

# US dig unearths tomb of previously unknown pharaoh

January 15 2014

---



A handout picture taken on January 1, 2014 and released by Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities on January 6, 2014 shows fragments from the tomb of the Pharaonic King Sobekhotep I in south Abydos in Upper Egypt

US archaeologists have uncovered the tomb in southern Egypt of a previously unknown pharaoh who ruled 3,700 years ago, antiquities officials said on Wednesday.

The discovery by a team from the University of Pennsylvania provides new evidence that at least part of Egypt may have escaped the rule of the Hyksos, invaders from what is now Syria who dominated the Nile Delta between the 18th and 15th centuries BC, the officials said.

A royal cartouche bearing the full name of pharaoh Senebkay was found on the sarcophagus and on a wall of the tomb unearthed in the ancient city of Abydos, the head of the antiquities ministry's pharaonic department, Ali El-Asfar, said.

The team also recovered the skeleton of the pharaoh, which suggested he stood 185 centimetres (just over six foot) tall.

They found canopic vases, traditionally used to preserve body organs, but no grave goods, suggesting the tomb was robbed in ancient times.

Asfar said the discovery suggested that the rule of the Hyksos did not extend to all of Egypt and that a native dynasty managed to preserve its independence in the south.

"The royal family in Abydos, which may have been founded by Senebkay, is of Egyptian origin and did not submit to the Hyksos's rule," he said.



The skeleton of the previously unknown pharaoh Woseribre Senebkay lays on a table. The king's body was originally mummified, but robbers ripped the body apart. Surrounding the skeleton (from left to right) are Penn graduate student Matt Olson, Alexander Wegner and Penn graduate student Paul Verhelst. Credit: Jennifer Wegner, Penn Museum

The same US team announced last week that it had identified the [pharaoh](#) whose tomb they unearthed at Abydos last year.

Pharaoh Sobekhotep I is believed to have been the founder of the 13th dynasty 3,800 years ago. His identity was established after the team found fragments of a slab inscribed with his name.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: US dig unearths tomb of previously unknown pharaoh (2014, January 15) retrieved 31 May 2023 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-01-unearths-tomb-previously-unknown-pharaoh.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.