became two bulbs, which grew into lotuses. Seth came away and told Pre-Harakhti falsely: I did not find Horus—although he had found him.

Then Hathor, Mistress of the Southern Sycamore, set out, and she found Horus lying weeping in the desert. She captured a gazelle and milked it. She said to Horus: Open your eye(s) so that I may put this milk in them. Then he opened his eye(s), and she put the milk in them, putting some in the right and some in the left. She told him: Open your eye(s). And he opened his eye(s). <She> looked at them and found that they were healed.

She/ set out to tell Per-Harakhti: (I) found Horus after Seth had deprived him of his eye(s), but I have restored him back (to health). See, he has returned. Said to the Ennead: Let Horus and Seth be summoned in order that they may be judged. Then, they were brought before the Ennead. Said the Universal Lord before the Great Ennead to Horus and Seth: Go and obey what I tell you. You should eat and/ drink so that we may have (some) peace. Stop quarreling so every day on end.

Then Seth told Horus, Come, let's have a holiday in my house. Horus told him: "I'll do so, surely, I'll do so, I'll do so.

Now afterward, (at) evening time, bed was prepared for them, and they both lay down. But during the night, Seth caused his phallus to become stiff and inserted it between Horus's thighs. Then Horus placed his hands between his thighs and received Seth's semen. Horus/ went to tell his mother, Isis: help me, Isis, my mother, come and see what Seth has done to me. And he opened his hand(s) and let her see Seth's semen. She let out a loud shriek, seized the copper (knife), and cut off his hand(s) that were equivalent. Then she fetched some fragrant ointment and applied it to Horus's phallus. She caused it to become stiff and inserted it into a por, and he caused his semen to flow down into it.

Isis at morning time went carrying the semen of Horus to the garden of Seth and said to Seth's gardener: What sort of vegetable/ is it that Seth eats here in your company? So the gardener told her: he doesn't eat any vegetables here in my company except lettuce. And Isis added the semen of Horus onto it. Seth returned according to his daily habit and ate the lettuce, which he regularly ate. Thereupon, he became pregnant with the semen of Horus. So Seth went to tell / Horus: Come, let's go and I may contend with you in the tribunal. Horus told him: I'll do so, surely, I'll do so, I'll do so.

They both went to the tribunal and stood in the presence of the Great Ennead. They were told: Speak concerning yourselves. Said Seth: let me be awarded the office of Ruler, l.p.h., for as to Horus, the one who is standing (trial), I have performed the labor of a male against him. The Ennead let out a loud cry. They spewed and spat at Horus's face. Horus laughed at them. Horus then took/ an oath by god as follows: All that Seth has said is false. Let Seth's semen be

summoned so that we may see from where it answers, and my own be summoned so that we may see from where it answers.

Then Thoth, lord of script and scribe of truth for the Ennead, put his hand on Horus's shoulder and said: Come out, your semen of Seth. And it answered him from the water in the interior of the marsh. Thoth put his hand on Seth's shoulder and said: Come out, your semen of Horus. Then it said to him: Where shall I come from? Thoth said to it: Come/ out from his ear. Thereupon, it said to him: is it from his ear that I should issue forth, seeing that I am divine seed? Then Thoth said to it: Come out from the top of his head. And it emerged as a golden solar disk upon Seth's head. Seth became exceedingly furious and extended his hand(s) to seize the golden solar disk. Thoth took it away/ from him and placed it as a crown upon his (own) head. Then the Ennead said: Horus is right, and Seth is wrong.

Seth became exceedingly furious and let out a loud shriek when they said: Horus is right, and Seth is wrong. And so, Seth took a great oath by (the) god as follows: he shall not be awarded the office until he has been dismissed outside with me, and we build for ourselves some stone ships and race each other. Now, as for the one who shall prevail over his rival, / he is to be awarded the office of Ruler, I.p.h. Then Horus built for himself a boat of pine plastered it over with gypsum, and launched it into the water at evening time without anybody who was in the entire land

having observed it. Seth saw Horus's boat and thought it was of stone. And he went to the mountain, cut off a mountain top, and built for himself a boat of stone of 138 cubits. They embarked upon their ships in the presence of the Ennead. Then Seth's boat sank in the water. So Seth transformed himself into a hippopotamus/ and scuttled Horus's boat. Horus took his copper (harpoon) and hurled it at the person of Seth. Then the Ennead told him: Don't hurl it at him.

he gathered the harpoons, put them in his boat, and sailed downstream to Sais in order to tell neith the Great, the God's Mother: Let judgement be passed on me and Seth, seeing that it is eighty years now that we have been in the tribunal / and they have been unable to pass judgement on us, nor has he yet been vindicated against me, but it is a thousand times now that I have been in the right against him every day although he doesn't regard anything that the Ennead has said. I have contended with him in the "The Path of the Truths" court, and I have been vindicated

against him. I have contended with him in the "Horus with the Projecting Horns" court, and (I) have been vindicated against him. I have contended with him in the "Field of Rushes" court, and I have been vindicated against him. I have contended with him in the "Pool of the Field" court, and I have been vindicated against him. And the Ennead said to Shu, son of

Isis, is correct in all that he has said./ Statement which Thoth made to the Universal Lord: Have a letter sent to Osiris so that he may judge between the two youths. Then said Shu, son

of Re: What Thoth has told the Ennead is correct a million times. Said the Universal Lord to Thoth: Sit down and compose a letter to Osiris that we may learn what he has to say. Thoth sat down to fill out a letter to Osiris with the words: Bull, the lion who hunts for himself; the Two Ladies,

protecting the gods and subduing the Two Lands; Horus of God, who invented mankind in the primeval time, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Bull in the midst of Heliopolis, 1.p.h.; son of Ptah, (most) glorious one of the Two Banks, appearing as father of the Ennead while he eats of gold and glaze, the possessor of sanctity, 1.p.h. Please write us what we should do for Horus and Seth so that we do not exercise (our) authority ignorantly.

Now afterward, following this, the/ letter reached the King, son of Re, Great in Bounty and Master of Sustenance. he let out a loud cry after the letter had <been> read out in his presence. Then he answered it very quickly (writing) to the place where the Universal Lord was together with the Ennead, saying: Why should my son Horus be cheated when it was I that made you mighty? It was I (alone) who could create barley and emmer in order to sustain the gods as well as the cattle following the gods, whereas not any god or any goddess found himself (competent enough) to do it? So/ Osiris's letter reached the place where pre-Harakhti was, sitting together with the Ennead on the White Mound in Xoïs. it was read out in his and the Ennead's presence, and Pre-Harakhti said: Please answer for me the letter very quickly to Osiris and tell him in the letter, "If you had not come into being and if you had not been born, barley and emmer would exist anyway.

"The letter of the Universal Lord reached Osiris, and it was read out in his presence. Then he again wrote to pre-Harakhti as follows: It is exceedingly good, all that which you have done, O you who invented the Ennead as an accomplishment, although justice was allowed to sink down within the netherworld. please look at the situation also on your part. As for/ the land in which I am, it is filled with savage-faced messengers who do not fear any god or <any> goddess. I have but to let them go forth, and they will fetch the heart of whoever commits misdeeds and they will be here with me. Indeed, what is the meaning of my happening to be here resting in the west

while you are all outside? Who among you is there that is mightier than I? But see, you have invented injustice as an accomplishment. When Ptah the Great, South of his Wall, Lord of Ankh-tawi, created the sky, isn't it so that he told the stars that are in it, "It is in the west where King Osiris is that you shall set every night"? (And he told me), "Now after (the manner of) gods, so patricians and commoners also shall go to rest in the place where you are." So he said to me.

Now afterward, following this, Osiris's letter reached the place where the Universal Lord was together with the Ennead. Thoth received the letter and read it out in the presence of Pre-harakhti / and the Ennead. They said: The Great in Bounty and Master of Sustenance, 1.p.h., is doubly correct in all that he has said. Then Seth said: let us be taken to the Island in the

Middle so that (I) may contend with him. he went to the Island in the Middle, and Horus was vindicated against him. Then Atum, Lord of the Two Lands, the Heliopolitan, sent to Isis, saying: Bring Seth restrained with manacles. Isis brought Seth restrained with manacles, as a prisoner. Said Atum to him: Why do you not allow yourselves to be judged but (instead) usurp for yourself the office of Horus? Said Seth to him: On the contrary, my good lord. let Horus, son of Isis, be summoned and be awarded the office of/ his father Osiris.

Horus, son of Isis, was brought, and the White Crown was set upon his head, and he was installed in the position of his father Osiris. he was told: you are a good King of Egypt. You are the good lord, l.p.h., of every land unto all eternity. Thereupon, Isis let out a loud shriek on behalf of her son Horus, saying: You are the good king. My heart is in joy. You have illumined Earth with your complexion.

Then Ptah the Great, South of his Wall, Lord of Ankh-tawi, said: What shall be done for Seth? For see, Horus was installed in the position of his father, Osiris. Said Pre-Harakhti: Let Seth, son of Nut, be delivered to me so that he may dwell with me, being in my company as a son, and he shall thunder in the sky and be feared.

Someone/ went to tell Pre-Harakhti: Horus, son of Isis, has arisen as Ruler, l.p.h. Thereupon Pre-Harakhti rejoiced exceedingly and said to the Ennead: You shall jubilate from one land to the next for Horus, son of Isis! Said Isis: Horus has arisen as Ruler, l.p.h. The Ennead is in festivity, and heaven is in joy. They donned wreaths when they saw Horus, son of Isis, arisen as great Ruler, l.p.h. of Egypt. As for the Ennead, their hearts were satisfied, and the entire land was in exultation when they saw Horus, son of Isis, assigned the office of his father Osiris, lord of Busiris. Thus, it concludes successfully in Thebes, the place of Truth.