

## Tutankhamun's Canopied Ceremonial Chariot: A Royal Vehicle for the Afterlife?

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The Grand Egyptian Museum Joint Conservation Project by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has proved that the 'Second State Chariot of the King' has been attached to the canopy, which had been considered an independent mobile canopy for the king by the excavator Howard Carter (Kawai et al. 2020). Due to the fragile condition of the chariot and canopy, we have created a virtual reconstruction by using a 3D laser scanner. It can now be inferred that the 'Second State Chariot of the King' was equipped with a canopy that functioned as a sunshade. The two-wheeled chariot with a canopy is represented in the scenes of the Battle of Kadesh during the reign of Ramesses II. In these iconographies, only one pillar of the canopy is depicted, but since Ancient Egyptian iconographic representations were not realistic, it is thought that the actual one was omitted. The chariot with the canopy from the tomb of King Tutankhamun, however, is a complex and delicate structure unsuitable for battle use. The 'Second State Chariot of the King' body is gilded and decorated with various inscriptions and images. It can be assumed from the texts and images that the chariot was used for royal ceremonial festivals and parades instead of battlefields. It is known that the ritual function of the two-wheeled chariot began during the reign of Akhenaten and that the two-wheeled chariot rider, who was likened to the god Aten, was an object of worship. Still, there is no clear evidence that the chariot had the same function in Tutankhamun's reign. It will be suggested that such a royal ceremonial chariot from the tomb of Tutankhamun may have been buried for the king's continuous eternal ride in the afterlife.

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