An Unpublished Stela of Kharu and his wife Ty in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Temp. No. 11.1.25.7).\(^{(1)}\)

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Abstract:

This paper studies the funerary stela of Kharu and his family. The stela, which is currently housed in the basement of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Temp. No. 11.1.25.7), dates to the Ramesside Period, while its original provenance is uncertain. The stela includes three registers, depicting the owner of the stela and his family before Osiris, Isis, and a sycamore goddess tree. The study aims to better understand the thematic division of this funeral stela and to determine the owner and his family.

Keywords:

 Ba; base; Egyptian Museum in Cairo; Kharu; Osiris; Isis; New Kingdom; Nineteenth Dynasty; Ramesside Period; Rekhptah; stela; sycamore goddess-tree; Ty.

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The funerary stela of Kharu (H₃rw), currently housed in the basement of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, is round-topped and made out of limestone (Pl. I-II). It measures 95 cm in its height and 38 cm in width. Iconographically, the stela dates to the New Kingdom, and more precisely to the Ramesside Period. It is divided into three registers containing different themes, with the owner of the stela, depicted on all of them.

The only reference for the stela of Kharu in the Topographical Bibliography, which describes it as a: ‘round-topped tomb stela, three registers, I, man before seated Osiris, with Isis behind him, II, Kharu H₃rw and wife Ty Tji, III, tree goddess pouring libation, probably Dyn. XIX-XX, in Cairo, Egyptian Museum, Temp. No. 11.1.25.7’. (2)

The name Kharu means “the Syrian”, and since the Nineteenth Dynasty the term (H₃rw) refers to Syria, while (h₃rw) for Syrians. (3) Several individuals called Kharu are attested: the block statue of Saa, called Kharu from the Chapel of Wadjmose (Cairo CG 570), which dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty. (4) The stela of so-called Kharu, without titles, who was possibly the servant of Ptah at Kom el Qal’a, and currently on display at the Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia (E 13598), dating to the Nineteenth

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Dynasty.(5)

**Texts and Description:**

**First register: (Pl. III)**

(1-2) Ḥ3rw m3ḥ-ḥrw, Kharu, the justified
(3) Wsjr ḫnty, Osiris, foremost of
(4) -imntt, the west
(5) 3st-wrt, Isis the Great

**Commentary:**

In the first register Kharu is shown on the right side with a shaved head, presenting bouquets of three lotus flowers to Osiris and Isis, while the other hand is raised towards the deities in an act of adoration. The deceased is shown with a heavy belly, which is a common trait of the Nineteenth Dynasty and he wears a starched kilt. An offering table with circular bread loaves is located between the deceased and Osiris. Osiris and Isis are represented on a pedestal with Osiris sitting on a low back throne with all his usual regalia, wearing the atef crown and holding the crook and flagellum. Isis is shown behind Osiris with the throne sign adorning her head, her hand raised in protection of her husband.

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Second register: (Pl. IV)

(1) Rḥ-Pḥ Ṿz-ḥrw, Rekhptah, the justified
(2) Ṣdmw, the servant
(3) Wṣjr, Osiris
(4) Ḥṣrw, Kharu
(5) nḥt-pr Tjj, mistress of the house, Ty
(6) Ṿz(t)-ḥrw, the justified

Commentary: Rekhptah (Rḥ-Pḥ) is likely the son of the deceased and his wife and Ty. He is standing on the right side, shown with a shaved head and wearing a starched kilt. With his left hand, he pours a libation on the ka-offering table located before the deceased and his wife, while censing with the other hand. On the left side, Kharu and Ty are sitting on chairs, with the latter embracing her husband. Kharu is represented with a shaved head and wearing a long garment with two frontal sashes. Ty is shown with a long straight wig and wearing a long garment typical of the Ramesside era. The inscription above seems to identify the title of Rekhptah (Rḥ-Pḥ) Ṿz Ṣdmw, which means “servant”, although possible reading of Ṣdmw-Ṿz is also possible.\(^6\)

There is an obvious connection between the ka-sign and the offering tables pilled with offerings, as the plural of kA (kA.w) is defined as food or nourishment, and this table could be classified also as spiritual food on the table. The ka-offering table is represented in different funeral scenes, such as the tombs of Ramose (TT 56), which dates to the Eighteenth Dynasty and Nakhtamun (TT 341), dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty.

**Third register: (Pl. V)**

![Image of a tomb scene]

(1) Wsjr, Osiris
(2-3) H3rw, Kharu
(4) m3ɛ-hrw nbt-pr, the justified, mistress of the house
(5) Tjj, Ty

**Commentary:**

On the right side, Kharu is represented with his wife kneeling before a goddess who stands in a sycamore. The goddess provides them with nourishment in the form of two streams of water and food provisions on a platter. Kharu has a shaven head

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(9) N. De Garis Davies, *Seven Private Tombs in Kurnah*, London, 1948, pl. XXVIII.
and wears a long garment. He opens his hands widely to receive the libation as if to drink from his hands. Kharu is kneeling with one leg drawn up and leaning forward to catch the water. Ty is shown with a long straight wig and her hands are depicted close to her face, also catching the water the goddess pours out for her. Her knees rest on the floor in a kneeling position while she looks taller than her husband due to the fact that he is leaning forward.\(^{(10)}\)

The *ba*-bird bends over at a severe angle on long legs to drink from the planter in which the sycamore tree sits.\(^{(11)}\) Its position behind the tree and not directly associated with the deceased and the libation poured for them is also unusual. The *ba*-bird usually appears under the tree’s shadow, or in the front to receive the water, and this is clearly shown on numerous tombs scenes dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty: Nakhtamun (TT 341)\(^{(12)}\), Userhat (TT 56)\(^{(13)}\), and Panehesy (TT 16).\(^{(14)}\) The same theme is portrayed also on stelae such as: Rameses-emperre (BM 796)\(^{(15)}\) and Ptahmekui (CG 34133) now housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo\(^{(16)}\), and also included on coffins such as that of Cairo CG 6081 from Deir el-Bahri.\(^{(17)}\) Furthermore, there is only one bird, and not two to represent the couple. The concept of resurrection for the deceased also occurred for their *bas*. The *ba* can rejoin the living world symbolizing the deceased and receive the water

\(^{(10)}\) On Similar kneeling positions at the tomb reliefs, see Billing, *Nut*, p. 349 and fig. B. 2, 351 and fig. B. 4, 364 and fig. C. 12, 367 and fig. C. 16, 392 and fig. D. 2.

\(^{(11)}\) This unusual aspect of the *ba*-bird is depicted on different stelae like: Berlin 7322, Hanover 2933 and Munich 298.

\(^{(12)}\) N. De Garis Davies, *Seven Private Tombs in Kurnah*, London, 1948, pl. XXIX.

\(^{(13)}\) N. De Garis Davies, *Two Ramesside Tombs at Thebes*, New York, 1927, pl. IX.


\(^{(15)}\) BM XII, pl. 73.


\(^{(17)}\) A. Niwinski, *The Second Find of Deir el-Bahari (Coffins)*, 2, 1, nos CG 6069-6082. IFAO, Cairo, 1999, pl. IV (1).
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from the canals in the shade of the sycamore trees.\(^{(18)}\)

The reasons for these unusual aspects are unknown, but the whole scene still falls into the category of the *ba* and the deceased receiving libations from the tree goddess. The sacred sycamore tree-goddess is associated with Nut, Hathor, and Isis.\(^{(19)}\) The lack of inscriptions accompanying the goddess makes it hard to positively identify her. However, in Chapter 59 of the *Book of the Dead*, the main role of Nut is with the tree cult, providing the deceased with water and food, as the goddess in this scene does.\(^{(20)}\) Chapter 68 also deals the role of Hathor as the goddess of the West associated with the sycamore tree, so Hathor cannot be excluded from consideration.\(^{(21)}\)


Conclusions:

The name Kharu was fairly common in the New Kingdom, thus making it difficult to identify him with other monuments, particularly as he does not have a title on the stela. Based on the style of art, epigraphy and the palaeography of the texts, apparently the stela dates to the Ramesside Period and specifically to the late Nineteenth Dynasty.\(^{(22)}\)

The manifestations of the sycamore-tree and its goddess on this object are very popular during the Nineteenth Dynasty, although the representation with the \(ba\) is unusual. The stela includes the two important vital forces in the netherworld, the offering-table adorned with the \(ka\)-sign and the \(ba\)-bird participating in the libation and food offerings for the deceased.\(^{(23)}\)

\(^{(22)}\) The stela of Ptahmekui (CG 34133), which dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty, comes from Abydos and its epigraphy is very similar to the stela under discussion here, see Lacau, *Stèles du Nouvel Empire* I, p. 181-2, pl. LV. Another valuable example, also dating to the Nineteenth Dynasty, is the stela of Ramesesemperre (BM 796), *BM XII*, pl. 73.

\(^{(23)}\) For an example of a relief including the \(ba\)-bird and the \(ka\)-standard offering table, cf. Frankfort, *Kingship*, fig. 21; Billing, *Nut*, p. 380 and fig. C. 35.
References:


Quirke, S., *Going Out in Daylight - prt ṭ m hrw; the Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead; Translation, Sources, Meanings*, GHP Egyptology 20 (London, 2013).


A facsimile drawing of the stela Tr. 11.1.25.7, © Ahmed Hamden.
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Pl. II

Stela Tr. 11.1.25.7, © Ahmed Amin.
Upper register.
Pl. IV

Middle register.
Lower register.
لوحة غير منشورة للمدعو خارو و زوجته تي
في المتحف المصري بالقاهرة
(رقم مؤقت ١١،١،٤٥.٧)

أحمد عادل حمدين

الملخص:
تتناول هذه الدراسة اللوحة الجنائزية للمدعو خارو و زوجته. اللوحة، التي توجد حالياً في الطابق السفلي للمتحف المصري بالقاهرة (رقم مؤقت ١١،١،٤٥.٧)، تعود إلى عصر الرعامسة، بينما مصدرها الأصلي غير مؤكد. تشتمل اللوحة على ثلاثة أقسام، تصور صاحب اللوحة مع عائلته أمام أوزيريس، وإيزيس، وإلهة شجرة الجميز. وتهدف الدراسة إلى فهم أفضل للتقسيم الموضوعي لهذه اللوحة الجنائزية وتحديد صاحبها وعائلته.

الكلمات الدالة:
با، قاعدة، المتحف المصري بالقاهرة، خارو، أوزيريس، إيزيس، الدولة الحديثة، الأسرة التاسعة عشرة، عصر الرعامسة، ريخبتاح، لوحة، إلهة شجرة الجميز، تي.

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