

## **Quartzite Statue of Ankhrekhu The British Museum**

From Egypt  
12th Dynasty, 1985-1795 BC

### **A Middle Kingdom official wearing a cloak**



Egyptian sculpture is often thought to consist only of massive and regal statues of the pharaohs of Egypt. However, there exist also more intimate images, so-called 'private' sculptures, made to be placed in the tombs of ordinary people. This statue shows the official Ankhrekhu seated, and wrapped in a cloak, a common feature of the private statuary of the Middle Kingdom (about 2040-1750 BC). He has a slightly serious expression, and larger than average ears, common in that period in both private and royal statues. He wears a wig that was conventional in the Middle Kingdom (about 2040-1750 BC). The folds of the drapery over the figure are carefully carved, and the fringed edge to the material of the cloak is indicated.

Ankhrekhu was an official with important courtly titles that indicate his rank. One of his main functions seems to have been that of overseer of priests, but it is not known in which temple, or of which god.

The earliest 'private' sculptures date to the Third Dynasty (about 2686-2613 BC). The statue of the shipbuilder Ankhwa is a fine example.

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R.B. Parkinson, *Voices from ancient Egypt: an* (London, The British Museum Press, 1991)

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