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Recensioni

The Development of Etruscan Painting to the Mid Fifth Century B.C.*

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Il presente contributo prende in esame il problema dello sviluppo della pittura funeraria etrusca dalle origini fino alla metà del V secolo a.C., con particolare riguardo verso gli affreschi della Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca a Tarquinia. Gli elementi figurativi apotropaici costituivano una delle principali componenti della pittura funeraria etrusca dalle fasi più antiche fino alla metà del VI secolo a.C., quando a Tarquinia fu introdotta la convenzione della tenda funeraria da parte di artisti greci giunti in Etruria successivamente alla conquista persiana della Ionia. Questo elemento dominò la scena a Tarquina fino alla metà del V secolo a.C. In tale contesto, gli affreschi delle camere sepolcrali della Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca, dipinte intorno al 520 a.C., appaiono decisamente anomali. Il recente rinvenimento a Mileto di vari frammenti di affreschi dell'età del bronzo in stile egeo suggerisce, tuttavia, come la pittura funeraria di Tarquinia possa essere stata influenzata da una scoperta casuale, da parte degli artisti greci dell'epoca, di affreschi provenienti dai palazzi dell'età del bronzo (all'epoca già interrati); una possibilità già considerata da Pietro Romanelli nella sua pubblicazione della Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca nel 1938.

The first appearance of figural painting in Etruscan chamber tombs in the seventh century B.C. has been the subject of much recent attention[1]. The purpose of these studies has been to examine the artistic sources of early tomb painting in Etruria. They leave untouched, however, the question why such decoration began to be employed in Etruscan tombs. Although the work of Alessandro Naso has established that painting in Etruscan chamber tombs more often took the form of the simple use of color to emphasize the architecture of the houses that were mimicked underground, the addition of figured decoration points to a conscious purpose connected with the tomb[2]. One must always remember that such art, even in later times when vivid representations of funeral celebrations are the dominant theme, was never public art. It was never intended to be seen by the passerby. It was never intended to assert the wealth and position of the occupant or occupants of the tomb. This was art intended exclusively for the dead. In the inky blackness of the tomb it was for their eyes only.

What, then, was its purpose? The subjects represented make it clear that in the seventh century these images were chosen in almost every case to protect the dead from the malign influences that could disturb their rest. Prominent among the dangers to the living was the Evil Eye. Belief in this superstition is worldwide and centers on the supposed power of the eye's directing a glance of malice toward its victim[3]. The glance may be intentional or the unintentional effect of a power over which its possessor has no control. Its consequences are baleful or fatal and are feared today among those who hold such beliefs just as they were among the ancients. But the Evil Eye is not confined to human agents. The gods are capable of shooting the glance of envy and destruction. Animals, too, among them snakes and other denizens of regions underground, can be agents of the Evil Eye[4]. The root-

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1 Camporeale 1999, Morel 1984, Naso 1990. A halting attempt to connect the decoration on the exterior walls of Iron Age hut urns with later Etruscan painting in the interior of tombs is made by Leighton 2005. The present article is based on a lecture delivered at the American Academy in Rome, November 2005.

2 Naso 1996. The same author estimates that such decoration was added to no more than 4% of the chamber tombs at Naso 2005, p. 40. The number of tombs with figural decoration is half that number.

3 The classic studies are those of Elworthy 1895 and Levi 1951.

4 On the gods and animals among the Romans see article Hastings 1912.

ed belief of pre Etruscan and pre Roman Italy was that the dead lived on in the tomb[5]. And the dead required protection from the same malevolence that could afflict the living. This is the simplest explanation for the paintings of ferocious animals and demons, borrowed directly from the orient or acquired through Greek intermediaries, for protecting the dead, while still other figures of lions and sphinxes stood guard outside (Hus 1961).

If the dead were troubled in their sleep, dire consequences could await the living, as we know from the experience of the Etruscans' closest neighbors, the Romans. It was not only the wandering spirits of the unburied, such as Diapontius in Plautus, or wrathful ghosts such as that of Virginia who came seeking vengeance that troubled the living (Plautus, *Mostellaria*, 446-531, Virginia, Livy III 58.11). The omission of the proper rites, including the regular family commemorations at the grave, could bring the spirits of the ancestors out in force[6]. On one occasion, as Ovid tells it,

> Bustis exisse feruntur
> Et tacitae questi tempore noctis avi
> Perque vias urbis latosque ululasse per agros
> Deformes animas, volgus inane, ferunt[7].
> *Fasti* II, 531-534

In the tradition repeated by Ovid the dead arise directly from their graves, not from Hades. Visits by the spirits also took place at stated times in the Roman calendar. On both the Parentalia, February 13th to 22nd and the Lemuria, 9th, 11th, 13th of May the spirits returned to their old homes. On the Parentalia they came in a friendly spirit; on the Lemuria they showed a darker side and had to be invited to leave the house by means of an arcane midnight ritual (Ovid, *Fasti*, II, 533-569, V, 419-492). At Rome, furthermore, an underground structure called the Mundus was opened on three days, August 23rd, October 5th and November 8th and the spirits (Manes) issued forth from it[8]. The beliefs behind these Roman superstitions and customs cannot have been dissimilar to the Etruscans' attitude toward the dead. For both peoples the dead must lie content and undisturbed if the living are to remain untroubled.

The earliest known Etruscan chamber tomb with figural decoration is the Tomba delle Anatre at Veii, which can be dated on the basis of the fragmentary pottery found at the time of its discovery to the second quarter of the seventh century (Steingräber 1986, no. 175). The five water fowl comprising its decoration are set in a line above a dado. The birds painted in this tomb, which are close kin to the birds that decorate Etruscan pottery of the day, can be interpreted as protection against the Evil Eye. Birds pecking at the offending organ are shown on the most important document illustrating ancient defenses against this danger, the marble relief in Woburn Abbey (fig. 1)[9].

At Cerveteri there are two tombs of the end of the seventh century, the Tomba degli Animali Dipinti and the Tomba dei Leoni dipinti, while at Tarquinia the Tomba delle Pantere belongs to the same period (Steingräber 1986 nos. 3, 6, 96). The Tomba delle Pantere (fig. 2) displays a great spotted panther and lion opposed heraldically above a gorgon-like facing lion's head. The colors are red and black against a cream wall. This scene is on the rear wall of the tomb. The Tomba degli Animali Dipinti has a frieze of various ani-

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[5] The classic discussion is that of Cumont 1947 who concludes, p. 15, «Ainsi tout ce que l'archéologie nous apprend corrobre la conclusion qu'aussi haute que nous puissions remonter les tribus italiques ont accepté cette foi en une survie dans le sepulture». For the general development of funeral practices in Etruria see Bartoloni 2003.

[6] As often as every second month, Bümner 1911, pp. 508-510.

[7] «The ancestors are said to have come forth from their tombs and raised their complaint in the quiet of the night. They say further that a shadowy crowd of deformed souls wailed in the streets of the city and in the fields». Ovid introduces this information with the caveat, «vix equidem credo», but though he doubted tales such as this, Romans of an earlier time were surely less skeptical.

[8] Cato the Elder ap. Festus, *s.v. Mundum*, Varro ap. Macrobius, *Saturn.* I.16, 16-18 See F. Coarelli in LTUR *s.v.*

[9] Elworthy 1895 fig. 24, for other instances Levi 1951, p. 223.

Fig. 1. Woburn Abbey, apotropaic relief. After Elworthy 1895.
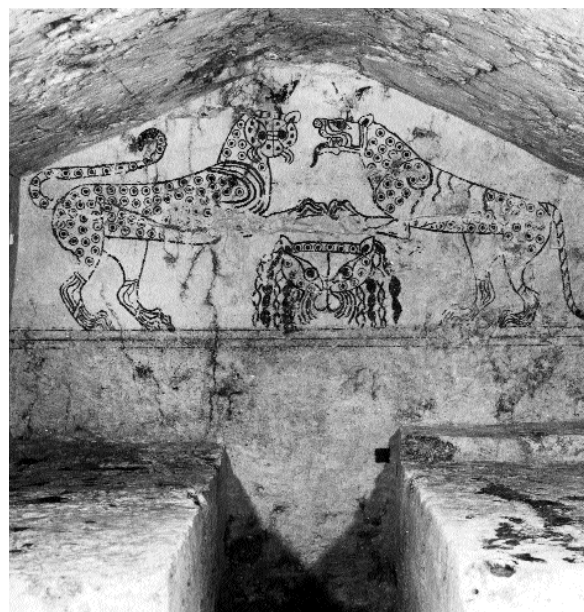
Fig. 2. Tarquinia, Tomba delle Pantere. Photo courtesy Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Etruria Meridionale.

mals, men and a lion's head. The Tomba dei Leoni Dipinti has painting on one side wall as well as on its end wall. On the side wall there are two lions and a large palmette. On the rear wall a "Master of the Animals" stands between another pair of lions in the gable while below the wall is treated as if covered by a plaiting of rushes. The painted animals of these tombs can all be interpreted as belonging to the world of apotropaic imagery[10].

With the Tomba Campana at Veii, again of the end of the seventh century, Etruscan tomb painting takes a step forward in complexity (fig. 3) (Steingräber 1986 no. 176). The inner chamber of this tomb was decorated with images of six shields, in two rows of three each, on the rear wall[11]. The rear wall of the
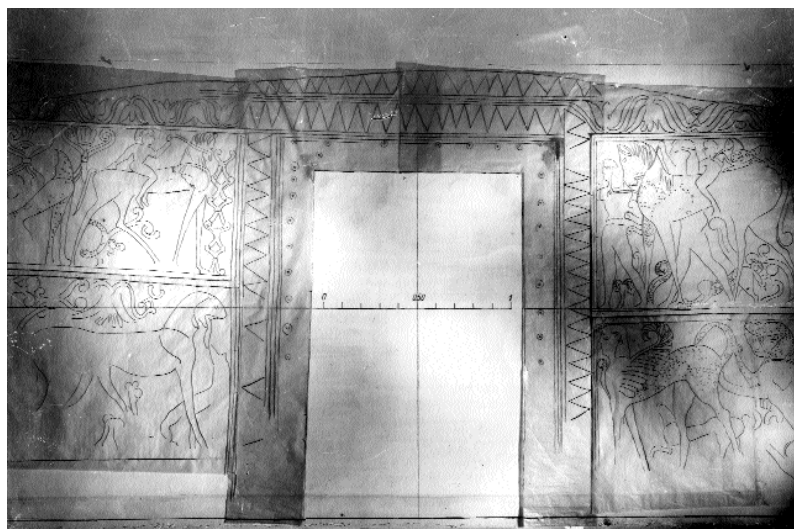
Fig. 3. Veii, Tomba Campana. Tracing of the now deteriorated frescoes. Photo courtesy Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Etruria Meridionale.

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[10] As does of course the gorgon, Elworthy 1895 ch. V.
[11] There is no need to emphasize the connection between these painted shields and the actual bronze shields displayed on the walls of orientalizing Etruscan tombs, e.g. the Regolini-Galassi Tomb at Tarquinia.

outer chamber has a vivid and intertwining design of fantastic animals, horses, human figures and dogs, disposed in four panels to left and right of the door. The upper panels on each side have horsemen (one with two companions on foot), a dog and a seated feline (head reverted) surrounded by exotic foliage and floral designs. The two lower panels are given over to exotic animals and one dog. On the left side panel there is further entwining foliage. A lotus pattern runs above the panels. There are two

ranges of rays of alternating colors over the doorway and a similarly colored tooth pattern running vertically beside the doorway. The threshold is yellow. The door frame is red. The figures, foliage and designs are executed in red, yellow and blue.

The human figures of the Tomba Campana are usually considered to represent a return from the hunt[12]. This suggestion finds support in the hunting cheetah crouching on the croup of the horse of the right hand upper panel[13]. But viewing these brightly painted figures around the doorway into the inner chamber one may well ask if the identification of part of the scene is really the key to its full significance. In these paintings there is an overwhelming preponderance of exotic, even terrifying, animals and intricate foliage. These two factors point to the direct purpose of this decoration: protection against the Evil Eye. The power of the evil glance becomes ensnared in the foliage, while the guardian sphinx and savage lions wait to pounce on it[14]. The hunters are hunters of the Evil Eye[15]. As an apotropaic device the paintings of the Campana tomb fall into line with the character of the earlier tombs at Cerveteri, Tarquinia and Veii. The newly discovered tomb at Sarteano displaying exotic animals derived from contemporary Corinthian pottery and easily invested with apotropaic significance is a similar case in point (Minetti 2003).

In early Etruscan tomb painting there is a single instance of content differing from what we have reviewed thus far, the ship in the Tomba della Nave I at Cerveteri (Steingräber

Fig. 4. Tarquinia. Tomba dei Tori. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 81.4274. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

1986, no. 7). This image shows that reference to a voyage to some destination in the afterlife was not foreign to Etruscan thinking of the time. However, in tomb decoration it was subordinated to the need for protective imagery and the traditional notion that the dead inhabited the tomb where they were buried. One should not be troubled by the fact that apparently contradictory beliefs regarding the afterlife were entertained simultaneously in Etruria. Christianity has never reconciled the difficulties presented by a belief in the rousing of the dead from their sleep in the grave on the day of the Last Judgment and the notion of the immediate departure of the soul after death for Paradise (possibly by way of Purgatory) or Hell.

The development of apotropaic imagery can be followed in the decoration of the Tomba dei Tori, which is properly hailed as the first in the great series of painted tombs at Tarquinia (fig. 4) (Steingräber 1986, no. 120). Its main decorative panel has the well known scene of the ambush of Troilos by Achilles. Elsewhere I have argued that sacrifice, emphasized by the knife (*machaira*) in Achilles hand, suggesting bloody

[12] So Steingräber 1986 and Colonna 1989, esp. 21-22.
[13] For the sources of this element see Camporeale 1984, p. 71.
[14] Two sculptured lions guarded the exterior of the tomb, Steingräber 1986, no. 176.
[15] They were imported from the same Greco-oriental source from which the exotic animals were taken. For hunting scenes on the "Phoenician" bowls imported into seventh century Italy, see Markoe 1985. The bowl with hunting scene in Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery no. 57.705 may also have an Italian origin.

sacrifice and thus the blood which could revive the energy of the pallid dead, was uppermost in the mind of the painters and their patrons[16]. The erotic scenes combining humans and bulls, displayed on the frieze above the Troilos scene and the two doorways to the inner chambers of the tomb, were purposely drawn to combat the Evil Eye (Holloway 1986, 25). The same may be said for the creatures shown in the gables of the outer and of both inner chambers, bulls, lions, a panther and ibex. There are also hippocamps, which, if we may trust the continuity of tradition represented by modern Italian charms against the Evil Eye, are also apotropaic (Elworthy 1895, p. 366). One of these, over the entrance to the main chamber, is carrying a rider. If this is a representation of the departure of the soul to a distant shore, it claimed no more than a minor place in the overall decoration of the tomb. The wall of the main chamber below the Troilos scene is also decorated with a line of trees, vegetation serving the same purpose as the vegetation in the Campana Tomb discussed above[17].

Around 540 B.C. Ionian painters, coming to the west in the aftermath of the Persian invasion of their homeland, raised the level and widened the horizons of Etruscan tomb painting[18]. The first tomb to show such new directions is the

Fig. 5. Tarquinia. Tomba delle Leonesse. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.622. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Tomba delle Leonesse of about 520 (fig. 5) (Steingräber 1986, no. 77). At Tarquinia, home to the overwhelming majority of known Etruscan funeral paintings, the tomb is now decorated to mimic the tent erected for the funeral games and funeral feast[19]. This convention was to dominate funeral art at Tarquinia for the next half century and more and it was a per-

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[16] Holloway 1986 with earlier bibliography, also Rouveret 1989 and Roncalli 1990. On the imagery of sacrifice in general Steuernagel 1998.

[17] On this subject see also Rouveret 1988.

[18] For this development, Cristofani 1976. The complexities of the milieu in which the tomb paintings were carried out has been clearly expressed by Torelli 1985, p. 118, «Dobbiamo dunque ricostruire, per la fase di pieno VI secolo della grande pittura, una intensa circolazione di manodopera che comprende ceramografi, pittori-decoratori di *pinakes* e meteci girovaga e che spiega le grandi oscillazioni di stile e di mani riscontrabili nel complesso più importante di pittura monumentale di Etruria a noi noto». See further Cristofani 1978, pp. 84-91 but with attention to the reservations expressed by N. Spivey 1987, pp. 89-94. For documentation of Ionian mural painting in Asia Minor see Mellink 1978 and Mellink *et alii* 1998.

[19] Representation of a banqueting tent in Etruscan tomb painting was first recognized in connection with the Tomba delle Leonesse by E. H. Richardson 1964, p. 116. At the same time there was in press a fuller discussion of the tent convention by Holloway 1965. Proof of the validity of this line of reasoning was provided the next year by the publication of the frescoes of the then recently discovered Tomba del Cacciatore by Moretti 1966, which were then placed in the context of tomb and tent by Stopponi 1968. For a sketch reconstruction of the funeral tent see Jannot 1988. See also Massa-Pairault 2001. In Holloway 1965 I also suggested that the decoration of tombs may have been carried out during the funeral celebration (which would have lasted several days) in order to increase the magical effect of the simulated celebration underground. In regard to the slightly later tombs in which the convention of the funeral banquet within the funeral tent is realized to its fullest, Jannot 1987 suggests seeing the honored dead as the more attentively treated member of the party.
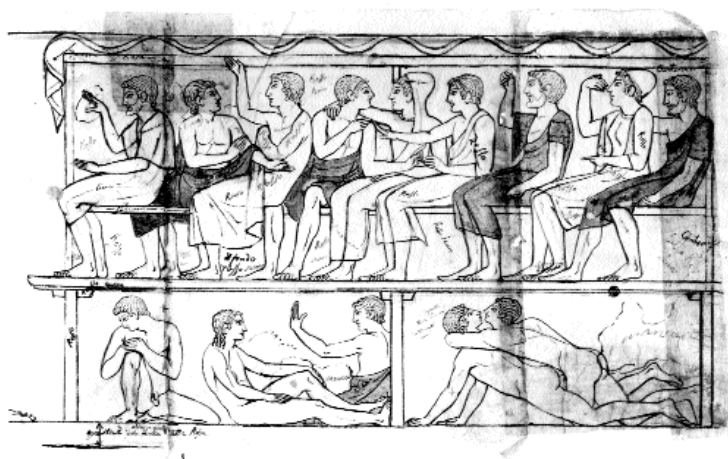
Fig. 6. Tarqinia. Tomba delle Bighe. Drawing of detail. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 79.960. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
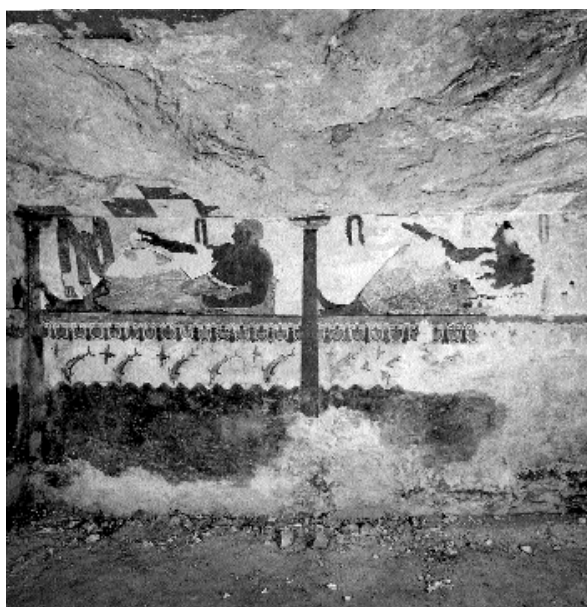

Fig. 7. Tarquinia. Tomba delle Leonesse. Side Wall. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.624. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

An early step in the direction of such spatial effects is made already in the Tomba delle Leonesse. The banqueters of the side walls, being inside the tent, are shown at larger scale than the dancers and musicians who are without. The banquet tent is also recorded in the vignette of the Tomb of Stackelberg (Tomba delle Bighe), where the guests of the funeral party are seated under the funeral pavilion and look out to the games taking place outside (fig. 6) (Steingräber 1986, p. 41). This vignette shows that the level at which the guests are seated was raised, allowing space for squatting and reclining figures below. This "lower space" is generally suggested in the tombs following the funeral tent convention by a dado below the banqueters and performers. Since the setting is a temporary structure, however, the "dado" must, in effect, be nothing more than a curtain covering the light structure shown in the Stackelberg Tomb[21]. And this is exactly what is represented in the Tomba delle Leonesse (fig. 7). The cloth covering the opening below the banqueters and then extending around the tomb chamber at the same level, has at its top a line of pendant palmettes. Below there is a dark area, the upper edge of which is finished in a series of wave-like undulations indicating the sea. Above it there are regularly spaced dolphins with birds flying above. The regular spacing and repetitious figures accord well with the idea that this is a design on cloth. The dark mass with undulating surface, however, is not always a convention representing water. In the Tomba dei Giocolieri it is simply a cloth hitched up to hang as a curtain from the "ground line" below the

fect response to the desire to bring cheer and contentment to the dead. Through it were born, with few instances of stereotype or repetition, vivid representations of the banqueting and celebrations that accompanied the funeral. In the tombs so decorated the convention of the house underground was left behind, and painting, though still rooted in the archaic art of Ionia, achieved illusionistic effects that were unknown in the Greek world[20].

[20] The funeral celebration with its feasting, games and

dances was also the major iconographical component of the funeral reliefs of Chiusi, see Jannot 1984. Cavalcades, banquets and processions are also prominent as subjects of the terracotta revetment plaques of the archaic period in Etruria and Latium, for which see Torelli 1997, pp. 87-121. It would be a mistake, however, to suggest, as is done by d'Agostino and Cerchiai 1999, pp. 2-12, that when such subjects occur in tomb paintings they must have the same significance they enjoyed when appearing for all to see as roof decoration.

[21] In this regard the tent structure imitated in the Tomba del Cacciatore is an exception.

figured scene (fig. 8) (Steingräber 1986, no. 70). In the Tomba del Cacciatore the dark area has been reduced in size and has become an uneven surface, its undulating top serving as the ground line for the grazing deer that form part of the decoration (fig. 9)[22].

Emphasis on the banquet, music, dance and funeral games, however, did not mean that the apotropaic needs met by earlier tomb painting were forgotten. The animals of the gables of late archaic and classical tombs are still apotropaic, and various figures in the funeral scenes make gestures or assume positions with similar significance. One of the dancers of the end wall of the Tomba delle Leonesse makes the horned gesture of aversion with her hand that is still current today as a defense against the Evil Eye (fig. 10). There are two defecating figures acting to protect against the Evil Eye (as we have seen in the Woburn Abbey relief) in Tarquinian tomb painting: one in the Tomba dei Giocolieri, the other in the Tomba degli Auguri[23]. Just possibly the frenetic pace of dancing served the same purpose. And there can be little doubt that the flashing reflections from the polished spangles of a performer such as the juggling girl of the Tomba dei Giocolieri, just as much as the juggling act itself, played their part in averting the Evil Eye. Furthermore, the funeral games and shows frequently turn bloody, thus satisfying the same desires of the dead served by the imminent sacrifice of Troilos in the Tomba dei Tori.

The well known tombs of Tarquinia belonging to the first half of the fifth century follow,

Fig. 8. Tarquinia. Tomba dei Giocolieri. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 81.4180. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Fig. 9. Tarquinia. Tomba del Cacciatore. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 81.4229. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

almost without exception, the convention of the funeral tent, often attenuated in its details but in each case referable to the basic elements established by the Tomba delle Leonesse and its immediate contemporaries of the end of the sixth century[24]. The theme of a voyage reappears at Tarquinia only in the Tomba della Nave and here merely as a intrusion into the conventional scene of the funeral banquet (Steingräber 1986, p. 91). One must wait until

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[22] Steingräber 1986, no. 51. To this extent I am in agreement with Brigger and Giovannini 2004. However, in my opinion, these authors err in viewing all of the decoration on the vertical walls of the painted tombs as an imitation of designs on textiles. It is also difficult to follow them in believing that all Etruscan tombs with the tent convention mimicked tents for a prothesis since only the Tomba del Morto, Steingräber 1986, no. 89, shows a corpse laid out for burial. In this case, but only in this case, the tent is represented as being used for a prothesis rather than for the banquet and celebration with games, music and dancing.

[23] Tomba degli Auguri, Steingräber 1986, no. 42. On apotropaic imagery see also Bonfante 1996.

[24] Holloway 1965 for the individual tombs.

Fig. 10. Tarquinia. Tomba delle Leonesse. Detail. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.627. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Fig. 12. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Outer chamber. Detail. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.621. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Fig. 11. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Outer chamber. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.617. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

mid century is passed before a second revolution in the conventions of tomb painting in Etruria introduced the demons escorting the dead that we find first in the Tomba dei Demoni Azzuri (Cataldi Dini 1987, Naso 1996, pp. 48-50, Adinofi *et alii* 2005).

There is, nevertheless, one major exception to the developmental scheme outlined in the

preceding discussion, the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca (Steingräber 1986, no. 50). The Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca was decorated a decade or so after the Tomba delle Leonesse. This is a double-chambered tomb with frescoes in both its antechamber and main room. The program of decoration might be described as both traditional and revolutionary. The traditional element is found in the pictures of the antechamber. Around its walls there is a scene of animated dancing taking place among trees from which hang an assortment of objects, garlands, cistae and sparkling mirrors (figs. 11, 12). This is not the first appearance of such a grove in Etruscan tomb painting and we may attribute to it the same apotropaic purpose.

Above the door leading from the antechamber to the principal room of the tomb there is a scene with close affinities to the paintings of the Tomba Campana. In the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca, however, there can be no doubt that this is a scene of the return from the hunt. Two servants carry the prey that has been bagged during the hunt suspended from a pole. There are two horsemen and on foot a hunter with two dogs. Since this scene is a return from the hunt, it cannot be interpreted as the beginning of a journey to a distant land of the dead.

But on the basis of the thick vegetation, similar to the vegetation of the Tomba Campana, it is possible to hypothesize that this painting also served as a trap set against the Evil Eye. The grove of trees represented on the side walls of the tomb would have had the same purpose.

The inner room of the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca is world renowned for its panorama of sea and shore which occupies the four walls of the chamber (figs. 13, 14, 15, 16). There is fishing, fowling, and a diver plunging into the

Fig. 13. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Inner chamber. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.608. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Fig. 15. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Inner Chamber. Side Wall. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.610. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

Fig. 14. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Inner Chamber. Side Wall. Photo courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, Inst. Neg. 82.609. Copyright Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
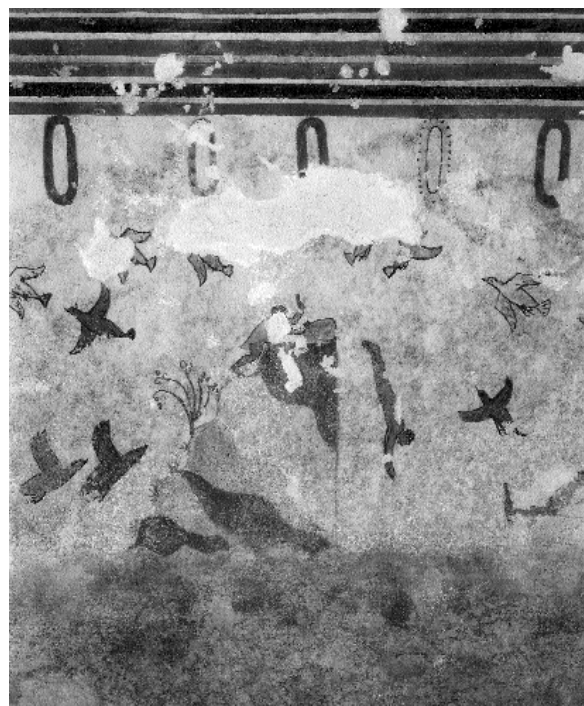

Fig. 16. Tarquinia. Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. Inner Chamber. Detail. Photo courtesy Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Etruria Meridionale.

deep. The scene is full of abundant life and action. A second scene, and one not without precedents in other Tarquinian tombs of this period, occupies the pediment over the end wall of the tomb. The banquet scene has been reduced to a single couple with their servants and a flute girl. The man offers a garland to his companion. To the left two serving girls prepare other garlands. To the right servants are busy around two craters. All told, it is a scene of quiet conviviality. Instead of seeing the two principal figures as a portrait of the owners of the tomb, posed together in the fashion of the couples who lie together on the lids of Etruscan sarcophagi, perhaps it is more appropriate to recognize this, together with other examples of banqueters in "pediments" of tomb chambers, as an abbreviated version of the more complete versions of the banquet scene found elsewhere[25].

The diver, although a minor element in the painting surrounding the four walls of the inner chamber, has always attracted interest and especially in recent scholarship because of the painting of a diver on the ceiling of the Tomb of the Diver at Greek Paestum. But at Tarquinia the diver is not that dramatic image of the moment of death that he is at Paestum; he is only one element of a panoramic landscape[26].

The cliff from which the diver begins his descent is rendered with a multicolored stratification of rock in a fashion which is unusual, even if not unique, in Etruscan tomb painting[27]. On the other hand, this method of rendering rocky formations is characteristic of Aegean painting of the Bronze Age (Immerwahr 1990, pp. 40-50). And in the Tarquinian freco we find typical Minoan-Cycladic lilies growing from same rock just as they appear in the frescoes of Complex Delta at

Akrotiri on Thera (fig. 17). Is it possible that some connection exists between painting at Tarquinia around 520 B.C. and painting of Minoan palaces or Cycladic towns like Thera already buried in the second millennium?

Fig. 17. Thera, Akroitiri. Complex Delta, Room of the Swallows. Detail. Photograph courtesy Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Receipts Fund.

In fact, it is more than likely that Ionian artists of the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca did know and had been influenced by Aegean painting. Recent excavations at Miletus have brought to light remains of a Minoan-like palace of the mid-second millennium and fragments of fresco painting from it (Niemeier and Niemeier 1997, esp. 239, figs. 77-78). Chance discoveries made in this or other Ionian cities may well have given our artists the opportunity to see Minoan style decoration for themselves. And coming to Etruria they remembered a panorama full of marine life, done with multicolored rock formations such as Aegean artists of the Middle Bronze Age executed for the frieze which encircled the walls of the West House at Thera in which the scene passes from a view of seaport towns and the hills behind them to the seashore, then to the sea, and finally to a flotilla of vessels, gaily dressed and carrying their festive passengers from one island to another. Another fragmentary section depicts a seaborne raid on another community[28]. It is not

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[25] Tomba del Frontoncino, Steingräber 1986, no. 66, Tomba Tarantola, Steingräber 1986, no. 114, Tomba Bartoccini, Steingräber 1986, no. 45, Tomba del Topolino, Steingräber 1986, no. 119 and Tomba dei Poggi al Moro (Chiusi), Steingräber 1986, no. 22. Cf. Weber-Lehmann 1985.

[26] For question of these tombs and supposed connections between them see Holloway, forthcoming.

[27] Also found in the Tomb of the Ship at Tarquinia, Steingräber 1986, no. 91.

[28] Thus creating the opposition of the city at peace and the city at war so familiar from the decoration of the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* XVIII 428-608. On the West House frieze see Morgan 1988 and Doumas 1992, pl. 30-48.

my intention to argue that the Tarquinian painting reproduced its Bronze Age prototype. But it could not have existed without some antecedent from the Aegean Bronze Age that had excited the attention and entered the memory of these Ionian painters of later centuries. Without such inspiration it would have been impossible for them to overcome the conventions of archaic painting[29].

The purpose of this panorama, as was the purpose of all Etruscan tomb painting of orientalizing, archaic and early classical times, was to create visions which would please the dead and make them resigned to their home underground. It had, in fact, the same purpose as the representations of the funeral banquet under its tent. And to it were joined scenes painted for apotropaic purposes, both the frescoes of the outer chamber and the felines which flank the doorway of the inner chamber in the pedimental opening above it.

The relation between the frescoes of the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca and Aegean painting of the Bronze Age did not escape the attention of Pietro Romanelli, to whom we owe the definitive publication of the tomb. This scholar was struck by the uncanny similarity of the Tarquinian frecoes to the Bronze Age painting known at Hagia Triada and Phylokopi but hesitated to claim a direct connection between them[30]. It is impossible to say what this same

distinguished archaeologist would have added to his considerations in the light of the discoveries at Akrotiri on Thera. But because of them, today we can appreciate the acuteness of his intuition. And because we are now in possession of the Theran evidence we can see the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca not as an anomaly in the history of Etruscan funeral art but as an unusual adaptation of a distant prototype for its purpose of creating a world of cheer for the dead.

After the mid fifth century Etruscan funeral painting takes other directions. At Tarquinia the tent convention is forgotten and the tomb is now decorated with images of those demons who escort souls on their journey to another place, a development heralded by the Tomba dei Demoni Azzurri (Cataldi Dini 1987 and Naso 2005, pp. 47-50). The tomb has now become the underworld itself. Enlarged in its physical dimensions, it is populated by divinities of Hades and is crowded with the spirits of the departed of family and clan[31]. But despite such changes in the imagined nature of their resting place, the living, it seems, could still feel that dead lived on in the tomb.

Addendum

The discovery of the Tomba dei Leoni Ruggenti at Veii («New York Times», 17 June 2006) provides documentation of frescoes of the period of the Tomba delle Anitre combining apotropaic images of lions and birds.

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[29] For the visual field in Greek art see Holloway, electronic publication. (I do not believe that the painting dedicated in the Sanctuary of Hera at Samos by Mandrokles, engineer of the bridge by which Darius's army passed over the Bosphorus, Herodotus IV.88.1-89.2, was in any way comparable to the panorama of the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca. It more probably resembled the processional friezes of the Apadana of Persepolis). For differing interpretations of the frescoes of the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca see Rouveret 1988, pp. 208-209, Massa-Pairault 1992, p. 86, Torelli 1997, p. 142 and d'Agostino and Cerchiai 1999, pp. 61-71.

[30] Romanelli 1938, p. 15, «Ora per trovare qualcosa che possa essere messo a confronto con questa pittura è necessario che noi risaliamo facendo astrazione dall'arte egizia o assiro-babilonese, all'arte cretese-micenea: a quegli scarsi avanzi di pittura parietale del palazzo di Hagia Triada o di Phylakopi in cui con mirabile immediatezza e vivacità di rappresentazione e con pari ampiezza di composizione e talvolta anche

con singolare concordanza di stile (si confrontino ad esempio i pesci del frammento di Phylakopi con gli uccelli di questa tomba) l'artista aveva figurato scene di campagna o di mare nelle quali l'elemento ambientale, il paesaggio, teneva lo stesso posto che esso ha in queste pitture di Tarquinia». Romanelli then added, «Tuttavia, qualunque siano stati il valore e la forza di questa ispirazione derivate da altra opera precedente, qualunque e quanti siano gli elementi singoli desunti dalla tradizione artistica e decorative, non v'ha dubbio che più di tutto hanno agito sull'ignoto pittore tarquiniese la visione e l'osservazione diretta della natura».

[31] Steingräber 1986, pp. 58-68, Minetti 2004, Naso 2005, pp. 47-63 and for Tarquinia Leighton 2004, pp. 163-168. For the Francois Tomb at Vulci, where figures of Etruscan history enter the scheme of decoration see now Sgubini Moretti 2004.

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