

MALE STATUETTE

EgyptianWood
H: 59 cm
Reference: 28297



This statuette is supported by a rectangular base carved in a single piece with the tip of the left foot. It portrays a man in a traditional striding pose. His left leg is placed forward, while both arms are held stiffly at the sides. Each hand is clenched around an enigmatic cylindrical object. The figure appears to be bald, although the presence of a wig cannot be excluded.

His tanned skin is painted in red-brown, his eyes are highlighted with black pigment. The man is dressed in a short loincloth (the shendyt, provided here with a small flap), held by a thick waistband. The white, unpleated skirt perfectly hugs his buttocks and thighs, but is more rigid in the front.

His face has a "smiling" expression, largely widespread in contemporary Egyptian representations, with the corners of the mouth slightly raised. Although it is not a real somatic portrait, the features are clearly marked (prominent nose, high cheekbones, full lips, weak chin) and, as often seen in the private iconography of the time, they are differentiated from the images depicting other individuals.

Such statuettes most often represented a high-level dignitary or a priest; but, even the humblest tombs included wooden funeral furniture. These figures were placed in the serdab, the area specifically reserved for the statues of the deceased, and acted as an alternative resting-place for his/her spirit in the event of damage to the physical body.

They would also receive the funerary offerings, especially foodstuffs. Small wooden statuettes were often placed in the tombs from the late Old Kingdom onward, and all throughout the 2nd millennium. In the 1st millennium, this practice regained its impetus, especially in the Saite period, as attested by this outstanding example.

CONDITION

Complete and in very good condition; many chips, minor cracks in the wood. Abundant remains of red, white and black paint.

PROVENANCE

Formerly private collection, England, acquired in the 1930s; thence by descent, private family collection, UK.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

FAY B., *Egyptian Museum Berlin*, Berlin 1985, p. 116 (inv. No. 8813).

PERDU O., *Les statues privées de la fin de l'époque pharaonique* (1069 av. J.-C. – 395 apr. J.-C.), Paris, 2012, pp. 298 ff., nos. 28-30.