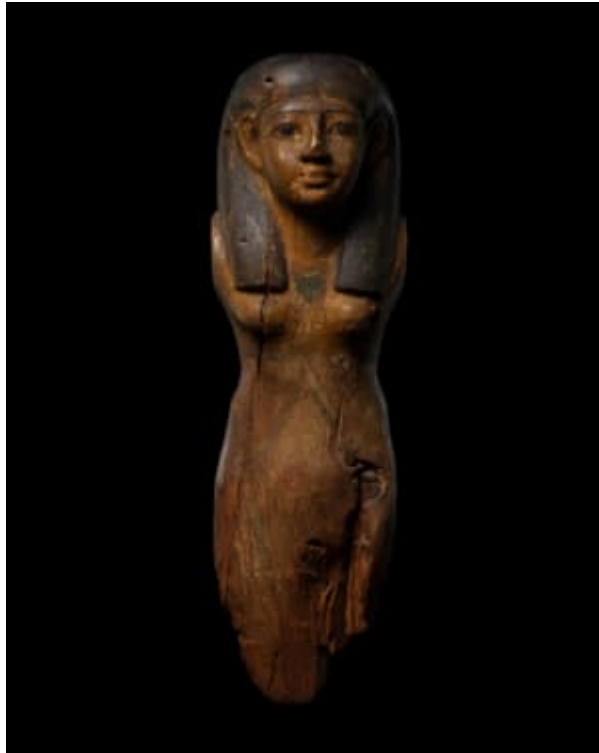


DAVID AARON



Statue of a Female Offering Bearer

H: 53 cm

Polychrome on wood

Egypt

Late 11th- Early 12th Dynasty, Middle Kingdom

A large wooden figure of an offering bearer from ancient Egypt. The figure stands with the proper left leg slightly ahead of the other, in traditional striding pose. She sports a high-waisted dress or skirt, which is the breasts with deep greenish-blue ribbons, outlined finely in ochre. She wears a wide wesekh collar of triangular, spherical, and cylindrical beads around her neck. The long tripartite wig, painted a rich dark brown, covers the top of her chest and down her back. The wide nose and mouth, with thick, slightly upturned lips, are of the surface of the face, while the large eyes and eyebrows are painted on in black. The eyes are wide shaped, and outlined with long cosmetic lines which extend towards the large, round ears on either side which are also outlined in ochre paint. It is very rare for such extensive and vibrant polychrome painting from antiquity. Rectangular sockets in each of the shoulders reveal how the arms would have originally been attached to the body.

Wooden figures were produced throughout ancient Egyptian history, but the majority extant today were from the Middle Kingdom. During this period, wooden figures were carved with increasing variety and personality. Models such as this may have been found in the burial chambers of tombs, often orientated to the cardinal directions and the coffin, as well as on top of the coffin itself. The striding pose of the figure suggests that it would originally have been one of a number of figures of offering bearers. The names of places would often be written on these figures, identifying them as the personifications of estates that would supply the owner throughout their life. A pair of large, intricately painted female offering bearers were discovered in a hidden chamber within the Twelfth Dynasty royal chief steward Meketre, during the 1920 excavations led by Herbert Winlock (

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 20.3.7, and the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 46725).

Wooden offering figure in the hidden chamber of Meketre's tomb. Thebes, 18 March 1920.

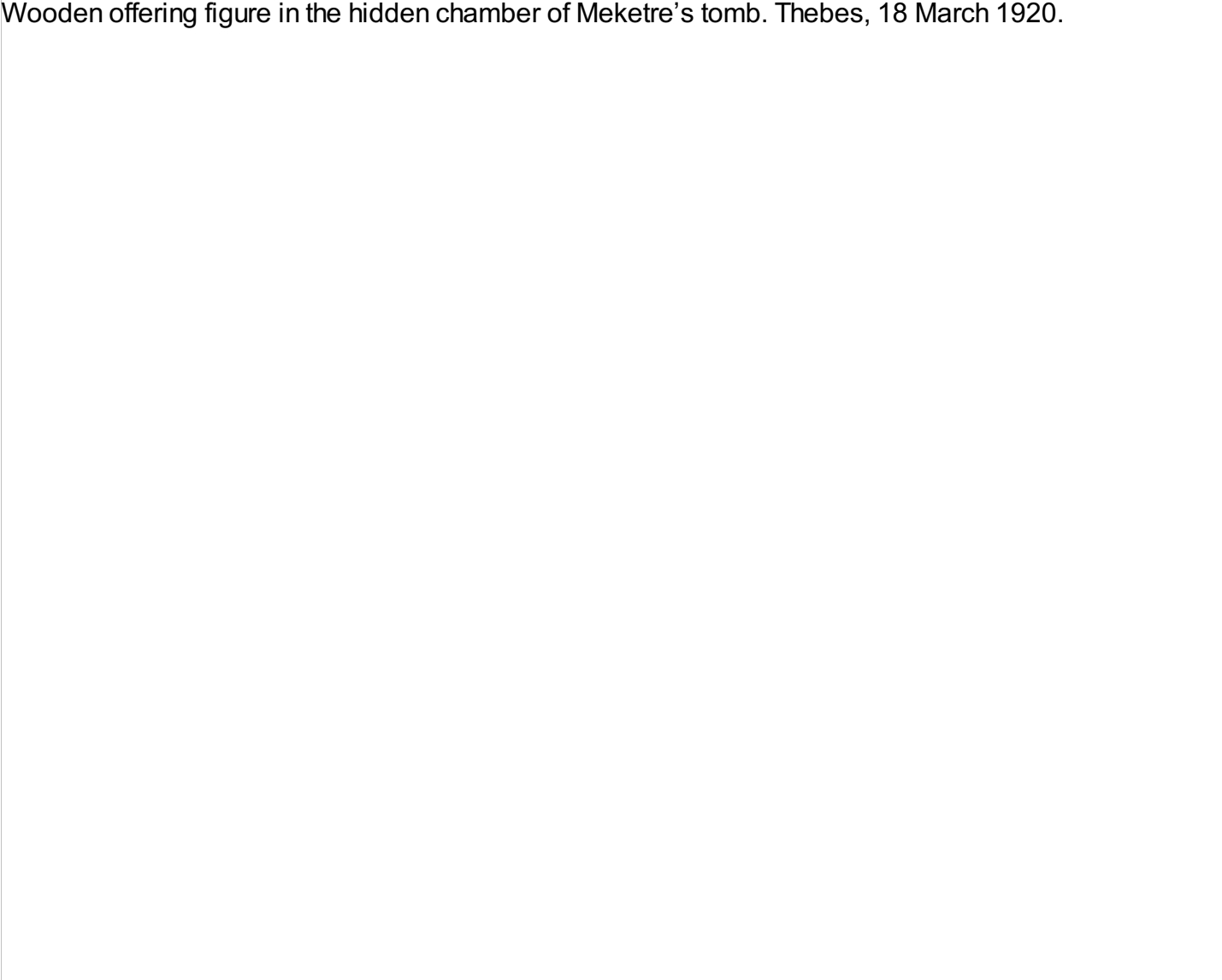


Image: Wooden offering figure in the hidden chamber of Meketre's tomb. Thebes, 18 March 19

Literature:

Collection Madeleine Rousseau, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 23 May 1962, Lot 27, pl. 1.