



# A Vegetal Form of the *djeser* Hieroglyph in KV35 (Gardiner D45)

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**Function**  
Logogram

**Value**  
*d*sr [Sacred]

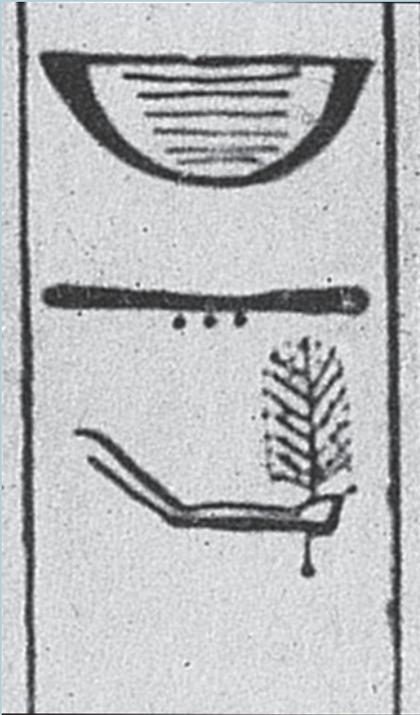
On a pillar in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 35), the hieroglyph *d*sr (Hoffmeier 1985: spec. 2–9) takes a vegetal form: the fist of a bent arm holds a branch that looks like a small tree. The central stem is reminiscent of a trunk, while the branching part is reminiscent of a tree-top, in the form of thirteen lateral branches around a central stem. The tree-like appearance of the sign, as well as the absence of a border delimiting its outline, distinguishes this hieroglyph from other known forms: a sceptre or staff, either long and thin (*mks*) or short and thicker (*nhb.t*). On another pillar in the same tomb, *d*sr has a different appearance, that of a very short, thick sceptre with a pommel:  (drawing based on De Luca's photo, 30629). This pommel is present elsewhere (OK:  Fischer 1979:19; MK: Jéquier 1921: 185 (490); NK: Amenhotep I, Karnak, Musée de plein air).

In the New Kingdom, the short, thick sceptre seems to have been interpreted as a vegetal (?) element, identifiable thanks to the presence of internal details  (Amenhotep I, Karnak, Musée de plein air; cf. Meresankh III *infra*),  (Thutmose IV: Fischer 1979: 19) and/or green colouring (TSL\_3\_26364). A head of lettuce may have been recognised (Keimer 1924: 80, 167; Fischer 1979: 19), as in Siptah:  (KV 47, Davies 1908: pl. VI). The ostensibly vegetal form of the *d*sr sign could be known as early as the Old Kingdom (Dynasty 4) in a more elongated form, coloured yellow with red details  (Queen Meresankh III: Dunham & Simpson 1974: fig. 6; Digital Giza). The element may have been held by two arms as early as the Early Dynastic forms (Regulski 2010: 366), then in the Old Kingdom at Giza and Saqqara (Der Manuelian 2003: 2, 19, 23, 173, 174 [D253], 190, 191, 232, 233; Collombert 2010: 34 n. 3) or at Akhmim (Callender 2019: 57, 62–64) and very occasionally in the tomb of Padiamenope (TT 33):  (room XIII-S, Book of Gates 8, mid. reg., col. 19). At Akhmim, a local idiosyncrasy interprets the top of the sign as an arrowhead (Callender 2019: 60–61, 63). Whatever form the sign assumes, the primary meaning of *d*sr would be to hold at a distance in order to singularise (Meeks 1991: 200).



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Document: Tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 35)

Date: New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, reign of Amenhotep II (ca. 1427–1400 BCE)

Provenance: Thebes

Current location: *In situ*

Object type: Pillar in burial chamber

Material: Stone; black paint

Hieroglyphic source



MdC: V30-N16-D45



Transliteration: *nb ꜥ-dsr*

Translation: Lord of the Sacred Land



Location: Burial Chamber (J), second pillar to the right of the entrance (left-hand side; Anubis scene)