

**ARCE/EAP Subproject
Conservation of the Sarcophagus of Ramesses VI**

**Tomb of Ramesses VI (KV 9)
Valley of the Kings, Luxor**

**Report to the Supreme Council of Antiquities
Prepared by
Edwin C. Brock
Project Director
December 16, 1998 to 31 December, 1998**



**This report was prepared for
The Egyptian Antiquities Project of the American Research Center in Egypt, Inc.
(ARCE)
2 Midan Kasr Al Dubara, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt tel. and fax (20-2) 7948622; tel. 796-
4681, E-Mail:arceeap@internetegypt.com
under UAID Grant No. 263-G-00-93-0089-00 (formerly 263-0000-G-00-3089-00)
American Research Center in Egypt, Inc. 1998**

Work in the Tomb of Ramesses 6 (K 9), Valley of the Kings

The American Research Center in Egypt's project to restore the sarcophagus of Ramesses 6 began with preliminary studies for the reconstruction project and documentation of the fragments of the mummiform sarcophagus from 16 December, 1998 to 31 December, 1998. This is the first season of the project to reconstruct the inner mummiform sarcophagus and as project director, I wish to thank Dr. Gaballah Ali Gaballah, Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities and the members of the Permanent Committee for granting permission to carry out this work. I also wish to extend my thanks to Dr. Muhammad Sughayer, Director General of Pharaonic Antiquities, Dr. Muhammad Nasr, Director General of Luxor Antiquities, Sabry Abdel-Aziz Khater, Director General of Luxor West Bank, and Muhammad el-Bialey of the Qurna Inspectorate. Mr Hassan Ali Ahmed served as the Inspectorate's representative to the project and his help is gratefully acknowledged. The project is sponsored by the Egyptian Antiquities Project of the American Research Center in Egypt with support from USAID. During this preliminary season, the staff consisted of Edwin Brock as project director and Lyla Pinch Brock as epigrapher.

Background

The remains of two stone sarcophagi are found in the burial chamber of the tomb of Ramesses 6. The outer sarcophagus of red Aswan granite was cartouche-shaped in plan and contained an inner mummiform sarcophagus carved from green conglomerate quarried in the Wadi Hammamat. At one time the sarcophagi rested in a

rectangular pit in the center of the burial chamber floor. After the tomb was robbed and the mummy of Ramesses 6 was reburied in the Deir el-Bahari cache, an attempt was made to reuse the one meter thick floor of the granite sarcophagus box for other monuments. In the process, the box was turned on its side and split in half, with the walls of the box being broken away. Green conglomerate seems to have been rarely used for monuments in the Pharaonic period and since no parts of the mummiform sarcophagus apparently were wanted for re-use, it was smashed up, probably to fill in the floor pit, along with the unwanted granite fragments. This would have made removal of the two granite floor pieces easier, but during the process of trimming the foot half of the granite box, it fell back into the pit, trapping some of the mummiform sarcophagus fragments beneath it, and the quarrying operation was abandoned. The face from the mummiform lid was acquired by the British Museum from the collection of Henry Salt in 1823. Although the tomb was cleared by Daressy, the burial chamber pit remained partly filled with these sarcophagus fragments as well as other material including some of the king's burial equipment and other debris. This pit was cleared by Brock in 1985, when he began his study of the New Kingdom royal sarcophagi including those of Ramesses 6. When the tomb was closed for restoration work in 1992 -1994, it was possible to begin studying the decoration on many of the fragments of the mummiform sarcophagus, box and lid.

Project Activities

During this season the project was able to carry out several activities in preparation for the future reconstruction of the mummiform sarcophagus. An inventory was made of decorated fragments of the sarcophagus and all of these fragments were numbered, totalling 263 found up to now. Drawings of the decoration were checked and corrected, and many joins of fragments were noted and drawn. The decoration of the box is carried out in shallow incisions in the stone surface with texts and figures rendered in paint, primarily in yellow outlined in red, with details in black and blue. The overall pattern is a row of Anubis jackals on shrines alternating with three *kheker* symbols along the upper edge, above columns of texts, with groups of figures forming a register below. Three blue strips alternating with two yellow strips form a baseline for the register of figures. The decorative theme is the same as that found on the sarcophagi of Siptah, Sethnakht, Ramesses 3 and Ramesses 4, and forms part of the decoration on the burial chamber walls of the tombs of Ramesses 6, Ramesses 7 and Ramesses 9. It deals with the themes of the resurrection of Osiris and the restoration of the power of the sun god in the netherworld and is sometimes referred to as the Book of the Earth.

One difficulty in copying the decoration is that the surface was covered at the time of burial by some resinous substance which has turned black and which obscures the painted decoration. In addition, dirt also covers the fragments and a careful cleaning by qualified conservators will be needed to remove the

dirt without damaging the paint. Following the suggestions of conservation experts of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, as well as others, the blackened resin coating should not be removed as it is part of the ancient surface.

It is estimated that at least 75% of the mummiform sarcophagus box is present among the fragments in the tomb and that it could be successfully reconstructed, since many of the fragments join together. At present it seems that the sarcophagus was over 290 cm long and at least 150 cm wide.

Summary

It is hoped that if permission to continue this project is granted by the Supreme Council of Antiquities, that reconstruction of the mummiform sarcophagus can be carried out this coming year, perhaps beginning in February. It is suggested that an appropriate location to display the reconstructed box would be on the wide platform on the north side of the hall as this would call for very little alteration of the tomb's present appearance other than a low base to serve as a level surface. The lid might well be displayed on the sloping floor of the deep niche at the rear of the hall and efforts are being made to obtain a cast of the face of the lid from the British Museum, which would be added to the reconstruction. Prior to the reconstruction activities further checking of the fragments to complete the documentation of the decoration is needed as well as to determine further fragment joins. Local conservation assessments of time needed and materials required will also be necessary.

Head of the sarcophagus
in the British Museum.



Partially-reassembled lid. >

Remains of mummiform
sarcophagus as found
below the outer lid.

