



**An Etruscan Affair:
The Impact of Early Etruscan
Discoveries on European
Culture**

Edited by Judith Swaddling

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The British
Museum

This book is dedicated to the memory of Giovannangelo Camporeale

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Front cover: Etruscan bronze mirror with a satyr and maenad, print made between 1768 and 1805. British Museum, 2010,5006.10.
Mirror: 4th century BC, British Museum 1814,0704.967. Print and mirror both ex-Townley collection (see p. 66 in this volume)

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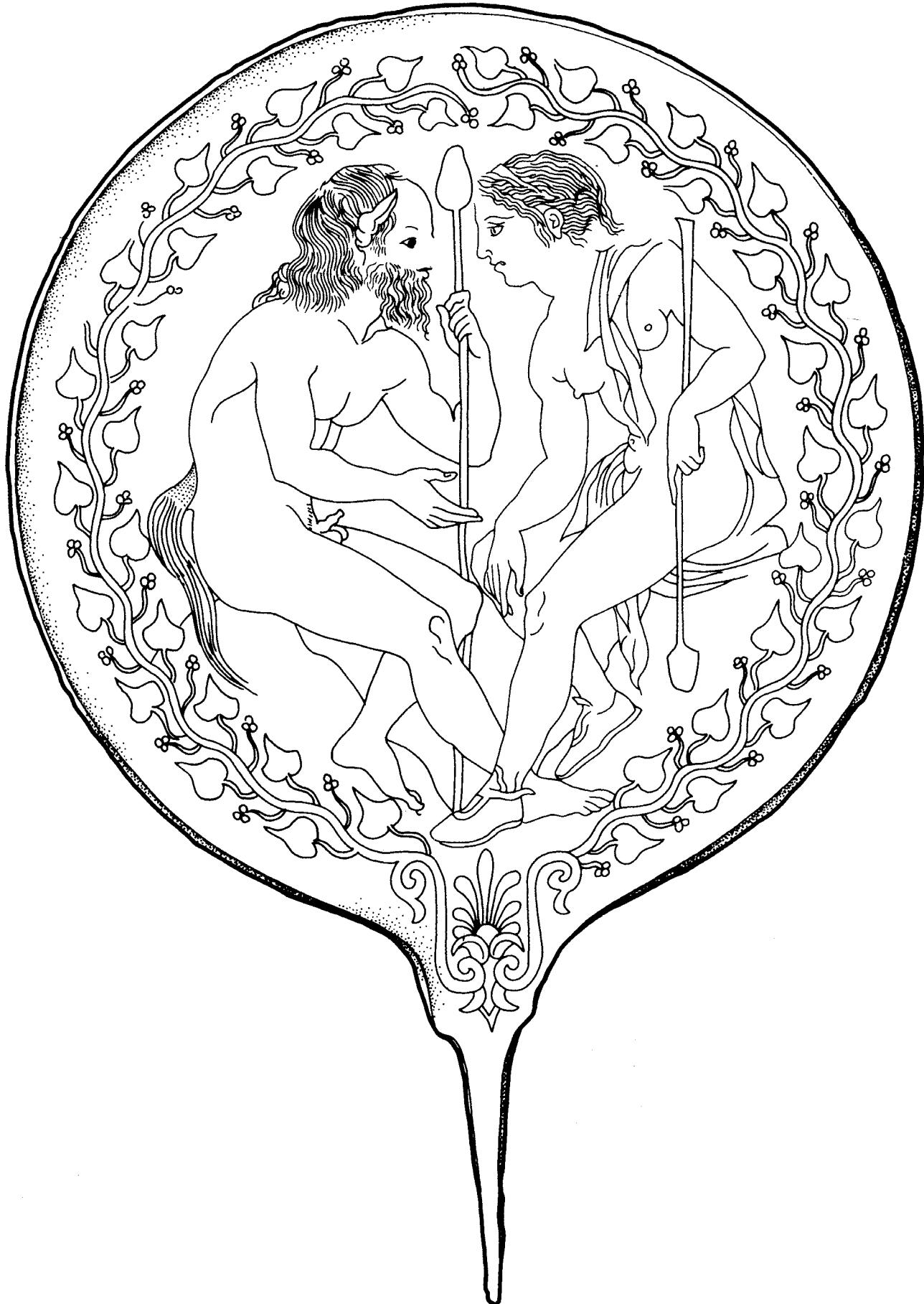
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Watercolour of the so-called Toscanella (Tuscania) tomb as shown in the exhibition of Etruscan tomb reconstructions staged by the Campanari at no. 121 Pall Mall, London, 1837–8 (see Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume, pp. 47–9)

Introduction

Judith Swaddling

It is little known that from as early as the 15th century the discovery of Etruscan sites and artefacts has had a dramatic and inspiring effect on contemporary culture. Glimpses of a vibrant, powerful and sophisticated civilisation, traditionally eclipsed by the grandeur of Greece and Rome, proved a major source of fascination and creativity. These papers from an international conference held at the British Museum in 2015 look at the impact created by Etruscan discoveries in Tuscany, Lazio and Umbria mainly prior to the 20th century. The authors consider how Etruscan finds have influenced artists, craftsmen, collectors, politicians, writers and intellectuals in many disciplines. Indeed, it is highly relevant that the first major archaeological exhibition in Europe at Pall Mall, London, in 1837 was dedicated to the Etruscans, and captivated the interest of scholars and the public alike (discussed in Chapter 4 in this volume).

Reception has been a popular subject in both Etruscan and classical studies in general for a considerable time, but the contributions to this publication represent the first investigation to look beyond reception and consider how the impact of Etruscan discoveries reverberated throughout Europe. Various periods in 18th and 19th-century Europe experienced the phenomenon of *Etruscheria* or Etruscomania, manifested in a passionate interest in all things Etruscan, including the people's origins, language, dress, customs and burial practices. In post-unification Italy the transfer of the capital from Florence to Rome in 1871 saw a renewed empathy with Etruscan culture and the reclaiming of Etruscan identity. Giuseppe Della Fina relates how the Etruscans were seen as the first civilising and unifying influence in Italy, a conviction that strongly motivated the collecting of Etruscan antiquities. Throughout the centuries we see a range of productive and creative responses to Etruscan culture, from a vast and magnificent 16th-century Etruscan 'garden' built at the behest of Ferdinand de' Medici in the heart of Rome (as discussed here by Vincent Jolivet) to the widespread re-use of Etruscan artefacts for purposes such as architectural embellishments, flower vases and containers of Christian relics (summarised in this volume by Giovannangelo Camporeale). Two of the chapters, by Ingrid Rowland and Lisa Pieraccini, look beyond Europe and pick up on Etruscan influence traversing the Atlantic, while Laurent Haumesser pursues the continuing impact of the discovery of Etruscan tombs in the 20th century, touching on *mise en scène* in museums, the development of photographic techniques and cinematography. It is hoped that this selection of essays by Etruscologists, classicists and art historians will give a representative account of the Etruscan legacy in its various manifestations and also spur further exploration of this rewarding topic.

In the words of Laurent Haumesser, 'we are all largely children of the 19th century', and, particularly relevant in this context, the same author notes how the rediscovery of Etruria helped to shape the modern concept of archaeology (see p. 94). It is notably this archaeological debt to Etruscan studies which has tended to be ignored. The development of new practices which resulted from Etruscology resonate to the present day. Conservation, preservation and the recording of data, and the responsibility of the state to

preserve and promote its archaeological heritage, can all find prototypes as far back as 17th-century Italy, which evolved in response to the increasing importance given to Etruscan finds. In the 18th century, the first museum in the world to open its doors to the public was an Etruscan one, the Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona (MAEC) in 1727 (for which see the chapter by Paolo Bruschetti).

Filippo Buonarroti (1661–1733), great-grand-nephew of Michelangelo (who himself seems to have visited and been inspired by scenes in Etruscan tombs) was a Lucumone (the Etruscan term for a chief official) of the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona, and many of the key characters who feature in this volume would have met at the soirées or *notte* at the Accademia where papers on new Etruscan research were read and debated, new finds were shown and replicas handed round for consideration (as discussed by Paolo Bruschetti in this volume). Events and parties were held to interest the local community in their history – the seeds of modern museums' public programming. It was this interest in cultural heritage that led to laws being passed to make archaeological finds state property and to encourage finders to hand them in to their local museum. Even the Portable Antiquities Scheme co-ordinated by the British Museum is a distant descendant of this model. Buonarroti also features prominently with his sponsorship of the arts, notably his publication of Thomas Dempster's pioneering *De Etruria regali*, which Buonarroti published a century after Dempster's death with added plates and, perhaps more significantly, detailed critiques of the scenes depicted on Etruscan monuments. As a result, the then contemporary preoccupation with surviving inscriptions was diverted towards what it was possible to learn of Etruscan life, setting a precedent for the kind of comprehensive study that is now well established in archaeological and art-historical practice.

Innovations in the illustration of archaeological artefacts here receive detailed attention from two authors. Bruno Gialluca records the sensation created by the finding of the tomb of the Tite Vesi family, discovered intact in 1667 near Perugia, and the first for which a full set of drawings was commissioned. Susanna Sarti provides an overview of the demand from major museums in the first half of the 19th century for canvases reproducing Etruscan wall-paintings, the importance these copies still hold today and the dilemma posed by their conservation. The response to Etruscan architecture by one of the greatest Italian print-makers, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, is considered by Lola Kantor-Kazovsky.

Several authors present information about the attitudes of collectors to Etruscan objects in their collections: it comes as something of a surprise that Charles Townley's collection which is principally renowned for its classical sculpture contained over 100 Etruscan objects, some of prime importance and valued greatly by their owner. However, as discussed by Dirk Booms, although Townley obviously held them in high regard for their intrinsic interest, it remains frustratingly uncertain to what extent he recognised them as Etruscan. The largely lost 17th-century collection of Cardinal Flavio Chigi (1631–93) doubtless contained numerous Etruscan artefacts and in a tour de force of

investigation, Iefke van Kampen painstakingly attempts to reconstruct the nature of the collection: how it was displayed in its various incarnations and whether or not it manifested pride on the part of its owner in his local heritage. On the evidence that we have and in the absence of a personal account by Chigi, we have to conclude that this was probably not the case: but perhaps no less important than their Etruscan origin, which Chigi may or may not have recognised, is the fact that Etruscan pieces were considered of sufficient calibre and inherent interest to be included in such early collections.

Ulf Hansson examines the passion in the 18th and 19th centuries for collecting Etruscan gems and displaying them in gem cabinets, which led to a flourishing market for sets of sulphur and plaster casts that were affordable to less wealthy collectors, while the use of gems in archaeological-style jewellery was hugely popular in the Victorian era. The Etruscan-ness of Wedgwood pottery (that most British of productions) is discussed by Nancy Ramage. The supposed Etruscan origin of the mass of fine Greek pottery found in Etruscan tombs, and the naming in 1769 of the district of the Wedgwood pottery factory in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, as Etruria helped to raise considerable awareness of the Etruscans. Within decades it was widely acknowledged that the vast majority of fine pottery found in Etruscan tombs was not in fact Etruscan but Greek. However, were it not for the exquisite taste of the Etruscans in Greek pottery and the wealth which enabled them to import the very best of it in large quantities, our knowledge of Greek vases would be only a fraction of what it is today.

These then are some of the principal topics discussed in this volume, but in dealing with them the authors provide an intriguing insight into the networks, dealings and personalities involved in the study and trading of Etruscan antiquities during these centuries. One of the best-known protagonists is Filippo Buonarroti, mentioned above, and it is well worth noting the names of a few others. It is probably Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68) whose name occurs most frequently in these studies, and whose regard for the Etruscans was highlighted in an exhibition in Florence in 2016, *Winckelmann, Florence and the Etruscans*.¹ Best known as a Greek scholar and for his monumental publication on the history of ancient art, he was passionate about the study of engraved gems and catalogued the Stosch collection of almost 3,500 pieces, a great many of them Etruscan. Remarkably he chose for the cover of his art history an Etruscan gem, the so-called *Gemma Stosch* (for which see Hansson, p. 85). Another key player was James Byres (1734–1817), Scottish architect, art historian, antiquities dealer and *cicerone* (tour guide) in Rome. His tome on *Hypogaei*, signifying Etruscan tombs, remained unfinished at his death; the illustrations by Franciszek Smuglewicz were engraved by Byres' partner Christopher Norton and later published minus the text. Peter Davidson shows that there is strong evidence that Byres shared his notes for the text with Winckelmann who made use of them for his art history (see p. 177). Both men were part of the homosexual community of intellectuals that flourished in Florence and Rome. In fact it appears highly likely that Byres and his colleagues were drawn to Etruscan culture by the sexual freedom and

appreciation of the male nude that the Etruscans seemed to have enjoyed.

Philip von Stosch was famous not only as a collector of gems: he was also acting on behalf of the British government as a spy on the Old Pretender, James Edward Stuart, son of King James II of England and Ireland and VII of Scotland, who was in exile in Rome as guest of Pope Clement XI.

Stosch's espionage earned him the funds to indulge his enthusiasm for collecting antiquities. However, as elaborated by Ulf Hansson, Stosch was hounded out of Rome one night in 1731 by masked men and fled to Florence, whence he never returned.

Another exciting adventure emerges in the chapter by Ingrid Rowland with the exploits of young Curzio Inghirami and his 'discovery' in 1634 of Etruscan *scarith* or capsules which, via their mysterious inscriptions, placed key events of the Christian faith in the heart of Etruria. The impetus for this inspired and famous forgery by the budding scholar reflected not only his ingenuity but widespread contemporary dissatisfaction with the papal regime. Opposition to the papacy had been strengthened by the conviction for heresy of the Florentine astronomer Galileo Galilei for his assertion that the sun and not the earth was the centre of the universe, contrary to the belief of both Aristotle and most of the Christian world until this time.

Other mysteries abound in this volume, not so much about the Etruscans but the circumstances relating to discoveries and the fate of the objects that came to light. Nancy de Grummond discusses a prime example: the famous 7th-century BC tumulus of Montecalvario at Castellina in Chianti, discovered in 1508. Over the centuries various finds have been connected with the tomb, including exotica such as now-lost golden cicadas, and in the story that unfolds a wide array of well-known characters become involved, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Benvenuto Cellini.

The conference on which this volume is based was a result of the British Museum's longstanding cooperation with the Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona (MAEC). It was inspired by an exhibition on which the two institutions collaborated highlighting the British contribution to Etruscology, *Seduzione Etrusca, dai segreti di Holkham Hall alle Meraviglie del British Museum*.² The exhibition involved the British Museum's largest loan of Etruscan objects to date. The Museum has major historic collections of Etruscan material, which featured in the founding collection of Sir Hans Sloane, and later in collections acquired from Lucien Bonaparte, Sir William Hamilton, Charles Townley, Richard Payne Knight and the Campanari and Castellani families. As Etruscan artefacts featured in its seminal collections, it is not surprising that they were included in the Museum's displays from its opening to the public in 1759 (for more information see Chapter 4). The British Museum is also fortunate to house the entire works of Samuel James Ainsley (1806–74), bequeathed by the artist, who visited Italy sometimes alone and sometimes in the company of George Dennis, the redoubtable author of *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*. Ainsley produced several hundred wonderfully atmospheric views of Etruscan landscape and remains, much of his subject matter now lost, with the intention of publishing it in a book which

sadly never materialised. We know little about Ainsley himself, but much has already been written about George Dennis, and new information continues to come to light in the chapter by Tom Rasmussen. Though Dennis is best known for his Etruscan travelogue he was also keenly involved in the archaeology of Sicily, Turkey and North Africa. His personal letters reveal his triumphs and disappointments, the hardships he endured on his travels, and his yearning to find a legendary site such as Henry Layard's Nimrud or John Turtle Wood's Ephesus. His scrupulous efforts to reach sometimes almost inaccessible Etruscan sites and to describe, record and draw them in objective detail put him at the forefront of archaeological method of the time. The fact that his *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* was reprinted three times (and in an Everyman version), the last version in 1878 being an updated and augmented volume including photographs, a fairly new phenomenon at the time, and with a print run of over 4,500 copies,³ shows just how widely the Etruscans had captured the public imagination.

For the fulfilment of this publication we are indebted to the very generous support of the Institute of Classical Studies (School of Advanced Study of the University of London), whose Director, Professor Greg Woolf, has offered great encouragement since the inception of the project. Graham and Joanna Barker, patrons of the British Museum, provided substantial funding for the conference, and also sponsor the annual Barker Etruscan lectures at the British Museum: the first chapter in this volume by Tom Rasmussen is based on the text of the inaugural Barker lecture, delivered as part of the conference. My personal gratitude goes to Sarah Faulks, British Museum Research Publications editor, for her unstinting encouragement and support during the preparation of this volume. I know that all the other contributors will join me in thanking her for patience, helpfulness and kindness throughout. Finally, for their contribution and their support in this venture, we thank our colleagues, past and present, at the MAEC and the Comune di Cortona: Paolo Bruschetti, Paolo Giulierini (now Director of the Naples Archaeological Museum), former Mayor Andrea Vignini, and, foremost, our dear friend Giovannangelo Camporeale. He was the holder of numerous academic and 'Etruscan' offices, among them Lucumone of the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona, that venerable birthplace of Etruscan studies. Professor Camporeale died in 2017, and we are honoured to include his final paper here. It is to him that this volume is dedicated with affection and respect.

Notes

- 1 B. Arbeid, S. Bruni and M. Iozzo (eds), *Winckelmann, Firenze e gli Etruschi: Il padre dell'archeologia in Toscana / Winckelmann, Florenz und die Etrusker: Der Vater der Archäologie in der Toskana* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2016).
- 2 *Seduzione etrusca. Dai segreti di Holkham Hall alle meraviglie del British Museum*, 22 March–31 July 2014, Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona.
- 3 Information kindly obtained by Fiona Campbell from the John Murray Archive at the National Library of Scotland: 1st edition c. 1,250 copies; 2nd edition c. 2,000 copies; 3rd edition c. 1,400 copies.

Chapter 1

George Dennis: In and Out of Etruria

Tom Rasmussen

Abstract

George Dennis is best known for his work on Etruria.¹ This chapter discusses him in relation to other contemporary and later writers on Italy, and explores how his approach to recording archaeological landscapes and material developed over the four decades that spanned his Etruscan researches. With the use of available archive material, new light is thrown on his working relationship with his artist companion Samuel Ainsley, as well as on his activities in other parts of the ancient world and his dealings with the British Museum which these entailed: Dennis was a scholar of the ancient Mediterranean not just Etruria.

George Dennis, indefatigable adventurer, archaeologist and envoy, will be mentioned several times throughout this volume. He is important because he was travelling and researching in Etruria at a time when it was possible to take note of many things that are today no longer visible or are in a poor state of preservation; in addition to this, his powers of observation and his attention to detail were acute, and he published his findings in a highly readable and engaging form in his two-volume *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*.

The volumes went through several editions in the first 60 years or so, but after a final reprint in 1907² for many decades the *magnum opus* seems to have been little read and studied. There may be a number of reasons for this, and herein lies my one point of disagreement with Dennis Rhodes' fine biography,³ more specifically with his preface where he touches on George Dennis's standing in the eyes of the eminent man of letters Edward Hutton – that other distinguished English connoisseur of the byways of central Italy. Hutton writes about Dennis not in his *Assisi and Umbria Revisited* but in *Siena and Southern Tuscany*, and what he has to say hardly amounts to 'lavish words of praise' but is loaded with irony and even mockery.⁴ Indeed, Hutton seems to have little time for Dennis and even less for his field of study, which in earlier editions⁵ he described as 'dull hearsay' and even 'pure invention'. This was at least expunged for the revised book along with a lengthy diatribe against anyone taking an interest in the Etruscans ('Are you a body-snatcher or an antiquarian that you should make so much of a few tombs? ...I know nothing of the Etruscan League. Get it out of Dennis or the guide-book'). Continuing in this vein (in the same passage) Hutton, an ardent Catholic, implicitly brackets Dennis with Whig historians such as Macaulay who wrote 'without regard for the truth'. Hutton was also a friend and Florentine neighbour of the art historian Bernard Berenson⁶ and a founding member of the British Institute of Florence, and was such an influential writer and Italophile that it is very possible that his negativity towards most things Etruscan was a contributory factor in the decline in the English readership of *Cities and Cemeteries* in the early 20th century and later.

Many tombs are described in *Cities and Cemeteries* and – despite Hutton's strictures – I will mention two more. The first I deliberately set out to find: Dennis's own tomb, hidden away in London's 11-hectare Hampstead Cemetery. Rhodes had seen it half a century ago, but now it lies half buried in the undergrowth, encrusted with moss, its inscription only



Figure 1 George Dennis's tomb, Hampstead Cemetery. Photo: Tom Rasmussen

partly legible (Fig. 1).⁷ The second I came across by chance in rural Dorset: the grave of Henry Austen Layard, excavator of Nineveh and Nimrud (Fig. 2). The tomb is of granite, in pristine condition and is a conspicuous feature of its churchyard setting. The reason for its inclusion here is that Dennis knew his contemporary Layard well, and it is no exaggeration to say that he really would have liked to be him. Looking back on his life in later years, Dennis wrote that they had both started out 'on a level', but it was Layard who had forged ahead and had 'won the Derby'.⁸

Thanks to Rhodes' vital detective work the basic facts concerning Dennis's life are reasonably clear. He was born in 1814 and did not receive a full education; he was enrolled at Charterhouse school for only two years and then entered the London Excise Office as a clerk at the age of 15. He was not the first English writer to pen a book about ancient Etruria. Elizabeth Hamilton Gray's *Tour to the Sepulchres of Ancient Etruria in 1839* was already in its third edition when Dennis's book was finished. In the six years from when he started on his own project to when it was published in 1848 he remained at the Excise Office, so that his researches had to be carried out during extended holidays and periods of leave (or simply absence). After this he joined the Foreign Office and was sent to British Guiana in South America where he remained for 14 years. With more periods of leave he managed somehow to make study tours of Sicily and eventually completed an historical and archaeological handbook of the island. His next employment was with the Consular Service and he was posted to Benghazi, Palermo and Smyrna, during which time he carried out archaeological excavations in these areas as and when he could.⁹ Funding was always a major problem. His last dig was at Sardis in the early 1880s.

Several questions and issues (some interrelated) will be touched upon in what follows. These include Dennis's choice of Etruria as a field of enquiry; his position vis-a-vis other writers on Etruria, in particular his attitude to Hamilton Gray, and D.H. Lawrence's attitude to him; his achievements and approaches to excavation in other parts of the ancient world; and the changes in modern Etruria between the 1840s and the later 1870s and their reflection in the two editions of his book. The 1878 edition was reprinted in 1883, but the really extraordinary feat, to my mind, has to be the first edition. The intention here is not to eulogise



Figure 2 Tomb of Henry Austen Layard, Canford Magna, Dorset. Photo: Carrie Partridge

Dennis (who was not without faults, although there is an enormous amount to praise him for) but to set him into the context of his time. His achievements are all the greater when one considers the almost insurmountable difficulties – springing especially from his lack of family connections and private income – that he was faced with throughout his life.

Dennis and Etruria

The first question to ask must be why Dennis chose Etruria. A conceivable answer is that he was captivated by the Etruscans as soon as he saw his first Etruscan tomb. One striking example he visited very early on was the painted Campana tomb at Veii which he must have seen between its discovery in 1840 and 1842. But according to his own words the very first tomb he entered was the Tomb of the Volumnii at Perugia, and his 12-page description of it and of the seven monumental burial urns that it contained is still very much worth reading.¹⁰ Also found in 1840, there was no doubt much local excitement about its discovery, and Dennis must have been one of the first foreign visitors to see it. He must have realised immediately, too, that here was an ancient people whose funerary monuments were both of extraordinary interest and worthy of detailed recording.

Another possible answer is that he may have visited the 1837 Pall Mall show in London,¹¹ which had so excited Hamilton Gray about the Etruscans. Alternatively, it may have been the very remoteness of Etruria that enticed him. Clearly he was attracted to wild places, as his early travelogue of Spain shows,¹² and there was very little *terra incognita*, archaeological or otherwise, left in the Europe of his day of the kind that Etruria could provide so readily. But his interests extended well beyond archaeology: somehow he had managed to educate himself very widely, becoming as fluent in all the main European languages as he was familiar with vast amounts of European literature. In Spanish he was expert, and his publication of *The Cid* (a 12th-century poem about a hero who lived around the time of William the Conqueror), which he worked on in his twenties, offers in its introduction some penetrating remarks concerning the quintessential nature of poetry, ballad and romance.¹³ It may have been then, in part, wider cultural enthusiasms that drew him to this part of Italy. In *Cities and Cemeteries* he writes of the Etruscans as 'the great civilizers of Italy', to whom the



Figure 3 Amphitheatre at Sutri.
Photo: Tom Rasmussen

Romans ‘owed most of their institutions and arts’, and on whose soil arose such names in literature as Dante, Petrarch, Macchiavelli and in visual arts the likes of Giotto, Brunelleschi and Signorelli.¹⁴ In his own day too ‘the Tuscan is still the most lively in intellect and imagination, the most highly endowed with a taste for literature and art’.¹⁵ This sense of continuity is evident throughout the whole book, and the landscapes, ancient and modern, that Dennis encountered conjured up in him images from literature of all ages and provenances: including Latin, Italian, English and Scottish. His text is therefore steeped in quotations not just from obvious figures such as Petrarch, Macaulay and Byron, but also from Millikin, Thomas Hood and James Thomson. Most of these passages are quite unsourced, some slightly adapted, and they give the strong impression of being quoted from memory. In reading Dennis one is continually amazed at his ability – rather like a latter day Pausanias – to recall everything he had been told and everything of interest he had read.

Dennis had detailed knowledge of a wide range of Latin writers, which comes out most clearly in his erudite footnotes. Of Livy he says, ‘No-one can thoroughly enjoy Italy without him for a companion.’ Dennis’s quotations are rarely superfluous to his own descriptions, as in the case of the amphitheatre at Sutri, flanked all around by shrubs and trees (**Fig. 3**). He may have been wrong about its date (he thought it to be of the Etruscan period) but he was absolutely right to quote Pliny, who in his letter describes the landscape around his beloved Tuscan villa. ‘Picture to yourself’, Pliny writes to Domitius Apollinaris, ‘an immense amphitheatre such as only Nature could create’. And of course the Sutri arena is not a built structure at all but carved wholly out of the natural rock, out of nature itself.

Dennis and Hamilton Gray

Dennis did not rate Hamilton Gray’s *Tour to the Sepulchres* highly (see Appendix 1) and set about writing a more accurate account. In so doing he also improved on the work of other earlier and contemporary topographers, primarily by including far more sites and writing about them in much

more detail. So, where Etruria is concerned, Luigi Canina and William Gell had restricted their focus to a relatively few sites in the south,¹⁶ the former excelling with his plan of Caere, the latter with a fine map of Veii.¹⁷ Hamilton Gray’s book, which had come out three years prior to the start of Dennis’s Etruscan tours, has enjoyed a somewhat mixed reception over the years, but she was still among the pioneers in writing detailed accounts of Etruscan sites and Dennis has to admit that she succeeded in making the whole subject ‘not only palatable but highly attractive’.¹⁸ He particularly admired her ‘lively description’ of Castel d’Asso,¹⁹ a remote site at that time even though only a few miles from the town of Viterbo, and one that had been visited a decade earlier by Gell who had made a few hasty sketches of the tombs.²⁰ The drawing illustrated here, however, is by Dennis himself (**Fig. 4**).

It is worth lingering at this site for a moment to compare the approaches of Dennis and Hamilton Gray. For the latter this was an arduous day trip, and at one point her carriage had to be carried across a deep stream.²¹ She had no torch for the tomb interiors, and provides sparse information about the exteriors, but convinced herself that the tombs must be very early and made for warriors, kings and statesmen. For Dennis the journey was equally strenuous ‘in consequence of the numerous ravines’, and he noted ‘the loneliness, seclusion, and utter stillness of the scene’. But he entered the tomb interiors, sometimes on all fours, and observed how ‘the tombs with the grandest façades have generally the meanest interiors’. He also noted the habitation site opposite, by the medieval castle, which he carefully planned (**Fig. 5**), as he did too for the even more spectacular site of Norchia nearby which was unknown to Gray. The different emphases of the two authors is shown clearly here, as is reflected by the book titles themselves (*Tour to the Sepulchres.../Cities and Cemeteries...*). Nevertheless, at Tarquinia Hamilton Gray did not ignore the city site but struggled valiantly on foot up onto the barren plateau;²² and so of course did Dennis, but it is he who observed, like a modern field archaeologist, that the terrain was strewn with potsherds of Etruscan date.²³



Figure 4 Castel d'Asso, drawing (Dennis 1848, vol. 1, opposite p. 235)

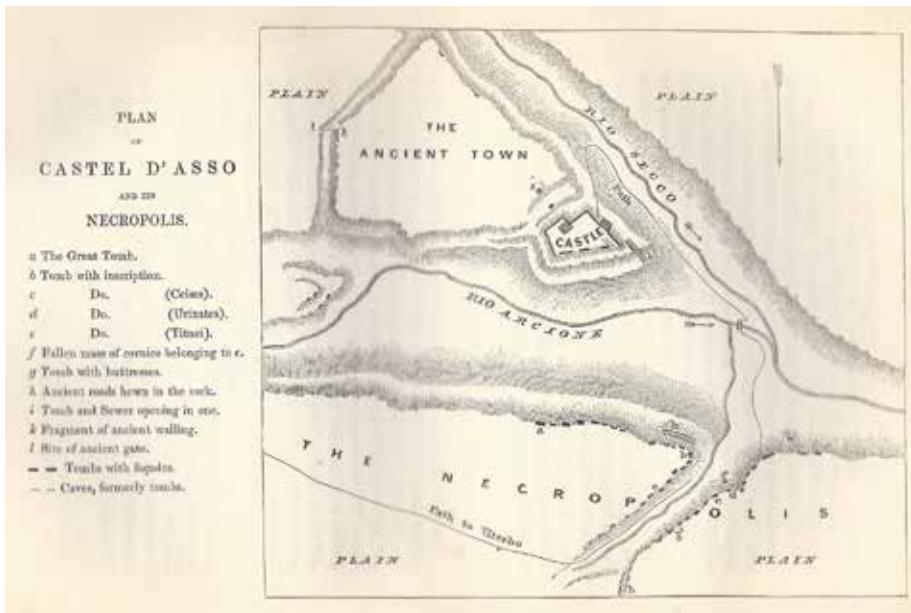


Figure 5 Castel d'Asso, plan (Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 230)

One could continue to point out contrasts between the two authors, observing, for example, how Hamilton Gray, in many of her descriptions of the Tarquinian painted tombs, was writing from memory,²⁴ not from notes such as those that Dennis made laboriously on the spot. He corrects her several times, notably concerning the towers on the S. Pietro hill at Tuscania, pointing out their medieval origin and that they were not a feature of some monumental Etruscan necropolis. On the subject of bandits he is less fearful than she, assuring his readers that the Banditaccia necropolis at Cerveteri had never been infested with them as the name had suggested to Gray and others, and dismissing their presence at Isola Farnese close by Veii where Gray was convinced she had narrowly escaped the attentions of a band of not just plain *banditi* but cannibalistic *banditi*.²⁵ The only times in his career that Dennis seems to have been sufficiently concerned about bandits to carry firearms is during his early travels in southern Spain, and later in life when he was excavating at Sardis.²⁶

If Dennis is the author, as has been maintained, of an anonymous and excoriating review in *Dublin University*

*Magazine*²⁷ of Hamilton Gray's work (directed primarily at the first volume of her *History of Etruria*, 1843), it would reveal on his part a markedly contemptuous attitude not only to Gray but to all women who venture into fields of scientific enquiry. The evidence adduced is a handwritten paper (see Fig. 21) found in a folder at the back of his personal copy of the first edition of *Cities and Cemeteries*.²⁸ In Dennis's own handwriting, this repeats brief extracts from the 17-page original and has been interpreted both as a short draft of the review and as notes taken from the final version as published.²⁹ A transcript of the first ten lines of the paper has been published;³⁰ for my own transcript of the whole document see Appendix 2.

However, nowhere else in his writings – his letters included – does Dennis express similar views about women.³¹ Certainly on a number of occasions he takes issue with Hamilton Gray (see above, and Appendix 1), but this is mainly over matters of accuracy and observation, and at no point does he attribute the inaccuracies to her gender. Moreover in the handwritten note he seems at one point at

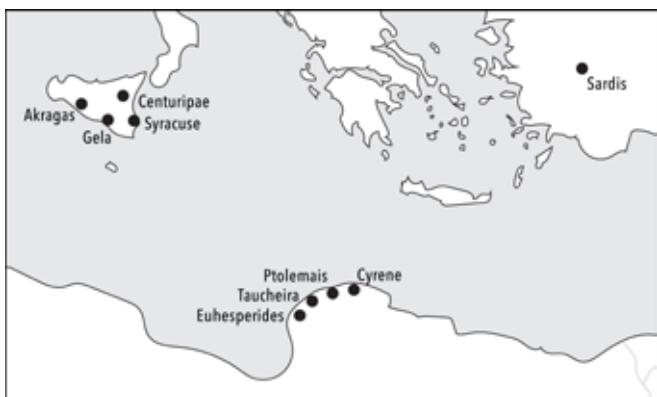


Figure 6 Attic red-figure lekythos from Gela, 440–430 BC, h. 32.35cm. British Museum, 1863,0728.151

least to take issue with the reviewer on the subject of cairns;³² and in the review itself there are disparaging remarks about the Campanari, the family of dealers and excavators based at Tuscania, which are quite at odds with the regard he expresses for them elsewhere.³³ Fortunately (for Dennis's reputation) there is now proof that he did not write the review, which is provided by a later review in the same journal which has so far been overlooked – this one a critique of Dennis's own work. It too is anonymous but the writer must be the same for he assumes authorship of the earlier review³⁴ and then goes on to praise Dennis himself as an 'antiquary of the humanities'.

The reason why Dennis made notes from the earlier review is not obvious. Clearly he disagreed with some of the points raised (on cairns, and on an early attempt to relate Etruscan to high Dutch) and agreed with others (classification of types of worship). As for the remarks about female inadequacies,³⁵ he may have jotted these down because he was amused, or more likely appalled by their extreme nature. Dennis was not without prejudices – he certainly shared the colour biases of his day with regard to black populations³⁶ – but there is no evidence that his attitude to Hamilton Gray was in any way sexist or misogynistic.

Figure 7 Sites of Dennis's excavations (1863–82)



Dennis in Sicily, Cyrenaica and Asia Minor

Dennis's Etruscan researches will be dealt with in more detail shortly, but first it is necessary to consider briefly his later activities after his 'exile' in South America, when he reinvented himself as an excavator primarily in the service of the British Museum. Throughout these years his interest in the Etruscans remained strong. In his researches in Sicily and North Africa he would note parallels with Etruscan material remains and tomb architecture,³⁷ and in Asia Minor he was consciously looking for them. Of the more than 1,200 objects which he donated or sold to the Museum, the greater bulk were excavated or bought in these areas; just a few are ethnographic items from his time in British Guiana. In these later years his operations are recorded almost entirely in the form of letters. Many of them, especially those to Layard and his publisher Murray, have been examined by Rhodes, but there are others which he wrote to the British Museum authorities, and there are mentions of his activities, too, in the Minutes of the British Museum Trustees. His first excavations were in Sicily at Agrigento (Akragas) in 1863 where he located Greek cemeteries but was very disappointed to find the tombs for the most part empty. He then moved on to Gela and here he met with some success. A number of fine vases excavated by him from this site have taken their place, and been illustrated, in the standard books on Greek pottery, including lekythoi attributed to the Phiale Painter (**Fig. 6**).³⁸ He also dug briefly at Centuripe (Centuripae) and Syracuse, but in a letter of April 1863 he wrote that if he could not obtain permission to continue to excavate in Sicily then he would want to 'explore either the cemeteries of the five cities at Cyrenaica or the 1001 Tombs of the Kings at Sardis. It would be most interesting to determine by monumental evidence the fact of the connexion between Lydia and Etruria.'³⁹ It is a letter that would effectively map out Dennis's future activities for the next two decades (**Fig. 7**).

Dennis went to Cyrenaica – and found that he disliked it intensely. Unlike Layard, who could happily mingle with Bakhtiari tribesmen and other Asiatics on their own terms,⁴⁰ Dennis was more traditionally colonial and European in outlook, taking a rather negative attitude towards the Arab peoples and finding communication in their language problematic.⁴¹ Moreover, whereas in Etruria he had been in his element describing with erudition the unfamiliar and the picturesque, now, more prosaically, he was solely searching for necropoleis to excavate, and in this region they had for the most part already been scoured by earlier explorers. For Dennis, Benghazi was 'the most dreary, forbidding spot in creation'.⁴² The town was the site of the ancient Euhesperides, later Berenice, and his probing of the necropolis proved very unproductive – perhaps not all that surprising given that some of this work was done remotely by a single workman who was both unreliable and unsupervised.⁴³ The result was rather similar at Cyrene, where the tombs were very poor in grave goods, and where he was physically threatened by the rifle-wielding occupants of 'a convent of Moslem monks'.⁴⁴ Next, Dennis headed off to Tocra (Taucheira) where again he found little material personally, but where some Arabs who were digging on their own account came across tombs with fine Greek pottery,

among which were five late Panathenaic amphorae, including one of those few that have the Tyrannicides as Athena's shield emblem (**Fig. 8**).⁴⁵ This inspired him to continue searching here at a later date and he did come across one more Panathenaic making six in all.⁴⁶ All this material, including the finds made by the Arabs which he managed to purchase, he sent to the British Museum.⁴⁷

One really feels for Dennis. He tried very hard in extremely harsh conditions, and was plagued with ill health. As he wrote to his sister Mary, his exposure in Cyrenaica to the wet and cold by day, and to damp underground tombs by night, left him with chronic rheumatic gout.⁴⁸ Often he chose, or was forced by circumstance, to excavate in the severe winter months. There almost seems to have been an element of self-punishment on occasion: in order to procure the vases mentioned above, he spent the Christmas Eve of 1865 hacking his way for 40 miles through swamps and rain to reach Tauchera at midnight, then to sleep 'wet, weary, and supperless' on the bare floor of a cave with his horse at his side.⁴⁹ One feels sympathy, too, for his wife Nora spending a rather lonely Christmas Day back at base at Benghazi.

Perhaps most depressing of all is his account of the necropolis at Ptolemais where he dug for weeks with a dozen workmen. Apart from well-preserved skeletal remains which were of no interest to him, the tombs contained little that was striking. It is worth quoting him here: 'The furniture in all these tombs was of the most ordinary description, not worth removal – no painted vases, rarely black ware; only common red pottery, lamps, fragments of bronze strigils....'⁵⁰ Yet how different are the sentiments expressed here from those he had given vent to 20 years earlier in one of the most quoted passages from *Cities and Cemeteries*. The context was his visit to the Etruscan site of Vulci, whose cemeteries had yielded more fine Greek vases than any other Mediterranean site. Here he was witness to a tomb being opened, only this one contained no Greek trophies, but instead 'coarse pottery... and a variety of small articles in black clay were its only produce'. For Dennis they were 'valuable as relics of olden time, not to be replaced'; but he could not prevent the workmen crushing them underfoot as they were considered to be 'cheaper than seaweed'.⁵¹

Obviously Dennis did not see a contradiction between his criticism of the Vulci workmen on the one hand and his own later approaches to excavation on the other, but then such approaches were the norm at the time. Nor was there then any concept of the tomb group – of keeping objects from the same tomb together to provide as much contextual and chronological information as possible.⁵² As far as is known, too, Dennis made no drawings of tombs or plans of any of the cemeteries that he excavated, whether in Sicily, Cyrenaica or Asia Minor.

All this is unsurprising, for 'as an excavator he seems to have been merely typical of his age', as David Ridgway noted.⁵³ Less comprehensible is his antagonism, on his arrival at Smyrna, to his compatriot John Turtle Wood, discoverer of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, and whom he seems never to have met in person. It was a site that Dennis would have loved to dig, as well as to locate one of the official wonders of the ancient world, but Wood was



Figure 8 Panathenaic amphora, Kuban Group, from Tocra, 425–400 BC. British Museum, 1866,0415.246

firmly ensconced here and Dennis accordingly looked towards Sardis. Interestingly, in the Minutes of the Trustees of the British Museum for the latter half of the 1860s the names of Wood and Dennis occur in about equal measure in regard to requests for Museum funding, and one wonders whether Dennis was aware of this. The story of Wood's epic six-year search for the temple is well known,⁵⁴ but Dennis had his own ideas about its probable location which were more in accord with those of his friend Edward Falkener who had published a plan of the site in 1862, after spending two weeks there in 1845. 'I have found a nice spot for it', he wrote to Falkener after a day visit to Ephesus in 1869 (a year before its final discovery), 'on the other side, that is on your side of the city and not far from the site marked on your plan There may be other spots to the west of the city which are still more promising'.⁵⁵ In a letter of two years earlier, Dennis had dismissed Wood's explorations as three years of 'prowlings'.⁵⁶ But the temple sites as shown on Falkener's hypothetical and Wood's actual plans are on nearly opposite sides of the city (**Fig. 9**),⁵⁷ and had Dennis mounted a dig that followed Falkener's directions he would probably have taken more years than Wood to find the temple, if he would have found it at all.

Dennis's archaeological activities at Sardis can be dealt with briefly. He tackled at least three of the burial mounds at Bin Tepe (the 'thousand mounds'),⁵⁸ having long been persuaded that the similarities between Lydian and Etruscan tumuli made it very likely that the Lydians were colonisers of Etruria.⁵⁹ What little he found came to the Museum, but the problem is that we do not know which

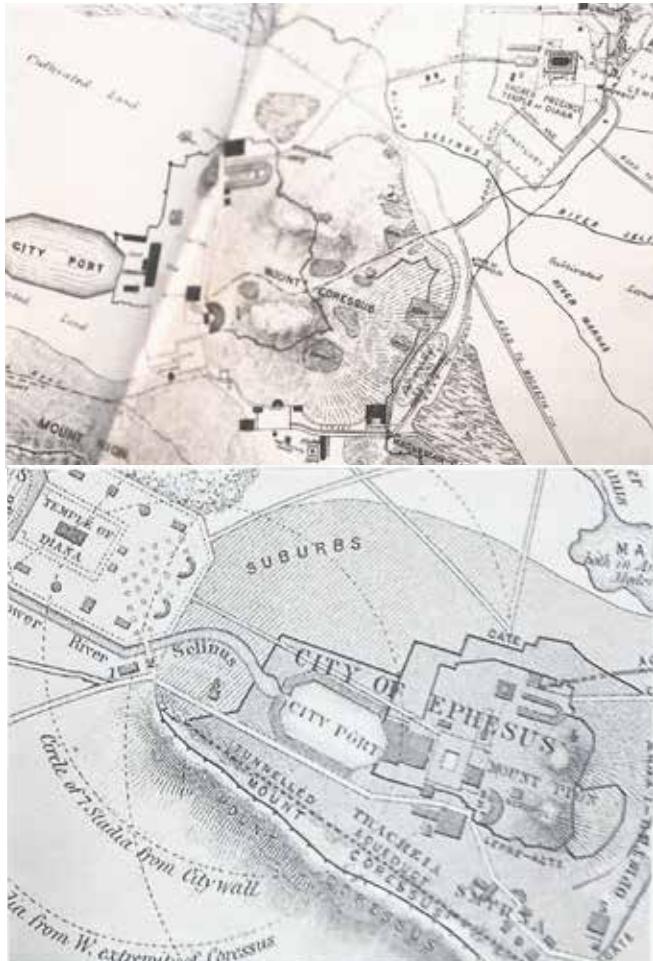


Figure 9 Ephesus, plans showing Temple of Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus (north is to top) (above: Wood 1977; below: Falkener 1862)

tombs the material comes from. The two most important pieces are relief sculptures of archaic date currently displayed in Room 13 in the British Museum, which are rare examples of stone sculpture of the Lydian/Persian era from the Lydian heartland.⁶⁰ Once again it was in the harsh mid winter that he started digging, and in a letter to his sister he tells of his ‘Crimean existence’ during his first Bin Tepe dig: there was ice in his tent, which also sheltered his horse. The month’s excavation had produced nothing. For a fortnight he had had to spend half the night awake to act as guard because of mountain robbers.⁶¹

At Sardis, too, Dennis conducted his only non-cemetery dig, on the Temple of Artemis, in 1882. He sank a trench above the naos of the temple, a trench that was apparently still visible when the Americans began work at the site in 1910.⁶² For Dennis the temple was that of Cybele and he may have thought that his one great find from here, a six times life-size marble head, was the goddess herself (Fig. 10). However, it turned out to be Empress Faustina the Elder, wife of Antoninus Pius, and is also in the British Museum’s collection.⁶³ Subsequent excavations have shown the Faustina to be the best preserved from among a collection of sculptures of Antonine rulers and their spouses housed in the temple. The Sardians had earlier petitioned (unsuccessfully), in the time of Tiberius, to be allowed an imperial cult on the grounds of their ancient kinship with the Etruscans – an argument recorded in a passage of Tacitus that Dennis knew well.⁶⁴

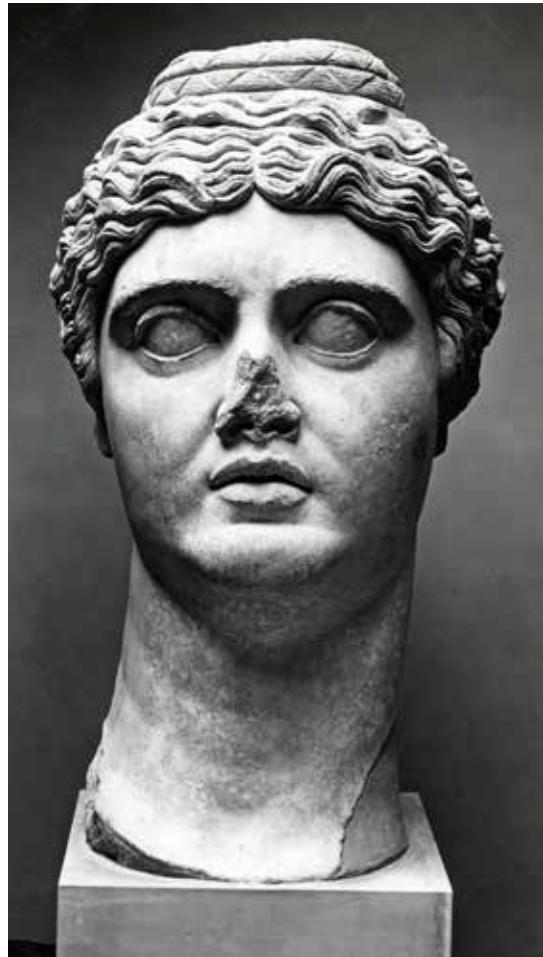


Figure 10 Colossal marble female head from Temple of Artemis, Sardis, c. AD 140, 176cm high. British Museum, 1936,0310.1

That Dennis also paid at least one brief visit to Greece, ‘the land of my youthful affections’ as he once described it,⁶⁵ is now clear through his letters,⁶⁶ although, from the acquisition dates, none of the unprovenanced Greek pottery that he gave to the British Museum seems to have been acquired there. All in all, the Museum did well out of Dennis in augmenting its collections of Greek pottery and terracottas,⁶⁷ but it is clear that by his own standards and expectations he felt himself to be an under-achiever. As he wrote to Layard from Benghazi in 1866, ‘It has not been my good fortune, though it is my ambition, to hit upon a Vulci or a Camirus.’⁶⁸ His dream, it seems, had always been to find a rich, virgin necropolis. He came closest to it at Gela in Sicily, but to his dismay he did not have a proper permit to continue the dig.

Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria: first and second editions

Dennis seems thoroughly careworn during his later years, and the contrast with the carefree period of his first Etruscan explorations could not be greater – especially the early trips of 1842 and 1843 (Fig. 11) with his artist companion Samuel Ainsley, whose portfolios of evocative drawings and watercolours from these excursions are in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum.⁶⁹ Ainsley also published his own account of his discovery of the rock-cut necropoleis at Sovana (Fig. 12): ‘I have seen no place which

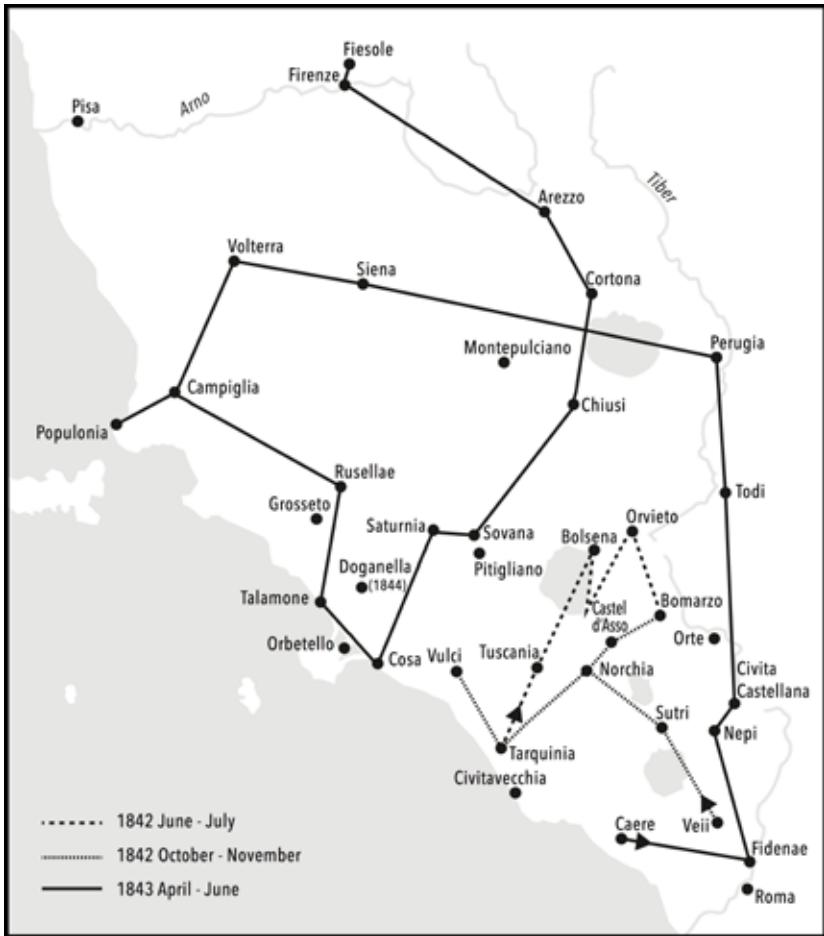


Figure 11 Dennis's early tours in Etruria (adapted from Rhodes 1992)

contains as great a variety of sculptured tombs' – although in his estimation the pedimented tombs at Norchia were of even greater interest.⁷⁰ As an artist, however, he was rather more interested in landscapes than in recording ruins and antiquities.⁷¹ For *Cities and Cemeteries* Dennis occasionally made use of his companion's sketches, but for the most part he composed his own drawings, often but not always employing the use of the *camera lucida*. Although Dennis was ultra-modest about his skills as an artist, works of his that have recently come to light show a considerable talent (Fig. 13). Indeed, Ainsley seems to have thought so highly of Dennis's drawings that he paid him the considerable compliment of basing some of his own images on them (Fig. 14).⁷²

A previously unpublished letter to his sister Mary (Appendix 1), written during his second Etruscan tour of 1842, gives some vivid detail about Dennis's working relationship with Ainsley, as well as touching on his views on Mrs Hamilton Gray and on his own approach to his Etruscan project.⁷³ It is apparent from the letter, too, that Dennis's interest in recording evocative scenery may well have been inherited from his father, John Dennis, who had his personal portfolio of European landscapes printed privately.⁷⁴

Dennis spared no effort to see everything for himself. At Veii he stationed himself at the nearby village of La Storta, walked daily to the site at sunrise with lunch in his pocket, drinking from the Cremera stream, and then returned to his lodging in the evenings. He was even careful to wade through the 70m long Ponte Sodo (dug by the Etruscans to prevent the river from causing flood damage) so as to be able

to describe the tunnel accurately. This insistence on autopsy caused him many problems. For example, to reach ancient Capena necessitated an excursion on horseback from Civita Castellana 17 miles distant, and he made it there and back in a day – just about. But the rain was heavy, he and his guide lost their way, his horse collapsed half way from exhaustion in the mud, and the only way to revive it was for Dennis to feed the beast his own packed lunch. But on the hilltop of Capena he was able to describe the few blocks that still remained of the town wall, and to trace the extent of the settlement from the broken pottery scattered all over it. As for the view from the top towards the 'towering Soracte', it was 'wildly beautiful', 'a scene of more singular isolation than belongs to the site of any other Etruscan city'.⁷⁵

Visiting Capena in the mid 1990s, it was still possible to see just the sort of agricultural scene that would hardly have changed since Dennis's day, with the olives being harvested by means of sheets spread on the ground (Fig. 15). On the site itself everything was overgrown but one could just glimpse the wall blocks that Dennis must have seen (Fig. 16). It is rather different now, as recent archaeological work has cleared much of the ground.

To get around Etruria required a high degree of improvisation. In his 1878 edition Dennis records a trip made with Ainsley in 1846 up the Tiber to Orte on a rare charcoal-carrying steamer that had been sailed out from England. It took two days and they slept on deck. They had 'some flasks of excellent wine to cheer us, we had youth, health, good appetites, enthusiasm, and no end of enjoyment'.⁷⁶ They went on to explore the Vadimonian Lake



Figure 12 Drawing by Samuel Ainsley of the Tomb of the Siren ('La Fontana') at Sovana, 1843. British Museum, 1874,0711.2116

and other parts west of the Tiber. This second edition of *Cities and Cemeteries* of 1878 is rightly regarded as the finest expression of Dennis's particular genius. It is certainly the fullest, with its expanded footnotes, new site plans and descriptions of new excavations, for example at Bolsena and Orvieto (Fig. 17). He spent great efforts on the revision,

Figure 13 Watercolour by George Dennis of Tivoli, 1842. Inscribed 'Tempio della Sibilla'. Private collection. Image courtesy of Louise Burness



especially during the years of 1876–7, but his revisits from his base at the Palermo consulate to many of the Etruscan sites were made easier by a number of factors. First, there was the unification of Italy in 1870 and the abolition of the customs posts of the Papal State that ran across southern Tuscany. This was a border that Dennis continually had to criss-cross in earlier days carrying all the necessary papers. More important was the development of the railway system. The first stage of the line from Florence to Rome was finished as far as Sinalunga by 1866, and the final link, from Orvieto to Orte was completed in 1874.⁷⁷ Now the visit to Capena, for example, would be far less arduous, as there was a rail station only five miles away. In the meantime the coastal rail route was also under construction, at first from Rome to Civitavecchia by 1861, later onwards and northwards through Orbetello and so on to Pisa.

Within the space of a few years Etruria had become a very different place and communications were transformed. It makes the first edition of *Cities and Cemeteries* of 1848 an even more extraordinary achievement, and it is no less than astonishing that Dennis was able to cover so much ground in so few months on foot, horseback and horse-and-coach, and that he was able to spend the time required at those centres which needed detailed study, such as Tarquinia with its painted tombs. The primitive conditions were undoubtedly to his and our advantage: as he writes, rail travel afforded 'too scanty a time to enjoy the all-glorious landscapes on the road'. One further advantage he enjoyed in preparing the revised volumes was the use of photography which had developed in the intervening years (Fig. 17). All the publisher had to do now was to give the photograph to the engraver, whereas every image in the first edition is the result of detailed drawing and sketching.

Of course Dennis was wrong in many areas. His views about the Sutri amphitheatre have already been mentioned, and he was similarly misguided about the date of polygonal town walls such as those of Saturnia, Cosa (Fig. 18), and Orbetello, which he considered to be exceptionally early, attributing them to the semi-mythical Pelasgians. (There is altogether too much about the Pelasgians in Dennis, though



Figure 14 Drawing by Samuel Ainsley ('SJA after Dennis') of the Tomba della Mercareccia at Tarquinia, 1843. British Museum, 1874,0711.2129

not as much as there is in Hamilton Gray.) He also spent perhaps too much effort in attempting to locate the city of Vetus, with the problem only resolved some years after the publication of his second edition. However, along the way he gives us the earliest full account of the important site later known as Doganella.⁷⁸

People do not read Dennis much these days for his comments on Etruscan art, least of all for his statements about Greek vases. He did recognise Etruscan red-figure when it had Etruscan inscriptions, but he was way behind the times with his view that most of the painted vases from Etruscan tombs were Etruscan.⁷⁹ The question of their provenance, however, was one that troubled him and after much deliberation he substantially changed his opinion for the second edition. Then there were the subjects – often riotous – that were depicted, which, even if the vessels were imported from Greece, must have something to say about Etruscan taste. For Hamilton Gray the scenes of sexual revelry were an irrelevance where Etruscan sensibilities are concerned, as they did not square with her notion (taken from Niebuhr) that the Etruscans were purer and less dissolute ‘than any other civilised people’.⁸⁰ Dennis was less sure: although the scenes might show Greek rather than Etruscan realities, there was no escaping the fact that they

displayed ‘the most abominable indecencies’ which could be paralleled elsewhere in Etruscan art including tomb paintings.⁸¹ Even Dennis’s high opinion of the Etruscans had its limits.

As for locally made wares, the fine dark pottery of Etruria was simply called ‘black ware’ in the first edition, only in the second is the term ‘bucchero’ used. It is a small bucchero bowl that is the only Etruscan object in the British Museum from Dennis’s collection; but, with its flat pierced lug-handles, it is very difficult to parallel precisely (Fig. 19).⁸²

In every way the second edition improves on the first, with perhaps one exception – the inclusion of a remarkably preserved terracotta sarcophagus with a reclining couple, said to be from Cerveteri, and discovered a generation or so after Dennis’s time to be a remarkable fake, now known generally as the Penelli sarcophagus after the brothers who created it.⁸³

All along, Dennis’s purpose had been to give a ‘plain, unvarnished tale of extant local monuments’,⁸⁴ and nowhere is this more true than with his handling of inscriptions. Although he was criticised in reviews of both editions for not including more Etruscan texts and discussions of their meaning, we can ourselves be grateful for his sobriety and avoidance of speculation in the linguistic sphere. Worth

Figure 15 Olive harvesting near ancient Capena. Photo: Tom Rasmussen



Figure 16 Northern defensive wall at Capena. Photo: Tom Rasmussen





Figure 17 Woodcut from a photograph of Necropoli del Crocifisso del Tufo, Orvieto (Dennis 1878, vol. 2, 43)

noting in this context is an inscribed sarcophagus from Tuscania (now in the British Museum) which featured in the Pall Mall exhibition discussed later in this volume by Judith Swaddling.⁸⁵ Like many similar examples, the inscription along the top of the chest gives simply the name of the deceased, his parentage and his age at death. However, one attempt at translation, published at the time of the display and working from a supposed correlation between Etruscan and Irish (already an indication that this is not going to end well), unsurprisingly sees an entirely different meaning and construes as follows: ‘Heaven permits the grim spectre of grisly Death to take away the little prattling infant daughter.’⁸⁶ Such wild reasoning is not untypical of approaches to the Etruscan language of Dennis’s time, and indeed of later eras. Another example concerns a word that crops up inscribed on many objects in the later tombs, namely *suthina*, which he sensibly realised must mean something like ‘sepulchral’ or ‘for the tomb’; unlike others who made guesses such as ‘in peace’. Along with a number of Italian scholars of his day Dennis knew a fair amount about the Etruscan script, as well as about proper names and a few common words of vocabulary, but he never tried to speculate

or venture beyond what he knew; and, fortunately for us, it is true of his whole approach to the Etruscans.

Dennis and D.H. Lawrence

Dennis’s skill as a writer brings his antiquarian interests to life but also transcends them.⁸⁷ As a narrator of human life both ancient and not-so-ancient, he cannot resist the telling of stories he has learned, nor can we resist hearing them, especially when they are as vivid as that concerning the lost villa of the last Count of Pitigliano: the Count had both a mistress at a neighbouring town and a wife about whom he was exceedingly jealous. One day returning from his mistress he happened to see his wife standing at the bridge that crossed the ravine at Pitigliano. To his asking, all suspicious, what she had been up to that day, she replied, all innocent, that it was probably much the same as he. He misinterpreted her remark and, his jealousy aroused, threw her into the torrent far below. ‘He fled, and was never heard of more; and his villa fell into utter ruin.’⁸⁸

Later, D.H. Lawrence would have stories to tell of more modern times in Etruria. In the gaol at Volterra there was supposed to be an elderly inmate who had killed his wife

Figure 18 Drawing of the town wall at Cosa (Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 269)

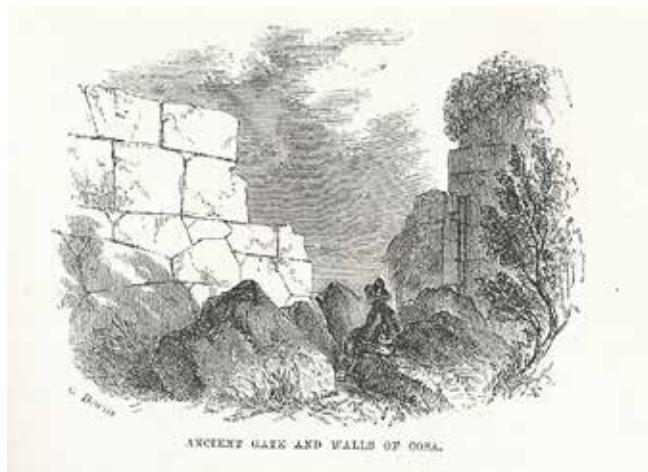


Figure 19 Bucchero bowl, 600–500 bc, diameter 12.3cm. British Museum, 1934,1117.1



because she had for 30 years complained of his piano playing. The nagging had thus been stopped, yet he is ‘still not allowed to play the piano’.⁹⁰ Such tales are not an irrelevance in either book but have a particular resonance that demonstrates the intimate relationship between ancient and modern: drawing attention in the one case to the rugged and ravine-riven terrain that characterises so much of the area of ancient Etruria; in the other to Volterra’s impregnable Etruscan acropolis, which the Medici transformed into a formidable fortress, and which now is an impregnable high-security prison. Lawrence had read and admired Dennis, used his geographical format for *Etruscan Places*, and even saw in him something of a kindred spirit.⁹¹ For both writers Etruria was a living landscape where past and present mingled freely. Lawrence could see in the women of contemporary Cerveteri something of the old Etruscan vitality, while the hunting scenes on Volterrana urns reminded him of the importance of the hunt in present times and, no doubt, of hunt-loving young Luigi who drove him by horse and cart around Vulci. Likewise, Dennis sets before us a whole cast of characters who are both of his time and somehow not of it: from the goatskin-clad cheese-making shepherds of Veii to the various hostesses he encounters, including the inn-lady at Sorano, of considerable culinary skills but who, short of space, tried unsuccessfully to get him to share a bed with several farmers. These kinds of detail – of an agricultural way of life that has more in common with ancient times than with today’s realities – truly enhance the picture that Dennis paints, and they do so in a way that would be inconceivable in our own times. People today – just about everyone – are globalised entities, armed with smartphones, email and a web presence, whether they happen to be agriculturalists or academics or owners of bed-and-breakfasts in the deepest corners of rural Tuscany. They may be interesting in many ways, but on the outside would offer a kind of sameness that Dennis would hardly linger over.

In one other respect, too, Dennis and Lawrence share a somewhat similar perspective, and that is with regard to the relationship between Roman and Etruscan culture. For Lawrence ancient Rome symbolised everything that was wrong with the growing fascism he saw all around him in Italy, while Etruscan culture was life-enhancing – until it was ‘wiped out entirely to make room for Rome with a very big R’.⁹² Dennis for his part was far too fond of Livy to denigrate the Romans outright, but for him, too, the Etruscans do seem to be the Real Thing, whereas Rome – ‘that upstart bully of the Seven Hills’⁹³ – was ‘indebted to Etruria for whatever tended to elevate and humanise her’ especially with regard to art and science.⁹³

Dennis and Layard

Those who are familiar with the language of football will have heard the phrase ‘a game of two halves’, usually meaning that a team did well in one half, not so well in the other. It can be applied to human lives and careers as well. Dennis’s early life was one of considerable success and fulfilment, considering that *Cities and Cemeteries* came out when he was only 34, by which time he had already published two authoritative works on Spain and its

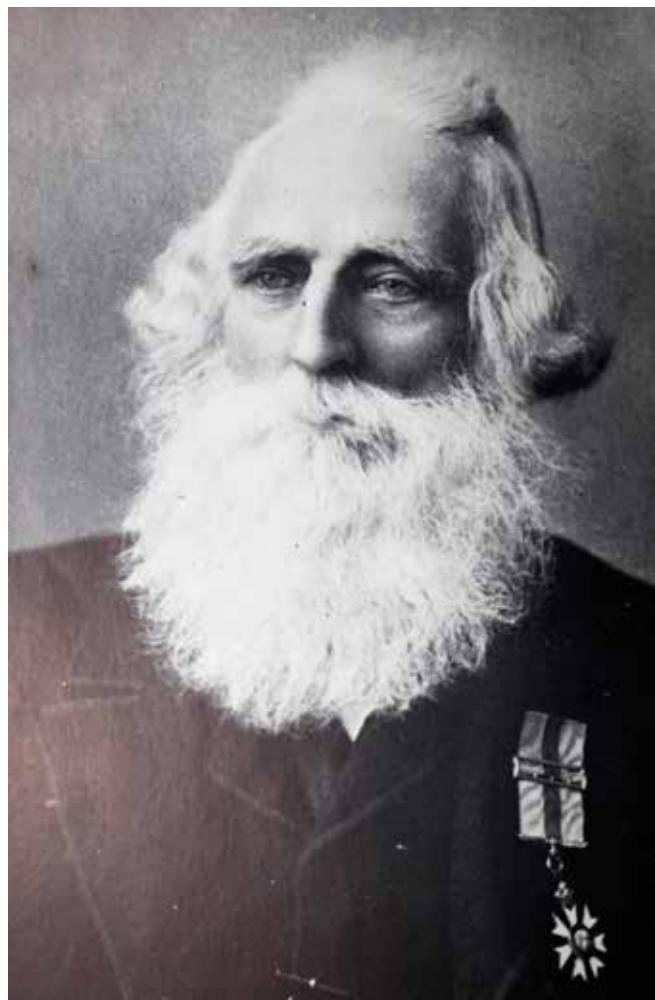


Figure 20 Dennis in his 70s (Rhodes 1973, frontispiece)

literature, and had laid the groundwork for his later book on Sicily.⁹⁴ For the remainder of his life his focus stayed with antiquarian research but it brought him little kudos and even less financial reward. It was unfortunate for him, tragic even, that he never held a diplomatic post in Rome, which would have enabled him to pursue his Italian researches with greater ease.⁹⁵ We may take for comparison his contemporaries Charles Fellows and Henry Layard, both great enrichers of the British Museum. The former was soon knighted after his discoveries in Lycia (which were well known to Dennis), and then retired as a gentleman farmer on the Isle of Wight.⁹⁶ Layard, whom Dennis revered and to whom he dedicated the second edition of *Cities and Cemeteries*, left archaeology after only six frenetic years in the field for a career in politics and diplomacy. He too was later knighted. All three are remembered today chiefly for the discoveries made in their younger years, discoveries that revealed unfamiliar cultures and little-known scripts and languages. But out of the three it was perhaps Dennis (**Fig. 20**) who best taught us how to relate archaeological monuments to the surrounding cultural landscape.

Appendix 1 Extracts from an unpublished letter to Dennis's sister, Mary (DFP)

Vetralla in Etruria
Nov. 7. 1842
My dearest Mary

I write from a miserable inn in the heart of ancient Etruria. Mr Ainsley reading Shakespeare by my side & we have our feet up on a large earthen pot full of charcoal while our cloaks, carpet bags etc are hanging all around it. The rain is coming down in torrents as it has done throughout the day much to our annoyance for we drove over this morning in an open car from Viterbo over 12 miles distant. But how come we [are] north of Rome you will enquire when in my last [letter] I spoke of going to Naples as soon as possible. On my return to the Alban Mount I met again with Ainsley and he told me of his intention to leave here in a few days for another tour through Etruria embracing all those cities he has not as (well as) those he had before visited. He asked me to accompany him and really the opportunity of seeing these remains of remote antiquity in his company was a temptation too great to resist. So I gave up my plan of moving southwards save a short pedestrian tour in the mountains which overhang the Pontine marshes which only took me a week. We then met in Rome and started a fortnight ago for Etruria.

....This is the valley [Castel d'Asso] of which Mrs Hamilton Gray says she would rather have seen than any plain in Europe save Rome. By the by Mrs Gray is our companion also but we find her far more amusing than instructive. Her errors and mistakes are so glaring as often to appear wilful and her simplicity and naivety are a constant source of amusement. She has done good, however, in calling the attention of the English public to these things and so far is commendable, but really I flatter myself that at the completion of my tour which will embrace many spots and sights she did not visit or see I shall be able to write a much more inspiring and faithful account than she. Do not imagine however that I have any such intention for I am perfectly aware that any work on this subject to supersede hers should be one of antiquarian knowledge not like hers of mere picturesque description. Now such knowledge is not easily or speedily obtained, it requires months nay years of unremitting attention to the subject on the only spots where such information is to be obtained, so that in my case it is out of the question.

....The pedestrian tour of which I spoke just now was to the sites of three cities whose remains are more extensive perhaps than any others of this description: Cora, Norba, and Segni....Now when you hear that these cities are so ancient as to have been attributed by the Romans to have had a fabulous origin you will understand the intense interest attaching to them...

(Nov. 12th 1842) We are still at Vetralla having spent a delightful week exploring its neighbourhood which was unvisited by Mrs Gray and even unknown to Sir W. Gell and where on the site of Norchia are sepulchres with sculpted fronts far more numerous and curious than

those at Castel d'Asso which threw Mrs G into rhapsody – and at Bieda also are a multitude of similar tombs and two Etruscan bridges – one of them a rare curiosity. Tomorrow we start for Corneto near the site of the ancient Tarquinia where the principal interest as regards Etruscan tombs is centered. Thence we go to Toscanella and return to Corneto where we part, Mr A returning to Rome, I going northwards to see the Etruscan city of Cosa, the walls of which are still standing perfect but without a house in their enclosure. I then return to Rome and move forward as soon as possible to Naples....

....Really were it not a duty to write home occasionally I think I should do it very rarely. It is always at a sacrifice of time which is due to note making, sketch-lining or something else which ought to be done while the memory retains its impressions. No time is less adapted to letter writing than a rapid tour such as I am now making. We get up with the dawn, swallow our breakfast hastily which is nothing but a cup of coffee without milk and a dry roll to sop in it – mount our horses and ride out to the scene of our operations for the day some six or eight miles distant. Then ere we have half completed our work night comes on and it is dark long before we reach home. We then dine or sup and are often so overcome with fatigue and excitement as to fall asleep immediately afterwards, and if we can keep our eyes open we note the events of the day etc – but are now several days in arrears....

... I am much indebted to Mr Ainsley for what little progress I have made in sketching. Before I met him I was afraid of colour as a child is of medicine, and as to pencil I had no idea of it. I cannot yet do anything to boast of but I feel the value of his hints and hope with watching to profit by them. I sadly regret not having availed myself of my dear father's instructions but without practice precept is of little value. Mr A and I sketch side by side so that I can conceal my defects by his drawing and his hints are practically forced upon my memory. He draws very beautifully – gives a great deal of character with very great force and I think has excellent taste in his composition and choice of subjects – I hope to introduce you to him on my return and procure you a sight of his sketches and studies from nature in oil. We agree extremely well, he is very amiable, gentlemanly, and well informed on all that relates to art. I do not wish a more agreeable travelling companion. We never pull different ways but dovetail uncommonly well. I am very happy in having made his acquaintance. Did you read Mrs Gray's work on Etruria... if not pray read it if you have leisure and you will have some idea of what is now interesting me. She is very inaccurate in many parts – not that she exaggerated the marvels of Etruria but that she confounds one thing with another and gives most inaccurate representations of the frescoes etc. The house in which I have resided all the summer at Rome is that of the Archaeological Society of which she says so much.

(Corneto. Nov. 13th.) We arrived here this morning and have already seen some of the remarkable tombs. ...We start tomorrow before daybreak for the ancient Vulci (now Ponte dell' Abbadia)...believe me my dearest Mary, Your ever affectionate brother

Geo Dennis

Appendix 2 Dennis's handwritten paper (Fig. 21)

Rev. of Mrs H. Gray

Dublin Univ. Mag
Nov. 1844

Antiq[uit]y is a dry, severe, & cautious study; the female mind is warm, imaginative, indisposed to doubt, eager to conclude. These are not elements of consistency or excellence.... Any deep or earnest investigation of matters connected w[ith] the social institutions of a gentile nation is not properly within the female province.... Strange temerity of the female mind, leaping at once to the desired conclusion over solecisms the most patent – wide-yawning, tremendous, from wh[ich] the masculine intelligence shrinks back instinctively. It is thus in almost all the works of lady-writers – imaginative, graceful, picturesque, enthusiastic, but so rarely ratiocinative!

And if the history have a hero (as here Tarchon) round him the lady historian will heap and accumulate her imaginations as fondly as round an object of actual affection in life. ... Should have treated it as an historical fiction.

There is an Etruscan form of exorcism in Cato de Re Rustica. ... Tomb of Tuath De Danan king, at New Grange is diminutive in comparison w[ith] the more cognate cairn-shaped tumuli of Etruria.

Undoubtedly the idea of a corporal resurrection was present in the minds of the gentile nations. Thinks nowhere in Etruria is [there] the rude stone-circled Celtic cairn [which] seems to be the primitive type of all the pyramidal and conical tumuli, & of which there were undoubtedly specimens in Greece in [the] time of Pausanias, and we believe still extant.

Mrs G's theory of ages of masonry [?is torn?] apart by walls in several old Italian towns in inverse order, rough at bottom, polygonal in middle and quadrangular at top.... Gate of Lions, however, w[ith] its propylea is in perfect quadrangular style.... dome 20 ft high covered the king of New Grange.

Etruscan tomb ?design is? similar to [the] similar situated cells of the Mexican and Yucatan pyramids. body also in full dress.... Adrien Von Scieck, a disciple of Goropius Becanus at [the] latter end of [the] 16th cent. tried to prove Etruscan to be High Dutch – idea from becoming the Phrygian of bread, being [the] first word a child utters naturally, if kept apart from society, & becoming High Dutch being [the] root of baker. Betham [sees?] Aesar in Etruscan & Irish meaning God. [The] Royal Museum at Copenhagen is very rich in Celtic antiquities.

Dulia is inferior worship

Latria superior “ to God alone

Rev. of Mrs H. Gray. Dublin Rev. May

Nov. 1844.

Study is a dry, severe, & cautious study; - female mind is
warm, imaginative, indisposed to doubt, eager to conclude. Nor
are not elements of consistency or excellence. — Any deep or
honest inquiry of matters connected w. a social history of
gentile nations is not properly within female province. —
Sharp tenacity of female mind, leaping at once to a desired end,
over decisions & most patient wide-gazing, tremendous, from
wh. & mascul. intellg. shrinks back instinctively. It is this in short
all who of lady-writers - imagination, graphic, picturesqueness,
but so rarely retrospective! And if a history have a hero (as
the French) round him - lady historian will keep & accumulate his
image as fondly as could an obj' of actual affect. in life —
Should have treated it as a historical fiction.

There is an Etrus. form of ~~Phoenician~~ in Cato de Re Rustica —
Tomb of Tuath De Danan King, at New Grange is diminutive
in compas. & more cognate cairn-shaped tombs of the Gauls
& idea of a corporal connexion & present in a mind of gentile
nations. — ^{think nowhere in Etruria except} The small stone-walled little cairn seems to be
familiar type of all - pyram. & conic. tombs, & of L. the above
undoubted specimen in Greece in time of Pandion, of an old
site extant. —

Mrs G.'s theory of eyes of making up & walls in addition
that towers in mind in order rough at bott. polys. in mid. &
made. at top. — Gate of Lions however w. its propylaea is in
perf. good. styl. — Some 20 ft high covered in this at New Grange.

Figure 21 Dennis's note sheet (obverse) on the Dublin review. Photo: Tom Rasmussen, courtesy of Sybille Haynes

Notes

- 1 It was an honour and a pleasure to give the first of the Graham Barker lectures. Their predecessors, the Eva Lorant lectures, expertly stage-managed as always by Judith Swaddling, attracted large and enthusiastic audiences – may the present series enjoy equal success. Much of the text is as delivered in May 2015; new material includes the appendices and their discussion, and there are minimal updates in the apparatus. My sincere thanks go to the following: Judith Swaddling for inviting me to lecture and for invaluable help at the British Museum; Colin Imber (University of Manchester) for examining several Ottoman firmans [DFP] which turned out not to be permissions to excavate in Asia Minor (as had been hoped) but warrants of appointment as consul at Smyrna; Francesca Hillier (British Museum) for locating relevant British Museum archive material; Peter Blore (University of Manchester), for practical help with the maps of **Figs 7** and **11**; Carrie Partridge (Parish Secretary, Canford Magna) for **Fig. 2**; Judith Tunks, for generous access to the Dennis Family Papers and for permission to publish the document in Appendix 1; Sybille Haynes MBE, for kind permission to publish the document illustrated in **Fig. 21**; Dennis. E. Rhodes, for most helpful correspondence; Charlotte O'Donnell and Fiona Campbell, John Murray Archive, National Library of Scotland, for various help and advice.
- 2 This final full reprint (of the 1848 edition) appeared in the popular Everyman's series. For a later partial reprint, see Dennis 1985. Print runs of the earlier editions (for which information I am grateful to Fiona Campbell) were as follows: 1848 edn – 1,250; 1878 edn – 2,000; 1883 (reprint) – 1,400.
- 3 Rhodes 1973.
- 4 Hutton 1955, 257 (which is also difficult to square with Rhodes' description of Hutton as Dennis's 'devoted admirer': Rhodes 1973, 153).
- 5 *Siena and Southern Tuscany*: editions of 1910, [1911] 1916, 1923: p. 274 (print run of first edn: 2000).
- 6 Berenson was even more dismissive about the Etruscans, who, where art was concerned, had little to offer but the 'originality of incompetence' (Berenson 1948, 161–2).
- 7 For the complete inscription: Rhodes 1973, 160.
- 8 Letter to Murray, 28 January 1888 (NLS) (cf. Rhodes 1973, 155).
- 9 For a short period he was also consul at Khania on Crete. In the photograph illustrated here as **Fig. 20** he is wearing the insignia of a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG), awarded for his consular service.
- 10 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 471–82.
- 11 See Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume.
- 12 Anon. (G. Dennis) 1839.
- 13 Dennis 1845, 9.
- 14 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, xc; 1878, vol. 1, cii.
- 15 But he held a less exalted view of the contemporary Romans of Rome and the Campagna, as is clear from passages of the letter of Appendix 1 that are not reproduced here, where they are described as 'mean, revengeful, cowardly, corrupt in every particular', as well as prone to violence and murder.
- 16 Canina 1846; Gell 1834. Of similar scope: Nibby 1837.
- 17 Canina 1838; Gell 1834, vol. 2, opposite p. 304.
- 18 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, vi.
- 19 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 230.
- 20 Gell 1834, vol. 1, 394–6.
- 21 Hamilton Gray 1843, 401.
- 22 Hamilton Gray 1843, 236.
- 23 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 381.
- 24 Hamilton Gray 1843, 171–2.
- 25 Hamilton Gray 1843, 109; cf. Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 36.
- 26 See n. 61.
- 27 Anon. 1844.
- 28 Now in the possession of Sybille Haynes. Inside is the bookplate of Dennis's nephew George Ravenscroft Dennis, who may have placed the paper in the folder together with his uncle's *Athenaeum* obituary. See Haynes 1992, 401, nos 490, 491.
- 29 See Haynes 1970, 177 and Williams 2009, 11 for these respective views. Neither is in doubt that Dennis was the author of the Dublin review.
- 30 Williams 2009, 11. My own transcript of this passage (Appendix 2)
- is identical, except that in line 6 'sharp tenacity' has been replaced by the original (and more meaningful) 'strange temerity'.
- 31 His review of Hamilton Gray for *Westminster Review* (see Dennis 1844) hardly touches on her work and is mainly about his own researches. See also Rhodes 1973, 175–6.
- 32 Where he comments: 'thinks nowhere in Etruria is there the rude stone-circled Celtic cairn'. The first word with its underlining is Dennis's, the rest is quotation, and he was probably recollecting the Celtic-looking circular tombs he had observed at Santa Marinella and Saturnia (Dennis 1848, vol. 2, 8, 316).
- 33 Compare Anon. 1844, 542 ('These Italians [such as the Campanari], having nothing better to do ... are coerced in a manner to be ... miners of antiquity.') with Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 441 ('Their names are known throughout Europe, wherever a love of antiquities has penetrated.').
- 34 See Anon. 1849. The piece begins: 'Our readers may remember an elegant volume ... by Mrs Hamilton Gray, which was noticed in this Magazine about three years ago. We were unable to give Mrs Gray all the applause we would willingly have awarded ... in consequence of her ill-judged efforts ...'
- 35 Such sentiments were, of course, not uncommon in the Victorian era, and Darwin would give similar views about women his scientific backing (Darwin 1871, vol. 2, 327).
- 36 As in his letter to Murray of 19.2.1879 [NLS], where in the same breath he abuses both the victorious Zulus in South Africa and the natives of Guiana. Concerning the latter he adds that he had 'lived among them for 20 years' and, interestingly, that he had 'fought against them in an insurrection'.
- 37 As recorded in the second edition of *Cities and Cemeteries*. See, e.g. Dennis 1878, vol. 1, 26 for niche tombs at Syracuse similar to those at Veii; vol. 1, 93 for tombs at Tocra similar to those in S. Etruria for their central skylight opening (which today are known in Italian as 'tombe a camera con fenditura superiore').
- 38 Oakley 1990, 84, no. 108, pl. 87b,c; similarly p. 85, no. 116, pl. 93b.
- 39 Letter to Newton, 12 April 1863 (BMA).
- 40 As recounted in Layard 1887.
- 41 Rhodes 1973, 82 (letter to Layard 21 July 1864).
- 42 Letter to Newton, 12 September 1864 (BMA).
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Letter to Panizzi, 10 June 1865 (BMA). However, in the vicinity of Cyrene he did excavate a fine marble Roman portrait head from a life-size statue of a bearded man: British Museum, 1867,0512.55 (see British Museum online database, Collection Online); Smith 1904, 177, no. 1951, pl. 19.
- 45 Kuban Group: Beazley 1986, 89, n. 59, pl. 99.2.
- 46 Letter to Panizzi, 7 March 1867 (BMA). The Panathenaic discovered by Dennis was in numerous fragments; of the six it is the tallest and the only one with Athena facing to right.
- 47 For the pottery and terracottas recovered at Tocra see Dennis 1870; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 4.
- 48 Letter to Mary, 1 March 1866 (BL).
- 49 Dennis 1870, 157.
- 50 Letter to Panizzi, 20 January 1866 (BMA).
- 51 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 410. Lawrence was quoting this passage already in 1932: Lawrence 1986, 125–6.
- 52 At Vulci this was first achieved by Stéphane Gsell in 1891, for whom see Potter 1998, 920.
- 53 Ridgway 1974, 191.
- 54 See Jenkins 2006, 51–3.
- 55 Rhodes 1973, 104.
- 56 Rhodes 1973, 97.
- 57 The plans can be found at the respective fronts of Falkener 1862 and Wood 1877. Wood has come in for some unfair criticism of late: see also Stoneman's (1987, 230) strangely perverse admiration for Falkener's placement of the Artemision, echoed by Challis (2008, 119). Falkener was convinced that the temple was to be found not to the north of the Magnesian Gate but to the west of it, in the port area. See Falkener 1862, 204–9.
- 58 Butler 1922, 10. The site is also known as Bin Bir Tepe ('1001 mounds').
- 59 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 414–15.
- 60 British Museum, 1889,1021.1 showing three horsemen with spears, and 1889,1021.2, showing three deer grazing (see British Museum

- online database, Collection Online): Butler 1922, 12; Perrot and Chipiez 1890, 903–5, figs 535, 536; Hanfmann and Ramage 1978, 156, nos 230, 231, figs. 400, 401.
- 61 Letter to Mary, 17.12.1868 [BL]. In a letter to Winter Jones (2.10.67 [BMA]) he writes of the purchase of two Snider rifles, for himself and his dragoman. With such ‘superior firearms nothing more thoroughly induces respect, and consequently security, from Orientals’. They provided ‘the means of defending not only myself but whatever art treasures I may have the fortune to discover.’
- 62 Butler 1922, 8.
- 63 British Museum 1936,0310.1 (see British Museum online database, Collection Online): Butler 1922, 7–8, ill. 2; Hanfmann and Ramage 1978, 166–7, no. 251, fig. 434; Burrell 2004: figs 34–6. For the imperial cult within the temple, see Burrell 2004, 103–9. To the cities of Asia Minor the granting of the cult by Rome was a matter of honour and status. For the recent discovery at Sagalassos of a comparable colossal head of Faustina, but of a less fleshy style and inferior workmanship, see Waelkens 2008.
- 64 Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.55. Cf. Dennis 1848, vol. 1, xxxvii.
- 65 Letter to Murray, 28 January 1888 (NLS).
- 66 He wrote to his sister Mary from Athens on 4 November 1867 (BL) and his letter is full of praise for the ancient city. He arrived at Benghazi 11 days later, as is clear from a letter sent from Smyrna to Winter Jones, of 8 October 1868 (BMA). Notice of the first letter is included in the Italian edition of Rhodes (1992, 227–8).
- 67 This was also acknowledged by the Trustees. For example, Newton, referring to the vases sent from Cyrenaica, ‘stated... that the manner in which Mr Dennis had employed the funds entrusted to him had been greatly to the advantage of the Museum. It was resolved that the special thanks of the Trustees be returned to Mr Dennis through the Foreign Office, with an expression of their high opinion of the services which he had rendered’ (BM Minutes, 12 May 1866).
- 68 Rhodes 1973, 91.
- 69 http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?people=134696.
- 70 Ainsley 1843.
- 71 As pointed out by Pallottino 1984, 10.
- 72 Haynes 1984. For the Mercareccia Tomb see Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 358–62. I am very grateful to Judith Swaddling for drawing my attention to several drawings and watercolours (see Fig. 13) executed by Dennis, featuring evocative views of monuments in Italy and Spain, which appeared on the market in May 2018 (see www.ottocento.co.uk/dennis).
- 73 I have seen the letter only in the form of a typewritten transcript (executed by George Ravenscroft Dennis?), which I follow verbatim except that the spelling of some names, notably Italian place names, proved too much for the copyist (e.g. Vetralla comes out as ‘Vetralto’) and these are corrected where necessary.
- 74 (J.) Dennis 1822 (copies in BL and DFP).
- 75 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 185. Cf. Gell (1834, vol. 1, 266) who had also been there: ‘The desolation is complete: Silvanus, instead of Ceres, is in complete possession of the soil.’ For more recent survey work on the site by the British School at Rome, see Jones 1962, 134–44; Keay *et al.* 2006.
- 76 Dennis 1878, vol. 1, 137.
- 77 Mori 1981.
- 78 Dennis 1848, vol. 2, 291–9; 1878, vol. 2, 263–9. Cf. Perkins and Walker 1990, 3, 11.
- 79 On the vases found at Vulci Gell wrote in 1832: ‘All the fine vases are Greek and those of black earth Etruscan’ (Clay 1976, 90). A generation earlier, Sir William Hamilton wrote in the preface to the first volume of his second collection of vases from Italy that they were ‘usually called Etruscan vases, but there now seems little doubt such monuments of Antiquity being truly Grecian’ (Tischbein 1791).
- 80 Hamilton Gray 1843, 296.
- 81 Dennis 1878, vol. 1, xci. The tone is even stronger in the first edition (1848, vol. 1, ciii): ‘the most abominable indecencies ever conceived’.
- 82 Perkins 2007, 20, no. 36.
- 83 Dennis 1878, vol. 2, fig. on p. 227; Swaddling 2014, fig. 9. See also Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume, p. 57.
- 84 Letter of 1848, Rhodes 1973, 54.
- 85 Pryce 1931, 199, figs 53, 54; Bonfante 1990, 44–5, no. 36.
- 86 Betham 1837, 47.
- 87 For an appreciation of Dennis’s descriptive powers see the preface by G. Della Fina to the first Italian edition of *Cities and Cemeteries* (published July 2015): Dennis 2015.
- 88 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 475.
- 89 Lawrence 1986, 156.
- 90 Fascinated by the variety of human-figure scenes on Volterrana urns, which drew from Dennis an emotional rather than a dryly academic response, Lawrence (1986, 147) writes: ‘Dennis is more alive [than scholars such as Ducati] to that which is alive’. On Lawrence’s intimate familiarity with *Cities and Cemeteries*, see Tracy 1977.
- 91 Lawrence 1986, 31.
- 92 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, 249.
- 93 Dennis 1848, vol. 1, xxi.
- 94 Anon. [G. Dennis] 1839; Dennis 1845; Dennis 1864.
- 95 Pallottino (1986, 15) is mistaken about him being consul in Rome.
- 96 Challis 2008, 54.

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Note on archive sources and their abbreviations

All letters mentioned for which no citation in Rhodes (1973) is given are unpublished. Letters to Henry Layard and Edward Falkener I have seen only through Rhodes’ transcriptions. Letters to the publisher John Murray are now in Edinburgh in the National Library of Scotland (NLS). There is no doubt much more in the British Museum archive (BMA) that I have not seen: Dennis wrote with regularity to the Keeper of Antiquities, Charles Newton, and to the Principal Librarian, Antonio Panizzi and his successor John Winter Jones. Mention of Dennis’s work is also frequent in the Minutes of the Trustees of the British Museum (BM Minutes). Finally, in addition to the letters and documents in the Dennis Family Papers (DFP), which are in the possession of Dennis’s brother’s descendant Judith Tunks, there is a clutch of letters to his sister Mary which is now in the British Library (BL) – folder no. 62114.

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Chapter 2

The Etruscan Academy of Cortona: Its Role in Establishing Modern Archaeology and the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Paolo Bruschetti

Abstract

From the time it was established in 1727, the Etruscan Academy of Cortona has promoted historical studies and research in various cultural fields, making use of important tools such as a museum and a library, to collect whatever could be useful for the improvement of its own activities. Thanks to such work new stimuli were given to historical research, based on objective data and research campaigns. Consequently the Etruscan Academy achieved new and vital development in the fields of conservation and the protection of cultural heritage – artistic, archaeological and literary – employing both original and innovative methods, which are still valid today.

Historical background

The history of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona is not only the history of a famous and venerable cultural institution, but also one of the political evolution of a state in pre-unitary Italy. Furthermore it reflects the development of philosophical thought and the concept of an ancient culture as the foundation for the advancement of a population. A brief overview of these elements follows as a background to understanding what the Etruscan Academy was and is. Let us begin with the political and social situation of 18th-century Tuscany. There had been a long period of dramatic demographic and economic crisis, partly due to an outbreak of epidemics and a succession of famines, as well as a lack of remedial measures that should have been implemented by the grand ducal government. These conditions continued from the first half of the 17th century to the beginning of the next, followed by a strong recovery, which led to an increase in farming production, the introduction of new crops, considerable demographic growth and a subsequent rise in migration to rural areas. These factors improved the economic situation and directly affected the agrarian aristocracy as well as the peasant population, regardless of their substantially underdeveloped condition.¹

The political-dynastic scenario was particularly complex: the Medici dynasty was heading into decline after Cosimo III, on his deathbed, left the throne to his son Gian Gastone, who was absolutely incapable of managing the Grand Duchy on his own, and had no heir due to a failed marriage. European dynasties, from the Bourbons of France to the Habsburgs of Austria, looked to the Tuscan state in the pursuit of a new balance of power; the Florentine patriciate, guided and supported by the intellectuals and dignitaries of central government, united around the school of Anton Maria Salvini and the research method of Filippo Buonarroti, hoping for a return to an oligarchic republic, which they justified with reference to the great impact that culture might have on politics, institutions and more widely on power. Accordingly, those defending Florentine ‘freedom’ looked to the glorification of the Etruscan past and the linguistic primacy of the city, on the one hand, and to the history of the transition from republic to principality, on the other, in order to legitimise their argument.²

These ideals were shaped by various developments; perhaps first and foremost was the rediscovery and



Figure 22 Arms of the Accademia Etrusca, tempera on wood, 1728

publication of *De Etruria regali*, a work that had been left as a manuscript for over a century before it was recovered and rewritten by Filippo Buonarroti, with the aid of Thomas Coke.³ Other notable publications followed, including the fourth edition of the controversial *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* and the *Museum Florentinum*, edited by Anton Francesco Gori. Lastly, a ‘Law of Nations’ chair was instituted at Pisa University, as a consequence of the development of a renewed secular European, bourgeois and rationalist consciousness, guided by Samuel Pufendorf.⁴ All of these initiatives, although diverse, stirred up public opinion in favour of maintaining political autonomy, but they did not prove to be effective against negotiations between the European powers, which concluded with the concession of the Grand Duchy to the Duke of Lorraine, Francis Stephen, consort of Maria Theresa of Spain, rather than assigning it to Don Carlos, the son of Philip V of Spain and Elisabeth Farnese, who was also a supporter of the established constitutional order. When Gian Gastone died on 9 July 1737, Francis became the Grand Duke. He came to Florence only later, but nonetheless inspired great appreciation among the city’s inhabitants on account of his culture and dependability, although indeed many reasons for scepticism remained.

The Etruscan Academy

We now turn to the topic of the Etruscan Academy (**Fig. 22**), which is the focus of this chapter. It is clear that its origin and development should be seen not simply as the exercise of a group of local intellectuals, which aimed at pursuing studies of literature or history – the function of many academies and literary circles established widely throughout the major cities in Italy. This Academy, significantly, was part of the complex political-cultural mechanism that was set up to try and

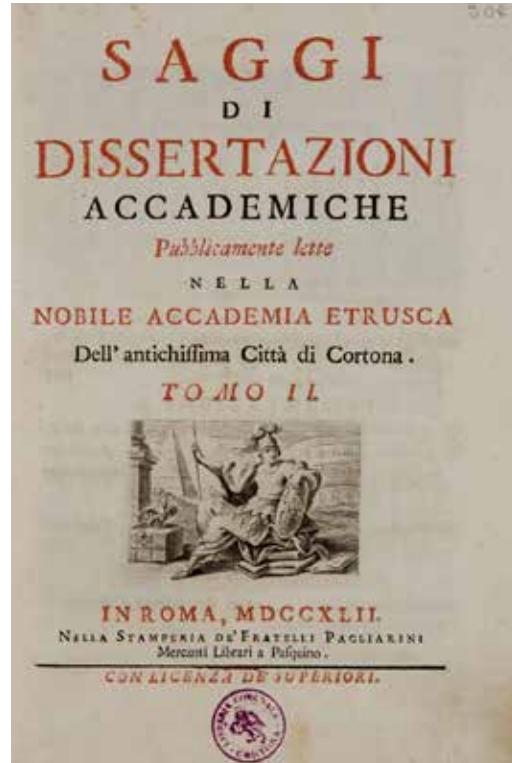


Figure 23 *Saggi di dissertazioni*, vol. II, 1742

contain the damage that derived from the extinction of a dynasty and the transfer of its power to foreign rule. This explains why many individuals, who were connected in various ways to the dynasties or influential members of other spheres of European power, were called upon to support the cause by serving as *luchmons* (Etruscan for *Lucumones*, or Presidents) for one year. The title itself – that of the chief Etruscan magistrate – was strategically chosen to connect the ancient population of Tuscany with the contemporary hope of the continued autonomy of its current inhabitants; a connection clearly made well before the end of the principality of Gian Gastone and the effective extinction of the Medici house. The connection between the Cortonese Academy and the publication of *De Etruria regali* between 1720 and 1726, strongly promoted by Filippo Buonarroti (see Sarti, Hansson and Della Fina in this volume) is also obvious. This archaeologist, collector and senator of the Florentine state was appointed by the Grand Duke to various public offices and he was also a scholar of the Accademia della Crusca, set up to study and preserve the Italian language.⁵ Thus a kind of ideal continuity between the Etruscan tradition and the Medici dynasty was established, which explains the great vitality and spirit of initiative encapsulated by an institution founded in a small provincial city, quite poor in cultural – let alone economic – resources, and certainly not at the front line of the political world. One must also appreciate the human and economic efforts that made it possible for the Academy to undertake such an ambitious publishing programme, with particular focus on the *Saggi di dissertazioni* (**Fig. 23**). The first of the volumes came out as early as 1735 with a dedication to the Grand Duke Gian Gastone, only eight years after the beginning of the fellowship, at a time when it was certainly not easy to promote culturally wide-ranging printed works. This explains the opening words of



Figure 24 Marble portrait of Marcello Venuti

the well-known Paragraph VI of *Deliberazioni e Statuti* (Deliberations and Statutes):

as anything that can benefit Man ... must not be limited to an Academy or a City, anything that is positive and brings benefit must be able to expand everywhere culture and art are found, therefore, for the good of the public, throughout Tuscany and beyond, there must be the possibility to choose Noble men, of singular talent and supporters of our studies⁶

The desire to open this academic initiative to everyone who held dear the fate of *La Repubblica Letteraria* is therefore evident, but of greatest importance was the fate of the civil state that might support these interests. It was essentially a strategic manifesto that gave great impetus to the evolution of that culture, as well as a political act in favour of the preservation of Tuscan autonomy.

The fame of the Cortonese institution rapidly spread across Europe due to all of these elements, but especially because of the motivation of the Academy in relation to Tuscan culture and the close connection it had with the political-dynastic world through its Luchmons, with positive effects also evident on a local scale. Here the Academy could count on the presence of high level intellectual personalities, culturally groomed in the Florentine and Pisan milieus and able to propose a new image of erudition as an instrument that supported the improvement of the community, according to its vision of the Alexandrian *mouseion*, by which, under the guidance of the gods, notions and concepts were taught, and above all the principles of culture were developed. It was the Venuti brothers, Marcello and Ridolfino (Fig. 24), who used an already widespread model to promote the transformation of the old academic formula into a new scheme that considered cultural precedents as central to the social and political debate of the Grand

Duchy.⁷ They exploited knowledge derived from association with the most reputable dignitaries of Tuscan society, and they took inspiration from the collections of books, natural phenomena, archaeological artefacts and works of art collected in Rome by their uncle Onofrio Baldelli, bequeathed to them for the establishment of a public collection in Cortona.⁸ A select gathering of intellectuals and ecclesiastics living in the city developed around them, all enthusiastic about doing something to improve the social status of an otherwise unfavoured population. They therefore created the conditions to develop a new way of processing cultural precedents according to the beneficial bearing that they would have on the political-dynastic situation at the beginning of the 18th century.

In Cortona, based on a principle of renewed academic spirit, a new approach to humanistic culture was developed, whose starting point was the tools with which a scholar needed to equip himself in order to proceed with his activity; the principles are contained in the very Paragraph VI of *Deliberazioni e Statuti* referred to above. The legacy of Onofrio Baldelli inspired the gradual enrichment of the library and the museum, making these central to cultural activity; scholars were therefore encouraged to donate books or works of art which, when brought together, created a basis for increasingly sophisticated and extensive investigations and research, favouring local history, focusing on ancient relics and Etruscan ones in particular, developing new lines of awareness based on data provided by archaeology. This was an absolutely new and very modern approach to research, which resulted in a new, scientifically organised discipline that was initially given the name 'etruscheria', a term which has for us a vaguely pejorative connotation. However, in effect, modern archaeology started here at Cortona, particularly Etruscology, regardless of the limitations deriving from a body of knowledge that was as yet very partial and insufficient.⁹

The museum

Such an eminent institution came to be established as follows: active locally, its objectives were the study and preservation of the traditions and history of Cortona, with an eye to a broader view of Italian history, as well as general participation in the debate on the function of culture in the global political context. Among the resources that scholars could use to achieve their aims, the mainstays were the museum and the library (Fig. 25), set up in the rooms of Palazzo Casali, of which use was granted by Grand Duke Gian Gastone from the beginning of the Academy's activities in 1727. In addition many initiatives were implemented to link the institute's activities more closely to the life of the city, starting with cultural events organised by Marcello Venuti and held regularly at the Academy or at the homes of individual members. On these occasions there were discussions, always at a very elevated level, of various problems or topics inspired by donations, purchases, visits, or by any event that was considered leverage for more extensive research; the proceedings were duly recorded in a handwritten log, which in their entirety comprise the collection of *Notti Coritane*, a real gold mine of investigations and studies, often of high calibre and often unexplored.



Figure 25 The library in the museum of the Etruscan Academy, 18th century

They are essential for reconstructing the history of 18th-century Cortonese culture. By browsing briefly through the volumes one has the impression of multi-faceted and highly intense cultural activity which placed no limits on the topics that were examined, making much use of current investigation and seeking out new solutions.

Among the most frequent topics were books and manuscripts, donated and exhibited archaeological artefacts and works of art, many of which prompted interesting reflections. Through analysis of the individual pages, it is often possible to re-construct the history of the materials that still, to this day, comprise the museum and bibliographic collection of the Academy, using an approach that certainly foreshadowed modern systematic classification. This clearly translated into a valid mode of learning about and protecting cultural heritage, at a time when this type of procedure was in its early stages and used only periodically. The description and classification of the academic collections soon became a complement to the collection, which, for the first two centuries of its existence, suffered increasingly from lack of space. The rooms donated by Gian Gastone de' Medici on the top floor of Palazzo Casali were increasingly full of books and materials, leading to great difficulty in access and rational arrangement. Nonetheless, the collections enjoyed great patronage and were visited by both scholars and ordinary members of the public. From the beginning, in fact, the underlying principle of the academic collections was that of total visibility and public access for everyone who wished to increase their knowledge by visiting the collections: today we can describe this as a *social function*, characterised by a desire to share every object with the public. At the time the Academy was established this innovation was cutting edge and completely unprecedented in the cultural sphere.¹⁰

The close connection between the Academy and the city was expressed in the 1700s by the celebration of *feste accademiche* (academic celebrations), occasions when poetry

was read or literary contests were held, which concluded with music, dancing and galas open to the public – obviously only to those who could afford such participation – with the city's civil and religious authorities in attendance. The decoration of the buildings, banquets and firework displays, together with the presence of the finest nobility, were intended for the enjoyment and appreciation of the entire population, even when basic daily life was problematic. This also helped to reinforce the idea that the Academy belonged to everyone, as was its intent.¹¹

As a result, the museum and library became the focal point of both the city and its environs. At a time when the discovery of archaeological remains was becoming more frequent, and their historical, as well as monetary, value was beginning to be recognised, and in a phase of increasing cultural awareness, finds were routinely handed over to the Academy with the firm belief that it was not only possible to preserve them there – which had not been a main consideration up until now – but that the donor would be acknowledged, which might bring them in turn legitimate satisfaction. A measurement of the seriousness of the scholars' intentions are the handwritten catalogues of the collections, which were created for various projects and updated over time with entries for new acquisitions. A motion was also passed regarding access and custodianship of the library and museum, with specific descriptions of the duties of the director of these facilities, and in 1750 the first catalogue of the Academy's entire collection and the main private collections in the city was printed (Fig. 26). In addition to being a flagship example of the Academy's cultural intent it also became an instrument of knowledge and promotion, to the outside world, of the Academy's activities. The scholars were invited via circulation of a notice to purchase the catalogue as a demonstration of their loyalty to their institution.¹²

The rich activity of the Academy, and especially its international dimension, was achieved over long years of

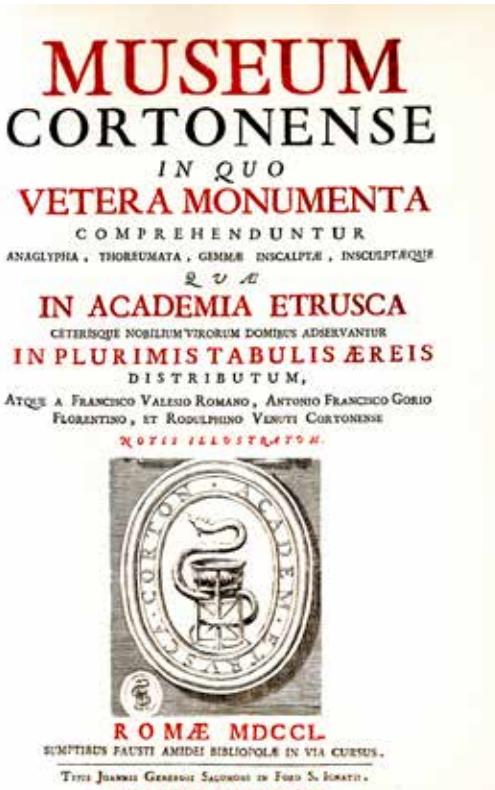


Figure 26 *Museum Cortonense*, the Museum's first catalogue, 1750

study and publication, and through the reputation of its Luchmons, who enabled its continuing success even after the demise of its founders and most skilful organisers. The institution, unlike many similar cultural experiments, also survived the difficult years at the end of the 18th century, marked by the revolutionary spirit inspired by France and by the following onset of the Napoleonic wars, and also the first half of the 19th century which, for Italy, represented the vanquishing of freedom, with the unification of the various small regional states into the Kingdom of Italy, under the Savoyard Piedmont dynasty. This was the period when the major European 'imperial' museums were being established and developed, which were rich in archaeological objects and works of art collected from various regions, especially the Mediterranean. Impressive collections were set up, embellished with the most beautiful and original masterpieces of all time; unfortunately, however, in the midst of this, the connection with the areas from which the materials originated, and which alone could explain their existence, was frequently neglected. This did not happen in Cortona: anything that was found or studied locally was immediately taken note of or passed to the museum or library, therefore creating a tight cultural bond within the area. This remains today one of the cornerstones of the study of art and archaeology, defining the history of humankind and its works. For example, consider the commitment of the scholars of the mid-1800s, involved in obtaining ownership of the very famous Etruscan bronze lamp (**Fig. 27**), or the long and costly legal action that led to the acquisition of the *Musa Polimnia*; or at the end of the century, taking on the bequest to the city of the important Egyptian collection, previously owned by a Bishop of Cortona, collected during his pastoral term in the Middle East; or, lastly, the donation



Figure 27 Etruscan bronze lamp, 4th century BC. Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona

by Gino Severini, one of the founders of the futurist movement, to his native city of a series of contemporary works of art.¹³

Today the cultural function of the Etruscan Academy is essentially the same as it was in the beginning: preservation remains a central theme, as does the gradual accumulation of material of regional heritage, which continues to be accessible to the public. Obviously management methods and responsibilities have changed, and these are now shared jointly with public institutions, first and foremost the Municipality of Cortona, followed by the Regional government and the Superintendency; with the beginning of the new millennium the collections of the museum have grown considerably, thanks to archaeological digs underway in the area, from which the artefacts are immediately conserved and then sent to the museum. The library, also enriched with acquisitions and publications received in exchange, is benefiting from the evolution of data management and online access; lastly the archaeological park, which unites most of the features of archaeological interest, undoubtedly highlights the great developments of the overall cultural project. The contribution that publications issued directly by the Academy provide to studies through theme-related series, magazines and specialised works is increasingly important, not only relating to archaeology and ancient history, but to local culture in general. Lastly, let us not forget the role of the exhibitions, both international as well as focused on specific themes of local culture and history. Thanks to these, the MAEC (Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona) and the Academy are increasingly taking on the role of ambassadors of the city of Cortona, echoing their original function when cultural activity was available only to the minority, and serving as an instrument to continuously improve society. Culture may not save the world from the dramatic condition it is in today, but it can play its part. Indeed, a population that knows its history and its own

capabilities can never be enslaved or used to serve the will of any master, whether domestic or foreign.

Notes

- 1 Biagiotti 2007.
 - 2 Barocchi and Gallo 1985; Gallo 1986.
 - 3 This subject was a main focus of the exhibition held at Cortona in 2014, *Seduzione Etrusca. Dai segreti di Holkham Hall alle meraviglie del British Museum*. For the catalogue see Bruschetti *et al.* 2014.
 - 4 Welzel 1993.
 - 5 Alfieri *et al.* 1985.
 - 6 ‘perché tutto ciò che può arrecare gioamento agli Uomini ... non deve restringersi o nelle angustie di una Accademia o di una Città, ma farne partecipe, se possibile, ogni luogo ove non sono impediti di pervenire le buone lettere, quindi è che a pubblica utilità della Toscana tutta, vogliamo che da quella e da altronde ancora scegliere si possano Uomini nobili, di singolar talento ed amanti degli studi nostri’ (Capo VI delle Deliberazioni e Statuti dell’Accademia Etrusca).
 - 7 ‘Nelle Università di Firenze e di Pisa si erano formati gli intellettuali che sostenevano l’autonomia della Toscana’; Barocchi and Gallo 1985.
 - 8 Guerrieri *et al.* 1978, 7–13.
 - 9 Cristofani 1983.
 - 10 Bruschetti 1997.
 - 11 di Lorenzo and Codini 1985.
 - 12 Bruschetti 1997, 265–6.
 - 13 Bruschetti and Giulierini 2008.
- Bibliography**
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Chapter 3

The Re-use of Etruscan Artefacts from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century

Giovannangelo Camporeale

Abstract

The re-use of Etruscan artefacts has been a widespread phenomenon from antiquity to the modern day and the process inevitably involves a re-evaluation of the original objects. In addition to being exhibited in a number of different ways, these ancient objects were also destined for both utilitarian and base purposes; examples of the former are urns that have been turned into vases for basil, and of the latter, sculptures reduced to fragments to create paving for streets, and decorated tombstones used as building materials or transformed into curbstones or seats in farmyards. This re-employment in all its various applications has depended upon the cultural level of the social context in which these practices have taken place.¹

Information about Etruscan civilisation (**Fig. 28**) has come to us via archaeological excavations, art and artefacts, historical and literary sources as well as through the traditions of other civilisations that have developed over the centuries, essentially but not exclusively within the Italian peninsula. The reception of Etruscan culture over time has varied, but as far as re-use is concerned we find re-employment of the original artefacts, their imitation, re-working and incorporation into other objects or buildings. In this chapter I will focus on the re-use of Etruscan artefacts in different cultural environments. The period under consideration is from antiquity through to the early years of the 20th century, when, as we shall see, cultural heritage laws insisted that all new finds became the property of the state and there was far less opportunity for the repurposing of ancient artefacts. The area in question is principally northern Etruria, where most archaeological finds were discovered up to the end of 18th century.

Etruscan artefacts and customs were re-used and re-introduced even by the Etruscans themselves. This obviously happened at a later date than when they were first used. The process of re-using an artefact or an ancient tradition can be understood as follows: the artefact was valued for its aesthetic merit and as a work of art, but as time passed it came to be seen in a new context and was put to new purpose. For the sake of conciseness, I cannot include all the evidence relating to this subject, and so I shall limit myself to specific examples that illustrate forms of re-use. I shall consider them chronologically, according to when objects were re-used. Examining re-use is important because it demonstrates the direct means by which the Etruscan world impacted upon contemporary and later cultures. From the outset it is necessary to establish a basic premise: the re-use of artefacts and the re-introduction of traditions are inextricably linked to the place, time and culture of the environment that adopts them. They are also inextricably linked to the person who creates these changes or their recipient, whether the recipient is the general public or an individual. It is therefore appropriate to examine each of these various cases individually.

Ancient approaches to Etruscan culture

Archaeological finds, before it became common practice to conserve them in museums or collections, were considered



Figure 28 Map of Etruria. Drawn by Kate Morton, British Museum

to be the property of the finder, or dealer, to use in whichever way they saw fit. The literary sources are explicit in this regard. As far back as the 1st century BC Suetonius (*Div. Jul.* LXXXI 1) tells us that Roman settlers sent to Capua plundered the tombs of earlier ages in order to build their homes; they worked eagerly, often finding ancient vases readily available. In the 6th century AD Cassiodorus (*Var. IV* 34) stated that treasures found in tombs could be taken freely because they no longer had an owner.

The most common instance of re-use in the ancient world concerned the recycling of bronze, melting down large statues or artefacts that were no longer in favour or in use in order to manufacture other products (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XXXIV 12, 27; 14, 30). It is possible that this is what happened to the 2,000 bronze statues the Romans took from Volsinii, when they destroyed it in 264 BC (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XXXIV 16, 34).² Perhaps among these there was the statue of Vertumnus, which according to classical sources was placed at the entrance to the Etruscan quarter in Rome and originated from Volsinii (Prop. IV 2, 3–4). Etruria was rich in the metals used to produce bronze and it manufactured bronzes that were widely exported to various parts of the Mediterranean and trans-Alpine Europe.³ Evidence of this is found in the written sources (Crit. ap. Athen. I XXVIIIB; Pher., *Kratap.* ap. Athen. XV 700C; Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XXXIV 16, 34). Unfortunately, only a small number of large bronze statues of Etruscan origin have survived. Small Etruscan bronze figures were also sought by Roman collectors (Horace, *Epist.* II 2, 180–3): their original and customary use as votive offerings inside a sanctuary was abandoned, and they were turned into decorative pieces for the home. The melting down and recycling of bronzes presupposes a basic

purpose, aimed at recovering the value of the materials used in the production of the artefact. The use of bronzes as decorative pieces for the home presupposes a more intellectual purpose which reflects cultural values. Therefore one finds already evident in the ancient world two clearly defined strands: recycling and re-use for another purpose. One is practical and materialistic and the other reflects cultural values and a high esteem for the object in question. These strands formed the basis of customs and practice in later eras.

From its very beginning the history of Rome clearly indicates an acceptance of the Etruscan world within the Roman sphere. There are a number of instances providing evidence of this. The city of Rome was founded around the middle of the 8th century BC, *Etrusco more*, that is, 'by Etruscan custom' (Plutarch, *Rom.* XI 1–4), and according to instructions given by expert 'urbanists' summoned by Romulus from Etruria for the purpose of consulting the *libri rituales* (Paul. Fest., pp. 358–9 L). During the time of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus, the first Etruscan king of Rome, the Etruscan insignia of power were introduced: the bundles of rods held by the lictors, the curule seat, the gown adorned with purple and the trumpet.⁴ Of course these traditions were adopted into official Roman culture at a time much later than their inception. We understand this to be recognition of the superiority of the Etruscan world over that of the Roman world and the acknowledgement of a debt of gratitude. Certain Etruscan practices also remained in high esteem, as can be seen in the tradition of sending young Romans to Caere to learn the *litterae* (Liv. IX 36, 3) or to Etruria to learn the fundamental principles of haruspicy (Cicero, *De div.* I 41, 92; Val. Max. I 1b; Tacitus, *Ann.* XI 15, 1). These were ancient Etruscan traditions,



Figure 29 Canopic urn from Dolciano, bronze vase 7th century bc, clay head 6th century bc. Archaeological Museum, Chiusi (su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo – Polo Museale della Toscana – Firenze)

used in Rome but also appreciated by Roman society. It is important to emphasise that haruspicy in Imperial Rome was performed by Etruscans or by those who had studied in Etruscan schools. This became a form of resistance, sustained by public authority, through the Emperor, the Senate and other authorities, against Christianity, which was becoming more and more widespread.⁵ It was a manifestation of Etruscan practice connected by time and the environment in which it was performed.

In Etruria it was not unusual for Archaic Etruscan monuments to be re-used during the Archaic, Hellenistic and Roman periods for purposes similar to their original use. The well-known canopic urn from Dolciano (Chiusi) consists of a bronze vase from the second half of the 7th century, used as an ash urn, and a clay human head from the 6th century, used as its lid (**Fig. 29**); the artefact was placed on a throne of bronze sheet decorated with embossed and engraved motifs (real and fantastic animals, palms) clearly taken from the Etruscan orientalising repertoire. The combination of pieces of different dates might be explained by the re-use of the ash urn, which may previously have contained the ashes of an ancestor of the deceased, with the latter's cremated remains being inserted when the clay head was added.⁶

The Caeretan panels of the Campana series in the Louvre (numbers 1–5), which come from a tomb in the necropolis of Banditaccia dated to the third quarter of the 6th century bc, appear to have been cleanly cut, some straight and some slightly curved, apparently in order to fit

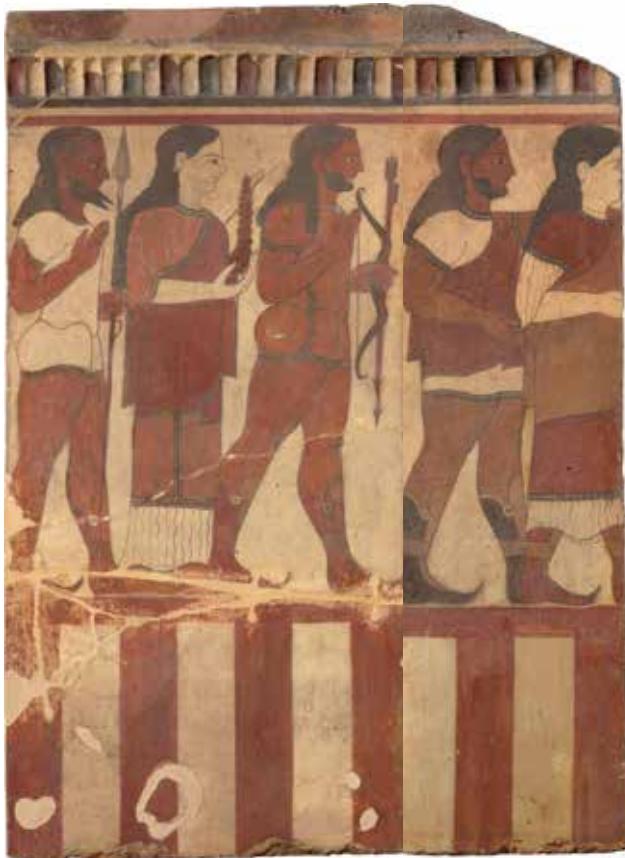


Figure 30 Campana panels from Caere, 6th century bc. Musée du Louvre, Paris, CP 6624–5, S4031, S4035. Photo © Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Hervé Lewandowski

them into the sloping parts of the burial chamber (**Fig. 30**). These cuts have interfered with the decorative elements – an unlikely occurrence if the panels had been commissioned specifically for the tomb in which they were found. Furthermore, the images in the individual panels, aside from possible alterations made by 19th-century restorers, appear as if they were *disiecta membra* from one or more scenes. The nature of the subject matter meant that it could only be truly understood when the panels were seen together and in their correct order,⁷ which can now only be conjectured due to their current fragmentary state. This is one of several cases where selected panels, which were part of an original series, have been re-used to adorn the walls of burial chambers. In these cases the panels served an ornamental function irrespective of the significance of the original subject matter. It is clear that the original purpose of a decorated object (within a tomb, a house or a temple) would have had a relationship to the mythological representation depicted upon it, which likely gave the whole a symbolic significance. The re-use of these objects in another tomb was one way to increase that tomb's prestige, as well as preserving both the 'familiar' aspects and those with historical significance. We must therefore deduce that the painted object was considered to be of more value than the content of its depictions. The rarity, the value and the cultural significance of these objects elevated the status of the family who owned the tomb to that of elite society.

Also relevant in this context are two round tombstones made of travertine from Chiusi, dating from the late Archaic



Figure 31 Hypogeum of the Volumni,
necropolis of Palazzone, Perugia. Polo
Museale dell'Umbria

or sub-Archaic period, which were re-used in the Hellenistic period. Their respective inscriptions provide evidence of this due to their paleographic characters, abbreviated first names, the *tau* instead of *theta* and the use of the 'Vornamengentilicum'.⁸ In another example a serpentine memorial from Orvieto of the sub-Archaic period has a Latin inscription.⁹

There are also cases of tombs that have been re-opened a few centuries later in order to accommodate new burials. Clearly this would have been a precise and deliberate decision by the owners of the tombs in order to enhance and underline the noble status of the families. Further examples of the re-use of tombs come from the tumuli tombs of Camucia and Sodo, at Cortona, built and used between the late 7th and early 6th centuries BC. The mounds were re-opened and re-used in the Hellenistic period.¹⁰ Another example is the hypogeum of the Volumni in Perugia, built and used towards the end of the 3rd century BC and re-opened and re-used in the Augustan age (Fig. 31).¹¹ Dating

to the same period one also finds a marble urn from Luni which has bi-lingual inscriptions ('P[ublius] Volumnius A[uli] f[ilius] Violens Cafatia natus / pup[li] velimna au[les] Cahat[i]l'),¹² and which has been considered important due to its location, in a chamber next to urns from an earlier period (Fig. 32a–b),¹³ implying that the positioning gave a sense of continuity. The bilingual inscription is not, as often, a conversion of an Etruscan text into Latin, but a conversion of a Latin text into Etruscan written in the Etruscan alphabet.¹⁴

A similar phenomenon is found in a temple: the tripartite building at Fiesole – the oldest parts most probably dating from the Archaic period – was rebuilt in the 3rd century BC and then again in the Augustan period,¹⁵ each time adhering to the plan originally set out according to the *Etrusca disciplina*. This re-use therefore took heed of the original location and plan which were determined according to religious criteria. It occurred during the period from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD, when the Roman world, or

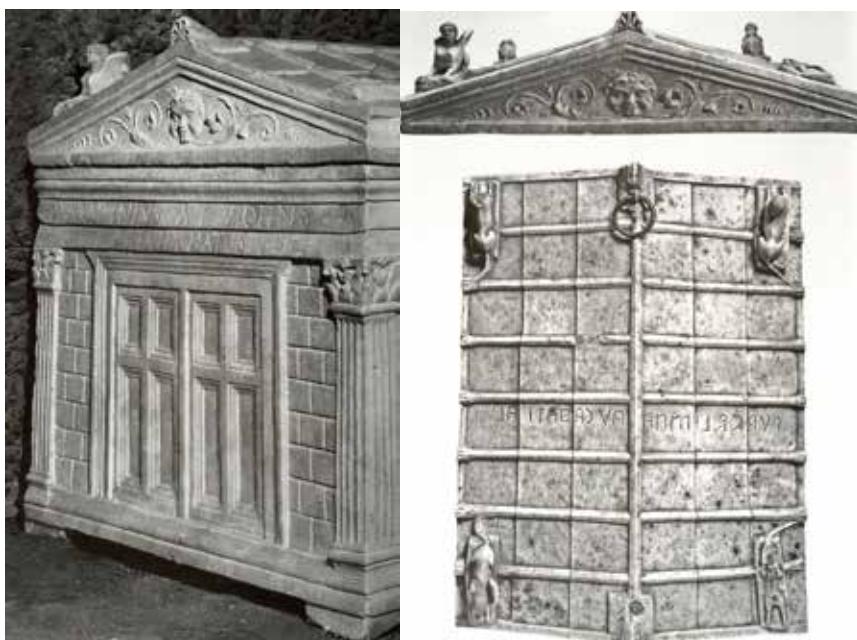


Figure 32a–b Roman urn and lid of Publius Volumnius from the hypogeum of the Volumni,
necropolis of Palazzone, Perugia. Polo
Museale dell'Umbria



Figure 33 Porta Bifora, Cortona (after Fortunelli 2005)

the Romanised world, was trying to recover many aspects of Etruscan culture which were by then considered ancient history.¹⁶ Similarly, in the time of Vespasian, the Capitol temple was restored following the instructions of the haruspices (*Tacitus, Hist. IV* 53).

There is also evidence of the re-use of important monuments simply as construction materials. One example is a stone panel with a dedicatory inscription, dating from the beginning of the 2nd century BC, from a sanctuary complex on the acropolis at Populonia. It was originally a pedestal for a votive offering and was later re-carved for use in a different structure within the same sacred area.¹⁷

During late antiquity and the early medieval period important Etruscan sites were re-occupied, having earlier been destroyed during the wars with the Romans or abandoned when their inhabitants were transferred to more rural areas. The situation was stable until their safety was threatened by barbarian populations: they had no central government such as that of the Roman Empire, which meant they had no means of defending themselves against barbarian invasion. The site of Orvieto (*Velzna* in Etruscan times and *Volsinii* in Latin) had been destroyed by the Romans in 264 BC. It was then re-occupied in the 6th century AD and took the new name of *Urbs Vetus*.¹⁸ The site of Civita Castellana, previously known as *Falerii Veteres*, was re-occupied during the 8th century AD.¹⁹

Surviving Etruscan city walls were often used as foundations for walls of the medieval (and Renaissance) period. Important examples are found in Perugia, Cortona and Volterra. The same can be said for the gateways which were an integral part of the city walls (Fig. 33).²⁰ Etruscan manufacture can be easily identified by the large dimensions of the stones used in their construction (their width can sometimes measure over 1m and the height 50cm), their irregular shapes and the absence of mortar. In later periods the stones were smaller in size and of regular shape (parallelepiped), or were actually bricks, joined with mortar. This information should also be considered in the historical context of the period following AD 1000, the time of the Comunes, an autonomous form of citizen government, resulting in states having to defend their own territory from the possible attacks by others. This is precisely what had happened during the Etruscan period, during which time the cities were political-administrative centres enjoying extensive autonomy.

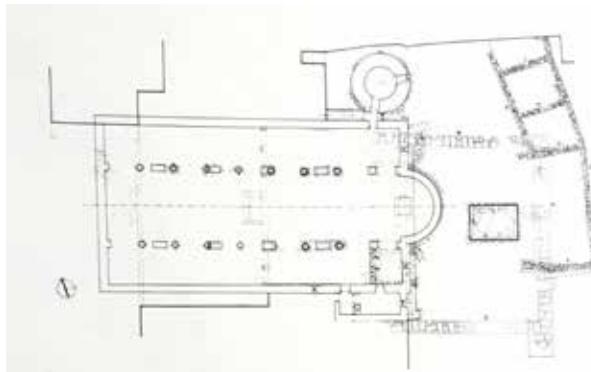


Figure 34 Romanesque church and Etruscan temple, Pieve a Socana (after Bocci Pacini and Zamarchi Grassi 1985)

The medieval period

Romanesque churches were sometimes built in areas considered sacred by the Etruscans. These areas were easily identified by their walls and votive deposits. Examples are found at Santa Maria dell'Acqua in Impruneta (FI)²¹ and at Sant'Antonino in Socana (AR) (Fig. 34).²² These churches are located at key points on the routes that went from Maremma to Florence and from the mid-Tiber valley, through Casentino, to Romagna. We can therefore deduce that the medieval roads followed the line of Etruscan ones, and the various stops on these routes retained a religious significance (and some also retained a commercial role).²³ There is a good example of this in the neighbouring Faliscan territory, namely the Cistercian abbey built in the 13th century AD at *Falerii Novi* and located next to the Via Cassia.²⁴

When bishops held power in 12th-century Volterra, Etruscan urns retained the same function that they had had in the Etruscan world, and were reserved for the relics of illustrious individuals, in this case saints, such as Clemente (Fig. 35), Attinia (Fig. 36) and Cirino.²⁵ An alabaster urn made in a workshop in Volterra became the reliquary of San Felice. It was removed from an altar in the Cathedral of Pistoia in 1414 during restoration works.²⁶ It is interesting to note that the Pagan origins of the urns were not considered an impediment when they were re-used in a Christian context. Their significance lay in their antiquity, which was seen to honour the relics of the saints they contained, and which conferred prestige upon the whole proceedings. The Etruscan past was becoming an important cultural reference in Tuscany, 'Tuscia Longobarda', where Roman antiquity did not have the same profound influence over local culture



Figure 35 (left) Urn of St Clemente.
Museo Etrusco Guarnacci, Volterra

Figure 36 (right) Urn of St Attinia. Museo
Etrusco Guarnacci, Volterra

that it had in neighbouring Tuscia Romana, or northern Latium.

During the late Middle Ages it was not unusual for Etruscan sculptures to be re-used as building materials in the construction of churches and palaces. Late Archaic stelai and tomb markers (*cippi*) belonging to a series from Fiesole have been found set into the walls of the church of San Tommaso in the Mercato Vecchio (which today is the Piazza della Repubblica) (Fig. 37a–b), and in Santa Maria a Peretola, both in Florence,²⁷ in the Palazzo dei Vescovi and in the convent of San Mercuriale in Pistoia,²⁸ and in a tower of the Medicean villa of Croce al Trebbio in Commune San Piero a Sieve (FI).²⁹ Urns from workshops in Volterra, or from local workshops which copied Volterranean models, were used in the building of the churches of San Leonardo in Artimino (PO)³⁰ and San Biagio in Lecore-Signa (Fig. 38).³¹ Another urn originating from a Perugian workshop was found within the walls of a sanctuary recently brought to light in the area of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Perugia.³² It is difficult to say whether these sculptures would have had roles other than being used as building material.

In the examples found at Pistoia, which were used in the fabric of cellars, the decoration was already chiselled and worn away in places, indicating that perhaps this was not their first re-use. It is possible that these objects were placed within various structures in order to interrupt the monotony of a row of plain blocks and to serve as decorative features.

Given the fate of other blocks of what was considered largely communal stone, it is plausible that these objects

were re-used in the places where they had been found. This may have been the case with the *cippus* set into the façade of the Romanesque church of San Tommaso in Florence; during the Villanovan³³ and possibly also the Archaic period³⁴ the area had been a necropolis. Also worth noting is the use of a *cippus* from the Fiesole series that had been modified into a curbstone and had been placed in front of the portico of the church in Artimino mentioned above.³⁵ In these examples Etruscan artefacts, at least those which remained in full view, were re-used in such a way that they could be admired by the observer. The preservation of the decoration suggests that their antiquity and survival were revered and, as a result, conferred prestige upon the building into which they had been incorporated. These artefacts have also been taken into consideration regarding other issues such as the westward spread of sculptures from Fiesole or the diffusion of urns and the models from Volterra towards the north-east.³⁶

Between the end of the 13th century and the 15th century scholars were primarily interested in Greek and Roman antiquity. In Tuscany this interest also extended to the Etruscans, though to a lesser degree. Inscriptions, gems and sculptures were very much sought after and this led to the formation of the first collections of antiquities.³⁷ Substantial finds were made in Volterra and its surroundings and it is therefore not surprising that by the early 16th century a kind of open-air museum was set up in a city street. This is what Leandro Alberti says in his *Descrittione di tutta Italia* (Bologna 1550, 48), in which he quotes the works of Zaccaria Zacchi (1474–1544), naturalist and sculptor:

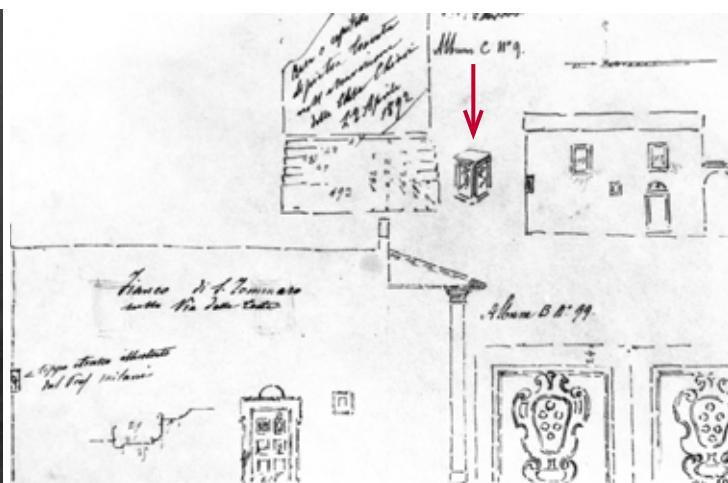


Figure 37a–b Cippus from
the church of St Tomaso.
Piazza del Mercato Vecchio.
Archive of Soprintendenza
Archeologica della Toscana,
Florence National
Archaeological Museum,
Polo Museale della Toscana

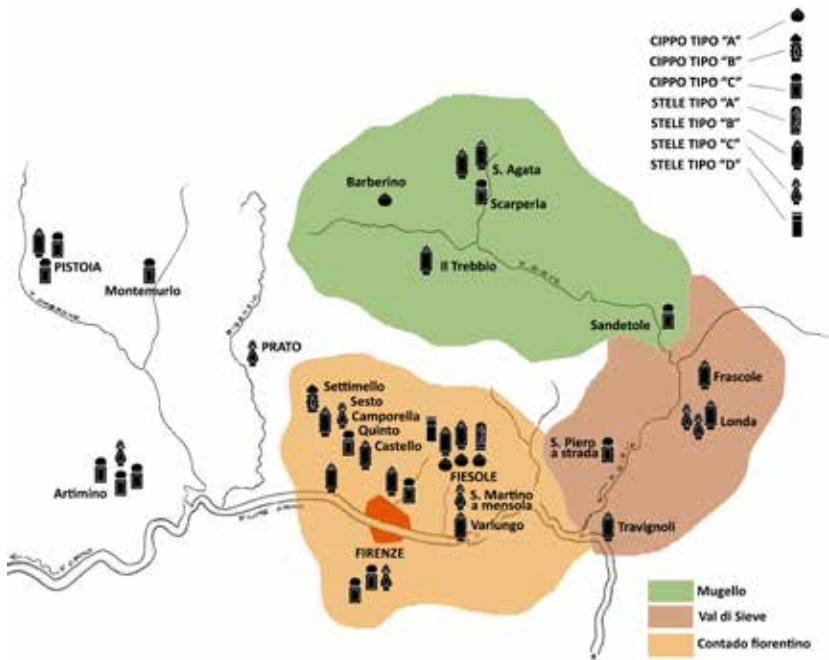


Figure 38 Map of diffusion of the Etruscan stelai and cippi (tomb markers) from Fiesole (from Cappuccini et al. 2009; reproduced with permission of the author)

Veggansi da ogni lato di essa [Volterra] antichissime statue di marmo quali intiere, quali spezzate & quali in un modo & e quali in un altro [...]. E nella uia di Corso Martio uedesì una statua di Marte [...]. Con alcune urne di alabastro con grand'arteficio historiate, oue si ueggono alcune lettere, da nessuno conosciute, benche dicono molti essere quelle Hetrusce. Similmente giace quiui una Statua di marmo rappresentante una donna uestita, & tenendo nelle braccia un fanciullino fasciato, hauendo in una delle larghe maneghe della ueste, sotlimente intagliato, alcune lettere Hetrusce, come si dice [Figs 39–40]. Altri assai Epitaffi di tal lettere [...] si scorgono, che sarei molto lungo in descriverli, per li quali chiaramente si può conoscere l'antichità della Città.³⁸

On all sides of her [Volterra] very ancient statues of marble are seen, some whole, some broken, and in such a way and in another [...]. And in the street Corso Martio one sees a statue of Mars [...]. With some alabaster urns of great decorative skill/inventiveness, where some letters can be seen, known by none although many say them to be Etruscan. Similarly, lying here a

marble statue representing a robed woman, holding in her arms a swaddled baby and, as they say, on one of the large sleeves of her dress, some lightly inscribed Etruscan letters [Figs 39–40]. Indeed other epitaphs of such letters [...] appear, that I would take a very long time to describe, through which the antiquity of the City can clearly be understood.

There are further examples from Volterra of the re-use of Etruscan artefacts, especially urns. In the necropolis of Portone a patrician villa belonging to the Franceschini family had its exterior faced with the fronts of alabaster urns, with the villa subsequently known as the House of the Marbles. The villa was preserved up until the 18th century:

extrinseci domus parietes, quasi indices magnae copiae sepulcrorum in his agris latentium, consertis marmoreis urnis Etruscis undique maxima ex parte vestiuntur: quarum sculpturas [...] iniuria temporum delevit³⁹

The external walls, almost to indicate the great number of burials hidden in those fields, are covered on every side, for the



Figures 39–40 The so-called *Kourotrophos Maffei*, an Etruscan marble statue of a nursing mother, with a long votive inscription incised along the right arm, c. 300–250 bc (known since 1494). Museo Etrusco Guarnacci, Volterra

most part by little marble Etruscan urns: the injustice of time has destroyed the sculptures.

quasi tutta [la città] d'urne cinerarie antiche d'alabastro state trovate ne' sepolcri ipogei di quei contorni.⁴⁰

Almost all [of the city] of ancient alabaster cinerary urns found in the underground burials of those areas.

The urns were considered a distinctive feature of the house,⁴¹ which in turn highlighted their value. In other words, the (Etruscan) past was used to elevate the present. This is further illustrated by an incident later on in the 17th century, once more in Volterra; Curzio Inghirami, whose family owned a villa in the immediate outskirts of the town (Scornello), attempted to ennable the villa by creating Etruscan and Latin inscriptions and pretending that they had been found in the surrounding area (see Chapter 11 by Rowland in this volume).⁴²

A quite different re-use of Etruscan urns occurred at Pogni in the countryside surrounding Volterra, where those from a local tomb were re-used by farmers as bases for presses on their farms.⁴³ Here it was the usefulness of the artefacts as salvage that was important, as opposed to their artistic or historical merit. The same can be said for the tumulus of Mula, a large *tholos* in Sesto Fiorentino (FI), already known by the end of 15th century (as the graffiti on the walls attest), which was used as a cellar.⁴⁴

During the 16th century the re-use of Etruscan artefacts and traditions continued for both cultural and material purposes. Antonio da Sangallo the Younger was appointed by Pope Paul III to build the Rocca Paolina (1540) in Perugia. He dismantled the Porta Marzia and rebuilt it within the walls and thereby restored its function as an entrance (**Fig. 41**). Also in Perugia, he restored the so-called Arch of Augustus and during his time there recovered the Etruscan inscriptions.⁴⁵ Sangallo also attempted to reconstruct the labyrinth of Chiusi, as described by Varro and documented by Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* XXXVI 19, 91)⁴⁶ and on a visit to Tarquinia (Corneto), he attempted to sketch the ancient city.⁴⁷ The reclamation and conservation of the Porta Marzia and Antonio's attention to other Etruscan monuments reveals a scholarly interest in the Etruscans before Etruscan scholars existed.

The adoption of the name Etruria in reference to Tuscany had significance for Cosimo I de' Medici when he became Grand Duke in 1569. His official title was *Magnus Dux Etruriae*, though his sovereignty was in Tuscany, which was only part of Etruria.⁴⁸ Cosimo had configured his political agenda with reference to the creation by the Etruscans, in the first millennium BC, of a great civilisation in the area of which he was prince. Along with this new title he unveiled his foreign policy agenda that was to extend his rule across the whole region of Etruria, to the detriment, of course, of the Papal States. Moreover, from the 15th century onwards, the Etruscans maintained an authoritative and constant presence in the political propaganda of the Medici, the ruling family in Tuscany, and due to initiatives by certain religious dignitaries in Viterbo such as Annio or Egidio Canisius, also the popes in Rome.⁴⁹

The year of 1546 witnessed a notable case of the re-use of Etruscan bronze artefacts. The city of Tarquinii (Corneto)

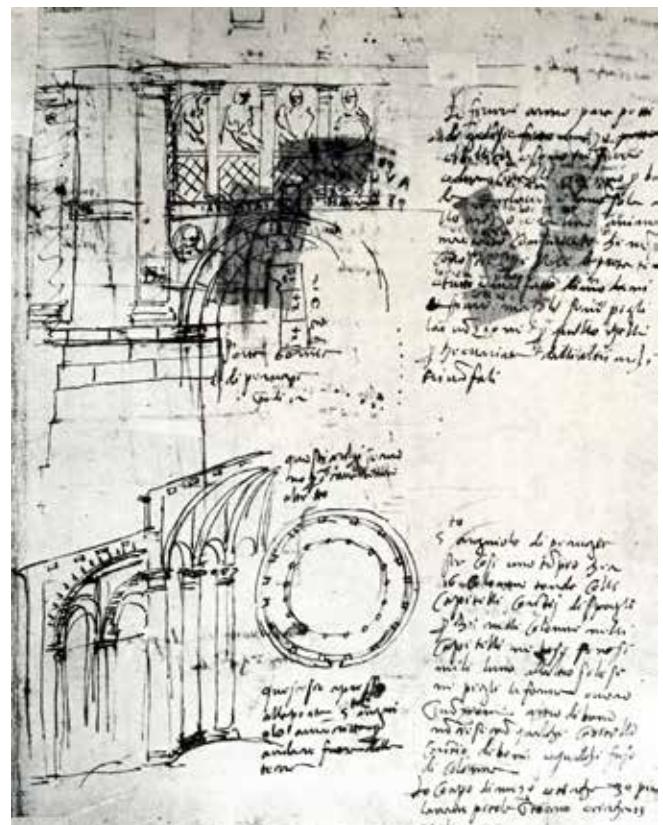


Figure 41 Antonio da Sangallo il Giovane, sketch of the Porta Marzia and Arco di Augusto. Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Inv. 1207, verso (su concessione del Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo)

owed a debt to the pontiff and agreed to settle it with 6,000 Roman pounds of bronze in the form of ancient artefacts unearthed on the site. The bronzes were melted down and used to plate the columns of the Roman basilica of St John Lateran.⁵⁰ A more mundane use of an Etruscan urn occurred in the 16th century in a small town 'near the city of Orvieto', where we hear of 'a stone vase from which chickens drank [...] on one of its sides there was written, in Etruscan letters, the name of the person buried'.⁵¹

The material recycling of Etruscan artefacts continued in the 17th century. In the votive deposit discovered at Formello on the property of Cardinal Flavio Chigi (for whom see Chapter 14 by van Kampen in this volume):

furono trovate della medesima terra cotta figure diverse, si di uomini che di donne, cavalli, bovi, pecore, porci, figure di metallo, patere, ed altro, che come più preziose furono le più facili ad essere guaste; perché ... un cavatore, il quale messe in pezzi cose insigni, con pensiero, come fece, di farle fondere ad uso di manichi di coltelli.⁵²

Different figures were found of the same terracotta, both of men and of women, horses, oxen, sheep, pigs, figures of metal, *patere*, and other things, which as the most precious/valuable were the easiest to be broken up; because ... a scavenger, who broke significant objects into pieces, had the thought to do as he did, to melt them down for use as knife handles.

Eighteenth and nineteenth-century interest in the Etruscans

The 18th century was a period of frenetic archaeological activity in Etruria especially in the area owned by the Grand Duke. It was particularly intense in Chiusi and Volterra

where excavations were run by patricians, landowners, religious leaders and intellectuals. Several collections of antiquities were formed and the first public museums were created from donations and acquisitions (such as in Volterra with the municipal museum, in Cortona with the Accademia Etrusca, and in Florence with the Società Colombaria). New finds were presented at conferences and in publications, and organised trips to visit relevant Etruscan sites were undertaken by scholars, including Filippo Buonarroti, Anton Francesco Gori, Scipione Maffei, Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Luigi Lanzi, and also by other well-educated visitors. A number of volumes on Etruscan civilisation were published jointly, with the collaboration of Buonarroti, Gori, Maffei, Giovan Battista Passeri and Mario Guarnacci. Across the Alps scholars such as Winckelmann and Christian Gottlob Heyne also demonstrated their interest in the Etruscans. Research was disseminated via the academies of Cortona and Florence and in broader terms an ‘Etruscan taste’ developed and influenced potters, bronze sculptors, carpenters and artists of the period.⁵³ In the present context, it is also important to note that amid these pursuits the re-use of Etruscan artefacts was also evident.

A very significant event occurred at Cortona in 1727 when a group of local intellectuals founded the Etruscan Academy, with which prominent Italian and foreign personalities of the 18th century were involved (see Chapter 2 by Bruschetti in this volume). The addition of the adjective ‘Etruscan’ to its name is indicative of its precise programmatic aim: to reconnect with an illustrious local tradition. After all, the Academy’s Secretary Ridolfino Venuti specified this in his preface to the first volume of *Saggi di dissertazioni* (1735), the Academy’s own publication.

One of the most striking phenomena of this time was the so-called ‘street furniture’, where stone sculpture obtained from excavation sites was used to decorate townscapes. In Chiusi urns, sarcophagi, *cippi* and architectural terracottas were all used as building materials, set mostly into the external walls of houses or distributed along the streets and in public gardens.⁵⁴ In Montepulciano the Palazzo Bucelli, which housed an archaeological collection, had its façade covered with the fronts of urns that had been produced in Chiusi (Fig. 42). This façade could not have been created before 1740.⁵⁵ In Volterra also urns were part of the same phenomenon, although on a smaller scale:

Figure 42 Palazzo Bucelli, Montepulciano



Nella stanza anteriore al Museo, che serve per le adunanze ordinarie degli Accademici Sepolti, sono incastrati per ogni parte nel muro sarcofagi, ed urne, cinque delle quali sono pure, con entro le ceneri de' Defonti, alcune molto belle di lavoro, ed altre più ordinarie, qui apposta murate...⁵⁶

In the room before the Museum, which is used for the ordinary meetings of the Accademia dei Sepolti, sarcophagi are set in every part of the wall, and urns, within five of which are also the ashes of the dead, some of very beautiful work, and others more ordinary, here and there are mounted on the walls.

Urns were also built into the façade of the Maffeiano Museum in Verona. The museum’s founder, Scipione Maffei, was in constant contact with Mario Guarnacci at Volterra, and received from him information and artefacts from local excavation sites.⁵⁷ Reliefs from Etruscan urns were used, along with other pieces from antiquity, to ornament the walls in the vestibule of the Uffizi Gallery and the Palazzo Antinori in Florence.⁵⁸ One observes the same phenomenon at other sites, for example the fragments of Latin inscriptions and a black-stone *cippus* with an Etruscan inscription embedded into the wall of the deconsecrated church of St Nicholas in Blera.⁵⁹ The urns had been sawn in half with only the figurative side displayed, demonstrating that it was the figurative side that was of interest and not the artefact as a whole.⁶⁰ However, the choice of Etruscan pieces for architectural and ornamental purposes was intentional. It presupposed a desire that the façade of a building, a street or a garden, which would otherwise have remained undistinguished, might convey prestige. It was a form of ennoblement bestowed by the intrinsic value of the artefacts, raising the status of the buildings of which they became part.

There is a wealth of evidence for a more pragmatic re-use of Etruscan material, with no concern for its cultural significance, as the following three references show:

Arretium [...] venerandae antiquitatis vestigia praefert, & inscriptiones tanto numero [...]. Sed inscriptionum earum magna pars periit, diruptis, in aedificia admotis, in calcem versis marmoribus: nec spernendus tamen earum numerus superest, in iis Hetruscae non paucae.⁶¹

Arezzo offers proof of noble antiquity and numerous inscriptions [...]. But most of the above-mentioned inscriptions have been lost, the stones being broken, applied to buildings, turned into lime: nor is the number of those that remain negligible, and among them not a few are Etruscan.

Ivi in molta distanza ruine di gran mura si veggono, che non senza qualche ragione sono credute della Città Tarquinia. Gran quantità di grosse pietre squadrate ne furon tolte l'anno scorso, per servirsene al nuovo porto di Corneto.⁶²

One sees in the far distance ruins of great walls, which not without reason are believed to be those of the city of Tarquinia. A great quantity of large squared stones were removed from them last year, for use at the new port of Corneto.

Se ne' secoli anteriori al risorgimento delle belle lettere in Italia, non fossero state barbaramente disperse e ridotte in calcina nelle fornaci tante Statue, se ne conterebbe ora un numero maggiore.⁶³

If in the centuries before the Renaissance in Italy, so many statues had not been barbarously dispersed and reduced to mortar in many lime kilns, one would now count a greater number.

This improper usage of Etruscan artefacts was criticised by various scholars, among them Pietro Bucelli, who had been fascinated by antiquity as a young man under the instruction of the Sienese intellectual Uberto Ben voglienti. Not yet 30 years old in 1711, upon his return from Rome to Montepulciano, his city of birth, he noted in dismay:

tutti l'avanzi d'antichità, che alla giornata in questo Distretto venivano dissotterrati, servivano, o per sassi comuni nelle muraglia, o erano trasportati altrove da Persone venute, o mandate a bella posta, a raccoglierli, per abbellirne ... i più rinomati esteri Musei.⁶⁴

All the remains of antiquity, which were unearthed in this district to this day, were either used for common stones in the wall, or were transported elsewhere by people who came or were sent on purpose, to gather them up, to embellish... the most famous foreign museums.

The re-use of Etruscan vases and urns was not limited in the 18th century to re-use in building works, as the evidence from a monastery in the vicinity of Chiusi demonstrates; there the inhabitants made use of vases and urns 'per vasi di fiori, di pietre con iscrizioni e tegole scritte per i tetti' (as containers for flowers, and of stone blocks and inscriptions as tiles for roofs).⁶⁵ Similarly Mario Guarnacci, founder of the library and the museum bearing his name in Volterra, wrote to Anton Francesco Gori in a letter dated 20 October 1741 (Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence):

In un Podere delle Monache di San Lino [...] nella settimana passata trovorno due bei Sepolcrij Etrusci. Il Cavaliere Incontrì [...] ha voluto barbaramente portare [alcune urne] a una sua Villa, [...] servendosene per piantarvi i Fiorj, ed il Basilico [...]. In questa occasione si è saputo, che il Cavaliere Incontrì ne [ha] ancora delle altre anco di prima; E le teneva in questa sua Villa esposte all'Aria e alla Pioggia, servendosene per Vasi da Fiorj, e d'erbe.

In a small farm of the monastery of San Lino... in the past week two beautiful Etruscan tombs had been discovered. The Cavaliere Incontrì [...] wanted, barbarously, to bring [some urns] to his own villa, [...] to use for planting Flowers and Basil [...]. On this occasion it was known that the Cavaliere Incontrì had already some from before; And he kept them in this Villa of his, exposed to the air and rain, for use as vases for flowers and herbs.

Furthermore Guarnacci noted:

con dispiacere suo grande infiniti monumenti Etrusci nelle barbare mani dei contadini rompersi e guastarsi, ed impiegarsi ad uso solamente di pietrami, [...] Vedea similmente nelle mani medesime e idoli e vasi e medaglie e bronzi e cose simili rompersi e vendersi a vil prezzo ai fabbri per solo uso di ferramenti.⁶⁶

With much sadness he saw great, infinite Etruscan monuments are broken and are ruined in the barbarian hands of peasants, and are employed solely as stones [...] Similarly, one sees in the same hands idols and vases and medals and bronzes and things similarly broken, sold at a contemptible price to the smiths simply to produce hardware.

And in Volterra:

per la incuria degl'infelici passati tempi, si sono veduti bene spesso rovinati i frammenti delle urne, e de' vasi, insieme con gli stessi Sepolcri.⁶⁷

Through the neglect of unhappy past times, the ruined fragments of urns and vases are very often seen, with their own tombs in much the same state.

The framework of our understanding of the Etruscan world was both expanded and refocused in the 19th century, following discoveries in south and central Etruria (in Veio, Caere, Tarquinia, Vulci, Falerii, in the rock-cut necropoleis, and at Orvieto). This region corresponded to Tuscia Romana which was under the rule of the Papal States. A number of entrepreneurs were involved in the archaeological excavations, such as the Marquis Giampietro Campana, Prince Lucien Bonaparte, the aristocrat Carlo Avolta, the Campanari family, the Guglielmi family, the Torlonia family, the brothers Candelori, Alessandro François and Riccardo Mancini. They were very active, with their principal aim being the sale of artefacts,⁶⁸ which ultimately arrived in the great museums of Europe and America (for example the Louvre (Paris), the British Museum (London), the Hermitage (St Petersburg), the Antikenmuseum (Berlin), the Von Wagner Museum (Würzburg), the Antikensammlungen (Munich), the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek (Copenhagen), the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (Leiden) and the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston)).⁶⁹ The first institutions and laws set up to control excavations and trade in archaeological objects including the Deputazione Comunale in Volterra (1744)⁷⁰ and the Pacca Edict of 1820 in the Papal States (see Chapter 15 by Della Fina in this volume) did not succeed in preventing the traffic of artefacts. It was only with the emergence of the new Italian State (1861) and the passing of the first law regarding the preservation of works of art (1909) that these practices became regulated. From that time archaeological activity was supervised by the relevant Soprintendenze and the first state museums were created.⁷¹

Previous to this, archaeological finds were often used to adorn and embellish domestic environments. One example is the garden of the Campanari, the well-known excavators and dealers, in Tuscania (at that time called Toscanella). A tomb was reconstructed using a number of sarcophagi, and other sarcophagi were simply placed around the garden (**Fig. 43**; see also Swaddling in this volume, p. 55). All these artefacts were from the Vipinana tomb discovered in the nearby necropolis.⁷² Ancient artefacts were scattered throughout the Forti park at Chiusi, in the grounds of a villa belonging to the Casuccini family, and a tomb was constructed complete with a sarcophagus and urns placed along the walls, in the manner of Hellenistic tombs found in the local area.⁷³

The 19th century also saw frequent fraudulent re-use, or rather re-employment, of objects. Fragments from a number of different ancient works were cut into regular shapes so that they would fit together neatly to make new objects; the joins were camouflaged to conceal the fact that different pieces had been used to create a new entity. This creation, or recreation, of an object to make it appear complete improved its standing in the antiques market; Chiusi was a prime centre for this activity, with painted vases, bucchero, bronzes, sculptures in the round and stone reliefs being reconstituted in this way and passed off as authentic.⁷⁴ Knowledge of the practice seems to be recorded at an event

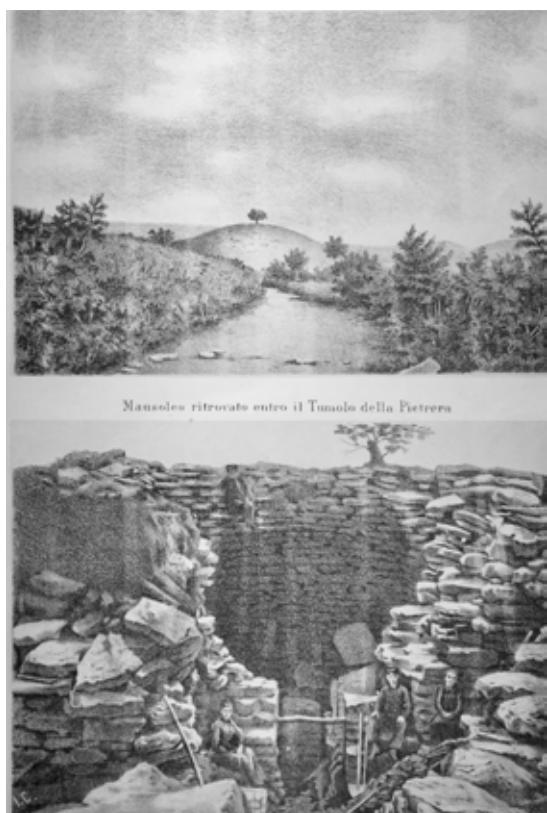


Figure 43 Garden of the Campanari's house, Tuscania (from Colonna 1978)

that took place at Chiusi on 11 April 1845. The event was described in an article in the *Gazzetta di Firenze* several days later on the 15 April,⁷⁵ which recorded that a ‘cabinet of Etruscan monuments found in the classical grounds of the local area’ was on display, which sought to ‘distinguish itself in its subtlety, ingenuity and diligence’, presumably with regard to how the artefacts had been reworked. A list of these reconstructed objects would be extremely long; it was a well-known phenomenon, but it rarely seems to have been taken into account by either private collectors or by museums.

In this period there are further instances of seemingly unethical re-use of Etruscan artefacts. In 1842 stone blocks that originally belonged to the city walls at Doganella⁷⁶ were

Figure 44 Tumulus La Pietrera. Necropolis, Vetulonia (after Falchi 1891)



re-used as construction material for a road that linked Magliano (GR) to Saline at the mouth of the Albegna. The building was discovered at the time the road was being built.⁷⁷ In the environs of Vetulonia during the last decades of the 19th century many *cippi* were unearthed. They were cut up and used to pave roads, to serve as animal troughs, seats for farmhouses and waysides and were even turned into fonts for holy water in churches.⁷⁸ Fragments of an archaic stele from Roselle, with a representation of a warrior, were found in a farmyard. One of these fragments, part of the base of the monument, was driven ‘into the ground for most of its height, so as to form the threshold of a gate in a wire partitioning fence’.⁷⁹ It is notable that the largest tumulus tomb, dating to the Orientalising period, at Vetulonia is known as La Pietrera (**Fig. 44**) – a name that has a clear and self-evident meaning: a place where one could find stones already hewn that could be taken freely and used for whatever purpose was required.

In conclusion, the re-use of Etruscan antiquities has continued from antiquity to the present day and is based on two principles: one material and the other cultural. In the first instance artefacts are considered by the user simply as reclaimable material without regard for their aesthetic or historic significance. In the second instance, the re-user comes to engage with the object’s cultural value and importance, which also leads to a new episode in the historical trajectory of the object. The two outcomes can happen in the same environment and within the same time frame. The choice of one form or the other depends on the socio-economic context of re-employment. Re-use in the material sense, however, is more frequent in rural areas. This essay has attempted to clarify the underlying motivation of individual examples of re-use as a means of expanding our knowledge of modern interaction with the ancient Etruscan world. Many objects have been simply re-used for their material value when, upon discovery, their archaeological or cultural significance has not been appreciated. On other occasions when an object is recognised as a cultural artefact, it may be displayed in a new context that serves to enhance the prestige of its new owner.

Notes

- 1 Many thanks to Carlotta Camporeale-Marshall, Elisa Camporeale, Vittorio Mascelli, Claudia Noferi, Nicoletta Norman and Charo Rovira for their help with this essay.
- 2 Regarding the preservation of some of these statues, see Torelli 1968; for the possibility that artefacts were also part of the booty, see Colonna 1998.
- 3 Naso 2000; Camporeale 2004; Naso 2006a; Naso 2006b; Camporeale 2007a; Naso 2012.
- 4 Camporeale 2015b, p.19
- 5 On this problem see Briquel 1997; Haack 2003.
- 6 Vlad Borrelli 1973, 203–36, pls LV–LX.
- 7 Roncalli 1965, 15–22 nn. 1–5, 84–93.
- 8 *Lart : Cae / [- -] petr [- -]; L : Pruxn.* On this subject see Della Fina 1980, 365–6, *REE* nn. 58–9, tav. LXXXIII.
- 9 *C. Considius / C. F. Pom:* (*CIL XI* 2757); Bizzarri 1962, 117. On this subject see Della Fina 1983, 36, 57 n. 52, 90 n. 156.
- 10 Franchini 1948–9; Neppi Modona 1977, 64–83; P. Zamarchi Grassi, P. Bocci Pacini *et al.* in Zamarchi Grassi 1992, 9–112; P. Zamarchi Grassi *et al.* in Zamarchi Grassi 1992, 119–67; Marzi 1994; Maggiani 2006 [2007], 159.
- 11 Camporeale 2009 [2012], 61–72.
- 12 *Corpus Inscriptionum Etruscarum* 3763.
- 13 Necropolis of Palazzone, Perugia: Camporeale 2009 [2012], tavv. XIIb–XIV.
- 14 Cenciaioli 2011; Camporeale 2009 [2012], with previous literature.
- 15 Maetzke 1955–6; Bocci 1961a; Bocci 1961b.
- 16 Camporeale 2015b, 240–2.
- 17 Benelli 2015.
- 18 The name *Urbs Vetus* indicates a settlement that emerged in the place of an old city, of which neither memory nor location had been lost: Camporeale 2015b, 339.
- 19 The name Civitacastellana consists of two elements, the first of which indicates an ancient city, the second a medieval settlement.
- 20 Fortunelli 2005, 254–66.
- 21 Romualdi 1989–90, 634, n. 8.1; Cagianelli 2004.
- 22 Bocci Pacini and Zamarchi Grassi 1985.
- 23 We cannot exclude the possibility that the same routes might have been used through the centuries for transhumance (on this see Chericci 2014, 252–7).
- 24 Camporeale 2015b, 269.
- 25 Bonamici 1983.
- 26 Fiumi 1977, 9, 15 n. 1; Bonamici 1983; Camporeale 2007b, 16.
- 27 On recent arguments, see Camporeale 2015a, 41, with bibliography.
- 28 On this argument see Capecchi 1987, with bibliography.
- 29 Magi 1932, 15, n. 9, tav. VIII 1.
- 30 Nicosia 1966b, 280, figs 2–3; Maggiani 2006 [2007], 162–3.
- 31 Capecchi 1974, 34; Maggiani 2006 [2007], 162–4, tav. XXXVIIa–d.
- 32 Cenciaioli 2011, 76, fig. 24.
- 33 Salvini 1996a; Camporeale 2015.
- 34 Minto 1926, 42; Salvini 1996b; Camporeale 2015a, 41–2.
- 35 Nicosia 1966a, 153–9, fig. 1; tavv. XXIb–c, XXIIa–c.
- 36 Regarding this question recently see Maggiani 2006 [2007], 161–4.
- 37 Palma Venetucci 2007, 20–4.
- 38 Camporeale 2015b, 24, 414.
- 39 Gori 1737.
- 40 Targioni Tozzetti 1769, 202.
- 41 Fiumi 1977, 9 insists, correctly, that ‘a great number of urns must have been in circulation, so many that, in the general opinion, they were losing prestige, thus they were considered of very little or no value’, for this reason he calls the House of Marbles ‘a house of peasants’. Without commenting on the quantity of urns in circulation at the time, one could call it a peasant’s house if the practice of covering a house in urns was common, and not a unique case, regardless of this family’s belonging to the local nobility.
- 42 The work is indicated as published at Frankfurt, but this also is false because it was almost certainly published in Florence (Parenti 1991, 94).
- 43 Camporeale 2015b, 244.
- 44 Caputo 1962, 130–8.
- 45 Camporeale 2015b, 380–1.
- 46 Vasori 1979, 136–9; Vasori 1981, 130.
- 47 Vasori 1981, 143–4, n. 110.
- 48 For this subject see Cipriani 1980a. This trend became so deeply rooted in Tuscany that the dedicatory epigraph of the monument to the soldiers killed in the First World War erected in 1923 by the city of Chiusi in a public garden reads: ‘mother Etruria mourns her sons’ (Della Fina 1983, 34).
- 49 Bertelli 1976; Martelli 1977; Martelli 1978b; Martelli and Cristofani 1979; Cipriani 1980a; Cipriani 1980b; Martelli 1980; Bertelli 1981; Cipriani 1981; Cristofani 1981; Cristofani 1992. For Annus of Viterbo see also Chapter 11 by Rowland in this volume, pp. 127–30.
- 50 Pallottino 1937, 20–1.
- 51 Marmocchini 1541–5.
- 52 Bartoli 1790, 270–1. For this document see Delpino 1985, 149, doc. 6; van Kampen 2015, 158, 169, doc. 3.
- 53 For a general overview and relevant bibliography see Camporeale 2007b.
- 54 Della Fina 1983; G. Paolucci in Paolucci 2015, 11.
- 55 Both A.F. Gori and S. Maffei, respectively in 1733 and 1738 (or 1739), visited the Bucelli collection and were impressed by the quality and rarity of its relics (Gori 1737, XVII: ‘Buccellianum Museum [...] compluribus Etruscis urnis, aliisque perraris cimelii locupletissimum’; Maffei 1739, 315: ‘Chi crederebbe che la maggior raccolta d’iscrizioni Etrusche si trovi in Montepulciano? Pur è così. Tal Museo è del Sig. Pietro Bucelli, [...]. L’indefessa ricerca di quel Gentiluomo, che non ha perdonato a spesa, né a fatica, poco meno di cento ne ha poste insieme, [...] scavate la maggior parte in vari luoghi di quel distretto, e non molto lungi dalla Città’), but they make no mention of the urns walled into the façade of the home. We can deduce that in those years the urns had not yet been affixed. Bucelli, who died in 1754, complains that his ‘piccola Casa resta tutta ingombrata da quantità di Urne non tanto Fittili, che di Travertino, Marmo e di altro genere, ma maggior parte di queste figurate; Olle Cinerarie, Cippi, Vasi antichi, Tegole, Lapidi con iscrizioni, parte delle quali obbligato sono a tenerle esposte a tutte l’ingiurie del tempo nella pubblica Strada longo le Muraglie di detta mia Casa’. The urns would be walled into the façade of the family house by Orazio Bucelli, brother of Pietro and heir to the archaeological collection, ‘ad imitazione del lodato Scipione Maffei, che così appunto distribui il suo museo di Verona’ (Paolucci – Pasqui 1989, p. 134). A distant model might be recognised in the family crests in the walls of public buildings or medieval castles. The collection would pass in 1780 to the Uffizi Gallery and later to the Archaeological Museum of Florence (see D. Pasqui, in Paolucci and Pasqui 1989, 87–93).
- 56 Riccobaldi Del Bava 1758, 171–2; see also Bocci Pacini 1991, 515–16.
- 57 Camporeale 2002, 15–16; Camporeale 2007b, 25–6.
- 58 Cristofani 1983, 75, 84, figs 41–2, 46.
- 59 Colonna 1966, 365.
- 60 This was in the 18th century: S. Maffei in a letter of 17 December 1739 from Verona to Mario Guaracci writes the following regarding the discovery of a tomb in the necropolis of Volterra: ‘O quanto mi avete inquietato con la nuova scoperta fatta dal Sig. Vicario Franceschini, [...]. Non sono mai stato fortunato di vedere una grotta vergine, [...]. Ma almeno potrò io averne un compito disegno? E potrò averlo delle urne figurate trovate in esso?’ (Oh how much you upset me with the new discovery made by Sig. Vicario Franceschini, [...]. I have never been lucky enough to see a virgin cave/grotto, [...]. But at least will I be able to have a drawing of it made? And can I have one of the figured urn found in it?) (Maffei 1955, vol. 2, 918). The same operation had to be carried out also on the urns of the Galluzzi Collection of Volterra, acquired by the Uffizi Gallery in 1768, to facilitate transport to Florence (P. Bocci in Marzi and Bocci 1997, 347). The tradition would continue: it is to be kept in mind that when the corpus of Etruscan urns (1870–1916) was published, thanks to the initiative of the German Archaeological Institute, the title of the work was *I rilievi delle urne etrusche*.
- 61 De Montfaucon 1702, 380–1.
- 62 Maffei 1739, 312–13.
- 63 Gori 1742, CXCIX.
- 64 Paolucci and Pasqui 1989, 35, 129.

- 65 Paolucci and Pasqui 1989, 36.
 66 Riccobaldi Del Bava 1771, XI.
 67 Riccobaldi Del Bava 1758, 167.
 68 Camporeale 2015b, 296–7.
 69 On this subject see von Hase 1989, with bibliography.
 70 Fiumi 1946–7, 352–3; Cristofani 1983, 81; Camporeale 2002, 24.
 71 See Barbanera 2015, 69–73.
 72 Colonna 1978, 92–9. See also Chapters 4 and 6 by Swaddling and Sarti respectively in this volume.
 73 Della Fina 1983, 33.
 74 Regarding this problem, with previous bibliography and various examples, see Martelli 1978a.
 75 Cristofani 1975, 19 has called attention to this.
 76 Perkins and Walker 1990, 3.
 77 Dennis 1883, vol. 2, 264.
 78 Camporeale forthcoming.
 79 Mazzolai 1960, 115, 145 n. 27, fig. 38.

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Chapter 4

Exhibiting the Etruscans in Bloomsbury and Pall Mall

Judith Swaddling

Abstract

The display of reconstructed Etruscan tombs in 1837–8, staged by the Campanari father and sons in Pall Mall, London, was the first archaeological ‘blockbuster’ exhibition. Capitalising on contemporary taste for *mises-en-scène*, it broke with the tradition of typologically ordered displays and presented the objects within an evocative, ostensibly authentic series of Etruscan tomb chambers. Dramatically lit by flaming oil-lamps, the tombs were furnished with actual-size copies of wall-paintings, artefacts from daily life hung on the walls, realistic tomb doorways and sarcophagi with lids left slightly open so that visitors could peer inside at skeletons and precious objects that the incumbents were purported to have owned. The Etruscans were a new phenomenon to the public and reviews and appreciative letters poured in. Much of the material from the exhibition was acquired by the British Museum, and this chapter looks at the wide-ranging impact of the Pall Mall show and its influence on the display of Etruscan material at the British Museum and elsewhere.¹

The beginnings of the Etruscan collection at the British Museum

Special exhibitions have become a routine feature in museum calendars around the world, with some, including those at the British Museum, regularly attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors. We tend to think of the prototype of these crowd-pullers being the highly successful Tutankhamun exhibition held at the British Museum in 1972, but the tradition began with the extremely innovative Etruscan exhibition staged in 1837 in Pall Mall by the Campanari: father Vincenzo and sons Carlo, Secondiano and Domenico, renowned as antiquarians, antiquities dealers and entrepreneurs.²

To appreciate the impact of the exhibition on the British Museum we must first look at the extent and display of the Etruscan objects in the collection during the Museum’s earliest days.³ When the Museum first opened the number of Etruscan objects was minimal, but there were definitely some on display from the moment that visitors were admitted in 1759. Unfortunately there are no known images of the 18th-century galleries, and we must make use of a variety of literary sources to get some idea of what was on display.

The British Museum had been established in 1753 by an Act of Parliament when Sir Hans Sloane bequeathed his collection of some 71,000 objects to King George II for the nation, in return for a payment of £20,000 to Sloane’s heirs. Sloane had been the royal physician, and also had a strong interest in natural history. Throughout his life he had been an avid collector of objects, principally natural history specimens, as well as ‘things relating to the customs of ancient times’. Objects categorised as ‘antiquities’, however, numbered just over 1,000, less than 2% of Sir Hans’ collection.⁴ As with most European collections of the 16th to 18th centuries, antiquities were very much an adjunct to natural history phenomena. Like other contemporary collections around the world, the British Museum acquired both ancient artefacts and natural phenomena, both classes



Figure 45 Terracotta cinerary urn showing the battle between Eteokles and Polyneikes, from the legend of the Seven against Thebes, 3rd–2nd century BC, length 44.5cm. This is one of the Etruscan objects from the collection of Sir Hans Sloane and on display at the British Museum from its earliest days. British Museum, 1756,0101.1124

being labelled as ‘curiosities’ and hence housed in ‘cabinets of curiosities’ which could range from portable cases to large free-standing cupboards and entire rooms, representing what was considered a microcosm of the world and its history.⁵ Much of the Museum building was also devoted to various libraries which were later incorporated in the Department of Manuscripts and Printed Books and ultimately the British Library.⁶

Interestingly, there seems to have been Etruscan material on display in Sloane’s manor house in Chelsea, part of a Tudor mansion once owned by Henry VIII. According to the account of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1748, ‘Below-stairs some rooms are filled with curious and venerable antiquities of Egypt, Greece, Hetruria, Rome, Britain and even America.’ (For the spelling of Hetruria with an aitch, see the explanation in Chapter 11 by Rowland in this volume, p. 128).⁷ We have to be careful that the reference to ‘Hetruscan’ objects was not simply to the then so-called ‘Etruscan vases’, which were in fact Greek. It was commonly believed at the time that the many Greek vases found in Etruscan tombs, and also in the Greek tombs of southern Italy, were actually of Etruscan manufacture (see Chapter 17 by Ramage in this volume, pp. 182–3). However the presence of actual Etruscan objects in Sloane’s collection is confirmed by the fact that, apart from vases, there are at least 25 other Etruscan objects in the British Museum’s collection which we know belonged to Sloane.⁸ These included a terracotta cinerary urn (**Fig. 45**),⁹ a bronze incense burner,¹⁰ a bronze fire rake, some terracotta anatomical votives, (understandably of interest to a physician),¹¹ a terracotta antefix depicting a gorgon,¹² some bucchero pottery and a proto-Etruscan impasto cup.¹³ There may have been other Etruscan objects in Sloane’s collection that are now difficult to identify in the British Museum’s collection. Sloane had acquired most of his classical pieces en masse from two sources: Cardinal Gualtieri, who was well-known for his collection of vases, many of which were

from tombs at Chiusi and were acquired from the Neapolitan Joseph Valetta, and from the Abbé Bernardo Sterbini, a very active dealer in Rome. We know that Sloane bought from Sterbini a number of pieces of native Italian origin from various periods.¹⁴ Many of the Sloane objects from the classical period were registered at the British Museum in 1756, but not all, and the association of the remainder was lost when the objects became integrated with other collections at the Museum. The Register in the Department of Greece and Rome begins with a transcript of Sloane’s inventory but the descriptions are not always detailed enough to identify the objects to which they refer.

Sloane’s bequest was installed in Montagu House, Bloomsbury, the 17th-century mansion that was bought to house the Sloane collection with funds raised by a national lottery. This was to become the British Museum and from the 19th century the collections were to increase rapidly through various methods of acquisition – donations, bequests and purchases. A plan dated 1725 shows the second floor of Montagu House and from later references we can deduce that Etruscan material was shown near the top of the stairs in the central wing.¹⁵

The earliest Etruscan objects on display in the British Museum

Over the centuries innumerable guide books have been written on the Museum’s collections, of which the earliest detailed example was by Edmund Powlett, published in 1761 and entitled *The General Contents of the British Museum with Remarks serving as a Directory in Viewing that Noble Cabinet*.¹⁶ Here we find references to ‘Antiquitates Hetruscae’, and comments on the Etruscan civilisation with due deference.¹⁷ He records:

The four Repositories under this Title, contain *Hetruscan Antiquities*. They were a Nation that formerly flourished in that Part of *Italy*, now called *Tuscany*. It is to be noted, that they were the first People that cultivated the politer Arts in *Europe*, from



Figure 46 Early Italian bronze fibulas, both Campanian types, illustrated in Rymsdyk 1778, table X. Left, 7th–6th century BC, length 14.6cm, British Museum, 1772,0309.24; right, 10th–9th century BC, length 8.7cm. British Museum, 1772,0309.71

whence they spread even to *Rome*, which acknowledged itself much indebted to the Inhabitants of that Part of *Italy*, on many Accounts.

Later Powlett describes some cinerary urns:¹⁸

We must also take particular notice of some Urns of plain Alabaster, and others very large, but ornamented with the same kind of Figures and Inscriptions as the large Pateras just above mentioned. The Letters do not agree with any Alphabet now in Use, or known; for which Reason our Antiquaries are at great Loss to understand the Purport and Meaning of them.

The plain alabaster urns were Roman,¹⁹ but large ornamented urns, decorated with figures and inscribed with then unidentifiable letters were almost certainly Etruscan. No Etruscan stone cinerary urns are recorded as having been in the Sloane collection, but there is one in terracotta bearing a scene with figures in relief, perhaps Eteokles and Polyneikes, which Powlett may have viewed (**Fig. 45**).²⁰

From what we can gather from Powlett's guide, objects were at that time arranged typologically rather than culturally, a scheme adopted across Europe at the time (see for example Chapter 14 by van Kampen in this volume). This same concept appears to have been followed in Sloane's own display of the material in Chelsea. It may have been influenced by the typological classification of artefacts adopted in *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, published by the French Benedictine monk Bernard de Montfaucon between 1719 and 1724, and later published in English as *Antiquity Explained and Represented in Diagrams* (1719–25).

Powlett continues his itinerary, and goes on to talk about vases of various shapes and sizes,

made of a Kind of fine pale red Earth.... some of them plain, but elegantly varnished; others painted with Figures, Letters and various Ornaments...

Many of these were no doubt the Greek vases that Sloane bequeathed, but he also possessed some very fine plain burnished bucchero, perhaps included in this very display,²¹ though the 'elegantly varnished' pieces may instead, or additionally, have included Sloane's black-glazed ware. Next came:

Some Pateras very large, and Ornamented with Figures and Hetruscan letters.

These objects must surely be Etruscan bronze mirrors, in the form of a disc with projecting hand-grip, which in the 18th century were thought to be *pateras*, shallow lustral or libation bowls, or even skillets.²² The backs of the discs are customarily incised with compositions of figures, sometimes labelled with their names written in Etruscan.

In Powlett's time, many learned members of the public

would have been aware of the Etruscans. Attention had been drawn to them by the publication of Thomas Dempster's *De Etruria regali*, compiled in the 17th century but not published until 1723–4 by Filippo Buonarroti and Thomas Coke of Holkham Hall in Norfolk, future Earl of Leicester (see Chapter 2 by Bruschetti in this volume, with references). This was a landmark volume, the first publication dedicated to the study of the Etruscans. To many people, however, the British Museum must have offered the first contact with the Etruscans. Entry was free and given to 'all studious and curious Persons', though tickets were required until 1810. During the 18th century aristocrats on the Grand Tour or those appointed as officials in Italy were enthusiastically buying up antiquities. Italian dealers such as the antiquarian Antonio Francesco Gori were already benefiting from a ready market in Etruscan antiquities in the early 1700s.²³ At least four of the pieces in the British Museum passed through this dealer's hands,²⁴ and two of them, a reclining satyr and a youth with lituus, are of doubtful authenticity. Clearly a thriving trade was already established in fakes and forgeries: fakes are always a sure indication of high demand for the genuine artefact.²⁵

In the early days, as we know from Powlett's guide, the 'Antiquitates Hetruscae' were displayed in Room V in the original Montagu House.²⁶ We know from a manuscript guide watermarked 1805 that Room V was adjacent to the gallery in which the Hamilton collection was exhibited: 'First room ---- Antiquities, chiefly collected by Sir William Hamilton. The cases on the right hand of the Door; those opposite the Windows, and those on the left of the Door leading into the second Room, contain Etruscan Vases'. Again these must actually have been of Greek origin, and only through Powlett do we have details of the authentic Etruscan objects which had already been on display for almost 50 years. At least 190 Etruscan objects are included in the Hamilton objects in the British Museum, but we do not know how many of these were on display.²⁷

Less than 20 years after Powlett's volume, another 'guide' to the British Museum appeared in 1778, an idiosyncratic work by two illustrators, John and Andrew Rymsdyk, entitled *Museum Britannicum, being an exhibition of a great variety of antiquities and Natural Curiosities, belonging to that noble and Magnificent Cabinet, the British Museum*.²⁸ In its form and content this volume reflects the contemporary preoccupation with natural history. And yet, in its limited number of plates, we find a few antiquities: not vases, but two early Italian bronze fibulas (**Fig. 46**)²⁹ and a late Etruscan or early Roman gold bulla,³⁰ all from the collection of Sir William Hamilton. The fibulas were admittedly thought at the time to be Roman, but were evidently considered of particular interest. From the text it becomes obvious that the

Rymsdyks must have been allowed to handle the material, for they comment:

What is remarkable of the Brass Pins of these Fibulas, and of this Metal of the Ancients, is: that it has Elasticity and Polarity; whereas our Brass breaks like Glass.

Despite the grandeur of this volume and its superb drawings, the text is remarkably conversational.

Sir William Hamilton's collection and its debt to Etruscan tombs

The magnificent collection of Sir William Hamilton, British Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and the Two Sicilies from 1764 to 1798, was one of the first in which classical antiquities took precedence over natural history. It was the first of the rich assemblages of the 18th and 19th centuries that shaped both the classical collections of the British Museum and its holdings of Etruscan material.³¹ Hamilton was a Scottish diplomat, antiquarian and vulcanologist, and he accumulated an unsurpassed collection of some 740 Greek vases, principally from Etruscan tombs in Etruria and Campania, and many Etruscan antiquities, particularly exquisite bronzes, gold jewellery and gems. It was the publication of Hamilton's first collection of vases in the 1760s, by Pierre-François Hugues d'Hancarville in 1766–7, which inspired Josiah Wedgwood's creation of the Etruria factory that opened in Stoke-on-Trent in 1769 (see Chapter 17 by Ramage in this volume).

By the time of the publication of Hamilton's second collection of vases in 1791, Hamilton himself and the principal antiquarians of the time had realised that the splendid vases were in fact Greek. It is interesting to note that for most of the 19th century the gallery where Greek vases from Etruscan tombs were exhibited was called the Etruscan Room, acknowledging the Etruscan taste for Greek vases, for in their tombs they preserved far more classical Greek vases than have been found on the Greek mainland. Exactly why the Etruscans acquired them so voraciously and deposited them in their tombs has never been answered satisfactorily, but without them we would be lacking crucial evidence and outstanding masterpieces for every stage in the development of Greek vase painting. Josiah Wedgwood later told a Committee of the House of Commons that, by imitating the Hamilton vases, he had within two years brought into the country at least three times the sum that the collection had cost. The Etruscans were therefore indirectly responsible for delivering a significant boost to the British economy!

In 1772, Parliament had approved a special grant to the British Museum of £8,410 to purchase the Hamilton collection 'for the Use of the Publick', with a further £840 'to provide a proper Repository'. The Trustees of the British Museum did not immediately seek new accommodation for the vases, but the acquisition of outstanding Egyptian material, sculptures acquired as spoils of the Napoleonic wars in 1801, prompted the planning of a new building. Until then, the Museum's galleries were still predominantly populated by the natural history specimens from Sloane's bequest.

Charles Townley and the 'new' Etruscan gallery, 1808

In 1805, the Museum acquired part of the remarkable collection of the antiquarian and connoisseur Charles Townley, notably the stone sculpture known as the Townley Marbles, and his large-scale bronzes and terracottas (for Townley's Etruscan pieces, see Chapter 5 by Booms in this volume). Already back in 1802 Townley, Hamilton and Sir Joseph Banks had been appointed by the Trustees of the British Museum as a working Committee to design the new building, constructed at a right angle to Montagu House and on a line with the present Egyptian sculpture gallery. The suite of rooms became known as the Townley Gallery and opened in 1808. It housed the Townley sculptures and large Egyptian works on the ground floor, while the Hamilton vases and the Etruscan Saloon were to be installed on the upper floor.³² The Etruscans were obviously considered a sufficiently important culture to merit their own gallery. Despite the new setting, the method of display still seems to have been very conservative and scholarly, with objects displayed largely typologically, and with little available information. It is an unexpected source which throws up just a little information about the Etruscan antiquities then on display. In the year that the new gallery was opened, 1808, a guide to the Museum was published, fictionally attributed to a gentleman named Mr Edwards who was taking his nephew – the appropriately named Ralph Montagu – on a tour of the galleries, and Etruscan artefacts are some of those which received his prominent attention.³³ It refers to the 'Etruscan Hall' as being in the process of arrangement, but with 'black vases', a bronze rake terminating in the form of a hand, mirrors, paterae and other vessels on display.

The Campanari's Etruscan exhibition in Pall Mall, 1837

It was to be almost another 30 years before the Etruscans really burst on to the London scene in the fanfare exhibition staged by the Campanari family in Pall Mall in 1837, in what evidently seemed like glorious technicolour replacing the old black and white movies. Hitherto, the classical human figure was known only via idealised statues in white marble, small figures in brown bronze and the sombre tones of black and dullish orange vases, but suddenly here were the Etruscans, sculpted and painted on their sarcophagi as real human beings with barely any stylisation, and shown interacting with one another in colourful wall-paintings. In a remarkably innovative venture, exploiting the contemporary taste for *mises-en-scène* (see Chapter 8 by Haumesser in this volume), the 11 rooms of the exhibition were converted into a series of reconstructed tombs with a high degree of detail and a significant amount of imagination. Because many Etruscan necropoleis mirrored Etruscan cities, with streets and tombs in the form of houses, and the interiors of the tombs reflected the internal living space of the houses, suddenly here was a much more immediate picture of life in ancient times, along with representations of real individuals with whom one could identify and meet face to face.

The tombs in the Pall Mall exhibition were representative of the major Etruscan centres then known: Tarquinia, Tuscania, Vulci and Bomarzo. Cerveteri was not represented as the necropolis had only come to light in 1836: what was to become known as the Regolini-Galassi tomb



Figure 47 Admission ticket for the exhibition of Etruscan tombs at 121 Pall Mall, 1837–8. British Library, Evan.4383

had recently been discovered intact, but its contents were then still in the hands of the excavators, only to enter the new Etruscan museum at the Vatican, the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, in 1838–9.³⁴ Vincenzo Campanari had been the main campaigner for the establishment of this new Etruscan institution, since at least the early 1820s, and unsurprisingly he became the main supplier of its founding collections. Although planning for the museum began in 1824, the Pope gave the final go-ahead only the day after the departure of the Campanari for London, on 15 November 1836, perhaps realising that the Etruscans were about to take Europe by storm.³⁵

Returning to the layout of the Pall Mall exhibition, the concept of dealing with the Etruscan material regionally was a real innovation, entirely at odds with the typological displays hitherto favoured for all kinds of collections in museums. The names of the regions were written on plaques over the doors of the exhibition rooms. Tickets cost one shilling (Fig. 47), a not insignificant sum at a time when a general office clerk would have earned about 25 shillings per week.³⁶ There was also a guide to the exhibition, priced at 6d (six old pennies, or half a shilling). Notes about the contents of the exhibition had been assembled for the guide by Carlo Campanari, but it was actually written by his brother Secondiano who was considered more literary and therefore more capable of spicing up the descriptions to capture public imagination.³⁷

The three floors of the Pall Mall house exhibited reconstructions of tomb chambers as follows:

Basement: Tomba del Morto (Tarquinia), Grotta Dipinta (Bomarzo), 2 tombs from Tuscania (then Toscanella) and a *colombarium* (actually not Etruscan but of late Republican date).

Ground floor: Tomba delle Bighe, Tomba Del Triclinio (both Tarquinia) and two more tombs from Tuscania.

Upper floor: Tomba delle Iscrizioni, Tomba Campanari (Vulci). Also the 'Great Room' a sales room with objects on offer largely from the excavations at Vulci conducted by Vincenzo Campanari.

The layout and contents of the rooms, and the identification of the objects listed in Secondiano's guide to the exhibition with those later purchased by the British Museum, have been explored as fully as possible in two articles by Giovanni Colonna³⁸ and, in keeping with the subject of this

chapter, I shall confine my discussion to the originality of the displays, their artifice and objectives. Curators of modern temporary exhibitions will take comfort from the fact that only four of the rooms were ready for the opening date of 26 January 1837, with the rest being opened and the final catalogue ready later in March, reflecting the kind of delays still not unheard of. Considering the logistics, the nature of the exhibits and the furnishings of the rooms, the Campanari did remarkably well to have a major part of the exhibition ready in just ten weeks after their departure from Italy.

Illustrations of the Pall Mall exhibition and a new discovery

Disappointingly there are only a few illustrations of the Pall Mall exhibition but what we have are very evocative, whilst also telling of the deceptive, yet probably then acceptable, techniques used by the Campanari. A watercolour depicts the room representing the Tomba delle Bighe (Tomb of the Chariots) at Tarquinia (Figs 48–9). From contemporary accounts we know that the rooms were dramatically lit by flaming torches, and in Figure 48 we see how the flames from a ceiling lamp have blackened the roof of the 'tomb'. The reconstruction, with its original wall-paintings reproduced by painted canvases, conjured up a stunning recreation of the tomb. In the centre stood a sarcophagus, unusually carved with scenes all round, depicting episodes from the Trojan War. *The Times* of 26 January 1837 stated this to be the finest piece in the exhibition, little realising that it did not belong to the tomb, which dates to about 490–480 BC, and was carved about two centuries later.³⁹ The four sides of the sarcophagus were captured in an engraving by Benedetto Pistrucci, who had also designed the Waterloo medal, being the Principal Engraver and Chief Medallist of the Royal Mint.⁴⁰ The Campanari were clearly employing some of the most illustrious artists of the day. A skeleton inside the chest was purported to be that of a warrior, together with his panoply, which had in fact been found by the Campanari in the 'Tomb of the Warriors' at Vulci in 1833.⁴¹

Another illustration which I recently discovered surfaced surprisingly in a book devoted to early Christian monuments (Fig. 50).⁴² It is a more spontaneous rendition and represents another of the tomb chambers, said to be an entity from Tuscania (Room no. 2 on the plan of the ground floor).⁴³ The blue pigment shown here on the walls was also noted in the *Guide* which observed its use as a 'common practice with Tuscans'.⁴⁴ These sarcophagi were also among the many objects purchased from this exhibition by the British Museum, and are readily identifiable.⁴⁵ The layout of the sarcophagi in the coloured image is echoed by the plan (Fig. 51) and black and white drawing reproduced in Pryce's *British Museum Catalogue of Sculpture*, and reproduced by Colonna, but it is currently not possible to establish the relationship between the two illustrations.⁴⁶

The authenticity of the Pall Mall tombs

The Tuscania tombs are fine examples of the deception or, perhaps more accurately, the artistic licence employed by the Campanari to grasp public interest, the example of the Tomba delle Bighe having already been noted above in this respect. It is an interesting piece of reconnaissance on the



Figure 48 Anonymous, reconstruction of the Tomba delle Bighe in the Pall Mall exhibition, pen and ink and body colour, width 26.7cm. British Museum, 2016,5002.2

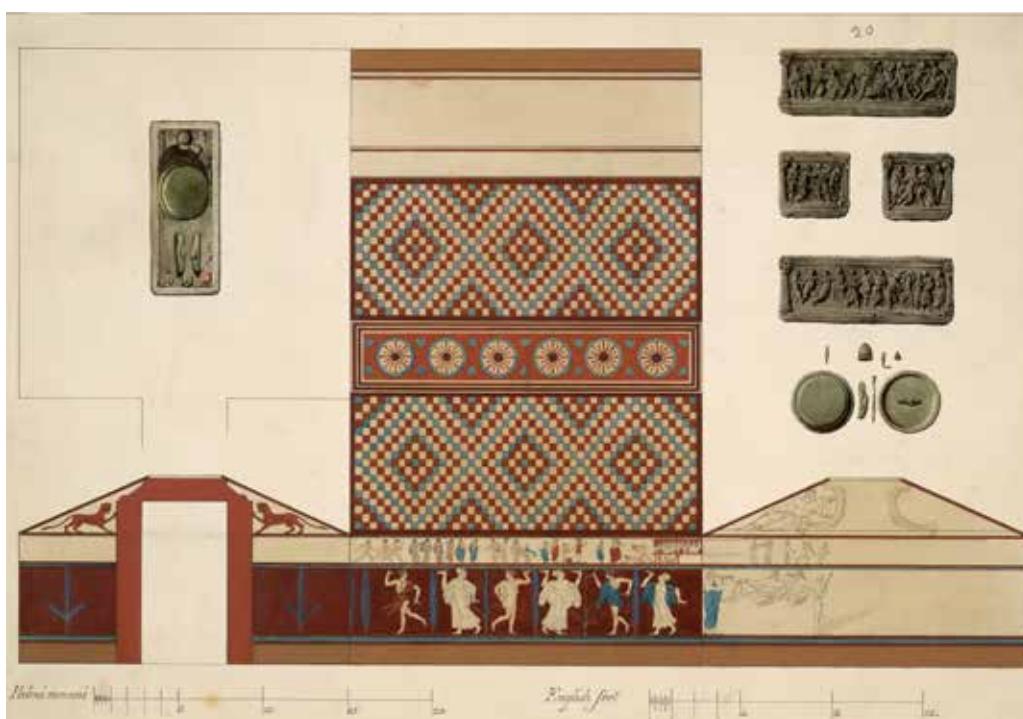


Figure 49 Anonymous, plan of the reconstruction of the Tomba delle Bighe in Fig. 48, which included a sarcophagus with scenes of the Trojan War (1838,0608.8, Pryce 1931, D 21) and its purported contents, pen and ink and body colour, width 40cm. British Museum, 2016,5002.1

part of the Campanari that in their choice of audience and location for the exhibition they bore in mind both that the British had been at the forefront with their publications on the Etruscans, and that they were particularly partial to funeral monuments.⁴⁷ Back in Tuscany, it had been evident that it was the English who were the most excited by Vincenzo Campanari's tours of Etruscan tombs.⁴⁸

Giovanni Colonna has already debunked some of the stories woven around the monuments as told by Secondiano in his *Guide*. In the First Chamber an emotional picture was painted concerning the 'old matron' shown reclining on her sarcophagus, near a fragmentary statue of a child, said perhaps to be her son: the sculpture is in fact of the 'temple-

boy' type, of Hellenistic date, and very probably not from a tomb but from a place of cult worship. Poignantly the boy was implied to have died young and his bones were said to be contained in the impasto biconical urn placed alongside, some seven centuries earlier than the sculpture.⁴⁹

The Second Chamber housed the four sarcophagi shown in the new illustration (Fig. 50). Secondiano claimed that they represented a complete family but the sarcophagi are unlikely to have come from the same tomb, since the inscriptions on the chests show no relationship between the incumbents: mention is made in the inscriptions on the chests of two separate families, the Atna and Vipinana. While the sarcophagi date to the Hellenistic period, the



Figure 50 Image of the Toscanella (Tuscania) tomb in Fig. 49, from Raoul-Rochette 1838, frontispiece

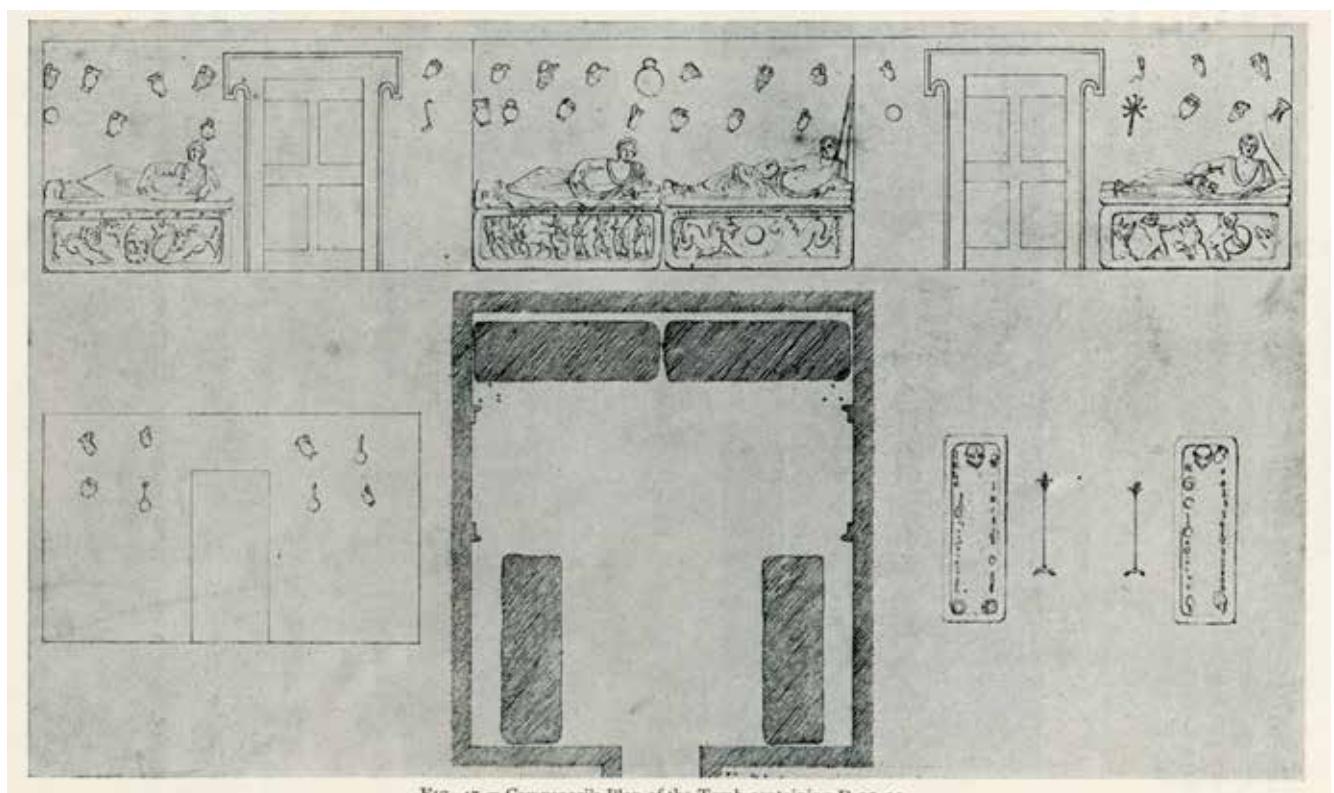


Figure 51 Plan of the Toscanella (Tuscania) tomb in the Pall Mall exhibition, Room 2 on the ground floor. From Pryce 1931, 194, artist unknown, described by Pryce as 'Campanari's plan'

objects shown associated with them are of widely differing dates.⁵⁰ The existence of heirlooms in tombs is well attested, but the date ranges of objects in this and the other Pall Mall tombs are too erratic to be convincing.

For this particular tomb assemblage, the newly discovered illustration shows us pretty much what the visitor

saw. The older male, on the right of the room and with only his lower legs and feet shown, was believed to be a priest of Bacchus on account of the incumbent being represented in his reclining effigy holding a kantharos and wearing an ivy wreath, but probably for no other reason than that he was depicted as though at a banquet, savouring a feast in the

afterlife as are many figures on sarcophagi.⁵¹ ‘His’ skull was also shown inside the sarcophagus, wearing a gold ivy wreath, along with his ‘sacrificial knife’, which was probably simply a razor.⁵² At the back of the room on the right is the sarcophagus of a younger looking man whom we now know from his inscription died at the age of 33, and he was claimed to be a warrior, with spears hung on the wall nearby (leaning up against the corner in the illustration) but no evidence survives for their association with this sarcophagus. The chest of his sarcophagus was constructed from limestone slabs, made up in London perhaps to avoid transporting the weight of the original.⁵³ To the left of this monument was the sarcophagus of another older man, also claimed to be a warrior, on the basis of what was believed to be a triumphal military procession shown on the sarcophagus, but it is more likely to be a funeral procession for a high-ranking official (**Fig. 52**). Indeed we can now identify the man from the accompanying inscription as a *zilath* or chief magistrate, stated to have died at the age of 63 (not 61 as Campanari states).⁵⁴ It has to be said that at least some of the discrepancies may be due to the difference in the level of knowledge of Etruscan studies then and now, but overall the Campanari seem to have aimed for an atmosphere of romanticising pathos.

Against the wall on the left was the last of the sarcophagi in this room, that of a younger woman who is described as ‘very beautiful’ (**Fig. 53**).⁵⁵ Secondiano remarks on the images on the sarcophagi being actual portraits, which we can now confirm to be the case on the evidence of terracotta sarcophagi of the period.⁵⁶ Inside the chest of the woman’s sarcophagus were a number of objects, mostly fine jewellery, but also including an Etrusco-Corinthian vase in the form of a monkey, some four or five centuries earlier than the sarcophagus. In addition there could be seen a skull decked with a gold myrtle wreath.⁵⁷ Much of the jewellery from the exhibition, along with a quantity of jewellery in the sales room, was sold off in an untimely manner after the first few months of the exhibition. Similarly an impressive bronze tripod placed before the sarcophagi at the back of the room was bought soon after the opening of the exhibition by the Duke de Luynes and removed.⁵⁸

In the case of the Tuscania tomb, there are interesting discrepancies between the illustrations that survive and what we know of the reconstruction itself. The illustrations shown here may have been based not on observation of the exhibition rooms, but on sketches – perhaps projections of what the reconstructed tombs would look like, and therefore pre-dating the exhibition itself, since they contain details not borne out by the preserved layouts. Such sketches could be construed as rudimentary mock-ups, foreshadowing what has become an essential practice for exhibition designers. The following are a few examples of such discrepancies. The image of the *zilath* looks considerably younger than it does on the sarcophagus and if one disregards the body it has a rather feminine appearance: perhaps the artist of the illustration misconstrued the gender as shown by such a sketch. The upper border of the chest of the young woman’s sarcophagus has designs of crosses or four-petalled rosettes which do not appear on the chest itself but were present on a similar-looking chest of a man’s sarcophagus sold by the



Figure 52 Sarcophagus of Atnas Vel, seen against the back wall, left, in Fig. 50. Length (chest), 210cm, total height of figure and chest 144cm. British Museum, 1838.0608.24

Campanari to the Palace of Monserrate, Sintra, Portugal.⁵⁹ Particular attention seems to have been paid to depicting the inscriptions, perhaps in view of the lively interest in Etruscan language at the time.⁶⁰

The exhibition was extremely popular and attracted great attention from the press and literati of the time: indeed it achieved what exhibitions so often seek to do now, both to captivate the public and also to satisfy scholarly interest.⁶¹ This is fully attested by a volume of reviews, press cuttings and correspondence preserved at the British Museum.⁶² The Campanari show was also a very successful commercial venture, with a shop on the top floor being used as a sale room for additional antiquities while the exhibition was in progress, and the remaining contents of the exhibition being sold off when it closed after a year in early 1838. Much of the Campanari’s material came from Tuscania and Vulci. They had close relations with the Istituto di Correspondenza Archeologica, which published the finds from Vincenzo Campanari’s excavations and allowed the family to keep a share, though they seem to have dug and exported more than would have been officially allowed. Following the success of Pall Mall, Vincenzo’s son Domenico set up a business in London trading in antiquities, while the other two sons, Carlo and Secondiano, dealt respectively in Paris and Germany,⁶³ thus initiating a thriving trade in antiquities in three major European countries. The Etruscan exhibition in Pall Mall was held at no. 121, which was demolished in the late 1920s and that number no longer exists. In the 1830s it would have been in the midst of art galleries, auction houses, the Wedgwood showrooms and numerous gentlemen’s clubs, and close to the Royal Opera House and the elegant shops in the Royal Opera Arcade (**Fig. 54**).

Reasons for the success of the Pall Mall exhibition

The Campanari could not have foreseen that 1837 was to be no ordinary year, for it saw the death of William IV and the accession of the young Victoria to the throne. St James’s Palace, until 1837 the official residence of British monarchs, is situated just at the west end of Pall Mall. In July 1837, when the king’s funeral took place, the exhibition is likely to have benefited from the massive increase in visitors to London, many of them from the aristocracy.⁶⁴



Figure 53 Sarcophagus lid showing a young woman (length 203.2cm, British Museum, 1838,0608.7, Pryce 1931, D29), placed on a chest presumably made for the Campanari exhibition, constructed from limestone slabs with plaster appliquéd decoration representing a bearded head between sea creatures (length 213.36cm, British Museum, 1838,0608.6, Pryce 1931, D 30), seen against the left wall in Fig. 50

Visitors to the exhibition received devoted attention from Carlo Campanari, an expert at deploying the charm offensive, who was almost always present to give guests a personal tour. This was not without ulterior motive, since it appears that from the outset he had wanted to woo potential purchasers, notably the Trustees of the British Museum. It was not the first time that an antiquarian excavator and dealer had used the strategy of making a public display of his wares and then offering them to the highest bidder. In 1821 the Egyptian enthusiast Bellinzoni had brought a collection of Egyptian items for exhibition in the Egyptian Hall, also in Pall Mall, with the intention of selling them off at the end of the show. It was his intention that his prize object, the so-called Bellinzoni sarcophagus, should also be displayed there before it was put up for sale so that it could attract greater interest. By chance, however, the sarcophagus was taken straight to the British Museum. Fortunately this still served Bellinzoni's purpose, for although the Trustees declined the purchase, it caught the attention of Sir John Soane who bought it for his own museum in High Holborn where it became his favourite possession and the star piece of the collection.⁶⁵

Campanari's ploy was to persuade a large number of his most eminent visitors to sign a petition and write letters urging the British Museum to purchase the contents of the exhibition. The names, preserved in two lists in the volume mentioned above,⁶⁶ make fascinating reading and include many well-known figures. We find Charles Roach Smith, founder of the British Archaeological Association, who pioneered the statistical study of Roman coin hoards; John Disney, who endowed the Disney Chair of Archaeology at Cambridge; and numerous painters, sculptors and architects, including Richard Westmacott, the sculptor responsible for the British Museum pediment. Other distinguished figures include George Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, 2nd Duke of Sutherland, Trustee of the National Gallery and of the British Museum, and Sir Edward Ffrench Bromhead, who was 2nd Baronet Bromhead and a Fellow of



Figure 54 Nos 120–1 Pall Mall, from Sandeman and Leighton 1849. The individual buildings are not identified, but given the extent of the Campanari Etruscan exhibition one would assume that no. 121 was the larger house, immediately behind the horse-drawn vehicle

the Royal Society. He was the uncle of Major Sir Gonville Bromhead, the hero of the battle of Rorke's Drift in the Anglo-Zulu war in 1879. Also there is Samuel Gurney, an English banker and philanthropist. Next to his signature is that of Joseph Fry who was Samuel Gurney's brother-in-law. Joseph was a tea merchant and an anti-slavery campaigner, and his brother founded the Fry's chocolate factory. Sir Robert Peel was also a visitor, along with 'nearly all the elite of taste and fashion'.⁶⁷ We know, too, that there was a dramatic near miss between two celebrated individuals at the exhibition:⁶⁸

Amongst ladies and gentlemen of the highest rank who have recently honoured the exhibition of Etruscan Tombs No 121 Pall Mall, with an examination it happened that on the 24th instant was the son of Camino Don Pietro Buonoparte (*sic*) lately arrived in London, and who quitted the exhibition a few moments after the Duke of Wellington had entered, but without having actually met his Grace. It would have been a singular occurance (*sic*) had the conqueror of Waterloo encountered, in these sepulchral caverns, a figure which might have been mistaken for the shade of his ancient competitor Napoleon Bonaparte, so exactly similar are the figure, countenance, look and gestures of the nephew to those of his uncle, the deceased Emperor.

It seems highly likely that the introduction to the exhibition for many of these guests came via its patron, Samuel Rogers, whom Campanari warmly thanked at the beginning of his *Guide*. Rogers, a banker by profession, was a celebrated poet and benefactor of the arts, a great conversationalist who was acquainted with all the major literary and political figures of his time. He may perhaps have first met the Campanari on his travels to Italy.

Members of the press seem to have been made particularly welcome to the exhibition, and there were many enthusiastic reviews with sentiments along the lines of one in the *Metropolitan Conservative Journal*:⁶⁹

We hope the spirited undertaking of Signor Campanari will meet with that success it so eminently deserves. This is the only

similar exhibition to be seen west of the Alps, and for the number and variety of its attractions superior to any in the world.

and this in the *Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres*:⁷⁰

How gratifying is it to the scientific and inquiring mind to have perfect specimens of the earliest periods of art thus cheaply brought home – even to our doors!

Others such as this one indicated the exhibition's wide appeal:⁷¹

It is an exhibition well worthy of the attention of the student, the scholar and the virtuoso:- and the exhibitor, Mr. Campanari, deserves much praise for the labour and expense he has bestowed in bringing these relics of "other times" before the eye of a British metropolis.

Voices of dissent are few and isolated, but this particular comment in *The Atlas* will resonate more with modern views:⁷²

These redoubtable guards [referring to the figures of Charun] appear to have no terrors for Signor Campanari, whose lamentations over the precious things carried off from the tombs and abhorrence of the sacrilegious thieves who committed such enormities, are uttered with amusing self-complacency. To pilfer a bone or an ear-ring is indeed base in the extreme, but to carry away a whole mausoleum is another affair.

The British Museum's purchase of material from the Pall Mall exhibition

The British Museum Trustees, after several refusals, were finally persuaded by the then Keeper of Antiquities, Edward Hawkins, the Campanari and presumably also by the signatories of the petition to buy much of the contents of the exhibition, but contrary to popular belief, not all. The Museum bought 191 objects⁷³ (and many more, unrelated to the Pall Mall exhibition, which were offered for sale by the Campanari in subsequent years) while the remaining material found its way to other collections, in London and elsewhere.⁷⁴ Carlo Campanari had no qualms in playing his potential purchasers off against one another: for example, a bronze statue of Athena (Minerva Ergane) in the Pall Mall exhibition was offered to the Trustees of the British Museum but they were gazumped by the King of Bavaria.⁷⁵ The Campanari were undeniably great entrepreneurs and must be praised for their business acumen. It has to be acknowledged, however, that the exhibition proved very expensive to stage, and in the end, despite Carlo's asking price to the British Museum of £3,000 (probably equivalent to the best part of two million pounds nowadays) the Trustees finally managed to acquire the major part of the contents of the exhibition for a mere £600.⁷⁶ This was the result of hard bargaining by Edward Hawkins, the Keeper of Antiquities, and James Millingen, an antiquarian and dealer who supplied most of the major European museums, seemingly on this occasion acting as an independent adviser. The installation of the exhibition and transport costs alone had cost Campanari over £1,000 (now equivalent to over half a million pounds). A letter of 1 March 1838 preserved in the bound Pall Mall documents in the British Museum from the shipping agents J. and R. McCracken, who according to their letter head had been appointed by the Royal Academy,

advised Carlo Campanari that even to accept £1,000 would not be a good deal:

Upon looking into the accounts connected with the importation of the sarcophagi; statues etc which form your Exhibition of Etruscan Tombs, we find that you cannot have expended much less than £1,000 if to the expense of the double transport from the site of the excavations to Leghorn and from Leghorn to London with Duties and landing charges, removal (?) etc is added the rent of your place in Pall Mall and what you have laid out there for fitting up the place and we do not include in this estimate your own loss of time and labour.

Indeed, upon consideration, we think if you were to part with the Exhibition for only one thousand pounds you would be a loser rather than a gainer by the speculation.

Perhaps in consideration of the funds already raised by other sales from the exhibition, the Campanari felt they must cut their losses rather than entertain the expense of returning the unwieldy sarcophagi to Italy, and in addition the sale opened the door to further major sales to the British Museum up until 1849. For the British Museum, the acquisition constituted a firm foundation for one of the finest collections of Etruscan antiquities outside Italy, as well as securing the good will and support of the key intellectual and political players of the time who had put their signature to the petition for their purchase by the Museum.

One of the most noted features of the exhibition was the reproduction of frescoes on canvases which were hung around the chambers. On the Tomba delle Bighe (**Figs 48–9**), *The Times* commented:⁷⁷

The walls of this room are covered with copies from the paintings found in the tomb, and are remarkable for their composition, correct drawing, and spirit.

Etruscan wall-paintings had begun to be copied on a small scale for the purposes of publication from the late 1820s as a result of the many new discoveries that were being made. Actual-size facsimiles were an even newer phenomenon initiated by the draughtsman and restorer Carlo Ruspi between 1832 and 1837, principally for the Vatican and for King Ludwig I of Bavaria, with the aim of preserving the threatened paintings for posterity in the new archaeological museums in the Vatican and the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. Full-size facsimiles acquired in the 1890s for the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek in Copenhagen and displayed there since 1991 show what some of the other Pall Mall rooms would have looked like, providing a truly colourful and lively spectacle.⁷⁸ The authorship of the Pall Mall paintings is uncertain, but they were certainly among the first produced. The canvases were acquired by the British Museum along with antiquities from the exhibition, but only a selection now survives and in a very fragmentary state. The photographs published in 1930 by Messerschmidt of the British Museum (i.e. Campanari) copies of the paintings from the Tomba Campanari probably illustrate the canvases when they were still in situ in the reconstruction in the basement.⁷⁹ The photographs included here (**Figs 55–6**) are among those taken in the 1980s when the canvases were unrolled for examination, but they are now handled as little as possible, until such time as resources may become available to conserve them. They are all the more valuable



Figure 55 Part of a painted canvas from the Pall Mall exhibition reproducing wall-paintings from the so-called Campanari tomb at Vulci, showing on the right Hades and Persephone, pre 1837. British Museum, 1838,0608,25-48 (see Fig. 60)



Figure 56 Part of a painted canvas from the Pall Mall exhibition reproducing wall-paintings from the Grotta Dipinta at Bomarzo, showing a sea monster, a plant ornament and a head, perhaps of a deity or the deceased, pre 1837. British Museum, 1837,0608,25-48

because the tracings on which the reproductions are based were done, perhaps by Carlo Ruspi, before a disastrous attempt by Campanari at removing the originals from the walls.⁸⁰ The preservation of similar canvases in Italy was, and still remains, problematic (see Chapter 6 by Sarti in this volume). Ironically two of the best-preserved pieces in the British Museum are two small sections showing erotic scenes from the Tomba delle Bighe, cut out from the canvases and placed in the Museum Secretum (**Figs 57–8**).⁸¹ The depictions originally featured among a number of couples shown in the act of love-making under the staging on which sat the audience watching sports contests. These pieces have only recently come to light and at first it appeared that their homoerotic nature had led to a past British Museum curator removing them from the canvases so that they could ‘appropriately’ be placed in the Museum Secretum. However it seems that a counterpart and also the figure of a naked male wrestler on all fours on the canvases in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco were also removed, one at the request of the Pope and one by the artist Carlo Ruspi to avoid further offence and ensure that he would be paid.⁸² The British Museum fragments showing the male couples are in such pristine condition that they must have been removed at an early stage, perhaps by the Campanari who feared a negative reaction in Pall Mall, or by the British Museum not wishing to offend visitors to the galleries. Either way, their condition gives us some idea of the striking colour and clarity of the canvases when they first went on show.⁸³

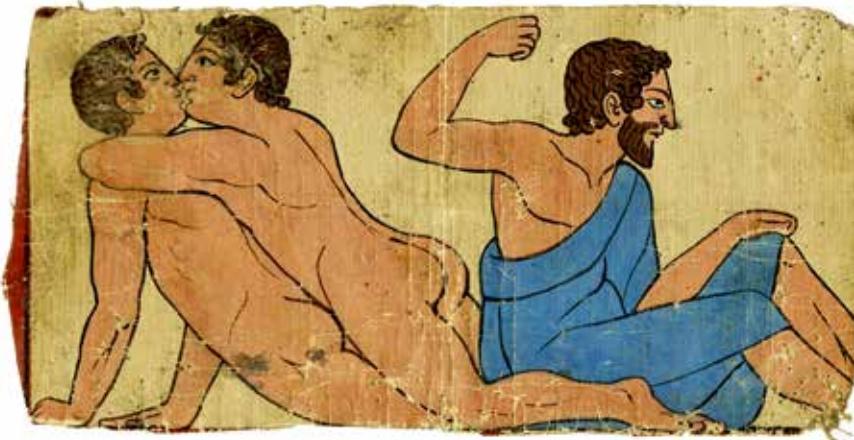
The Pall Mall exhibition: impact and influence

Of the many artists inspired by objects from the Campanari exhibition, one notable example was James Stephanoff who

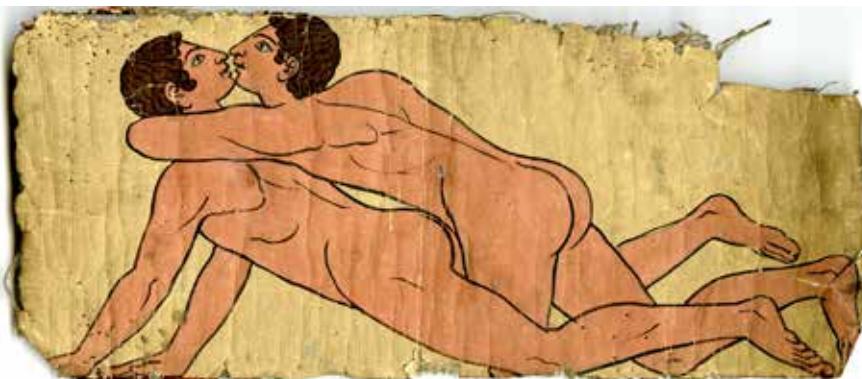
in 1845 produced the remarkable watercolour, *An Assemblage of Works of Art, from the Earliest Period to the Time of Phydias* (**Fig. 59**), which gives pride of place, immediately below the Parthenon sculptures, to Etruscan objects, namely the reproductions of Etruscan wall-paintings and sarcophagi from the Campanari exhibition.⁸⁴ The scheme of the painting works very well on a decorative level, though we might question the aesthetic appeal of the sarcophagi which are probably not what would now be considered as the best representatives of Etruscan art. In the book of reviews of the Campanari exhibition held in the British Museum one of the recurring themes is, indeed, the beauty of the objects. There were certainly some very fine bronzes, jewellery and pottery on display. With regard to the sarcophagi, what the contributors seem to be alluding to, and indeed some of them articulate this more clearly, is that here are represented real people once of flesh and blood, with whom they could identify far more readily than with the idealised works of Greek and Roman sculpture with which they were now familiar.

Their attitudes are graceful, natural and animated, and their countenances expressive; the habits of their lives accompany them in death.⁸⁵

Even today it is the spontaneity and realism of the Etruscans which still attracts many of their adherents. To at least some of the Pall Mall visitors, the Romans came off badly: a quote from the *Morning Post* refers to the Romans as ‘that illustrious nest of thieves, those pauperised conquerors, were but fellows of yesterday compared with our immortal friends, the Tuscans’, and adds:



Figures 57–8 Fragments showing couples making love beneath the staging of a grandstand at a sports contest, at some date cut from the painted canvas reproductions of the wall-paintings of the Tomba delle Bighe exhibited at the Pall Mall exhibition, pre 1837, width of top fragment 24.1cm, width of bottom fragment 12.5cm. British Museum, 2010,5006.610 and 611



It is obvious that the Italians are a more hearty and festive people than the Romans, and the few and indistinct glimpses we may obtain of Etruscan manners and customs seem to point to a corresponding vivacity in those most ancient of the known inhabitants of the country.⁸⁶

The presence of the very skeletons of Etruscan individuals, seen *in situ* in some of the sarcophagi, conveyed their humanity even more. We can draw on another comment from the *The Constitutional*:

We can look upon the bones of the priests and heroes, and note that they are just such as we wear within our fleshly clothing to this day.⁸⁷

Other recurring themes in the reviews are admiration for the Campanari's achievement, and appreciation of the joys of banqueting, music and dance which the Etruscans envisaged for the afterlife.

Mrs Hamilton Gray and George Dennis

One visitor who was certainly swept away by the whole experience of the Campanari exhibition was Mrs Elizabeth Caroline Hamilton Gray. The exhibition had been recommended to her by Dr Samuel Butler, Bishop of Lichfield and Headmaster of Shrewsbury School, and also a classical scholar and collector, who bought many of the objects from the exhibition sale room. As a collector, like many early antiquarians, he not infrequently fell foul of the dealers, since the objects bought by the British Museum (which seems to have been similarly duped) from his collection are in several cases fake. Examples of this include a brightly polished mirror with a modern ivory handle, at least one Etruscan mirror with a fake engraving, and a stone

disc with a purported Etruscan inscription, also a fake, said to be from Cortona, which according to his friend Mrs Hamilton Gray he humorously called his 'Etruscan fire insurance policy', alluding to the plaques which prior to the establishment of the municipal fire brigade were displayed on houses to indicate which fire service they subscribed to.⁸⁸ It is Mrs Hamilton Gray who comments on his sizeable purchases from the Pall Mall exhibition.⁸⁹

Mrs Hamilton Gray, now a prominent figure in any discussion of the history of Etruscology, was inspired by the show to investigate the Etruscans in their homeland. She and her husband, the Rev. John Hamilton Gray, began planning their Grand Tour, and travelled in Italy between 1837–9, visiting a number of Etruscan tombs. They also made the acquaintance of Etruscan scholars such as Giuseppe Micali and Emil Braun, and the antiquarian and dealer Alessandro Castellani, with whom Mrs Hamilton Gray was much impressed. They bought numerous antiquities, mainly vases, coins and gems,⁹⁰ habitually seeking the advice of the Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica prior to purchase. Only two of the objects came to be acquired by the British Museum, from posthumous sales, both Etruscan scaraboid gems of fine quality.⁹¹ Very much later, in 2007, the British Museum acquired another item originally in the collection, an intriguing subgeometric bichrome amphora now known as the Hamilton Gray Vase.⁹²

Mrs Hamilton Gray and her party visited many sites and museums but most relevant here is her sojourn with the Campanari in Tuscania. Carlo Campanari was a gracious and benign host, showing them around his archaeological garden and arranging visits to local tombs, and even



Figure 59 James Stephanoff, *An Assemblage of Works of Art, from the Earliest Period to the Time of Phydias*, 1845, watercolour over graphite, height 74.3cm. British Museum, 1994,1210.6

managing to smile when a member of the party accidentally broke a strigil which was fresh from excavation.⁹³ Later George Dennis was also to commend the Campanari hospitality, recalling ‘with respect and gratitude the many pleasurable and profitable hours I have spent in their society’.⁹⁴

On her return from Italy Mrs Hamilton Gray wrote up and published in 1840 the memoirs of her travels, *Tour to the Sepulchres of Etruria, in 1839*, which was so popular that it ran to a third edition. She had been encouraged in this venture by William Richard Hamilton, Trustee of the British Museum and Secretary of the Society of Dilettanti. He not only gave careful attention to her proposals, but recommended books and put his library at her disposal, to the extent that she acknowledged that the publication would not have been possible without his help. It was engagingly and informatively written, and very well received by the public. Notably it evokes the atmosphere and fascination of sightseeing of the time, and introduces us first-hand to some of the major characters in Etruscan archaeology. It was not a work of gravitas as Mrs Hamilton Gray openly admitted: that would be a task for others. In turn, James Byres, the Scottish architect, artist, antiquary and dealer (see Chapter 16 by Davidson in this volume), posthumously benefited from the success of Mrs Hamilton Gray’s publication. He had supplied various collectors whose objects eventually came to the British Museum, most notably the Portland Vase. He became extremely interested in the Etruscans

following a visit to the excavations of Thomas Jenkins in the Monterozzi cemetery at Tarquinia, and planned to publish a volume containing his drawings of the site and of various antiquities, especially inscriptions, but the text was never completed, despite the interest of Piranesi and Sir William Hamilton.⁹⁵ The illustrations were published posthumously by Frank Howerd in 1842, profiting from the significant public interest aroused by the appearance in 1841 of Mrs Hamilton Gray’s book.

Indeed this work and Mrs Hamilton Gray’s *History of Etruria* (1843) seem to have prompted, at least in part, a better known publication.⁹⁶ George Dennis, the British pioneering Etruscologist, felt that a more thorough and authoritative work was required. We do not know whether he saw the Pall Mall exhibition as he was in Spain for at least some of its duration, but he must have seen Mrs Hamilton Gray’s account and perhaps also some of the press coverage. Dennis found Mrs Hamilton Gray’s work far from satisfactory and full of deficiencies; this despite her own statement that she was publishing the information to make it accessible to others far more scholarly than she. He much disliked her often ingenuous, excited style, her ‘giddy and gushing prose’, as Nancy De Grummond has described it.⁹⁷ His subsequent travels and research in Italy culminated in 1848 in his *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* (see Chapter 1 by Rasmussen in this volume). Strangely, his own masterpiece seems to have failed to capture the public imagination as much as Mrs Hamilton Gray’s had done and it was only republished in 1878, when it

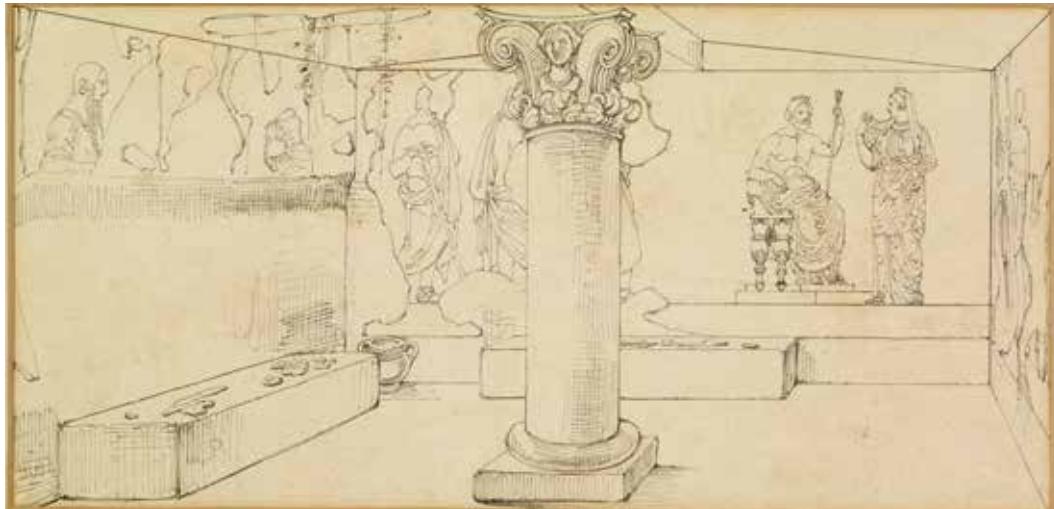


Figure 60 The so-called Campanari tomb at Vulci, reconstructed in Room 11 on the first floor of the Pall Mall exhibition, unsigned pen and ink drawing of the tomb itself, perhaps by Secondiano Campanari, width 34cm. British Museum, 2018,5005.1

was updated and more fully illustrated.⁹⁸ Dennis' work was unarguably a milestone, and over 150 years after its publication, it remains an indispensable guide to Etruscan sites and a colourful source of information regarding practices, archaeological and other, of the time. One wonders whether it would have happened without the indirect stimulus of the Pall Mall exhibition.

Another publication spawned by the exhibition, specifically the Tomb of the Inscriptions from Tarquinia, was Sir William Betham's *Etruria-celesta: Etruscan literature and antiquities investigated, or, The language of that ancient and illustrious people compared and identified with the Iberno-Celtic, and both shown to be Phoenician* (Dublin, 1842). Though voicing now very outdated views, these two volumes were much lauded at the time, causing a review in the *Gentleman's Magazine* to comment:

As the coruscation from an electric cloud discloses to the benighted wanderer in some unknown tract, in the twinkling of an eye, all the features of a rich and varied landscape, so the no less rapid glance of a thought frequently reveals to the student, in an instant, the clue to researches before pursued with fruitless labour.⁹⁹

Echoes of the Pall Mall tombs in Italy

Based on the success of the London exhibition the Campanari subsequently converted the garden of their home in Tuscania into a kind of archaeological park, with sarcophagi out in the open and also a vaulted chamber with sarcophagi in imitation of a tomb (the 'Vipinana tomb', see **Figs 43, 65** – the tomb was accessed via the doorway shown in **Fig. 43**). In 1838 the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco created what seems by the Pall Mall comparison to be a fairly modest reconstructed tomb, near the museum exit. Indeed some key elements repeated in the reconstructed tombs were almost formulaic, such as the pairs of lions as guardians: plaster copies were employed in the Campanari tomb in London, the originals of which accompanied the Vatican tomb, and there were other original pairs of lions outside the Vipinana tomb in the Campanari garden in Tuscania. Paintings of the Underworld god Charun seem also to have been considered essential, featuring prominently at the entrances to the *dromos* leading to the tombs in the basement of the Pall Mall house and to the so-called Campanari tomb at Vulci (**Fig. 60**, discovered by

the Campanari in 1833) on the upper floor, and in the tomb in the Campanari garden. Secondiano provided instructions to Pietro Ercole Visconti, who was charged with the installation of the tomb at the Vatican, recommending the inclusion of features such as a representation of Charun and copies of wall-paintings.¹⁰⁰ The Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze constructed Etruscan tombs in its courtyard around 1900, at the behest of Luigi Adriano Milani who had ultimately been inspired by the reconstructions in the Campanari garden and the Pall Mall tombs, of which the memory clearly lingered on vividly some 60 years later (see Chapter 6 by Sarti this volume, p. 74, **Fig. 72**).¹⁰¹

Display of the Pall Mall material in the British Museum

After her tour to Italy, Mrs Hamilton Gray came to the British Museum to visit her old Etruscan friends from the Campanari exhibition. She was deeply saddened when she saw the objects in their new context in September 1839. As she related, they were:

ranged along in melancholy confusion and neglect, without a place in the catalogue, nor any indication to the curious of what they were. Our Etruscan friends lay in silence. They looked indeed as if they felt they were in a strange country, cold, comfortless and far from home. The fantastic vaults of Campanari, with their elevated beds and mysterious gloom, his gay painted tombs and variety of ornament were no more to be seen. In short, the long and ugly line of coffins placed one against another in that room give no more idea of the sepulchres of Etruria than the broken columns and isolated statues in the Egyptian Hall give of the grand palace of Karnac.¹⁰²

She added that the Etruscans recumbent on the sarcophagi 'had an air of supreme unhappiness and desolation', as they might have done if when alive they had been 'brought as prisoners to the Druid Isle'. It seems that in 1839 Mrs Hamilton Gray must have seen the sarcophagi when they were in the so-called Ante-Room, where they remained until about 1850 (**Fig. 62**). At least their location, in rooms between the Parthenon sculptures and Egyptian antiquities, closely resembling and perhaps the source for Stephanoff's composition in 1845, was a prestigious one,¹⁰³ even if the method of display was wanting. Here the sarcophagi remained until the gallery was emptied to



Figure 61 The Etruscan Room at the British Museum, 1847, wood engraving, *Illustrated London News*, 13 February 1847, 108

accommodate material freshly arrived from Nimrud, becoming the Nimrud Central Saloon by 1852.¹⁰⁴

One aspect of Mrs Hamilton Gray's visit which greatly pleased her was 'the interest which the middle order of people testified in the collection before them, and the knowledge and improvement they were evidently anxious to gain from their visit', and the fact that a circle gathered around them to listen to an exposé given by a member of her party.

The travels of the Etruscan antiquities around the British Museum present a complex and frequently changing picture.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore in addition to the dedicated spaces which will be discussed below, selections of Etruscan material continued to be included in typological displays of bronzes, vases, sculpture and jewellery. The fast-flowing influx of antiquities from bequests, excavations and sales meant that in the 200 years up until the Second World War the existing displays were almost constantly being moved and rearranged to accommodate new material.¹⁰⁶ The new Townley Gallery of 1808 was not to last long as the rapidly increasing collections, not least the arrival of the library of George III, necessitated much more extensive accommodation. Therefore, in 1823 the architect Robert Smirke was commissioned to design the quadrangular building that constitutes much of what we see today. As far as the Etruscan collection was concerned, in 1842 the Etruscan Room, consisting of Etruscan and many Greek vases found in Etruscan and south Italian tombs, was reported to be in the course of arrangement. This occupied the central gallery on the upper floor of the new west wing, then Room 22 but now Room 71, and where the current Etruscan gallery has resided since 1991. By 1847 the gallery was completed and an illustration of it appears in the *Illustrated London News* (Fig. 61). Particularly interesting is that a close look reveals the Campanari canvases draped around the walls. The Museum was evidently learning a little about evocative display, but here the canvases were used as no more than suitable 'wallpaper': they decorate the walls but are in no way used to recreate the ambience of an Etruscan tomb, as so effectively achieved by the Campanari.

It would appear from Mrs Hamilton Gray's description above that the Campanari's reconstructed tombs vanished without trace in the British Museum, but research for this paper has shown that this was certainly not the case. The *Synopses* and early guides to the British Museum collections tell us much about the fortunes of the tombs, even if we cannot document them precisely year by year. The *Synopses* provide fairly detailed lists of the contents of each gallery and were published from the end of the 18th century, while the *Guides* begin to appear at the end of the 19th century. In both of these the Etruscan collection figures significantly.¹⁰⁷ For example, the *Synopsis* for 1847, contemporary with the illustration of the Etruscan Room (Fig. 61), provides a detailed list of the copies of the wall-paintings from Tarquinia suspended above the cases (nos 1–59) in the Etruscan Room.¹⁰⁸ Curiously it states that they are by S. (probably indicating Signor rather than Secondiano) Campanari rather than by Carlo Ruspi as now thought.¹⁰⁹ By 1851 we see that this room is no longer the Etruscan Room but the First Vase Room, probably in acknowledgement of the fact that so many of the vases were now accepted as Greek in origin although found in Etruscan tombs. Figure 62 shows the movements of Etruscan antiquities around the Museum between about 1840 and 1932. The Campanari wall-paintings based on the Tarquinia tombs were still listed in this gallery, and there they seem to have remained until at least 1881.¹¹⁰ By 1886 the First Vase Room somewhat confusingly became the Third Vase Room, with the First and Second Vase Rooms to the north (nowadays Rooms 72 and 73) containing earlier and other Greek vases, but the Tarquinian wall-paintings are no longer listed. This is however, not the end of their story.

In 1881 we see the emergence of the New Etruscan Room in the north-west corner of the upper galleries, in what was then Room 16 (nowadays no longer a public gallery). The *Annual Return* for 1881 states that 'the collection of Etruscan sculptures and black fictile ware has been transferred from the Sepulchral Basement and the Room of Archaic Sculpture to the New Etruscan Room in the north gallery on the upper floor'. It was so new that when the 1881 *Guide* was published there was as yet no description.¹¹¹ By 1882 Etruscan antiquities are installed, and by 1886, re-numbered as Room 32, we find specifically mentioned the Tuscana sarcophagi, the Bomarzo and the Trojan War sarcophagi, and the lid with the Tarquinian priestess.¹¹² Two illustrations which I recently identified, the only ones so far known, show us what this gallery looked like. The first is a photograph from the British Museum's archives (Fig. 63)¹¹³ which must illustrate this gallery because we know from the *Synopses* that the Bomarzo sarcophagus and those from the Tarquinian tombs were housed here, and in the background we can see on the wall the copy of the painting of the chequered ceiling of the Tomba delle Bighe. The photograph must therefore postdate 1882 when this gallery was installed and pre-date 1892 when this became the First Egyptian Room.¹¹⁴ Also clearly visible in the photograph is the plaster copy of the column capital from the Campanari tomb at Vulci, also from the Pall Mall exhibition, the original of which is in the Museo Archeologico, Florence.¹¹⁵ This capital exerted its own influence in London, surprisingly in the theatre: the

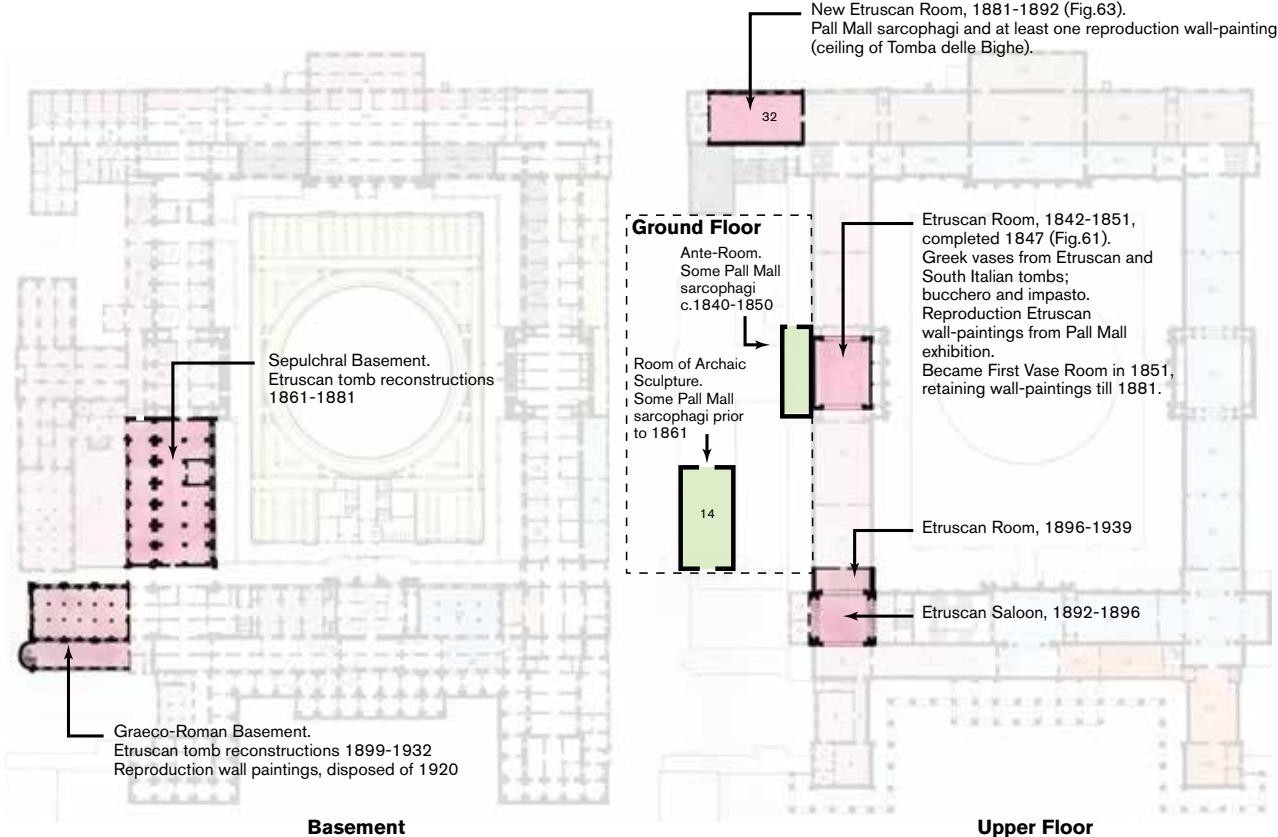


Figure 62 Plan showing the moves of the Etruscan material around the British Museum between c. 1840 and 1932, using as a basis a plan drawn in 1857, from a bound volume, 'Plans of the British Museum' in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum. Compiled by Kate Morton, British Museum

artist Lawrence Alma Tadema used it in his design for scenery for Henry Irving's production of *Coriolanus* at the Lyceum Theatre in London in April 1901. Alma Tadema chose to set the play in Rome of the 6th century BC rather than the more usual setting of the Imperial period, and used Etruscan imagery to supplement his repertoire where Roman evidence was lacking.¹¹⁶ For the interior of the house of Tullus Aufidius in the same production he extensively employed the wall-paintings of the Tomba delle Bighe, the copies of which he no doubt saw at the British Museum, and motifs from the infamous fake sarcophagus produced by the Penelli brothers, which by 1888 was exhibited in the First Vase Room.¹¹⁷

The second illustration of Room 16, now renumbered as 32, is in the unlikely form of a comic cartoon, dating to April 1887 (Fig. 64). It is one of a series of cartoons of the Victorian period showing the exploits of a character called Ally Sloper, known for skiving off and loafing around.¹¹⁸ The caption reads: 'Startling Phenomenon observed by Bank-Holiday Visitor in the Etruscan Room' and Ally is looking at an old gentleman, himself taking time out in the Trojan War sarcophagus, reading a copy of the Ally Sloper comic book. The Museum by now attracted crowds of all ages and social classes, particularly on public holidays. The drawing echoes the layout shown in the photograph, with the Bomarzo sarcophagus seen beyond the 'Trojan' one being studied by two visitors. The comic book had a very wide readership and the Etruscans had evidently arrived in popular media.

For the Tarquinian facsimiles, there is no mention of them in the *Synopses* or *Guides* after they were removed from

the First/Third Vase Room. An old pencilled note in the *Synopsis* for 1866, in the margin by the description of the new Etruscan Room in the north-west corner, queries 'copies of tomb wall-paintings'¹¹⁹ so it seems that someone else was also wondering what had become of them. Were it not for the sight of the chequered ceiling reproduction in the photograph mentioned above, showing the Etruscan Room in its new incarnation, it would seem that they had indeed vanished. It is a much smaller room than the Vase Room and it is unlikely that many of the Tarquinian canvases could have been shown there. The Officers' Reports in the British Museum tell us the eventual fate of the Tarquinian facsimiles, which in fact survived until 1920. On 30 March 1920 permission was sought to destroy them as they had become 'very dingy and partly rotten', which is unsurprising given the likelihood of the paint flaking from the canvases over the decades and pollution from the infamous smogs of Victorian London.¹²⁰ There is however also mention that they had been 'painted over' about 20 years previously,¹²¹ so it would seem that the British Museum went to some lengths to preserve them during their 83 years of ownership. In 1920 however their condition and a comparison with photos of the wall-paintings led to the decision that there was no reason to keep them.¹²²

In 1892 the Etruscan display removed from Room 32 was installed in the new 'Etruscan Saloon' occupying a large area of Room 39. This turned out to be only a short term measure, for by 1896 further augmentation of the collections, particularly Cypriot material from Enkomi, meant that the Etruscan material occupied only the

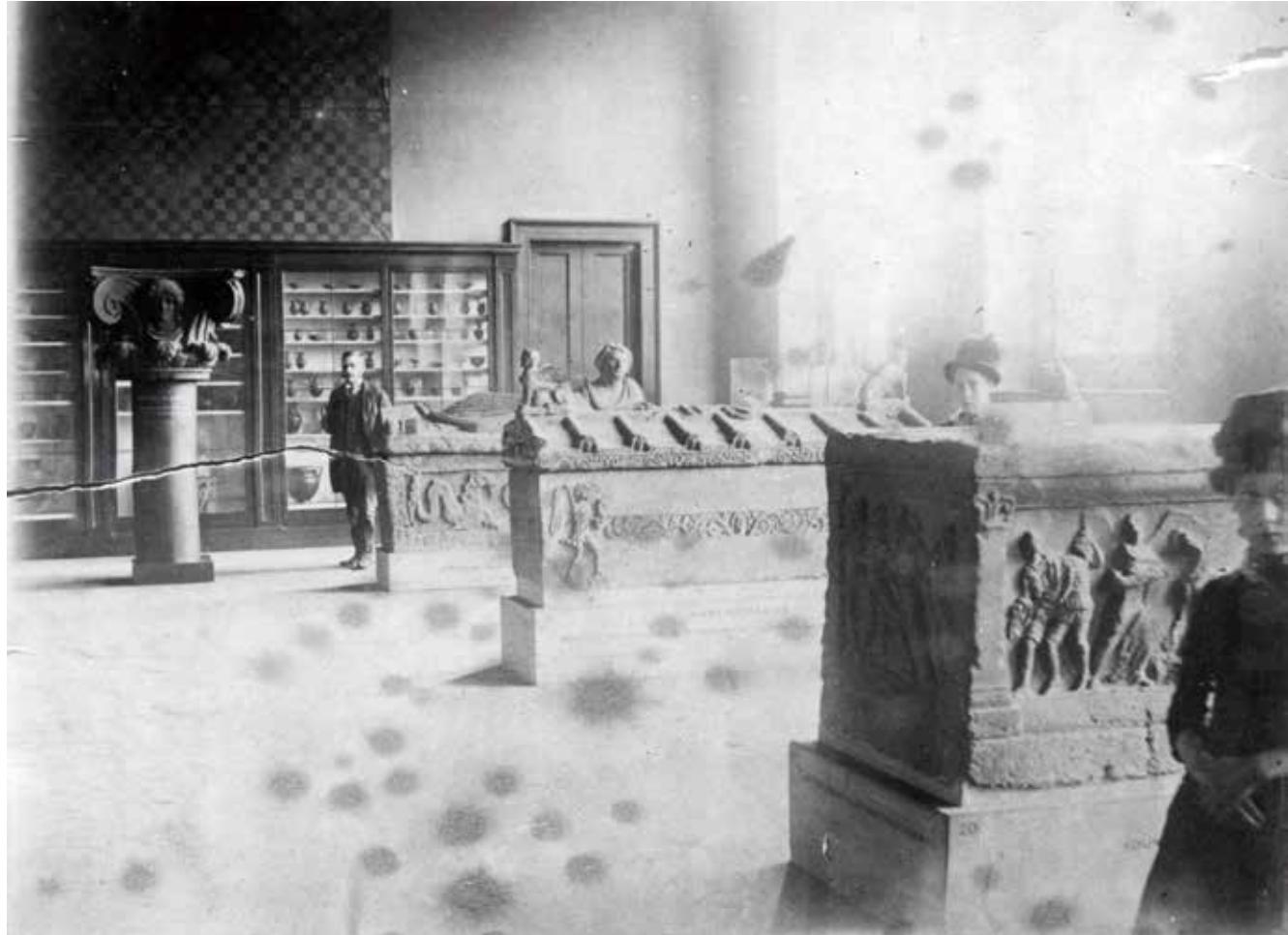


Figure 63 Photograph of the room in the north-west corner of the first floor of the British Museum where Etruscan antiquities from the Pall Mall exhibition were displayed between 1882 and 1892 (Fig. 62), including the plaster reproduction column from the so-called Campanari tomb at Vulci (Fig. 60), the sarcophagus of a young woman (Fig. 53), the sarcophagus from the Grotta Dipinta at Bomarzo (1838,0608.12, Pryce 1931 Sculpture D20) and the 'Trojan War' sarcophagus shown in Fig. 49. Hanging on the far wall is the reproduction of the ceiling painting in the Tomba delle Bighe (Fig. 48)

northern part of that gallery, which after the Second World War was to become the Room of Greek and Roman Daily Life (as now), and numbered Room 69.

It came as something of a surprise on scouring the Museum archives to learn that several of the Pall Mall 'tombs', despite Mrs Hamilton Gray's misgivings, were reassembled for much of this time; from 1861 four of them were again on view to the public,¹²³ indeed right up until the 1930s. To begin with they were located in a series of small rooms, called bays, opening off from the Sepulchral Basement, while some individual sarcophagi appear to have remained in the Archaic Room, devoted to sculpture, on the ground floor. The *Synopses* and *Guides* are for some reason silent about the reconstructions until a detailed description appears in the 1899 *Synopsis*, by which time the tombs had been moved to the Graeco-Roman Basement, built in 1855 in the south-west corner of the Museum. There is also a reference to gates and barriers which may suggest that the public could not actually enter the 'tombs'.¹²⁴ Extant photographs of this basement unfortunately do not provide any views into the bays. In the first bay was the reconstruction of the Grotta Dipinta from Bomarzo, the largest of the tombs from Pall Mall, with copies of the wall-paintings¹²⁵ and the sarcophagus (see Figs 56, 63), and in the second bay the four large sarcophagi said by the

Campanari to be from Tuscania. In the third bay was the sarcophagus chest purportedly from the Tomba delle Bighe at Tarquinia, with scenes from the Trojan War, perhaps by then realised not to belong to that tomb from which the copies of the paintings were displayed upstairs; on top of the chest, though with no connection to it, was placed the lid carved with the figure of a priestess of Dionysus, with kantharos and fawn, from Tarquinia.¹²⁶ The fourth bay contained a variety of Etruscan cinerary urns and, very incongruously, the Roman wooden waterwheel from Rio Tinto, while the fifth housed the reconstruction of the Campanari tomb from Vulci, with its central sculpted Tuscan column embellished with volutes and mythological heads, wall-paintings¹²⁷ (Figs 54, 56, 63), and plaster copies of crouching lions, now placed inside the 'tomb' rather than serving as guardians outside it as they had done at Pall Mall.¹²⁸

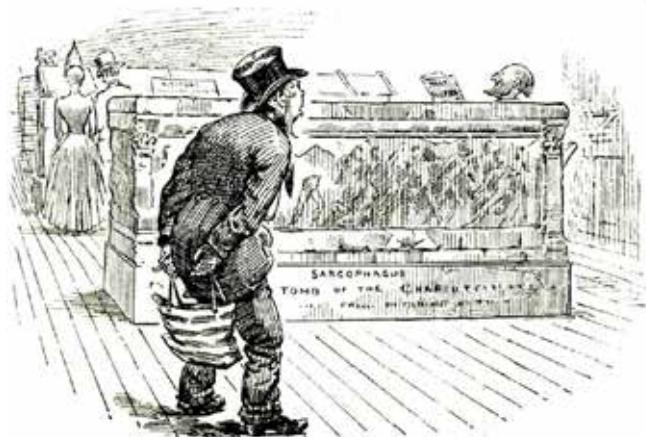
The last mention of the tombs in the *Guides* is in 1928.¹²⁹ By 1929 the *Guides* to the collections changed in character to become themed discussions of aspects of classical antiquity, books which would stand in their own right: they were of course useful as such but not so helpful for tracking the peregrinations of exhibits. In 1931, however, the author William Boulton devotes two pages to the Etruscans in his *Romance of the British Museum*, noting the reconstructions of

the Grotta Dipinta and the Vulci (i.e. the Campanari) tomb, in the ‘Etruscan Basement’ as the most interesting Etruscan exhibits. Sadly just the next year, 1932, the Officers’ Reports note that two of the tombs had been dismantled¹³⁰ and it seems that round about this time the entire Graeco-Roman Basement was emptied, perhaps in order to house an electrical plant (the space is still used for the same purpose), so the other Etruscan tombs were probably also dismantled at much the same time. What then happened to the tombs is uncertain: following the evacuation of objects with the onset of the Second World War in 1939, and the massive re-organisation when the collections were eventually returned from their many different locations to the bomb-damaged institution, it seems that either the plaster and canvas elements of the tomb settings had suffered too badly to be returned to display or the desire or space for the reconstructions was no longer present.

What might have been...

One might wonder whether, had the Etruscans been represented in a more focused way, feeding on the impact created by the Campanari exhibition, they might have had a stronger presence in the study of classical archaeology in Great Britain. After the Second World War, the Etruscans lost their public face at the British Museum for nearly four decades. The destruction of the upper suite of Greek and Roman galleries during the Blitz, after the antiquities had been evacuated, saw them open to the skies until the early 1950s.¹³¹

The Etruscans finally lifted their heads again in 1976, when a mezzanine gallery was opened up for a new Etruscan display off one of the classical Greek galleries on the ground floor (now Room 20a, an open reserve of Athenian painted pottery), organised by Dr Sybille Haynes.¹³² Although the new Etruscan display was a great success, the mezzanine gallery was something of a cul-de-sac and during the 1980s it was accepted that this important civilisation and the other non-Roman peoples of Italy merited a gallery of their own alongside the other major classical cultures. Therefore when the new suite of galleries was planned for the upper floor of the west block, the Etruscans and other Italic peoples found a home in Room 71, the large central gallery in a series of five rooms, back to where they had been for much of the 19th century. I had the responsibility of organising this permanent display illustrating the Etruscan and Italic cultures of Italy, entitled ‘Italy Before the Roman Empire’ (now known as ‘The Etruscan World’). In fact I argued for the inclusion of a reconstruction of the Tuscania tomb from Pall Mall, but the costs involved and, ironically, the issue of floor-loading (a problem somehow resolved or rashly ignored in the Georgian house in Pall Mall and the old Room 32 in the British Museum), prevented the realisation of the idea. Writing as a curator faced with the modern constraints of health and safety, and envious of the dramatic effects which the Campanari were able to achieve, it is hard to resist commenting on the lack of safety precautions in the Pall Mall exhibition. One wonders how the floors of an ordinary Georgian house in Pall Mall coped with the burden of the sarcophagi, each weighing around two tons; and how the fire risk of the flaming torches and candelabra in close



Startling Phenomenon observed by Bank-Holiday Visitor in the Etruscan Room,

Figure 64 ‘Startling Phenomenon observed by Bank-Holiday Visitor in the Etruscan Room’. Ally Sloper cartoon, April 1887

proximity to the canvas wall-painting reproductions, and the hazards of the narrow, dark ‘dromos’ corridor, closed by a block imitating an Etruscan tomb closure which had to be heaved aside to admit entrants on their descent to the ‘underground’ tombs, were ignored. The downward corridor seems to have been immediately adjacent to the upward stair exit from the basement, with no other exit from the other four basement rooms.¹³³

Let us hope that the future will continue to look favourably upon the Etruscan exhibition at the British Museum, having now experienced its longest period of stability as far as location is concerned. Looking forward, a digital if not a physical reconstruction of one or more of the Pall Mall tombs would surely re-ignite some of the excitement stirred by the legendary Campanari exhibition almost two centuries ago.¹³⁴

Notes

- 1 I am indebted to Marjorie Caygill (retired, British Museum) for sharing her expertise on the history of the British Museum and to Francesca Hillier, Archivist at the British Museum, her predecessor Stephanie Alder and Lyn Rees for helping to find relevant material for this account of the display of the Etruscan collections at the British Museum. I am grateful for help and support in a variety of ways from Lesley Fitton, Keeper of the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum, Charles Arnold, Fiona Campbell, Nancy de Grummond, Joan Edwards, Celeste Farge, Alice Ford-Smith, Laurent Haumesser, Peter Higgs, Ian Jenkins, Claire Lyons, Kate Morton, Philip Perkins, Paul Roberts, Charo Rovira Guardiola, Shane Taylor, Peter Williams, Susan Woodford, Laurence Worms, my husband Robert Broomfield and not least Sarah Faulks, British Museum Research Publications editor, for her patience and encouragement.
- 2 Much interesting information about the Campanari and their activities has been gathered by Francesco Buranelli (Buranelli 1991); see also Dennis 1883, 474.
- 3 Details of all the objects in the British Museum’s collection can be found in the online database at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.
- 4 MacGregor 1994b, 29, 289.
- 5 Sloan 2004.
- 6 The Cottonian Library and Harleian Manuscripts acquired by the British Museum under the 1753 Act, and the Old Royal Library acquired in 1757.
- 7 MacGregor 1994b, 34–5.
- 8 A search for Etruscan objects from the Sloane collection in the

- British Museum's Collection Online reveals 25 objects. See above n. 3.
- 9 BM, 1756,0101.1124.
- 10 BM, 1756,0101.530.
- 11 BM, 1756,0101.794,796-7,932,972 and 1007.
- 12 BM, 1926,0624.1.
- 13 For the bucchero from the Sloane Collection see Perkins 2007, nos 38, 40, 67, 85, 163, 173, 191, 226. Impasto cup, BM, 1756,0101.850, c. 850–750 BC, *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, British Museum 7 IVBa pl. 4, 4.
- 14 Jenkins 1994, 168. I am grateful to Ian Jenkins, fellow curator at the British Museum, for sharing some of his research on the history of the collection.
- 15 See below, n. 26.
- 16 Powlett 1762. The 1st edition was published in 1761, and the 2nd slightly different edition 1762. The contents are sometimes attributed simply to the printers, Dodsley, rather than to Powlett.
- 17 Powlett 1762, 43–4.
- 18 Powlett 1762, 45–6.
- 19 For example the sepulchral vase of Claudia Romulla, BM, 1756,0101.261. A copy of the 1808 *Synopsis* in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum was annotated by Taylor Combe with identifications of many of the objects.
- 20 British Museum, 1756,0101.1124. *Synopsis*, 1808, 75–6, no. 21. Two other Etruscan cinerary urns mentioned here (nos 24 and 34) are from the collection of Sir William Hamilton.
- 21 See above n. 11.
- 22 The objects had been correctly identified as mirrors since the early 1820s by Inghirami in his *Monumenti Etruschi* (1821–5), but the term *patera* continued to be applied for some decades: *The Edinburgh Review* 16, January 1850, 392.
- 23 Cagianelli 2006; Gambaro 2008.
- 24 Bronze youth, BM, 1824,0497.1; bronze satyr, BM 1824,0466.1; bronze youth with lituus, BM, 1814,0704.2870; inscribed bronze plaque, BM, 2007,8045.225. Respectively Swaddling 2014, III, 78, 81, 82, 86.
- 25 See also Chapter 3 by Camporeale in this volume for a display of dubious Etruscan antiquities at Chiusi in 1845 (p. 38, n. 75).
- 26 For a plan of the galleries see Caygill 2004, 27, 28. The plan by H. Keene, 1755, shows the route of a public tour of the ‘Second State Storey’ Montagu House.
- 27 As shown by a search for Etruscan objects from the Hamilton collection in the British Museum's Collection Online (see above n. 3).
- 28 Rymsdyk and Rymsdyk 1778.
- 29 Rymsdyk and Rymsdyk 1778, table X.
- 30 Rymsdyk and Rymsdyk 1778, table XIV, BM, 1772,0314.116. Marshall 1969, Jewellery 2310.
- 31 Jenkins and Sloan 1996.
- 32 In the area of the Etruscan Room opened in 1847, see Fig. 62.
- 33 Anon. 1808.
- 34 The Regolini Galassi tomb itself now benefits from a virtual reality tour accessible in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco and online (<https://vimeo.com/182166063>, accessed 6 June 2018).
- 35 Colonna 1978, 89.
- 36 See <http://www.victorianlondon.org/finance/money.htm> (accessed 6 June 2018).
- 37 Campanari 1837.
- 38 Colonna 1978; 1999. The identification of objects was much assisted by the publication in 1993 of notes on the exhibits which on Carlo Campanari's death in 1871 came into the possession of Giuseppe Cerasa, the notes being much more detailed than Secondiano's guide to the exhibition (Campanari 1837). Musolino 1993; Colonna 1999, 42.
- 39 Colonna 1978, 52–3, n. 8.
- 40 Marsh 1996.
- 41 Colonna 1999, 53 with n. 107.
- 42 Raoul-Rochette 1838, frontispiece.
- 43 Colonna 1999, 40–44, figs 1–2, 5.
- 44 Colonna 1999, 47 suggests that the blue colour may be the result of the natural hardening of the plaster applied to the walls.
- 45 Pryce 1931, 184–99, Sculptures D23–D32. See below, nn. 51, 53, 55.
- 46 Pryce 1931, 195; Colonna 1999, 41, fig. 3.
- 47 *The Times*, Thursday 26 January 1837, quoting Campanari, ‘The English authors of the Universal History were amongst the earliest writers, who explained by their learned observations the history of the Etruscans and their usages. I hope, therefore, to meet the approbation of the English public in exhibiting a specimen of the monuments of that ancient people, particularly of the kind to which they seem to be most partial – namely, the funeral monuments.’
- 48 ‘Signor Campanari of Rome, having, as he told us in his own mellifluous language, being from his early youth been in the habit of acting as Cicerone at the tombs of Toscanella and Corneto, and having noticed that among his illustrious patrons the English were remarkable for the vivacity of admiration with which they regarded the precious reliques preserved in these sacred receptacles, conceived the idea of transporting to London some of the sarcophagi and fitting them up in apartments, painted and arranged so as to represent the tombs themselves with all their reliques in the very positions in which they were found’: *The Atlas*, Sunday 29 January 1837.
- 49 Chest, BM, 1838,0608.1 (Sculpture D23); lid, BM, 1838,0608.1; boy, BM, 1838,0608.16 (Sculpture D107); biconical vase, BM, 1838,0608.152.
- 50 Colonna 1999, 44–50.
- 51 Pryce 1931 Sculptures D28 (chest) and D27 (lid), both BM, 1838,0608.3.
- 52 Colonna 1999, 49 suggests that this razor is BM, 1840,0212.18, Bietti Sestieri and Macnamara 2007, 525 but this was not purchased (from Samuel Butler, Bishop of Lichfield) until 1840.
- 53 Pryce 1931 Sculpture D32 (chest) and D31 (lid), both BM, 1838,0608.4. Colonna states the chest to be made of plaster, but it is in fact constructed from slabs of limestone, which was cheap and readily available at this period, as were the labourers required to work it (pers. comm. Tracey Sweek, Conservator, British Museum, April 2018).
- 54 Pryce 1931 Sculpture D26 (chest) and D25 (lid), both BM, 1838,0608.24. Colonna 1999, 47 likely identified it as the sarcophagus found at Rosavecchia on the Tuscania-Tarquinia road in 1836. For the inscriptions see Pryce 1931, 184–99; Bonfante 1990, 44–5.
- 55 Chest, Pryce 1931 Sculpture D30, BM, 1838,0608.6; lid Sculpture D29, BM, 1838,0608.7.
- 56 Prag 2006.
- 57 Probably BM, 1841,0301.13; Marshall 1969, Jewellery 2292, purchased later from Campanari in 1841.
- 58 Colonna 1999, 48–50.
- 59 Colonna 1999, 47.
- 60 For the inscriptions see Pryce 1931, 184–99; Bonfante 1990, 44–5.
- 61 Barbanera 2008.
- 62 Bound volume of documents, ‘Campanari's Etruscan tombs’ in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum.
- 63 Buranelli 1991, 49–50; Perkins 2007, 4.
- 64 For an account of the funeral see *The Spectator*, 15 July 1837, 7.
- 65 Taylor 2017, 15–16, 80–2.
- 66 See n. 62 above.
- 67 Past and future Prime Minister, and then Leader of the opposition, 1835–41. On his visit to Pall Mall, see *Metropolitan Conservative Journal*, Sunday 2 April 1837.
- 68 *The Morning Post*, Monday 31 July 1837. Extracts from the reviews quoted are taken from the bound volume of reviews and correspondence, ‘Campanari's Etruscan tombs’, in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum, many of which were re-typed and do not include page numbers of the original publications.
- 69 *Metropolitan Conservative Journal*, Sunday 2 April 1837.
- 70 *The Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c for the year 1837*, no. 1051, London, Saturday 11 March 1837, 161–2.
- 71 The *Weekly (sic) Belle Assemblée*.
- 72 *The Atlas*, Sunday 29 January 1837.
- 73 BM, 1838,0608.1–191.
- 74 Colonna 1999. The British Museum purchased further objects from the Campanari up until 1849.
- 75 British Museum Committee Reports, 27 January 1838.
- 76 British Museum Committee Reports, 31 March 1838.

- 77 *The Times*, 26 January 1837.
- 78 Moltesen and Weber-Lehmann 1991, esp. 23–4.
- 79 Messerschmidt 1930, 44–60.
- 80 Colonna 1999, 53; Dennis 1883, 465–6.
- 81 BM, 2010,006.610 and 611. The Museum Secretum is now disbanded and the objects are incorporated in the main collection.
- 82 Blanck and Weber-Lehmann 1986, figs 60 and 75, p. 231, D 36; Colonna 1996, 51.
- 83 For copious illustrations of 19th-century reproductions of Etruscan tomb paintings, including some from the same tombs as in the Campanari exhibition, see also Blanck and Weber-Lehmann 1986.
- 84 BM, 1994,1210.6; see Jenkins 1985.
- 85 *The Atlas*, Sunday 29 January 1837.
- 86 *The Morning Post*, Monday 27 April, 1837.
- 87 *The Constitutional*, Wednesday 25 January 1837.
- 88 Mirror with ivory handle, BM, 1840,0212.12; Etruscan mirror with fake scene and inscription, BM, 1840,0212.11 (Swaddling 2001, no. 36); BM, 1840,0212.8 (Swaddling 2001, no. 32) may also have a modern engraving. Stone disc with fake Etruscan inscription, BM, 2010,0512.1 (Pryce 1931, Sculpture D110, acquired 1840).
- 89 Hamilton Gray 1843a, 3.
- 90 Williams 2009, 12.
- 91 Gems: BM, 1887,0601.1, showing a seated warrior, 6th century BC and BM, 1889,0514.1 showing Isis suckling Horus, 7th century BC, from Chiusi.
- 92 BM, 2007,5008.1, Williams 2009. Gems: BM, 1887,0601.1, 1889,0514.1.
- 93 Hamilton Gray 1843a, 306–39.
- 94 Dennis 1883, 474.
- 95 Ridgway 2009, 4.
- 96 Hamilton Gray 1843a. See also Prinzi 1985.
- 97 De Grummond 1986, 41; Williams 2009, 11.
- 98 Hemphill, P. sv George Dennis, 359–60 in De Grummond 1996.
- 99 *Gentleman's Magazine* 1843a, vol. 54, 49–53.
- 100 Colonna 1999, 43 with n. 34, 56.
- 101 Taloni 2016.
- 102 Hamilton Gray 1843a, 12.
- 103 Hamilton Gray 1843a, 11–13.
- 104 *Synopsis* 1842, 218–19; 1843, 28–9; 1844, 102; 1852, 82. The sarcophagi on display comprised the Tuscania group at the north end of the gallery and the two terracotta sarcophagi at the south, 1838,0608.10 and 11, Walters 1903, Terracotta D799 and D800.
- 105 What follows is a summary of information largely gleaned from consulting the British Museum's *Synopses*, early *Guides*, Officers' Reports, Annual Reports, *Annual Returns*, *Triennial Reports* and *Parliamentary Returns*, which either repeat information or give slightly differing versions.
- 106 See http://www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/departments/greece_and_rome/history_of_the_collection/collection_history.aspx
- 107 *Synopsis* 1847, 238.
- 108 *Synopsis of the contents of the British Museum*, 58th edition, 1851, 237–8.
- 109 For Ruspi see Chapter 6 by Sarti in this volume.
- 110 *Synopsis* 1851–81.
- 111 *Guide* 1881, 45; *British Museum. Returns of Accounts, Estimates etc.*, 1881, I – Arrangement, 19.
- 112 *Guide* 1882, 108–15; 1886, 75–8.
- 113 I am grateful to my colleague Dr Peter Higgs for locating this photograph.
- 114 In this year, 1892, the room was again re-numbered and became no. 28.
- 115 Messerschmidt 1930; Ronczewski 1930.
- 116 Arbeid 2011, figs 1 and 7.
- 117 *Guide* 1888, exhibit no. 1; Jones *et al.* 1990, 30–1.
- 118 The Ally Sloper character was created by Charles H. Ross and his wife Émilie de Tessier (alias Marie Duval) one of the first female cartoonists in Europe. Ally Sloper first featured in the magazine *Judy*, a rival to *Punch* and later in a dedicated comic, *Ally Sloper's half-holiday*.
- 119 *Synopsis* 1866, 77, copy in the British Museum, Department of Greece and Rome.
- 120 On pollution in Victorian London see for example B. Rosen, <http://vichist.blogspot.co.uk/2006/11/london-fog.html> (accessed 6 June 2018).
- 121 This must correspond to the reference in the *Annual Return* for 1897/8 stating that the paintings had been taken down and cleaned and the *Annual Return* for 1899 which refers to the facsimiles of wall-paintings in the First and Second Vase rooms being repaired, re-fixed and re-labelled.
- 122 Ms Officers' Reports 30 March 1920. It is unclear which photographs were compared or whether they pictured the canvases or the wall-paintings themselves. The 1920s also happened to be the time of the dismantling of the reconstructed Etruscan tomb in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco: see Chapter 8 in this volume by Haumesser, p. 102, n. 44.
- 123 Officers' Reports, received 24 January 1861, vol. 66; *Annual Return*, 2 May 1861.
- 124 *Guide to the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum*, 1899, 80–1; 1920, 79–80; 1928, 74–6. The *Annual Return* of 1899 (year ended 31 March 1899) records that one of the tombs had been completed and that another was in progress. By 1900, the *Annual Return* (year ended 31 March 1900) reports that the second tomb had been completed and 'plans of two tombs remounted'.
- 125 Steingräber 1986, no. 2
- 126 Colonna 1999, 53–4. BM, 1838,0608.9, Pryce 1931, Sculpture D22.
- 127 Steingräber 1986 no. 177
- 128 The lions, BM, 1838,0608.13 and 14, consisting of plaster over a wire frame, are now in a parlous state and would present a challenging conservation task. The column and capital, BM, 1838,0608.18 (Pryce Sculpture D113) no longer exists and likely deteriorated beyond repair, especially if of similar construction.
- 129 *Guide* 1928, 74–6.
- 130 Boulton 1931, 85; Officers' Reports 2 June 1932.
- 131 Swaddling and Perkins 2009, iv.
- 132 Dr Haynes worked intensively on the Etruscan collection in a voluntary capacity with the support of her husband, Dr Denys Eyre Lankester Haynes, Keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities from 1956 until 1976.
- 133 Colonna 1999, 44–5, figs 5–6 for the plan of the Pall Mall basement.
- 134 Cf the new reconstruction of the Regolini Galassi tomb at the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco in the Vatican Museums (<http://www.meteoweb.eu/2013/04/cnr-inaugurato-letruscanning-3d-ai-musei-vaticani-le-immagini/195990/> accessed 6 June 2018).

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Chapter 5

Following the Greeks 'at a Respectful Distance': Etruscan Objects in Charles Townley's Collection

Dirk Booms

Abstract

Charles Townley (1737–1805) is best known for his large collection of Roman marble sculpture, collected during three Grand Tours in Italy, as well as his so-called *Cista Mystica* from Palestrina. Few people realise that he also bought many Etruscan antiquities, especially from James Byres. This chapter will highlight some of those objects, the places they occupied within the larger collection and Townley's attitude towards them and Etruscan art in general.

Among classicists and archaeologists, Charles Townley is most renowned for his collection of Roman marble sculpture, which on his death in 1805 was bought from his relatives for the nation by an Act of Parliament and deposited in the British Museum. Less well known is that a second part of his collection followed in 1814, which was composed mainly of smaller bronze and terracotta figurines, vases, drawings and coins. Townley had amassed his enormous collection during, between and after three Grand Tours to Italy that were undertaken between 1767 and 1777. As well as a collector, Townley can be considered as somewhat of an academic, constantly studying and discussing his antiquities with the other antiquaries of the time, most notably his friends the infamous Baron d'Hancarville and Richard Payne Knight.¹ However, at the time of his death, only one published article could be put to his name, ironically on a Romano-British object, the so-called Ribchester helmet, while the manuscripts of a few others remained unpublished.²

Townley's focus was on Greek and Roman antiquities, together with master paintings, drawings and ancient manuscripts, but over the years he collected about 130 ancient Egyptian, Peruvian and South Asian antiquities as well. Although he does not seem to have had a particularly in-depth interest in the Etruscans, 102 objects in his collection can nevertheless be identified as such (excluding Greek vases found in an Etruscan context)³ and it was the inclusion of a few of Townley's Etruscan objects and drawings of them in a 2014 exhibition in Cortona that prompted this essay.⁴ The aim of the chapter is to highlight a part of Charles Townley's collection that has received little attention until now. I will, as much as is currently possible, outline the extent of Townley's knowledge of Etruscan art and archaeology (at an early stage of Etruscan studies) and how that influenced or was influenced by his collecting. The evidence is put forward here under five headings, representing the different manifestations of Townley's general research activity and knowledge, and here specifically concerning the Etruscans: the books in his library, his own notes on the antiquities he collected, his collection of drawings of both his own objects and those in other collections, his academic research and publications, and eventually the display of his antiquities at his own home. Furthermore, rather than providing an exhaustive list of all the Etruscan objects that Townley owned (details of which can be retrieved from the British Museum's online database), only certain pieces will feature throughout the chapter.⁵



Figure 65 Johan Zoffany, Townley's Library in Park Street. Burnley Borough Council, Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum/Bridgeman Images

Park Street Library

One means of assessing Townley's knowledge of the Etruscans is to look at the writings that he left behind, as well as at his personal library. A manuscript in the hand of John Towneley, Charles' uncle and heir after Charles' brother Edward Standish had died in 1807,⁶ lists all the books at Townley's house in Park Street, London (now Queen Anne's Gate).⁷ Some of the publications listed concern 'Etruscan vases', as all Greek-style vases were still being called at the time. We find that Townley owned several copies of Baron d'Hancarville's *Antiquités étrusques, grecques et romaines tirées du cabinet de M. Hamilton envoyé extraordinaire de S. M. Britannique à la court de Naples*, the influential publication of Sir William Hamilton's Greek vases (listed variously as 'D'Hancarville, recueils d'Antiquités Etrusc.Grec.&c. 4 Vol.' (fol. 13), 'Hamilton's Etruscan Vases Vol. 1, 1791, Do [ditto] proofs, Vol 2 &3, Do Do, also published version' (fol. 13), 'Etruscan Vases' (fol. 5)).

In fact, we know that Townley even pre-ordered the four volumes directly from the author at their first encounter in Naples in March 1768, paying 48 ducats 'to Monsieur d'Hancreville [sic] for the Subscription to his four Volumes of Etruscan Vases &c'.⁸ Townley would later lodge d'Hancarville at his London home to catalogue his own collection as well (a task that was never completed). It is probably because of this deep friendship and involvement that the original drawings for the *Antiquités* also ended up in Townley's library, mentioned in the catalogue as 'Original Drawings for D'Hancarville's Etruscan Vases, 2 Vol.' (fol. 7). The various references to the publication from 1768 in Townley's library, and also the fact that it is referred to

differently each time imply that *Etruscan Vases* was very much the working title, at a time when the discussion regarding these vases' Greek origins was at its peak. Influential scholars like Winckelmann and Gori actively argued for a Greek origin as early as the 1760s,⁹ as would eventually also Townley's friend Sir William Hamilton.¹⁰ Yet, in auction catalogues as late as 1800, all Greek-style vases were still called Etruscan.¹¹

Townley's vast collection of books furthermore included Kirk's *Etruscan Vases* (fol. 27) and Giovanni Battista Passeri's *Picturæ Etruscorum in Vasculis* (listed as 'Passerii, Picture etruscorum in vasculis, 3 Vols.' fol. 13), which still insisted on a pure Etruscan origin for the vases.¹² Other publications in Townley's library did not focus solely on vases, amongst which were Antonio Francesco Gori's *Museum Etruscum* (as 'Gorii Museum Etruscum, 3 Vols.' fol. 14), *Museum Cortonense* (fol. 18), and *Musei Guarnacii Antiqua monumenta Etrusca eruta e Volaterranis hypogeis* (as 'Monumenta Etrusca Musei Guarnacii illustrate', fol. 14), Luigi Lanzi's *Saggio di Lingua Etrusca* (as 'Saggio di Lingua Etrusca, 3 Vols.', fol. 63), Giusto Fontanini's *De Antiquitatibus Hortae Coloniae Etruscorum libri tres* (as 'Justi Fontanini Gorojulienow (sic), de Ant. Hortae Coloniae Etruscorum' folio 27), Mario Guarnacci's *Origini Italiche* (fol. 14) and Joseph Marie Suanès' *Praenestes Antiquae libri duo* (as 'Suaresij Praenestes antiquae' fol. 23). It is clear that Townley showed at least some interest in the subject, even in the Etruscan language, most likely because of the inscriptions he encountered on objects he acquired or wanted to acquire.

Purchase accounts

Townley made records of the various aspects of his life in an almost obsessive manner and, more importantly, also kept them. The Townley Archive thus includes hundreds of folios with details regarding purchases of and for his collection, including dates, provenances, dealers and amounts paid. Obviously, these have proven invaluable for establishing provenance and excavation histories, but they also give us insight into Townley's travels, sometimes down to the dinner he had at an overnight inn-stop or Hackney coach fares. That said, the information is very exhaustive for the pieces of large marble sculpture, but the same level of information is not always available for small scale acquisitions. Notes on provenance are especially lacking, most likely because Townley did not find it out himself.

Like most English collectors at the time, Townley mainly bought from a variety of dealers in Rome, but additionally visited private collections throughout Italy, some of which were housed in monasteries and convents. The archive contains numerous letters concerning such visits, in the form of memories jotted down, notes on interesting pieces, purchase accounts, and even – sometimes from memory – entire lists of antiquities that he found in the various locations.¹³ One (unfortunately undated) visit is recorded to a convent of nuns in Volterra, deep in Etruscan territory, where Townley saw a 'benitoire placé sur un priape a jambes de lion; Mr Zoffani dit l'avoir vu' ('a basin placed on a priapus with the legs of a lion. Mr Zoffany says he has seen it').¹⁴ Zoffany, who famously painted Townley in an imaginary gallery at Park Street (Fig. 65) surrounded by his

most famous antiquities, as well as by his peers d'Hancarville, Charles Astle and Charles Greville, is known to have travelled in Tuscany and to have had some interest in the Etruscans, having been elected member of the *Accademia Etrusca* in Cortona in 1778.¹⁵ For Townley, however, the visit is one of very few records of his travelling to the towns north of Rome with a specific Etruscan history.

In Rome, Townley mainly purchased from the dealers Gavin Hamilton and Thomas Jenkins. The latter was the first Englishman to visit and report on the tombs at Tarquinia when they were found in 1761, and eventually opened up his own excavations there.¹⁶ Townley acquired from Jenkins 'a large Etruscan vase, and two small ones',¹⁷ but he equally did business with lesser known dealers, for example the artist Thomas Patch and Nicolo Masoni, whom he repeatedly called the 'Genovese' in his notes and from whom he acquired a 'vaso etrusco' for 2 scudi.¹⁸ Most Etruscan articles, however, Townley acquired from the Scottish dealer James Byres, of whom a more detailed account can be found elsewhere in this volume (see Chapter 16 by Davidson in this volume), and who was one of the earliest antiquarians to appreciate Etruscan art.¹⁹ In 1773, Townley first bought from Byres '5 small Etruscan vases'²⁰ and in a second sale another '29 Etruscan Vases'.²¹ In 1784, he acquired 'About [empty space] Etruscan vases, small, amongst them a curious flat oval dish, the border broad with figures and ornaments upon it',²² as well as another 'Eighteen Etrusc Vases' as well as 'Six cups of Buchari'.²³ The separate and specific mention of *buchari*, or *bucchero*,²⁴ shows that his other references to 'Etruscan' vases do not include *bucchero*, but rather imply painted vases, of which he owned c. 220, which were either Greek or of local production but Greek in style. For Townley to still call them Etruscan at such a late date is somewhat disappointing, given his knowledge of Gori and his friendship with Hamilton.

As with the vases, most acquisition notes to bronzes, terracottas and gems give no detailed descriptions or information on provenance. For example, an Etruscan terracotta figure of a bull or cow²⁵ could not be found among Townley's written inventories, although it features in two of his drawings and appears to have held some significance to its owner (see below). Only when an object was perceived as rare or unique was a more detailed description given, as for a bronze 'Etruscan Idol' which from its unformed shape indicates the most remote ages. It is about seven inches high, a shield in the left hand, a lance in the right hand, and a sort of helmet on the head [Fig. 66].²⁶ Byres also offered to Townley a bronze figure of a priest ('An Augur with the Lituus in his hand, something above a foot high') in a letter of 1781 which included a drawing of it and which he identified as Roman work.²⁷ It was always uncertain whether Townley actually acquired the figure, of which the authenticity is now in question,²⁸ but in a letter only recently noticed, a list of acquisitions from Byres does include a 'Busto Grande. Etrusche. 80 zecchini' ('Large bust. Etruscan. 80 zecchini'), and 'due figure, una di Ercole, l'altra di Augure. 40 zecchini' ('two figures, one of Hercules, the other of an Augur. 40 zecchini'), as well as four patere 'storiate etrusche' (with 'Etruscan decoration').²⁹ Given that the augur was originally offered together with a bronze of



Figure 66 Drawing of the 'Etruscan idol', two studies of a bronze statuette of a warrior wearing a Corinthian helmet, which once bore a crest, greaves and a bell-shaped cuirass, 1768–1805. British Museum, 2010,5006.462 (see also Fig. 177)

Hercules, it is safe to assume that Townley did in fact buy both of them. The bronze figure of Hercules, of which there are six in Townley's collection, cannot be identified.

Nevertheless, Townley's collection of drawings included many of objects that did not belong to him, such as the life-size bronze Etruscan head from the Lago di Bolsena from Payne Knight's collection.³⁰ In another letter, dated 9 December 1778, Byres offers to Townley 'four of the earliest Etruscan Ase [sic]', or *aes signatum*, and the level of detail into which he goes implies that Townley must have expressed interest in these antiquities, which at that point (1778) seem to have been rarities even in museums. It is worth quoting the letter (verbatim):

...the most uncommon purchase I have made is of four of the earliest Etruscan Ase, which I have long thought of mentioning to you, as I believe they are unique, at last I never heard of any but three that could at all compare with them. One of the Treasury of St. Genevieve at Paris and two, but much inferior belonging to the Marquis Oliviero del Abate, at Pesaro. They are of an oblong form, about six inches and a quarter long by about three inches and half broad, of different thicknesses, weighing from four to upwards of five pounds each. On one of them is on each side a Bull, good work. on another, on one side are two Dolphins and two Tridents. On the other side. Two Cocks, the other two. have shields represented on each side of them. all very good work. The great Ase at Paris. I'm told, weighs about three pounds. those of the Marquis Oliviero are octagon and only weight about two pounds each, which makes me think that mine are of a prior date. they were found last



Figure 67 Drawing of Etruscan mirror from an album of 67 prints and drawings of bronzes and sculptures, 1768–1805. British Museum, 2010,5006.1878.6

Autumn in Tuscany, in the Foundry where they had been cast, for along with them I got some broken pieces of Ase and several unform'd lamps of Brass. They have occasion'd a good deal of Speculation amongst the curious. I have had proposals made me from Paris. Germany and from the Cardinal Zelada. To part with them, but choose they should be placed in England, and if not in the British Museum, in the hands of some person who knows their value; I esteem them at one hundred pounds. I have a few other Ase, which altho' known, are rare, which I would throw in with them...³¹

Interestingly, among Townley's drawings are three of *aera signata* that fit Byres' description, and which were published by d'Hancarville in 1785 and by Byres himself (posthumously) in his publication of Etruscan *hypogaei*.³² However, it does not appear Townley eventually acquired the actual objects, as no *aera signata* in the British Museum can be attributed to his collection.

Drawings

Townley's collection of c. 2,500 works on paper contains broadly four categories of drawings, based on their function: drawings made while travelling to act as aides-memoires for the antiquities that he purchased en route (the antiquities themselves would be shipped to him later); drawings mailed to him, of objects offered to him for sale; drawings commissioned in England, for various purposes; and drawings of objects in other collections.³³ While several of his own Etruscan antiquities feature in this massive collection of drawings (such as the 'idol' and priest mentioned above), it does not seem that he in any way took a specific interest in Etruscan objects, as only a handful of Etruscan antiquities from other collections are present, and mostly among groups



Figure 68 Impression of mirror. British Museum, TY 14/6/28. Mirror, British Museum 1814,0704.2869

of drawings that Townley bought in bulk (such as an antefix of the 'Juno Sospita'-type in a drawing from the 17th-century Dal Pozzo collection).³⁴

However, one category of objects that does seem to have taken Townley's direct interest was ancient bronze mirrors. In total, he had 26 (including fragmentary ones), 15 of which are Etruscan, including the one gracing the cover of the present volume.³⁵ It moreover appears that Townley planned to publish this collection, as his archive contained a fair number of studies and printed proofs of them, with and without notes and corrections.³⁶ His interest stemmed mostly from the mythological scenes depicted on them, and in some of his surviving descriptions (see below), we can clearly recognise Townley the 'academic'. The drawings often show front and back, and sometimes even highlight details of the handles. Furthermore, they consistently show the object in its then existing state, including cracks, missing pieces and imperfections. This was a policy that Townley had adopted for his sculpture, asking restorers to make very clear which parts were original and which parts restoration (**Fig. 67**), and which he seems to have applied to a number of his drawings as well. His fascination was part of a wider interest in mirrors at the time, especially in their iconography, and not because they were Etruscan (see below). A rubbing of the central mythological scene of one mirror notes 'Dr Coombe's (sic) trial to impress a print from my patera'.³⁷ Rather than this being Taylor Combe, the future first Keeper of the Department of Antiquities at the British Museum, of which Townley was a Trustee, this Dr Co(o)mbe is more likely to be Taylor's father, Dr Charles Combe, who was a numismatist as well as a Dilettante and a Trustee of the Hunter collection (later The Hunterian) (**Fig. 68**).³⁸

Academia and publications

As stated earlier in the chapter, Townley's only published piece of research concerned the Ribchester helmet. However, the archive contains various writings that he had worked on and prepared during his lifetime. Given some of Townley's interpretations of mythological scenes, it remains both fortunate and unfortunate that none of these were published. Townley had a detailed grasp of the classical authors and ancient myth, but under the influence of d'Hancarville, not for nothing once called the 'professor of the fantastic',³⁹ and together with other antiquarians like Richard Payne Knight and James Christie,⁴⁰ he became obsessed with ancient mystery cults and mysticism. The core of their beliefs was that all art and artistic creativity originated in religion and that religion was sexual in nature. Following this thesis, almost every ancient depiction was read as relating to the mystic qualities of nature, with the constant alternation of destruction and creation understood as acts undertaken by deities, especially Bacchus and Ceres.⁴¹ Townley thought to see these especially in scenes on Greek and Etruscan mirrors.⁴²

One striking example, an Etruscan mirror showing Hercules and Minerva in the garden of the Hesperides with accompanying inscriptions (**Fig. 68**, the one that interested Dr Combe) is explained by Townley as: 'Hercules assisted by Minerva. The divine wisdom destroys the germ of production, displayed by the apple tree of the Hesperides.' More entertaining is Townley's nine-page manuscript⁴³ on his so-called *Cista Mystica*, an Etrusco-Italic *cista* of a type made in Praeneste,⁴⁴ whose mythological scenes he interpreted as mystic and the object itself as being involved in the Mysteries of Dionysos or the Eleusinian Mysteries. However, nowhere in the manuscript does Townley identify the object as Italic, Praenestine or Etruscan, and neither does he the mirrors. This is not the place to publish the essay in its entirety, but some passages should be mentioned to give a general idea:

...On the sides of it are engraved by simple outlines various symbolical figures relative to the ancients Theology expressing the progress of the vivifying, preserving, and destroying powers attributed to the supreme Deity, who by producing the periodical revolutions of the dissolution and reproduction in nature was supposed to preserve the harmony of the universe.... On the sides of it stand Bacchus and Ceres, who are the same as the Osiris and Isis of the Egyptians. These ideal personages of Bacchus and Ceres were adopted by the ancient Theology to personify the active and passive germs, or means of production, supposed to have been inherent in matter.

...In the lower border of this *cista* to express the dormant state of the productive germ which is represented by the foliage of the lotus, that foliage is placed in the inferi, represented by the arch, forming as it were a cavern, and two arches spring from one cup of a lotus flower. But in the uppermost border to recall again the alternate rotation of dissolution and reproduction, the same plant is represented in a double manner, turned upwards and downwards alternately.

Payne Knight sums up the interpretation of the *Cista* with almost the same words:⁴⁵

The figures upon the Cista represent, in the symbolical Writing of the Ancient Mythic Theology, the Progress of the Power of Destruction & Generation, in producing those periodical Revolutions in Nature, by which the Harmony and Order of the World is preserved.

Eventually, however, it would appear that Townley, and perhaps Payne Knight, distanced themselves from d'Hancarville's outlandish theories, or at least stopped disseminating them. This might have been the reason why the completed manuscript on the *Cista Mystica* was never published. In fact, Townley's library contained several folders and manuscripts with unpublished notes on his collection by d'Hancarville, and it is perhaps significant that Townley's handwritten titles of them read 'rough drafts and some erroneous by d'Hancarville', 'False Explanations of gems & pastes by d'Hancarville', 'Expiating Vague conjectures by d'Hancarville' and 'D'Ancarville's Explanations of [sic] some of my Marbles, some of his observations are just & interesting, but mostly are erroneous'.⁴⁶

Most importantly, however, Payne Knight and Townley's (posthumously and uncredited) joint publication of *Specimens of Antient Sculpture, Aegyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman* (London, 1809–35) does not include any of the mystic theories. Instead, it provides us with a valuable insight into their opinion of Etruscan art. Their introduction to the volume, in which they cover the history of art and craftsmanship, also adds aesthetic assessments of the skills of entire cultures, for example:

This high character of excellence seems to have been unknown to the Phoenicians; and probably to every other people, except the Greeks, and such as have received the rudiments and style of it from them. Some persons, perhaps, may think that an exception should be made in favour of the Etruscans: but the high pretensions, which the national vanity of the modern Tuscan writers first gave them, and the credulity of Foreigners afterwards⁴⁷ allowed them, have, we believe, been very generally abandoned since the Abbe Lanzi's very learned and satisfactory treatise on the subject appeared. The stories of almost all their compositions are from the Greek poets, exhibiting the actions and adventures of Greek deities and heroes; and all the more elegant examples of their art now remaining were manifestly executed long after their subjection to the Romans. The more rude and ancient specimens are exactly in the same style as those of the very antient [sic] Greeks; from whom they appear to have learnt all that they knew; and whose primitive style they continued to copy, after a more elegant and dignified manner, founded upon more enlarged principles, had been adopted by the Greeks themselves. Hence their works may be justly considered as Greek; or, at least, as close imitations of the Greek; they having always followed their archetypes strictly and servilely, though at a great distance, if reckoned by the scale of merit. The proximity of the Italian colonies, where the arts were cultivated with the most brilliant success at a very early period, afforded them the most favourable opportunities of obtaining instruction; and, as they availed themselves of it at all, it is rather wonderful that their progress should have been so slow, and comparatively imperfect.⁴⁸

The same negative aesthetic sentiment is continued throughout the publication, with further comments regarding Etruscan craftsmanship as copying 'the improvements taken place among the Greeks, without knowing the means by which they had been wrought' and showing 'less taste and elegance, but with more elaborate diligence, and a stricter attention to nature', or finally: 'the Etruscans having followed the improvements of the Greeks



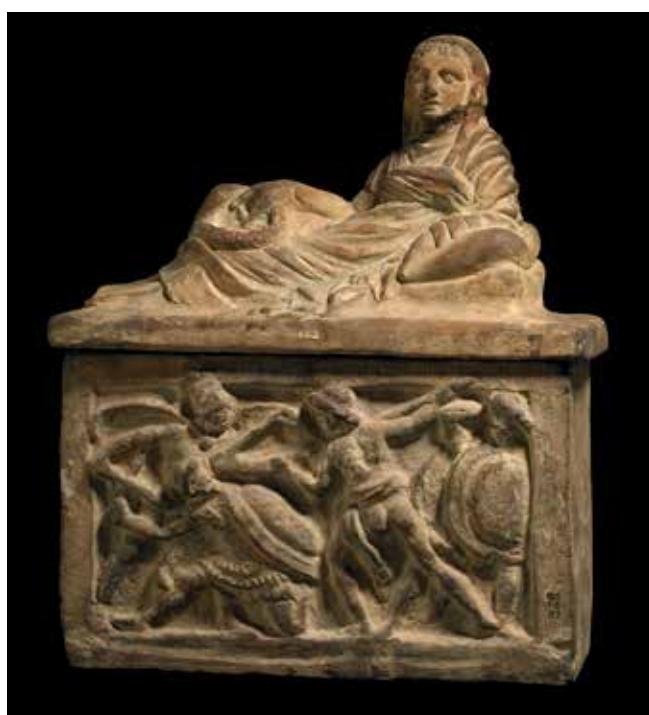
Figure 69 Watercolour by William Chambers of the sculpture collection of Charles Townley in the entrance hall of his house in Park Street, 1794. British Museum, 1995,0506.9

slowly, and at a respectful distance; and having no pretensions to that venerable antiquity in art, which some of their later countrymen have been disposed to give them.⁴⁹

Display

Townley thus seems to have had a fairly detailed knowledge of the Etruscans, at least as far as was possible at this early date, even though he did not focus on collecting Etruscan antiquities aside from vases. It then seems consistent that the painted conversation piece by Zoffany, mentioned above, does not include anything Etruscan. However, evidence exists to suggest that Townley did have two Etruscan objects

Figure 70 Etruscan terracotta cinerary urn in form of a sarcophagus, 3rd–1st century bc. British Museum, 1805,0703.177



on display, even quite prominently. In William Chambers' watercolour of the entrance hall of Townley's house at Park Street (**Fig. 69**), his only Etruscan urn, a type from Chiusi⁵⁰ (**Fig. 70**), is prominently displayed next to the fireplace with other – Roman – funerary urns. Interestingly, in order to show the actual urn, the artist had to reverse the direction of the lid. In front of the urn, a woman is reading one of Townley's handwritten so-called parlour catalogues, which were intended for visitors to the house. The urn's description in the actual catalogue reads:

A small Etruscan sepulchral Urn in Baked Clay, in the front of which is represented in Bas Relief four combatants in action, which denote the story of the hero Echetles, fighting for the Greeks & armed only with the beam of a plough at the battle of Marathon, as it is related by Pausanias, Lib. 1. Cap. 32 – Upon the cover is a figure of a young woman laid down and covered with drapery. Her name appears on the upper margin of the urn, wrote Boustrophedon, and seems to be Ulchae Silats Vygia.⁵¹

Secondly, a sketch of the library chimney piece⁵² shows the small terracotta figurine of a bull or cow mentioned above as a counterpart for a statuette of an Egyptian Apis-bull with worshipper (**Fig. 71**), flanking a central unidentified figurine and surrounded by Egyptian statues of a male and a Harpocrates, two terracotta busts of Bacchus, a marble relief showing a centaur abducting a woman (identified by Townley as Nessos and Deianeira), and a marble relief of a ‘faun attacking a nymph’.⁵³ To the right of the chimney-piece are also placed one head and one full statue of satyrs, both in marble.⁵⁴ In such a context, it is doubtful that the bull-statue was on display due to its being Etruscan. Rather, I am convinced this layout is to be attributed to the theories propagated by d'Hancarville. Without going into detail here, in both d'Hancarville's and Knight's theories, the bull – a major motif in every culture – was seen as symbolising the generative powers of the Creator.⁵⁵ Townley's display clearly articulates the



Figure 71 Sketch of the library in Charles Townley's house in Park Street, showing the arrangement of sculptures on the chimney piece and in the niches on the right. British Museum, 2010,5006.1911

importance of the bull and of Bacchus, who we gather from his description of the *cista* is the deity to represent the ‘active germ of production’. Satyrs and fauns are then present because of their association with Bacchus. The specific mention of Egyptian Osiris and Isis as counterparts of Bacchus and Ceres might explain the presence of the Egyptian statuettes on the mantelpiece: Harpocrates was, after all, the child god Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris. Also the unidentified lion-faced statuette between the bulls has its role to play, as Townley wrote regarding the lion on the *cista*: ‘That animal, its well known, represents the sun or heat and consequently the active and generative power of the Deity, because by its heat attracting the fluids and rendering them again to the earth...’

Conclusion

What the evidence in this chapter has made clear is that, disappointingly, Townley does not appear to have had particular interest in objects *because* they were Etruscan, perhaps with the exception of the cinerary urn and the ‘idol’. Ironically, those Etruscan antiquities in which he took a more active interest were not obviously identified by him as such (the mirrors, the *cista*), and his interest seems to have been almost solely in their iconography. Etruscan art, when identified, he actually did not value very highly for its aesthetics. Only two Etruscan objects can be proven to have been on display in his house, which coincidentally are the only Etruscan objects among the first part of his collection acquired for the British Museum, in 1805.⁵⁶ Every other Etruscan item, including the mirrors and the so-called *Cista Mystica*, were acquired in 1814.

The 2015 British Museum conference as well as this publication has been an opportunity to draw some attention to lesser-known Etruscan objects from the Townley collection, for example the terracotta bull or the ‘idol’, specifically because they can be linked to his notes, research and drawings. The survival of Townley’s letters to and from some of the foremost dealers, in particular James Byres, shed some light on where and how these dealers operated, while his library shows us the level of knowledge of Etruscan culture in London circles.

In this respect, Townley’s ‘Etruscan collection’ is informative at this early period of interest in Etruscan culture and should be noted, not because of the actual objects, but because it permits the reconstruction of the thought processes behind acquiring and interpreting them. Further study of the Townley archive will surely bring to light much more information on that front.

Notes

- 1 For Charles Townley’s biography and history of collecting, see Cook 1985.
- 2 They form part of the Townley Archive, a collection of notes, letters, pamphlets, and catalogues, which was bought by the British Museum in 1992. Whenever cited in this chapter, the TY number refers to the archive’s catalogue, Hill 2002.
- 3 Amongst the Townley collection are identified 41 Etruscan bronze objects (of which 15 are mirrors, 6 are statuettes, and 3 are *aes grave*), 1 Etruscan terracotta cinerary urn, 5 Etruscan terracotta figures, 3 pieces of Etruscan gold jewellery, 19 Etruscan gems (in carnelian, sard, sardonyx, jasper and agate; 12 others are identified as Roman Republican in the ‘Etruscan style’), and 33 terracotta vessels (29 of which are bucchero). Information on all of these can be found in the British Museum’s online catalogue (http://britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx).
- 4 *Seduzione Etrusca. Dai segreti di Holkham Hall alle meraviglie del British Museum*, Cortona, Palazzo Casali, 22 March–31 July 2014. Included were bronze figurine BM 1814,0704.2870 (see further below), oinochoe BM 1814,0704.459, and drawings BM 2010,5006.455, 2010,5006.481 and 2010,5006.531.
- 5 A full list can be retrieved from the British Museum’s online database, using ‘Etruscan’ and ‘Charles Townley’ as search terms.
- 6 Cook 1985, 59–60. The variant spellings of Charles Townley and John Towneley (and in fact the rest of the Towneley family) are due to the fact that Charles deliberately changed his name to an earlier version, omitting the first E, as a form of antiquarianism. This continues to confuse scholars up to today, but I have striven to give the names as represented by the sources themselves, as for example in the next footnote, wrongly written John Townley.
- 7 ‘Ms. Catalogue of Park Street Library, in hand of John Townley’, kept in the DDTG Scientific Papers at the Lancashire Record Office, Preston. A copy also exists in the Townley Archive in the British Museum (TY 20/1).
- 8 ‘10. Dankervil. I Vasi Etruschi. Tom 4 in Folio. Ducati 48’ (TY 10/1/4) and ‘Billet original de d’Hancarville a son graveur etrit a Naples l’an 1767’ (kept in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum).
- 9 Shanks 1996, 114.
- 10 Burn 1997.

- 11 E.g. the Cawdor sale, TY 19/109. After a period of simply importing Greek black- and red-figure vases, the Etruscans started creating their own imitations. Therefore, some of the Greek-style vases were actually Etruscan.
- 12 Shanks 1996, 114.
- 13 E.g. TY 14/4/5: a list of antiquities, amongst which a ‘fine Etrusc Vase (with sketch of it) 19 inches high. Ten Smaller Etrusc vases’ are mentioned as ‘part of the best Articles in ? y^e Duc de Chaulnes chambre Egyptien. 1788.’
- 14 TY 12/24-25.
- 15 Tredwell 2009, 281-2.
- 16 Swaddling 2014b, 368-9.
- 17 TY 10/17.
- 18 TY 10/1/10.
- 19 Ridgway 2009.
- 20 TY 8/115.
- 21 TY 8/116.
- 22 TY 10/15.
- 23 TY 7/693 and TY 10/16. The 18 vases and six bucchero cups are said by Townley to have been bought in 1786 in TY 10/16, but appear already in a list of 1784 in TY 7/693. The ‘flat oval dish’ is Samian ware, 1814,0704.1548. It remains curious that Townley would refer to this Samian dish as an Etruscan vase, except perhaps for the fact that this type of Roman pottery, in the late Republic and early Empire was made in Arretium, originally an Etruscan city.
- 24 Bucchero in Townley’s collection: BM 1814,0704.439 to 447, 449+, 449 to 461, 463-465, 473, 682 and 1115. Most of these 29 are presented in detail in Perkins 2007.
- 25 BM 1805,0703.287. An almost identical figurine from Veii is at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Michigan, accession number 0000.00.1771.
- 26 TY 10/1/10; BM 1814,0704.973, representing a warrior, possibly the god of war Laran; also drawings BM 2005,0928,44 and 2010,5006.462.
- 27 TY 7/689.
- 28 BM 1814,0704.2870 and drawing 2010,5006.481; Swaddling 2014a; Farge 2014a.
- 29 TY 693.
- 30 Swaddling 2014c, 436-8.
- 31 TY 7/686.
- 32 Drawings: BM 2010,5006.524-526; d’Hancarville 1785, pl. III; Byres 1842, pl. V.
- 33 Farge 2014b, 458-60.
- 34 Drawing BM 2005,0928.35 of Berlin, Antikensammlung, TC 544 - ex Bellori collection.
- 35 BM 1814,0704.967. Information on all mirrors can be found on the British Museum’s online catalogue, and for the early mirrors see Swaddling 2002, Concordance D, p. 71.
- 36 As suggested by Celeste Farge, Curator of Prints and Drawings in the Department of Greece and Rome, BM, based on the existence of a bound ‘proof book’ in the department, as well as several proofs with and without additions among the Townley Papers (TY 13/6/1-16, TY 13/7/1-3; TY 13/8/1-22). Potentially, Payne Knight’s mirrors were also to be included in this publication, as proofs of those exist as well (TY 13/9/1-3).
- 37 TY 14/6/28.
- 38 Mirror, BM 1814,0704.2869. However, the incised scene is now thought to have been added in the 18th century; see Swaddling 2002, no. 34. As the various fakes in his collection make clear, the lack of detailed knowledge of Etruscan artefacts meant many collectors could have succumbed to unwittingly buying fakes.
- 39 Michaelis 1882, 119.
- 40 See for example Payne Knight 1786 and Christie 1806.
- 41 Haskell 1984, esp. 187-9.
- 42 It is possible that Townley never realised that these objects were mirrors, for he consistently calls them *patera* (meaning ‘pan’, according to the general misinterpretation of mirrors at the time: see Swaddling in this volume, p. 44) and elsewhere gives as explanation of the word: ‘Patera, or Patra is the name of the Hindoo Patera, and it is an original Hindoo Word – Tra means an instrument and Pa means Water, so composes the term for Instrument of Water’ (TY 14/86).
- 43 TY 14/5/1.
- 44 BM 1814,0704.703. Both stylistic and scientific evidence for the authenticity of the *cista*, which is unfortunately sometimes still doubted, has been presented in Bailey 1986. The article also contains the notes and information of its discovery in Praeneste in 1786.
- 45 Quoted by Bailey (1986, 135), found in the Townley papers in the British Museum.
- 46 ‘Ms. Catalogue of Park Street Library, in hand of John Townley’, f.1 and f.3; TY 12/24-25; TY 16/29/4; TY 16/28.
- 47 The national sentiment of the Tuscans regarding their Etruscan ancestry is a well-known subject in Etruscan studies (see Chapter 15 by Della Fina in this volume), and Townley certainly had experienced it himself: a letter and drawing from the previously mentioned Thomas Patch offering a bronze figure of Hercules states that ‘the sketch can give but an idea of the size and shape the stile is what at Rome they call the first greek and we here the very best Etruscan for those call’d Roman are not to be compaird with it for Elegance and true taste’ (TY 7/680).
- 48 Payne Knight 1809-35, x.
- 49 Payne Knight 1809-35, Sections 40 and 60, and plate XVII.
- 50 Huntsman 2014, esp. n. 9.
- 51 So-called Parlour Catalogue (p. 33), kept in the Department of Greece and Rome, BM. Townley’s books on the Etruscan language seem to have been misleading, as the name of the deceased is written as *vl:cae:splaturia(s)*, see also Rix 1991, CL 1.1352.
- 52 For a comparison between this probable arrangement of the library versus the one depicted in Zoffany’s painting, see Cook 1985, 33-4, fig. 32.
- 53 Marble reliefs: BM 1805,0703.122 and 1805,0703.127, for Townley’s identifications, see TY 12/3; Egyptian male and Harpocrates: BM EA36850 and EA989; terracotta busts of Bacchus: BM 1805,0703.285-286; Apis bull statuette: BM EA61608, which also appears alongside the Etruscan terracotta bull in Townley drawing BM 2010,5006.508. The central figure remains elusive.
- 54 BM 1805,0703.82 and 1805,0703.30.
- 55 Payne Knight 1786, 39 and 43-4; Funnell 1982, esp. 52-3; Haskell 1984, 188; d’Hancarville 1785: I.65 ff, especially I.69, stating that Bacchus was often represented as a bull.
- 56 This is significant especially for the small terracotta figurine of the bull. In the 1805 sale, the only terracotta objects to be acquired by the British Museum were the so-called Campana reliefs and a defined group of large terracotta sculpture from a closed context found near Porta Latina (BM 1805,0703.34-36, 281.a, 282, 283.a, 284, 285 and 286). All small figurines (c. 100) followed only in 1814, with the exception of the bull-statue and two small deities (1805,0703.288-289), but the reason for inclusion in the earlier sale is unknown.

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Chapter 6

Making Copies of Etruscan Paintings: The History of the Facsimile Gallery in Florence

Susanna Sarti

Abstract

In the first half of the 19th century, archaeologists and scholars started to focus on the problems of understanding, as well as conserving, the newly discovered fragile Etruscan tombs. Already known in private collections such as the Campana Museum in Rome, facsimiles of Etruscan tomb paintings were first introduced to the public in the famous Campanari exhibition of reconstructed Etruscan tombs in London in 1837. Following their presentation in museums in Rome, Munich, Copenhagen and Bologna, in 1928 the First International Etruscan Congress provided the opportunity to open the Gallery of Reproductions of Etruscan Paintings in Florence, to which this chapter is devoted. This chapter traces the history of copies of Etruscan wall-painting and focuses on the collection of facsimile wall-paintings in the Museo Archeologico in Florence.¹

The nucleus of the Archaeological Museum in Florence was formed by the family collections of the Medici and the House of Habsburg-Lorraine and initially displayed in the Uffizi Gallery. This contained no Etruscan wall-paintings or any copies of them, even after its re-organisation by the *aiuto antiquario* or assistant curator Luigi Lanzi, supported by Grand Duke Leopold in 1780. It celebrated the antiquities of the ‘Museo Etrusco’ as well as the ‘Gabinetto delle figurine’ containing terracottas and vases.²

Despite this situation there must have been discussion in Florence from the 18th century onwards about the use of reproductions as an essential means of preserving such a fragile and easily damaged art form as mural painting. Drawings of Etruscan paintings were first published in *De Etruria regali*, written by Thomas Dempster in Pisa in 1616–19 and printed by Filippo Buonarroti in Florence in 1726 (see chapters by Bruschetti, Hansson and Della Fina in this volume), adding the *Explicationes et Conjectures* and a further 14 plates,³ which included a drawing of the Tomba Tartaglia discovered in Corneto, ancient Tarquinia, in 1699.⁴ In 1743 Anton Francesco Gori, in his *Museum Etruscum*, published a drawn plan and paintings of a tomb discovered at Tarquinia and a *sepulcrum etruscum picturis ornatum inventum prope Clusium anno CIO.IO.CC.XXIV*, ‘an Etruscan tomb decorated with pictures found near Chiusi in 1734’.⁵ Francesco Inghirami devoted Ragionamento VI of his fourth volume of *Monumenti Etruschi* to the tombs of Tarquinia, making a synthesis of all the previous work on the subject. In addition, in his *Etrusco Museo Chiusino*, ‘già vicini al termine della loro opera’ (‘already near the end of their work’), he hastened to make use of illustrations of the newly discovered Tomba del Colle.⁶ Giuseppe Micali’s *Monumenti per servire alla storia degli antichi popoli italiani*, published in Florence in 1832, was illustrated with several etchings and drawings of Etruscan wall-paintings.

Most of the well-known antiquaries of the time were interested in the recently discovered Etruscan paintings. Scipione Maffei described the tombs of Corneto after he was given a tour by Giannicola Forlivesi in 1737.⁷ In France, the Comte de Caylus and later J.B.L.C. Seroux d’Agincourt showed interest in the painted tombs of Tarquinia.⁸ In London in 1763 an *Account of Some Subterraneous Apartments*,

with Etruscan Inscriptions and Paintings, Discovered at Civita Turchino in Italy was compiled by Joseph Wilcox and Charles Morton.⁹ Giovanni Battista Piranesi also dealt with this fashionable subject.¹⁰ Winckelman clearly disliked the reproductions published by Filippo Buonarroti, which he judged as ‘assai mal disegnate e incise’ (‘quite badly drawn and engraved’), while he praised the work of the Scot James Byres (1734–1814): ‘se ne avrà quanto prima una piena ed accurata descrizione con tavole in rame dal Signor Byres’ (‘you will very soon have a full and accurate description with copper plates by Signor Byres’).¹¹ The latter’s volume, *Hypogaei, or Sepulchral Caverns of Tarquinia the Capital of Etruria, with Engravings after Drawings made by the Polish artist Franciszek Smuglewicz*, was published posthumously.¹²

In the meantime several Etruscan sites became well known and interest in the tombs was followed by the production of numerous etchings and drawings of their wall-paintings. In 1827 Baron Otto Magnus von Stackelberg, the diplomat August Kestner and the architect Joseph Thürmer began making copies of some of the tombs discovered in Tarquinia.¹³ The *London Literary Gazette* devoted three columns to the work of von Stackelberg’s team, whose ‘excellent drawings are, we hope, to be (if not already) published’.¹⁴ William Gell argued, however:

The Roman government, lending itself to the culpable cupidity of certain German speculators, prohibited the drawing of these sepulchres, and thus favouring a monopoly, has deprived the public of a faithful account of them; and as they are now nearly destroyed by candles, or obliterated by damp, an accurate description of them has become almost impossible.¹⁵

The *Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* had just sponsored a project to publish Etruscan wall-paintings in the *Bullettino, Annali* and *Monumenti*, employing a number of draughtsmen and painters, namely Ludwig Gruner, Giuseppe Angeletti, Nicola Ortis, Bartolomeo Bartoccini, Gregorio Mariani, Louis Schultz and Carlo Ruspi.¹⁶ Painters and architects, such as Pierre-François-Henri Labrouste, were also keen to make copies of Etruscan paintings.¹⁷ Travel books contained anecdotes about the tombs, for instance the Prussian Wilhelm Dorow, after a brief description of the images in Chiusi, wrote: ‘je ne restai pas longtemps dans cette grotte très-humide, parce que je craignais d'y gagner la fièvre: d'ailleurs je ne voulais rien y copier, puisque des savants se sont déjà acquittés de ce soin’ (‘I did not stay long in this very damp grotto, because I was afraid of getting the fever: besides, I did not want to copy anything there, because some experts had already taken care of this’).¹⁸ Stendhal, consul at Civitavecchia, pointed out that ‘la curiosité qui depuis quelques années seulement attire les voyageurs à Corneto et à Civita-Veccchia a pour objet des tombeaux qui remontent à deux mille ans au moins’ (‘the curiosity which only recently has attracted travellers to Corneto and Civitavecchia has as its object tombs which date back at least two thousand years’), and he wrote that he had seen ‘M. Ruspi travailler à de nouvelles copies de ces peintures singulières’ (‘M. Ruspi working on new copies of these singular paintings’).¹⁹

The most influential project to create copies of Etruscan tomb paintings was undertaken between 1832 and 1837 by Carlo Ruspi, who was requested by the Pope and Ludwig I

of Bavaria to produce a group of facsimiles, tracings and watercolours of the most important Etruscan paintings of Tarquinia for the Museo Gregoriano in the Vatican, and for the Vase Room in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.²⁰ This was at the time of the popular Campanari exhibition in Pall Mall, London, which first introduced the facsimiles to the wider public.²¹

Compelled by issues of conservation archaeologists started to focus on the problems of preserving, as well as understanding, the painted tombs, in addition to making known the newly discovered monuments.²² The Etruscophile Mrs Hamilton Gray advised travellers not to expect much delight from a journey to Tarquinia: ‘They will see nothing but walls painted with colours, not half so vivid as the copies preserved in the Vatican’.²³ The great interest in making 1:1 reproductions of mural paintings, as well as drawings and etchings of them, also engaged private collectors such as Marquis Giovanni Pietro Campana, who exhibited reproductions of Etruscan tombs in Rome. Facsimiles are mentioned in the catalogue of his museum, the *Cataloghi Campana*,²⁴ including those of the Tomba dei Matunas.²⁵

In Florence, the Grand Duke asked the painter Giuseppe Angeletti to draw the Tomba della Scimmia, discovered by Alessandro François at Chiusi in 1846, and recommended that he follow the advice of Eduard Gerhard, founder and secretary of the *Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, to look at contemporary reproduction projects for comparison. The main issue was the need to create images of the paintings before the tombs became inaccessible, since they often had to be covered over completely in order to allow agricultural work to continue. Following a visit by Gerhard to Chiusi, the *regio antiquario* or royal curator Michele Arcangelo Migliarini²⁶ wrote to the director of the Uffizi Gallery about the reproduction of the tomb, explaining that the Prussian archeologist had suggested making further drawings and ‘di farne lucidare, per mezzo della carta trasparente, quelle parti meglio conservate, e che sono più visibili’ (‘to trace, by means of transparent paper, those parts which are better preserved, and that are most visible’).²⁷

In the meantime, the Grand Duke had to deal with the problem of insufficient space to house the increasing number of antiquities. This resulted in the decision to move the Etruscan Museum from the Uffizi to the Fuligno monastery in Via Faenza, which already housed the Egyptian Museum. In the new museum an entire room was devoted, for the first time, to the reconstruction of an Etruscan tomb. In 1863, the tombs known as Golini I and Golini II had been discovered in Orvieto and drawn by Achille Ansiglioni and Francesco Moretti at the request of the Italian government, in order to illustrate them in a volume by Giovanni Carlo Conestabile.²⁸ The facsimiles of Tomba Golini I by Ansiglioni were displayed in the new Archaeological Museum, which opened on 12 March 1871.²⁹ Susan and Johanna Horner’s 1873 guidebook, *Walks in Florence*, gave an accurate description of the Egypto-Etruscan Museum, including these comments on the reconstruction:

a low chamber, constructed to resemble the Etruscan tomb recently discovered near Orvieto, with copies of the paintings on the walls, and vases on a low shelf around. The bronze gilt armour and vases in a room already described were taken from



Figure 72 Garden of the Archaeological Museum, Florence, with Luigi Adriano Milani standing in front of the reconstruction of the Tomba Golini I. In the foreground, the Tomb of Casale Marittimo. © Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo

this tomb. An ancient bronze candelabrum is placed in front, with candles attached to it, in the same manner as the painted candelabrum on the wall of the compartment to the right. The paintings represent what may be supposed to be the funeral banquet.³⁰

The influential Baedeker guide considered the Golini tomb to be as important as the François Vase, highlighting them both with an asterisk:

Etruscan Collection on the right: 1st Room: Black vases from Chiusi, with and without reliefs; on the l. *Etruscan tomb from Volsinii with cinerary urns, mural paintings (mythological, e.g. Pluto and Proserpine, and scenes from life), and numerous inscriptions (the custodian lights visitors). - 2nd Room: In the centre the celebrated 'François Vase'.³¹

George Dennis' description of the Museum in via Faenza also drew attention to the room where the reconstruction of Tomba Golini I was displayed close to the well-known François Vase.³²

The new museum was, therefore, positively received, but the significant growth of the collection of antiquities soon made it necessary to search for a larger building. Despite the financial difficulties experienced in Florence after 1871, when it was replaced by Rome as the capital of the Kingdom of Italy, the 'Regio Museo Archeologico', which was to become the National Archaeological Museum of Florence, was opened in 1883 in the Palazzo della Crocetta. The collection was exhibited according to new principles:³³ on the ground floor there was a topographical section linked to the garden, where certain Etruscan tombs were reproduced (Tomba Golini I, Orvieto and Tomba Inghirami, Volterra) or even transported from their original locations and rebuilt (Tomba del Diavolino, Vetulonia and Tomba della Poggiarella, Casale Marittimo) (**Fig. 72**). On the first floor, the Medici and Habsburg-Lorraine collection was displayed, while the second floor was devoted to a collection of Flemish, Florentine and French tapestries, the 'Galleria degli arazzi e tessuti antichi', created in 1882 and opened to the public in 1884. In the Baedeker guide, after the description of the Archaeological Museum, the reader was informed: 'Ascending the staircase ... to the second floor, we

enter the Galleria degli Arazzi, a valuable but very unadvantageously exhibited collection of tapestry'.³⁴ The director of the Archaeological Museum, Luigi Adriano Milani³⁵ did not give up on his pursuit of more space, until finally in 1922 the 'Galleria degli Arazzi' was closed and the second floor was made available.³⁶

The reproductions of Etruscan paintings in the first arrangement of the Museum appear in a photograph by Fratelli Alinari, showing the facsimiles of Tomba Golini I made by Achille Ansiglioni hanging on the walls of the room called the 'Sala delle Urne', described in the newspapers of the time as being on the first floor.³⁷ Luigi Adriano Milani did not like Ansiglioni's work³⁸ and started his own project on Etruscan painting, in order to create a section on it in the museum for the wider public. The limitations of site access to visitors as well as the need to preserve these vulnerable monuments had prompted museum curators to find new strategies for display, and Milani probably conceived the idea of creating a gallery of reproductions of Etruscan mural paintings after being inspired by other museums in Europe. On several occasions he explained that he was particularly impressed by the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek where Carl Jacobsen had also been concerned with issues of preservation of the original paintings and the display of copies.³⁹

In Orvieto, another enterprise involving Etruscan painting was led by Adolfo Cozza, who in 1881 was given the responsibility by the Ministry of 'Istruzione Pubblica' for making copies of the two Golini tombs for the Museo Civico, which had opened in 1879. Also in Orvieto, in 1889, Orazio De Amicis was asked to make reproductions 'in un quarto dal vero' ('at a quarter life-size') of the newly discovered Tomba degli Hescanas for the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo.⁴⁰ Meanwhile in the Museo Civico of Bologna, the painter Luigi Busi created a Gallery *sui generis*, by painting images of the most important Etruscan painted tombs known at the time on the walls of Room X, apparently with a purely decorative purpose.⁴¹ The Facsimile Gallery of the Archaeological Museum in Florence was the last such display to be created, although a group of 1:1 copies were purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1905.⁴²



Figure 73 Pastel drawing of the Tomba della Scimmia in Chiusi by A.G. Gatti. © Courtesy Marco Gatti

Milani's project is explained in detail in the 1912 edition of the *Guida al Regio Museo di Firenze*, in which he underlines the necessity for such a gallery due to the problem of preserving the original paintings. His conception of the museum was as a book of ancient history,⁴³ which he believed, above all, would not be complete until it included a section on Etruscan painting.⁴⁴

To obtain images of Etruscan paintings for the Archeological Museum, Milani employed the skilled artist Augusto Guido Gatti.⁴⁵ The latter's first task was to recreate the painted walls of the Golini I tomb, built in the garden of the museum by the architect Giuseppe Castellucci and the master mason Giovanni Rigacci, and opened in 1903.⁴⁶ After this, Gatti travelled around Etruria to make drawings (Fig. 73), sketches (Fig. 74), tracings and watercolour paintings of the interiors of tombs (Fig. 75), which he used to create the facsimiles.

In 1909, Mary Lovett Cameron described the Archaeological Museum in Florence as 'being, in consequence of its admirable arrangement, one of the most educational of any in Italy',⁴⁷ and she continued:

With regard to the arrangement no fault can be found ...; on the ground floor a long file of rooms contains the objects found on given sites, collected together and arranged as far as possible chronologically ... Each room has the name of the site over the door from which the objects exhibited were taken, and the contents of particular tombs are put in cases together and labelled. Populonia, Cortona, Chiusi, Orvieto, Toscanella and Arezzo each have a room or part of a room devoted to them ... In the corridor facing the garden are the fragments of the beautiful Luni frieze in terra-cotta ... On the first floor the fine collection of bronzes and bucchero is being rearranged at the

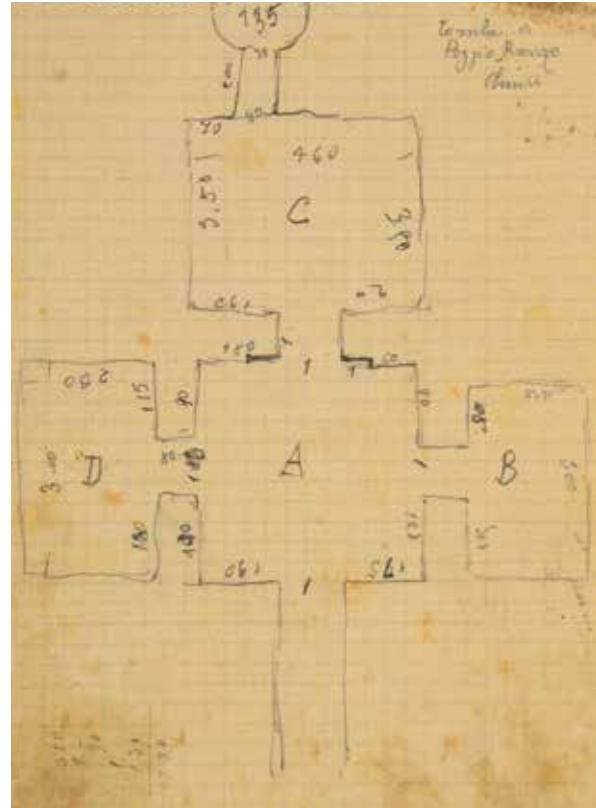


Figure 74 Sketch of the Tomba del Pozzo in Chiusi by A.G. Gatti. © Courtesy Marco Gatti

Figure 75 Watercolour of the decoration of the Tomba dei Tori in Tarquinia by A.G. Gatti. © Courtesy Marco Gatti



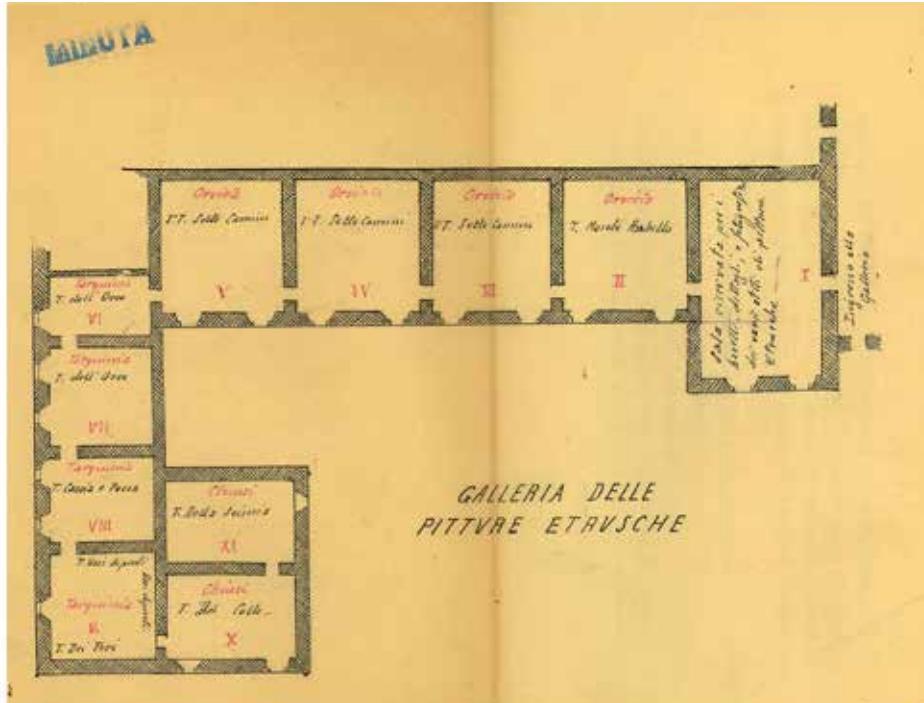
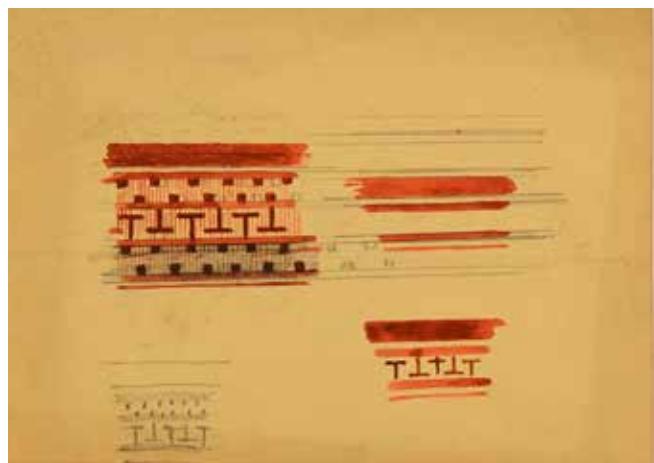


Figure 76 Map illustrating the first project of the 'Galleria della pittura etrusca' (Florence, Sar-Tos Archive, 1925-50, Pos. 7/4, prot. 82, 16 January 1926).
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time I write ... Among the painted vases the François vase reigns supreme ... In the garden there are a number of reproductions of tombs, from the earliest well-tombs onwards. They have all been transported here and reconstructed with the original stones and some of them have the urns, as originally found in them. A copy of the frescoes in the tomb of the Sette Camine near Orvieto gives a vivid impression of the general appearance of such tombs.⁴⁸

By 1911 Guido Gatti had completed the first facsimile of the Tomba della Scimmia, which was temporarily exhibited in room XXVI on the ground floor, in a first move towards a Facsimile Gallery.⁴⁹ The project was taken over by the next Soprintendente, Luigi Pernier, who in 1922 asked Emilio Bonci Casuccini at Chiusi for permission to reproduce the Tomba del Colle.⁵⁰ At the same time the Galleria degli Arazzi was removed so that work for Milani's project could begin on the second floor of the Palazzo della Crocetta, beside the long corridor where the Cast Gallery displayed examples of Etruscan works of art kept in foreign museums.⁵¹

Figure 77 Watercolour of the decoration of the Orvieto tombs by A.G. Gatti. © Courtesy Marco Gatti



By 1925 the Facsimile Gallery was in existence but not yet open to the public (Fig. 76). However, some archaeologists were allowed to visit it, including Carel Claudius Van Essen who disapproved of the copies, considering them unreliable. He wrote to the new Soprintendente Antonio Minto: 'Où les choses en sont maintenant (il faut dire la vérité) on ne saurait se fier à ces réproductions pour des études stylistiques sans courir le danger de se tromper' ('As things are (one should speak the truth) one would not be able to rely on these reproductions for stylistic study without running the risk of making errors').⁵²

Nevertheless, Doro Levi considered the Gallery essential to the Museum in his guide *Il R. Museo Archeologico di Firenze nel suo futuro ordinamento*,⁵³ after the publication of which in 1926 work on the Gallery immediately accelerated. Gatti decorated the rooms with friezes resembling the decoration of the tombs at Chiusi, Orvieto (Fig. 77) and Tarquinia, and soon the Facsimile Gallery was ready to open. The Soprintendente Antonio Minto chose to have the opening at the 1st International Etruscan Congress, when the most important scholars from all over the world were gathered in Florence.⁵⁴ The appearance of the Gallery is known thanks to the photographs taken by Giani & Co. (Via Fra' Bartolomeo 18, Florence) and the description by Antonio Minto.⁵⁵

Eleven rooms (XVII–XXVII) were devoted to the Gallery (Fig. 78).⁵⁶ The facsimiles were hung from the walls and display cases in the rooms contained objects which were associated with the tombs. The facsimiles were not intended to be reconstructions of the tombs, but rather had a decorative and didactic function. Watercolours and drawings showing general views, details and plans of the tombs were also often added.

Some of the tombs discovered in Chiusi were illustrated in room XVII, specifically the Tomba delle Tassinaie, Tomba di Orfeo ed Euridice and Tomba di Poggio al Moro (Fig. 79). The facsimiles were based mainly on Gatti's work

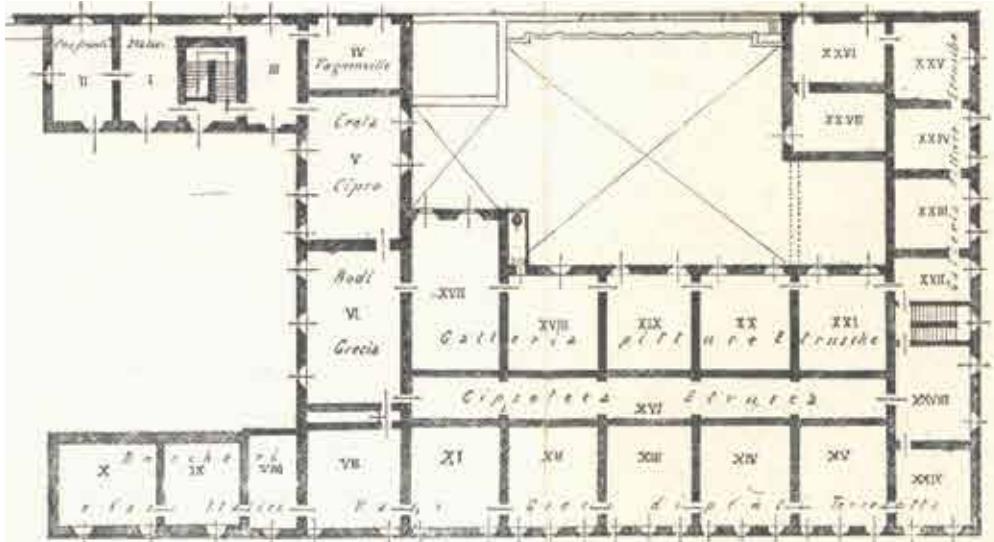


Figure 78 Map of the ‘Galleria della pittura etrusca’ (after Studi Etruschi 1928, pl. LII, fig. 3).
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Figure 79 Archaeological Museum, second floor, room XVII, 1928: Chiusi, Tomba delle Tassinaie, Tomba di Orfeo ed Euridice, Tomba di Poggio al Moro. © Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo

in Chiusi, where in 1910 Milani had organised a project to re-open the tombs seen by George Dennis and to produce illustrations of them.⁵⁷ Objects displayed in the Gallery included Etruscan urns and vases decorated with wreaths similar to those painted on the walls of the Tomba delle Tassinaie. These were displayed on shelves, with the polychrome sarcophagus of Larthia Seianti from Chiusi placed in the middle of the room. The most impressive Chiusine tombs, the Tomba del Colle Casuccini and Tomba della Scimmia, were placed at the end of the Gallery, where in Room XXVI an archaic *cippus* representing a funeral banquet was positioned in the centre, with a case containing urns and objects from Chiusi displayed in Room XXVII.

In rooms XVIII–XXI the visitor could see the tombs of Orvieto: in room XVIII, there were facsimiles of the Tomba degli Hescanas on the walls and, in the centre, a display case with Etruscan vases from Orvieto. In the following rooms

the Tomba Golini I ('dei Velii') and the Tomba Golini II ('delle due Bighe') (Rooms XIX–XXI) were represented, together with objects discovered inside the tombs, including the complete panoply of a warrior (**Fig. 8o**).

The tombs of Tarquinia were illustrated in four rooms (XXII–XXV): in Room XXII facsimiles of the Tomba dell'Orco covered the walls, while fragments of tufa sarcophagi from Tarquinia were displayed near the window. In Room XXIII, there were further 1:1 images of the Tomba dell'Orco, and at the centre of the room the statue of an Etruscan Lasa (a female underworld demon), actually from Vulci, but closely related to the iconography of the Tomba dell'Orco (**Fig. 81**). In Room XXIV were the impressive scenes from the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca and a showcase in the centre with objects found in Tarquinian tombs. Finally, in Room XXV, there were the facsimiles of the Tomba dei Vasi Dipinti and Tomba dei Tori, as well as watercolours showing their plans.



Figure 80 Archaeological Museum,
second floor, room XIX, 1928:
Orvieto, Tomba Golini I.
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Figure 81 Archaeological Museum,
second floor, room XXIII, 1928:
Tarquinia, Tomba dell'Orco.
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In Florence it was therefore possible to see the tombs of Chiusi and Orvieto, and some of the most important of those at Tarquinia, with displays of objects found inside the tombs, as for example with Tomba Golini I, or of objects with a close iconographic connection with the images from the tombs, such as the Lasa in the room of the Tomba dell'Orco.

The ‘Galleria dei fac-simile’ project was completed only in 1931, when the exhibition was enlarged with the facsimiles of the Tomba François at Vulci in Rooms XXVIII–XXX,⁵⁸ where photography was used in combination with sketches, watercolours (Fig. 82) and tracings. Moreover, casts of the sculptural decoration of the tomb (a gift of Ugo Ferraguti, *Ispettore Onorario* for Canino) were exhibited in the rooms

‘come materiali di confronto’ (‘as comparative material’).⁵⁹ When the new Gallery opened to the public on 14 November 1931 several newspapers gave accounts of the event and explained Minto’s project to extend the museum, creating a new entrance in Piazza Santissima Annunziata.⁶⁰ The *Guida artistica di Firenze e dei suoi dintorni*, published in 1932, although enthusiastic about the new museum, did not give a detailed description of it, evidently because the work was still in progress.⁶¹

In 1939 Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, in discussing the reproductions of the Tomba della Scimmia, mentioned the Facsimile Gallery and commented that, although he believed Gatti’s work was very important for the reading of

some of the lost images, the watercolours and the tracings (**Fig. 83**) were more reliable than the facsimiles.⁶²

The reproductions in Florence were also used for the volumes of *Monumenti della Pittura Antica* published under the direction of Giulio Emanuele Rizzo and they were often requested for publication, but it seems that the Facsimile Gallery was not greatly appreciated by visitors to the museum.

During the 19th century, museums used their facsimiles to demonstrate Etruscan painting, but often as decorative panels hanging on the walls, not necessarily with much connection to the objects displayed in the same room. In the British Museum and in Munich the facsimiles were displayed in rooms devoted to Greek vases, albeit many of them from Etruscan tombs, and in the Vatican in rooms filled with Roman sarcophagi and statues.⁶³ In Florence, as we have seen, almost a whole floor was devoted to the facsimiles hanging on the walls, in an attempt at representing Etruscan tombs by combining objects connected with them, but without the intention of creating a full reconstruction of a tomb, which would probably have been a more attractive idea. Despite the fact that visitors seem not to have greatly appreciated the arrangement of the Facsimile Gallery, the new guide to the Museum published by Antonio Minto in 1950 showed no significant changes, although great attention was paid to the topographical section in 52 rooms on the ground floor.⁶⁴

In the meantime, the *Istituto Centrale del Restauro* in Rome began to improve on the technique of detaching ancient paintings from their original location in order to preserve them, and soon a fascination with the originals prevailed over the old taste for reproductions. In 1951 in Florence the first exhibition of Etruscan painting was organised in Palazzo Davanzati, and no facsimiles were used. In 1955, the exhibition of Etruscan art in Milan also displayed frescoes detached from Etruscan tombs, with no facsimiles at all, despite including a reconstruction of two complete tombs.⁶⁵ In the same year, the Olivetti firm devoted its popular calendar to Etruscan painting, for which new photographs were taken.⁶⁶

The original concept of the ‘Galleria della pittura etrusca’ had become outdated. After the flood of 1966, most of the facsimiles were removed and in 1968 Alfredo de Agostino, in the new guide to the Museum, did not mention Rooms XXI to XXVII which were probably closed at the time. In the Orvieto rooms, the facsimiles were replaced by the original paintings from the Golini Tombs, lately

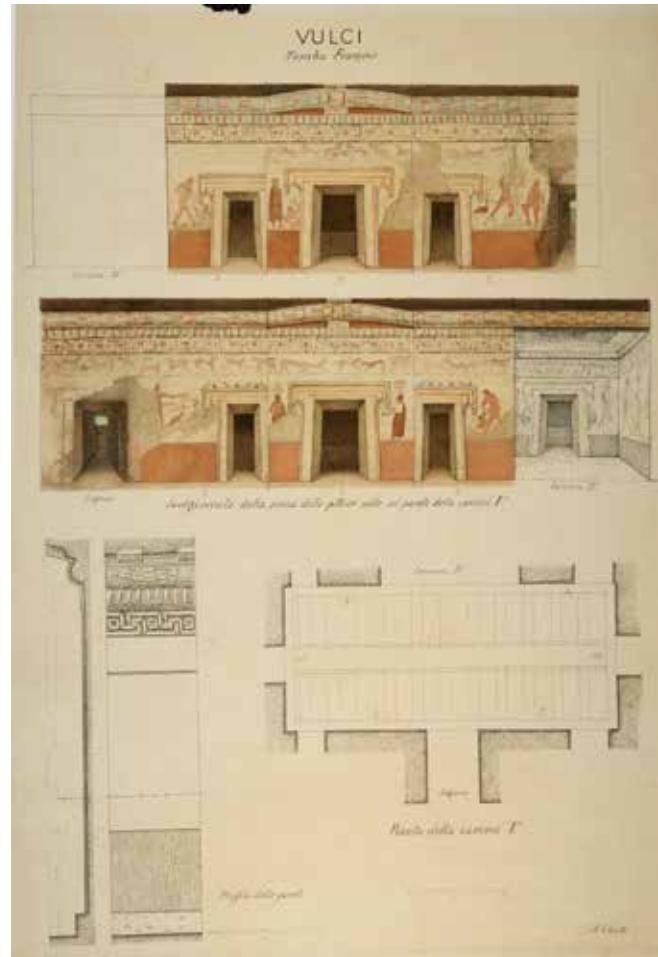


Figure 82 Tomba François, Vulci, watercolour. Photographer Fernando Guerrini. © Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo

detached and displayed at the exhibitions in Florence and Milan.⁶⁷ The frescoes had been cut from the rock and mounted on canvas, as they had begun to deteriorate because of the humidity.⁶⁸ There were no changes in Room XVIII, where it was still possible to see the facsimiles of the Tomba degli Hescanas on the walls and in the showcase were ‘Volsinian silvered vases with relief decoration from the chamber tomb of Poggio Sala near Bolsena’.⁶⁹

In the new arrangement of the 1980s, there appeared to be no reason to retain the ‘Galleria dei fac-simile’, and it was dismantled completely, together with the Cast Gallery, and its exhibits forgotten. The facsimiles, sketches and tracings were placed in storerooms, while watercolours were hung on



Figure 83 Tracing of the Tomba della Scimmia of Chiusi. Photographer Fernando Guerrini. © Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo

the walls of administrative offices at the Soprintendenza in Florence.⁷⁰

These images languished in obscurity for decades, but their value is now being recognised not only for what they can tell us about Etruscan paintings, but also as historical artefacts in their own right. Today, the importance of preserving such ‘archaeological’ objects for our cultural heritage has made new strategies for their conservation and display an urgent concern, taking into account the difficulties of their large size and the fragility of the materials, essentially wood, paper and canvas.⁷¹

Notes

- 1 See <http://icar.huma-num.fr/web/it/gatti>.
- 2 Lanzi 1782, 46–50 ‘Primo Gabinetto. Museo Etrusco’ and 157–69 ‘Decimoquinto Gabinetto. Figuline antiche’. Cf. Sarti 2013, 50–1, fig. 23.
- 3 Gialluca and Reynolds 2014.
- 4 *Thomae Dempsteri De Etruria regali libri VII* 1723–6, pl. LXXXIX.
- 5 Gori 1743, 84–7, classis II pl. VI, 88–91 classis II pls VII–VIII. See Dobrowolski 1990.
- 6 *Etrusco Museo Chiusino*, 181, pls CLXXXI–CLXXXV.
- 7 See Dobrowolski 2008, 119–28 and Harari 2012, 107–14.
- 8 Cf. Inghirami 1825, 121–2, n. 4, which mentions a letter written by P. Panciudi in 1760 to the comte de Caylus; Seroux d’Agincourt 1823, 8, pl. X. Moreover, see Lubtchansky 2011.
- 9 Wilcox and Morton 1763, 129.
- 10 Piranesi 1769, 22–3.
- 11 Winckelmann 1783, 192–3.
- 12 See Ridgway 2009.
- 13 Weber-Lehmann and Lehmann 1987.
- 14 *The London Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c.* 1829, 668.
- 15 Gell 1834, 376.
- 16 Blanck 1987, 48–60.
- 17 Lubtchansky 2004, 11–24; See also Haumesser 2006 and his chapter in this volume, and Lubtchansky 2011, 187–216.
- 18 Dorow 1829, 25.
- 19 Beyle 1853, 996 and 999. Cf. Nardi 1996.
- 20 Weber-Lehmann 1992, 418–22.
- 21 Colonna 1999. See also Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume.
- 22 For conservation matters, see Cuniglio 2017; for reproductions of antiquities see Lubtchansky 2017, and for the 19th-century concept of copy/reproduction see Piccioni 2016, 120–5; see also Capoferro and Renzetti 2017.
- 23 Gray 1843, 214.
- 24 Cataloghi del Museo Campana s.d., Classe VI, 2–3: ‘Possiede inoltre questo museo de’ grandi cartoni, ove si è dato conto di parecchi de’ più importanti dipinti parietari etruschi per mezzo di *fac-simili* fatti dagli originali che sonosi lasciati nelle tombe’. For Campana Collection, see Sarti 2001.
- 25 This tomb was drawn by Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (cf. Wilkinson 1856, 2).
- 26 For Michele Arcangelo Migliarini (Rome 1779–Florence 1865), see Auf der Heyde 2003.
- 27 Uffizi Gallery Archive, Florence, Filza 1846, fasc. 40, ‘François Alessandro. Escavazioni da esso intraprese presso Chiusi. Ipogei ivi scoperti, e disegni delle volte e pareti dipinte in uno di essi. Angeletti Giuseppe incaricato di eseguire i suddetti disegni’, letter dated 29 march 1846 written by Michele Arcangelo Migliarini, ‘Regio antiquario’, to the Director of the Uffizi Gallery, Antonio Ramirez di Montalvo.
- 28 Golini and Conestabile Della Staffa 1865, 34; see also Fumi 1891, 16: ‘A cura del governo furono diligentemente disegnate dai pittori Ansighioni e Moretti, incise in rame dai Bartoccini in diciotto belle tavole e dottamente illustrate dall’archeologo valentissimo conte Connestabile’. Cf. Feruglio 1982, 21–8.
- 29 Gamurrini 1873, 31–41.
- 30 Horner and Horner 1873, vol. 2, 429–30 and, for the description of the Egypto-Etruscan Museum, 416–30.
- 31 Baedeker 1874, 351.
- 32 Dennis 1878, 80.
- 33 Cf. Milani 1898.
- 34 Baedeker 1913, 608–9.
- 35 For Luigi Adriano Milani (1854–1914), see Sarti 2012.
- 36 Milani 1912, 88–9. See also Parigi 2012, 3–5.
- 37 *La Nazione*, 31 December 1888, ‘Il Museo Etrusco in Firenze’. Alinari n. ACA-F-003450-0000, see <http://www.alinariarchives.it/it/search>.
- 38 Milani 1898, 49.
- 39 See Moltesen and Weber-Lehmann 1991, 9–40 and Cuniglio 2017. Cf. also Capoferro and Renzetti 2017.
- 40 Della Fina 2013, 191–200. See also Tamburini *et al.* 2002, 30–43.
- 41 Sassatelli 1984.
- 42 For the collection in Boston, purchased from Edward Perry Warren, 1905, see http://www.mfa.org/collections/search?search_api_views_fulltext=etruscan%20painting&page=1 and Weber-Lehmann 2017. See also the collection created by Vincenzo Fioroni (1867–1929) of watercolours painted by Elio D’Alessandris, and now belonging to the Museo della Antichità Etrusche ed Italiche of the University ‘La Sapienza’ in Rome; see Colonna 1984, 74–5 and Drago Troccoli 2005, 17–19.
- 43 Milani 1912, 34.
- 44 Milani 1912, 85–8.
- 45 For Augusto Guido Gatti (Florence 1863–1947), see Sarti 2017a and Sarti 2017b.
- 46 Milani 1912, 191–2; Florence, Sar-Tos Archive, 1920–24, Pos. I, fasc. 16. For the Garden, see Romualdi and Marino 2000.
- 47 Cameron 1909, 186.
- 48 Cameron 1909, 237–40.
- 49 Milani 1912, 85–7, 303–4; the room was destroyed in 1933, Florence, Archive of the Soprintendenza Archeologia della Toscana (Sar-Tos Archive), 1925–50, Pos. 7/8, fasc. 3, ‘Museo Topografico. Demolizione sale su via della Colonna (1933–1934)’.
- 50 Florence, Sar-Tos Archive, 1920–25, Pos. 7/3, letter 5 April 1922: ‘affinchè ... Guido Gatti, assistito dal restauratore Sig. Chiari, possa prendere i lucidi e rilevare i dettagli delle scene figurate’.
- 51 For the Cast Gallery of the Archaeological Museum of Florence, which still awaits reconstruction, see Sarti 2017a, 43–6.
- 52 Florence, Sar-Tos Archive, 1925–50, Pos. 7/4, letter prot. 474, 2 April 1925 and see also the letter by Minto in reply to Van Essen, prot. 590, 30 April 1925.
- 53 Levi 1926, 18. For Doro Levi (Trieste 1898–Rome 1991), see La Rosa 2005.
- 54 Minto 1932.
- 55 Minto 1928, 771–2. For Antonio Minto (1880–1954), see Patera 2012.
- 56 Levi 1926, 18, cf. pl. I, plan of the second floor of the Crocetta palace.
- 57 Galli 1915, 6–7.
- 58 Minto 1932.
- 59 Florence, Sar-Tos Archive, 1925–50, Pos. 7/4, prot. 913, letter dated 16 August 1931; Pos. 7/4, 1925–50, prot. 991, thank you letter from R. Paribenzi to Ferraguti dated 31 August 1931.
- 60 *Corriere della sera* 17 November 1931, ‘Gli affreschi della tomba di Vulci’ by Pericle Ducati, *La Nazione* 17 November 1931, ‘La Galleria delle pitture etrusche si arricchisce di tre nuove sale’. For Minto’s project, see Cuniglio 2009, 121–5 and Cianferoni *et al.* 2012, 363–5.
- 61 *Guida artistica di Firenze e dei suoi dintorni*, Florence, 1932, 283: ‘Il Museo interessantissimo è visibile dalle 10.00 alle 16.00 nei giorni feriali e dalle 9 alle 12 la domenica’.
- 62 Bianchi Bandinelli 1939, 5: ‘Bisogna avvertire, però, che il Gatti integrò anche le sue riproduzioni con l’ausilio delle incisioni dei *Monumenti dell’Instituto*. Perciò gli aquerelli che precedono i lucidi ... sono oggettivamente più probanti delle copie grandi’.
- 63 Weber-Lehmann and Lehmann 1987, figs 6–7.
- 64 Minto 1950, 25.
- 65 Pallottino 1955, xvii.
- 66 I warmly thank Lucia Alberton of the Archivio Storico Olivetti, Ivrea (Torino) for her precious help.
- 67 Today the original paintings are in the Museo Claudio Faina di Orvieto. Two of the facsimiles of the Tomba degli Hescanas made

- by A.G. Gatti are exhibited at CEA Centro Visite PAAO at Villa Paolini in Porano (Terni).
- 68 De Agostino 1968, 98.
- 69 De Agostino 1968, 96.
- 70 In 1987, 68 canvases were stored in the Limonaia at Villa Corsini (Sesto F.no, Florence); cf. Bardi *et al.* 2010. See also Mari *et al.* 2009; Cuniglio *et al.* 2013. For the complete corpus of Gatti's work, see Cuniglio *et al.* 2017.
- 71 I thank Judith Swaddling for the invitation to the conference and for her warm welcome in London. I also thank Olga Krzyszkowska and Corinna Riva for their support, and my friends and colleagues Lucrezia Cuniglio, Melanie Mendonça, Judith Toms and Athena Tsingarida for their generous help.

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Chapter 7

Glyptomania: The Study, Collection, Reproduction and Re-use of Etruscan Engraved Gems in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Ulf R. Hansson

Abstract

This chapter considers the interest in Etruscan engraved gems and jewellery in the 18th and 19th centuries, from the scholarly and collecting activities of Philipp von Stosch, Anton Francesco Gori and others in Florence in the heyday of the *Etruscheria*, to the complete re-systematisation of the Etruscan glyptic material by Adolf Furtwängler at the turn of the century in 1900. It also discusses the interesting cultural phenomenon of the *dactyliothecae* (gem cast cabinets), amateur and commercial serial production of gem impressions and gem casts in various materials, and the re-use and imitation of Etruscan gems and goldwork in the so-called ‘archaeological jewellery’ produced by the Castellani and other workshops.

Engraved gems constitute a rich and significant, but nowadays rather neglected source material for the study of ancient cultures. This was certainly not the case in the 18th century, when the study and collecting of gems and gem casts were not only considered core antiquarian practices, but engaged a wide spectrum of cultured enthusiasts around Europe. Many leading scholars in the Republic of Letters like Charles César Baudelot de Dairval, Philipp von Stosch, Anton Francesco Gori, Pierre-Jean Mariette and Johann Joachim Winckelmann published widely discussed books on the subject.¹ Engraved gems, including Etruscan ones, had a place in any ambitious survey of the art of the ancients, such as Count Caylus’ multi-volume *Recueil d’antiquités* (1761–7), or Winckelmann’s pioneering *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764), which even had an Etruscan gem on its front page – the celebrated *Gemma Stosch* (**Fig. 84**).² These influential and often illustrated works, and handbooks like those of

Figure 84 Frontispiece to Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, 1764





Figure 85 Pier Leone Ghezzi, *Two Famous Antiquarians* (Philipp von Stosch and Marcantonio Sabbatino examining gems). Engraving by Arthur Pond, 1739. British Museum, 1979,U.844

Mariette, Lorenz Natter and Christian Adolf Klotz³ caused a surge of interest in gems throughout Europe. They also led to a revival of gem-engraving as a craft, with contemporary artists skilfully emulating not only the subject matter, but the engraving techniques and styles of ancient craftsmen, thereby sometimes creating confusion amongst collectors as to what was ancient and what was not. These miniature artworks had often survived intact and in great numbers from the Greek, Etruscan and Roman worlds, and they were easy to collect and carry. Their miniature engraved images were recognised early on as some of the richest sources available for the study of ancient mythology, portraiture and iconography in general. The images were also very easy to reproduce mechanically by pressing the engraved surface into a softer, pliable material. The fact that a sealstone's impressed image was understood as an essential part of its original artistic intention added greatly to the interest in gem impressions and casts made from them, which were much more accurate than any artists' illustrations could be. Produced in a variety of materials such as wax, sulphur, plaster or glass-paste, gem impressions and casts were circulated among scholars, collectors and artists for reference purposes, and they also made attractive collectibles for travellers on the Grand Tour and for educated people in general.⁴ Even if the precious originals were locked away in princely and private collections, they could still be studied and admired by a wider audience via faithful reproductions available in custom or ready-made selections ranging from simple Grand Tour souvenir boxes with handwritten lists of the subjects they contained to

encyclopaedic collections of several thousand casts with printed and bound commentaries written by renowned scholars.⁵ In this way, gems and gem casts became instrumental in the 18th- and 19th-century reception of ancient art and mythology.

An early milestone in the history of scholarship and collecting, even by modern standards, was the activity of the widely influential Philipp von Stosch (1691–1757, **Fig. 85**), who contributed significantly and in several ways to the 'glyptomania' that developed over the course of the 18th century. A native of Küstrin in Brandenburg, but active in Rome and Florence in the first half of the century, Stosch had cleverly positioned himself as a leading gem connoisseur and had also built his own magnificent collection which contained two of the period's most celebrated Etruscan scarabs, discussion of which follows below.⁶ Gems had become Stosch's great obsession and *folie dominante* (principal passion) through contacts with leading scholars and collectors whom he had met on his early travels around Europe.⁷ He succeeded, even where others failed, in gaining access to every major collection, and had examined the originals and made copies or commissioned drawings of all the gems he could find. He also befriended and encouraged contemporary gem-engravers to imitate ancient styles and techniques, thus gaining extensive first-hand knowledge of all aspects of ancient gem-engraving.⁸ In 1724 Stosch published his *Gemmae antiquae caelatae / Pierres antiques gravées*, a fully illustrated, systematic study of 70 gems signed by their ancient engravers which he had managed to separate from the many stones with fake inscriptions that were already in circulation by then.⁹ This was some time before the interest in gems peaked and the subsequent flood of fake 'ancient' gems that came in the second half of the century, which Stosch's publication actually helped to create as it provided forgers with many new names of master engravers, not previously known from ancient writers like Pliny, which could be added to both ancient originals and modern works to increase their value. The book established Stosch as the foremost specialist in this increasingly important field of study, even among the highly critical antiquarians in Rome, where he had settled in 1722 and where gems constituted a growing and highly lucrative market. Stosch's own acquisitions of gems, medals and antiquities were funded by his dealing activities but also by the money he received from the British government for his not-so very secret mission of spying on the Old Stuart Pretender, who was then living in exile in Rome as the Pope's official guest.¹⁰ His frantic collecting was not governed by aesthetic considerations alone: above all he wanted his collection of originals, pastes and sulphurs to be as comprehensive and representative of ancient gem-engraving as possible. At the time of his death in 1757, Stosch's magnificent *museo* contained 3,444 original gems and pastes that were catalogued by Winckelmann, and an additional 28,000 sulphur impressions of gems in other collections, most of which later ended up in the workshop of James Tassie in London.¹¹

Since inscriptions on Etruscan gems referred mostly to the figures depicted and not to their engravers, there were no Etruscan works in Stosch's book, but he had many fine such examples in his own collection.¹² Some of these were

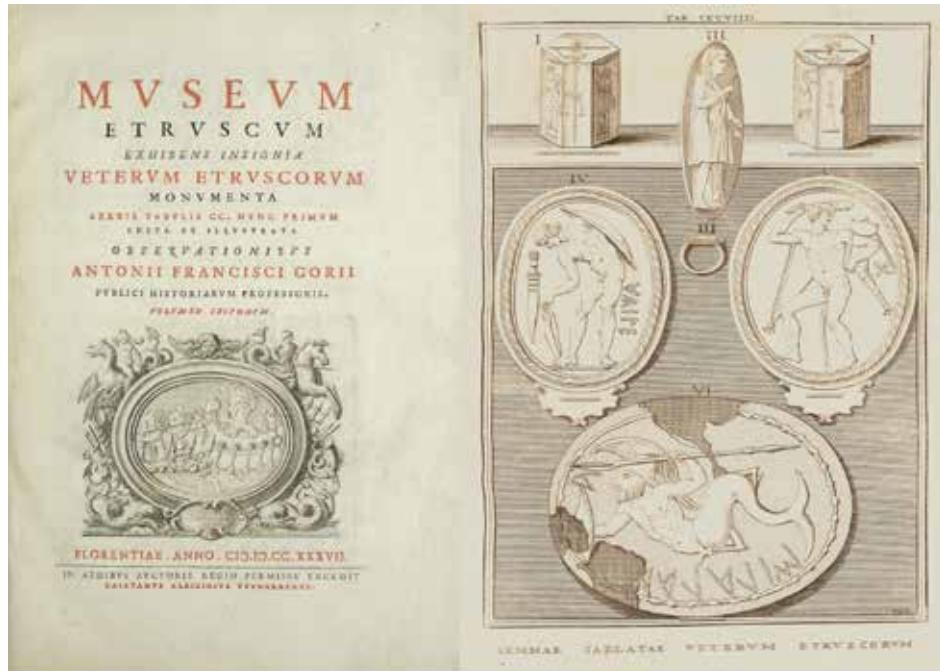


Figure 86 Anton Francesco Gori, *Museum Etruscum*, 1737. Frontispiece and pl. 199 with Etruscan gems, including the Corazzi *Hercle/Herakles* (v)

probably acquired while he was still living in Rome, but his interest in Etruscan gems increased considerably when he moved to Florence in 1731. Although he had many powerful friends in Rome, Stosch's work as a British informant had gained him many formidable enemies there. This, coupled with rumours of atheism and licentiousness, made his presence in the city an increasing embarrassment to the papal authorities. After his carriage was attacked one night by a group of masked men who demanded his immediate departure from the Papal State, Stosch decided to leave the city for good and settle in Florence.¹³ He arrived there at the height of the so-called *Etruscheria* or Etruscomania, which had been fuelled by publications like Thomas Dempster's posthumous *De Etruria regali* (1723) and Gori's *Museum Etruscum* (1737) (Fig. 86),¹⁴ and he was soon actively involved in the Tuscan antiquarian community, sponsoring a literary journal and interacting with academies and learned societies.¹⁵ He frequently sent items, either originals or reproductions, from his constantly growing private *museo* in the Palazzo Ramirez de Montalvo to the recently established Accademia Etrusca in Cortona (see Chapter 2 by Bruschetti in this volume), to be admired and discussed by its members at their meetings, the famous *notti coritane*. Gems constituted a significant and recurrent discussion topic at the Accademia and quite a few members had gems in their collections, among them Galeotto Ridolfini Corazzi (1690–1769) who owned several Etruscan works, including the famous *Hercle/Herakles* gem illustrated in the *Museum Etruscum* (Fig. 86) and *Museum Cortonense* (1750) volumes.¹⁶

Among the most prized Etruscan items in Stosch's possession were two cornelian scarabs¹⁷ that he had acquired in the early 1750s. Most famous was the so-called *Gemma Stosch*, which depicted five heroes from the 'Seven Against Thebes' narrative, named in the gem's inscription as *tute* (Tydeus), *fulnice* (Polyneikes), *amphiare* (Amphiaraos), *atresθe* (Adrastos) and *parθanapaes* (Parthenopaios). This miniature masterpiece had previously belonged to Count Ansiedi of Perugia, where the gem was said to have been found, and it

was presented to Stosch as a gift at a meeting of the Accademia Etrusca.¹⁸ First published with an illustration in 1742 by Gori,¹⁹ who was then the leading authority on the Etruscans, discussions continued in a series of publications, notably by Carlo Antonioli and of course by Winckelmann in his catalogue of Stosch's gem collection.²⁰ The gem also adorned the front pages of Winckelmann's art history (Fig. 84) and Mario Guarnacci's *Origini italiane* (1767).²¹ When it came into his possession, Stosch commissioned his house artist Johann Adam Schweickart to make a new and better illustration of it for a flyer to be circulated in antiquarian circles (Fig. 87a).²² The hotly debated question was whether its curious inscription was Etruscan, as Gori claimed, or Greek, as Stosch first wanted to believe, or Pelasgian, held to be the mother language of both Greek and Etruscan, a view championed by Winckelmann. Stosch later confessed that he did not care what language it was, the main thing was that his scarab had been universally recognised as one of the oldest gems to have survived from antiquity.²³ Winckelmann initially claimed that it was not only the oldest Etruscan gem, but the most ancient artwork in existence: this early masterpiece was to gem-engraving what Homer was to poetry.²⁴

Stosch's other famous Etruscan scarab (Fig. 87a–b) had been purchased from a Florentine art dealer sometime before the *Gemma Stosch* came into his possession.²⁵ It depicted a nude male figure and carried the inscription *tute* – a name that Stosch immediately had recognised as also appearing on the curious gem then still in Ansiedi's possession, and already well known through Gori's publication. He decided that he had to have both scarabs at 'qualsivoglia prezzo' ('whatever the price').²⁶ In his unillustrated catalogue of Stosch's gems, Winckelmann interpreted the scene as the wounded hero-warrior Tydeus removing a javelin from his calf, and held it to be the most beautiful of all Etruscan gems, on a par with the best Greek works of the high style and thus of a later date than the *Gemma Stosch*.²⁷ These two items, both now dated to the early

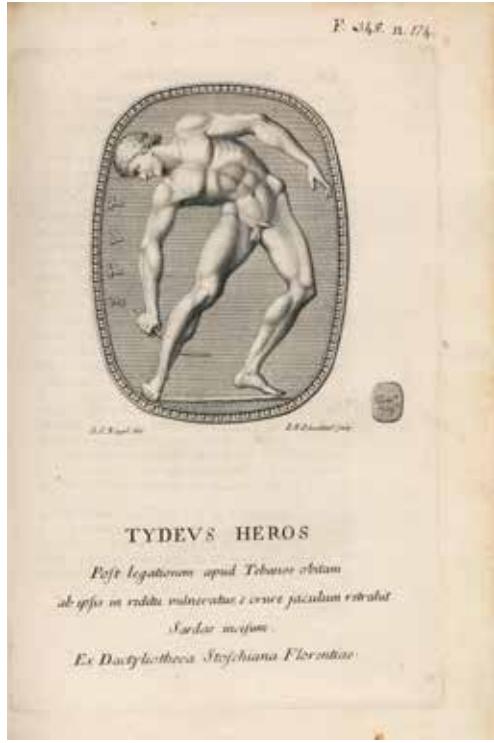


Figure 87a–b a) (left) Johann Adam Schweickart, The 'Gemma Stosch' (1756) and b) (right) *Tute/Tydeus*. Unnumbered plate from the illustrated luxury edition of Winckelmann 1760

5th century BC,²⁸ and a handful of other well-published gems, contributed to the widely held view that gem-engraving was one of the arts in which Etruscan craftsmen had excelled the most. Many examples were illustrated and discussed in Caylus' *Recueil*, and along with cruder works fashioned in the so-called *a globulo* technique (Fig. 89), where the image was created using only a limited number of round drill-heads instead of the edge of a cutting-wheel.²⁹ Winckelmann later felt the need to revise his chronology and place these simpler *a globulo* works before the *Gemma Stosch*, in the most primitive stages of art production.³⁰ Pierre-François Hugues d'Hancarville, who included discussions on gems in his catalogue of Sir William Hamilton's vase collection, dated them to before the Trojan war.³¹ Today, they are placed towards the end of the Etruscan production, in the late 4th and 3rd centuries BC.³²

Dactyliothecae

Gem collections had so far been hidden away in various princely art shrines. But in the course of the 18th and early 19th centuries an increasing number of private individuals had the means to build their own collections and Etruscan gems found their way into many of these. Among the collections that are now in the British Museum can be mentioned those of Sir William Hamilton (1731–1803) and Sir William Temple (1788–1856), who acquired many Etruscan gems while serving as British envoys in Naples (Fig. 88a–f). Hamilton's first collection (he built two) was rich in Etruscan scarabs, many of which were bought from Giovanni Carafa, Duke of Noia, who in turn had acquired several scarabs from Stosch's collection.³³ Many of these hidden treasures now became more widely accessible through illustrated catalogues and other publications, and especially from serially produced cast collections. The first commercial workshop for gem casts was established in Rome in the late 1730s by Stosch's former manservant

Christian Dehn (1696–1770), who had learnt the art of reproducing gems in glass-paste and sulphur from his former employer and now specialised in red *zolfi* (sulphur casts) of gems in various private collections.³⁴

Dehn was soon followed by many other manufacturers in Italy and abroad. Their custom or ready-made selections were often called *dactyliothecae*, literally 'cabinets for finger-rings', a term borrowed from Pliny and used in the title of one of the most famous cast collections: the Dresden-based manufacturer Philipp Daniel Lippert's *Dactyliotheca Universalis* (1755–76), which contained 4,198 casts in a white plaster-like material set in gold-edged paper collars and thematically arranged according to subject matter in shallow drawers inside four cabinets made to resemble large book volumes.³⁵ It had a printed catalogue with learned commentaries in Latin by the well-known scholars Johann Friedrich Christ and Christian Gottlob Heyne. Lippert also published an edition of 2,000 casts with a catalogue in German targeting art academies and schools.³⁶ Winckelmann relied heavily on casts from both Lippert and Dehn for his own work on the style of the Greeks, but doubted that their selections included many Etruscan items.³⁷ Most major cast workshops did in fact offer casts of Etruscan gems, but they were never very numerous. The Scotsman James Tassie (1735–99) had the widest range to offer his customers, based as mentioned on Stosch's gigantic collection of *zolfi* which Tassie successively added to and used to make his own various editions of casts in coloured glass-paste and sulphur.³⁸ Tassie perhaps also produced the set of red sulphur impressions of Hamilton's first gem collection, now in the British Museum (Fig. 89). The first focused cast project featuring Etruscan gems, and one of the very last ambitious ones before interest waned, was the *Impronte gemmari* of the Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica in Rome (1831–68), which was especially aimed at publishing casts of gems found during recent



Figure 88a (left) Hyakinthos(?), inscr. *puce*, Etruscan scarab, early 4th century bc. Ex Castellani collection. British Museum, 1865,0712.65

Figure 88b (centre) *Turms/Hermes*, Etruscan scarab, 4th century bc, from Chiusi. Ex Castellani collection. British Museum, 1872,0604.1238

Figure 88c (right) Youth with dog, Etruscan scarab, 4th century bc. Ex Hamilton collection, British Museum, 1772,0315.343



Figure 88d (left) *Taitte/Daidalos*, Etruscan scarab, 4th century bc. Ex Hamilton collection, British Museum, 1772,0315.366

Figure 88e (centre) Centaur, Etruscan *a globolo* scarab, 3rd century bc. Ex Castellani collection, British Museum, 1862,0604.15

Figure 88f (right) Centaur, Etruscan *a globolo* scarab, 3rd century bc. Ex William Temple collection, British Museum, 1856,1226.1576

excavations in Etruria.³⁹ The project was supervised by the Institute's secretary, Eduard Gerhard, and a group of international experts which included the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, whose own impressive gem collection contained many fine Etruscan works.⁴⁰ The 600 casts in the series were produced by the artist Tommaso Cades (1770s–after 1850), who also issued a separate collection of 12 boxes with *Gemme etrusche* (1831–9), and brief catalogue texts were published in the Institute's *Bullettino*.⁴¹ By this point in the mid-19th century, the age of the *dactyliothecae* was over, and the many fake gems that had flooded the market for more than a century had created a crisis for scholars and collectors and turned this whole field of study into a minefield.

'Jewellery that nobody need be ashamed to wear': Etruscan revival jewellery

In his *Traité des pierres gravées* from 1750, the French collector and connoisseur Pierre-Jean Mariette claimed that Etruscan scarabs were exceedingly rare.⁴² A century later they were not. George Dennis reported in his *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* in 1848 that the inland region of Chiusi was exceptionally rich in finds. There was even a specific locality there called *il Campo degli orfici* (the Jewellers' field) from 'the number of *scarabei* there brought to life'.⁴³ Excavations at Vulci, Cerveteri and Tarquinia in southern Etruria were found to be equally rich especially in *a globolo* scarabs. Well into the mid-19th century, such scarab gems could still be bought in bulk on the antiquities market, and they even found their way into new jewellery creations that were inspired by ancient models and sometimes even included pieces of original ancient goldwork. Mrs Hamilton Gray,

who had acquired some Etruscan scarabs on her travels in Italy, reported in her *Tour of the Sepulchres of Etruria in 1839* that Princess Canino, second wife of Lucien Bonaparte, had created a minor sensation at a social event in Rome in the 1830s by wearing a complete Etruscan parure of jewellery said to have come from excavations on the Canino property near Vulci that was 'the envy of society and excelled the chefs d'œuvre of Paris and Vienna'.⁴⁴ As this new fashion

Figure 89 Sulphur impressions of Sir William Hamilton's first gem collection. British Museum, 1772,0315.300–437

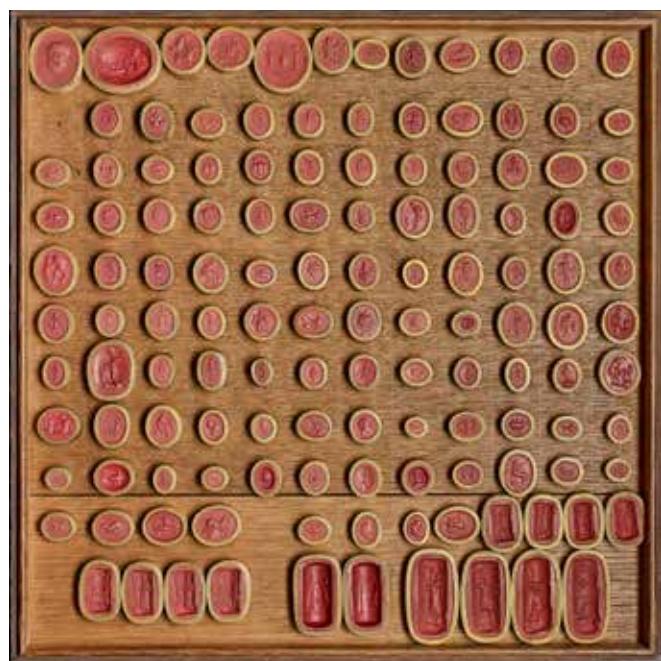




Figure 90 Jewellery from the Campana collection, illustrated in Martha 1889, pl. 1

caught on, several workshops started producing Etruscan-inspired jewellery, although the label 'Etruscan' was often used to describe revivalist works that had little to do with Etruscan originals. Among the earliest and most successful revivalist jewellers were three generations of the Castellani family, who were active for more than a century.⁴⁵

The Castellani firm was established in Rome in 1814 by Fortunato Pio Castellani (1794–1865), who also founded a school for jewellers. The business was continued from the 1850s by his sons Alessandro (1823–83) and Augusto (1829–1914), and from 1914 by Augusto's son Alfredo (1853–1930), who subsequently donated large parts of the family's considerable collection of jewellery and antiquities to the Italian nation, in accordance with his father's wishes. Their first workshop was located in the Palazzo Raggi in via del Corso, but in 1854 it was transferred to 82 Piazza Poli, and in 1869 to 86 Piazza Fontana di Trevi, where the name Castellani can still be seen above the entrance to the building. Deeply interested in archaeology, the Castellani were very much involved with the excavators, dealers and collectors of the period and had ample opportunity to handle and study original ancient pieces of jewellery. This gave them almost unrivalled knowledge in the field, which they expertly made use of when they restored and improved upon ancient originals, and made new creations inspired by

ancient models.⁴⁶ Original gems, including Etruscan scarabs, were sometimes used in these latter modern works.⁴⁷ The Castellani also collected and dealt in ancient jewellery and antiquities.⁴⁸

Initially producing works in the conventional style of contemporary English and French jewellery, the firm soon turned to ancient models for inspiration, a move that proved extremely successful. In 1826, Fortunato Pio was invited to give a lecture at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome on the results of successful chemical experiments that he and two associates had conducted with the aim of imitating the yellowish so-called *giallone* gold of Etruscan jewellery, which differed from the reddish variety used in modern works.⁴⁹ He also initiated a long-term collaboration with Michelangelo Caetani (1804–82), Duke of Sermoneta, who became instrumental in the firm's refocus on ancient jewellery designs and techniques such as granulation (minute gold spheres) and filigree (gold wire), in which Etruscan craftsmen had excelled and which the Castellani were increasingly successful at imitating by combining careful examination of ancient originals with practical knowledge derived from extensive experiments with materials and techniques. They also collaborated with craftsmen who made folk jewellery using traditional techniques that appeared to be similar to ancient ones. One such artisan, Benedetto Romanini from the village of Sant'Angelo in Vado near Urbino, was invited to Rome to share his knowledge with the Castellani goldsmiths.⁵⁰

Two events proved decisive for the Castellani firm's refocus on so-called archaeological jewellery. The first was the invitation to examine the exceptional gold finds from the famous Regolini-Galassi tomb from the mid-7th century BC, discovered at Cerveteri in 1836.⁵¹ The second was the 1861 sale of the Campana collection of ancient jewellery that had been sequestered by the Papal authorities following the art collector and banker Giampietro Campana's highly publicised trial and conviction for embezzlement of public funds.⁵² The Castellani campaigned, unsuccessfully, against the decision to sell the exceptionally rich collection to France, and their negative experience led to the family's decision to build their own collection of ancient jewellery, which they put on display in their showrooms. In 1859, Augusto Castellani was given an opportunity to examine closely the more than 1,000 extraordinary pieces and prepare the collection for the forthcoming sale. He found that several items had already been heavily and badly restored, and spent five months working full-time to continue and improve on the work already carried out, to make the collection presentable.⁵³ When the Campana jewellery was finally exhibited at the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris in 1862 and then in the Louvre, it had a strong impact on contemporary jewellers and their patrons. Some of the magnificent pieces were later illustrated in colour in Jules Martha's *L'Art Étrusque* (1889, **Fig. 90**),⁵⁴ among them the iconic necklace incorporating 23 scarabs of mostly Etruscan manufacture and genuine gold components of various provenances dated between the 6th and 1st centuries BC, which had been combined with modern additions in a hybrid design that in fact had no known ancient equivalent.⁵⁵ The Castellani workshop produced several similar necklaces, including the so-called Canino collier (**Fig.**



Figure 91 The Canino scarab collier. Castellani workshop, 1860s(?) with Etruscan elements. British Museum, 1872,0604.649

91), now in the British Museum, named after Lucien Bonaparte, Prince of Canino, and believed to have been assembled slightly later than the Campana necklace, as its modern additions exhibit the finer craftsmanship that the Castellani acquired over the years.⁵⁶ Many of the scarabs that the firm re-used in their jewellery are assumed to have come from the Canino estate at Vulci and from other excavations in Southern Etruria, especially those of Campana and the Campanari family, with whom the Castellani were closely associated.⁵⁷ But most of the gems had probably been acquired on the antiquities market in Rome and also in Naples,⁵⁸ where Alessandro spent some years in forced exile for political activism. In the firm's accounts there is mention of several well-known dealers who traded or specialised in gems, for example Francesco Depoletti and Giuseppe Baseggio.⁵⁹ But the supply of ancient originals could not always meet market demand and the extant corpus was often supplemented with modern copies – obvious ones as well as very convincing imitations.⁶⁰ The Castellani used both ancient and modern scarabs in their jewellery, but the modern production of scarabs remains insufficiently studied.⁶¹

The Castellani enjoyed their most creative period in the 1860s and 70s, when their jewellery was very successfully received at international exhibitions in London, Paris and Vienna. Alessandro Castellani was invited to give lectures around Europe and in the United States, and both he and

his brother published books on the subject of ancient and revivalist jewellery.⁶² ‘Everybody must thank the Roman goldsmith for at last giving the 19th century some jewellery that nobody need be ashamed to wear’, wrote one British critic in 1863, ‘at the present time, every goldsmith’s shop in London displays “Etruscan jewellery”’.⁶³ But these heavy designs did not appeal to everyone’s taste, and the revivalist jewellery trend was even caricatured in *Punch* magazine (**Fig. 92**).⁶⁴ Alfredo Castellani nevertheless continued to produce jewellery along the lines laid out by earlier generations of his family until his death in 1930, ignoring current trends, as indeed had his father before him.

During his exile from Rome in the 1860s, Alessandro Castellani spent long periods in Naples, Paris and London, where he established branches of the family firm. In Naples, where there was already a long tradition of craftsmen expertly copying or faking ancient jewellery from Pompeii and other sites, he founded a school for jewellers.⁶⁵ Two of the school’s talented students who were invited to join the firm became very successful and soon established their own workshops. Carlo Giuliano (1831–95) was brought to London in the early 1860s by Alessandro Castellani to help set up a family branch there, but left after only a few years to start his own business.⁶⁶ At first he sold his work through other jewellers like Robert Phillips, but in 1874 he opened his own showroom in Piccadilly.⁶⁷ Giacinto Melillo (1846–1915), who



Figure 92 'A young lady on the high classical school of ornament',
Punch or the London Charivari, 16 July 1859, 30

took over the Naples branch from Alessandro Castellani when still very young, was soon producing revivalist jewellery under his own name (**Fig. 93**). But there were several other workshops that were also inspired by 'Etruscan' jewellery. In Italy these revivalist jewellers were sometimes called *etruscani*, and several of them had shops near the Spanish Steps in Rome.⁶⁸

The revival of gem studies

In 1827, the German archaeologist Eduard Gerhard complained that despite the wide public interest in ancient

gems and the wealth of publications and cast collections, no significant scholarly progress had been made in the field since Stosch and Winckelmann.⁶⁹ This led the Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica in Rome to launch its own cast project, but the material in the *Impronte gemmarie dell'Istituto* was classified and presented in much the same way as in the preceding century. The casts were arranged according to subject matter in cardboard boxes made to resemble book volumes and accompanied by brief and uninformative catalogue entries. In 1828, the curator of the Hermitage gem cabinet in St Petersburg, Heinrich Köhler (1765–1838), published the first focused study of Etruscan scarabs.⁷⁰ It was one in a series of hypercritical gem studies based on the Hermitage collection in which the author cast doubt on the authenticity of much of the material in circulation, especially gems carrying artists' signatures.

In the early 1880s, the German archaeologist and art historian Adolf Furtwängler (1853–1907), who was then assistant curator at the Berlin Museums, embarked on a bold, ambitious project to re-examine as much of the preserved corpus of ancient gems as possible, with the aim of ridding it once and for all of the many modern copies and fakes in circulation and re-introducing, as it were, this rich source material to the scholarly community.⁷¹ The classical archaeologist and notable gem collector Paul Arndt, who briefly served as Furtwängler's assistant, estimated that Furtwängler examined as many as 60,000 original gems in the 15 years the project took to finish, most of which were then still unpublished and even unclassified.⁷² Echoing Stosch, Furtwängler began his systematic investigations with gems signed by their artists and bringing order to the 12,000 gems in Berlin, where Stosch's old gem collection had ended up after Frederick II had acquired it in 1766 for his *Antikentempel* at Sanssouci.⁷³ The project culminated in the lavishly illustrated three-volume *Die antiken Gemmen: Geschichte der Steinschneidekunst im klassischen Altertum*, published to great acclaim in 1900.⁷⁴ Armed with the powerful new

Figure 93 Gold bracelet made by Giacinto Melillo c. 1870, length 19.6cm. British Museum, 1978,1002.144. It was inspired by the panels with filigree, granulation and repoussé decoration on Etruscan a *baule* ('carpetbag') earrings such as those shown in this image, 6th century BC



tools for stylistic analysis originally developed for the study of sculpture and painting, Furtwängler systematised the surviving corpus of gems and created new typologies and a chronological framework for the entire ancient production, and provided it with detailed commentaries and ambitious cultural syntheses. Unlike much of the Roman material, which often left him rather indifferent, Furtwängler had great respect for Etruscan engravers, whose work he divided into no less than 12 substyles, from the earliest locally produced Archaic gems of the late 6th century BC down to the more widespread and diversified production of the early Roman period. This section of Furtwängler's pioneering study, which was understood by his contemporaries as much more than just a conventional handbook of gems,⁷⁵ was in fact the first comprehensive survey of the art production of pre-Roman Italy based on original materials.⁷⁶ The excellent photos of the book's nearly 4,000 illustrated items were not of original gems but of plaster casts that Furtwängler had borrowed mostly from Tommaso Cades' cast collection.⁷⁷ Although his work primarily targeted the scholarly community, Furtwängler naturally hoped that it would also increase popular interest in ancient gems and perhaps even contribute to yet another revival of gem-engraving as a craft.⁷⁸ Alas the passion for both seems to have waned irretrievably.

Notes

- 1 Baudelot de Dairval 1717; Stosch 1724; Mariette 1750; Winckelmann 1760. A.F. Gori included discussions on gems in several of his publications and also published catalogues of the Zanetti (1750) and Smith (1767) gem collections.
- 2 The publications listed in Mariette (1750, vol. 1, 241–4) and Murr (1804) give an idea of how much the bibliography grew in the second half of the century. Cf. also Furtwängler 1900, vol. 3, 402–35.
- 3 Mariette 1750; Natter 1754; Klotz 1768.
- 4 Gem impressions in coloured sulphur were considered cheap and fairly easy to make, but more fragile than the white plaster casts which became more common in the second half of the 18th century. Early pioneers were Philipp von Stosch (1691–1757) and his manservant Christian Dehn (1696–1770) for sulphur impressions, and Philipp Daniel Lippert (1702–85) for casts in a plaster-like material. For an excellent survey of the materials and techniques used for gem impressions and casts, see N. Riedl in Kockel and Graepler 2006, 121–30.
- 5 E.g. Kockel and Graepler 2006. Erudite commentaries accompanying cast cabinets were written by e.g. J.F. Christ, C.G. Heyne and L. Vincent (for P.D. Lippert) and R.E. Raspe (for Tassie).
- 6 For Stosch's interest in gems, see Zazoff 1983a, 3–67; Hansson 2014.
- 7 'C'étoit ma passion ou si Vous voulez ma folie dominante'. Unpubl. letter Stosch-François Fagel, Paris 13 April 1714. The Hague, Nationaal Archief 1.10.29 inv. 2026 fol. 22.
- 8 Stosch collaborated with Italian gem-engravers Carlo and Tommaso Costanzi, Flavio Sirletti, Giuseppe Torricelli, Lorenzo Masini, Felice Bernabé and Antonio Pichler, and it was Stosch who initially encouraged the young Lorenz Natter to study and imitate the work of ancient gem-engravers. E.g. Hansson 2014, 22 and refs; Natter 1754, p. xxxii.
- 9 Stosch 1724.
- 10 On Stosch as a British informant, see Lewis 1961, esp. 63–90. Stosch's early collecting was also funded through the small annuities he received from Pope Clement XI and August the Strong for 'services rendered'. In the case of the Dresden court he was employed there for several years as diplomatic envoy and Royal Antiquarian, and he advised Pope Clement XI on antiquarian matters. The latter payments continued until the pope's death in 1721. He also received funding from François Fagel, on whose behalf he acquired art and rare books, e.g. Hansson 2014 and refs.
- 11 Many gems had been traded, sold or given away over the years. Winckelmann's catalogue (1760) had 3,444 entries and also mentioned 'La grande collection d'empreintes en souffre... environ 28 000 morceaux' (p. xxix). These latter were later acquired by J. Tassie, Raspe 1791, p. lxiv.
- 12 Furtwängler 1896 lists 47 scarabs (20–7 and 36f. *passim*) and a large number of Etruscan and Etruscanising ringstones (37–64). Stosch's gems are indicated with a 'W' and the relevant no. in Winckelmann 1760.
- 13 There exist several contemporary accounts of this dramatic episode. See e.g. Justi 1871, 14f.; Lewis 1961, 87f. and refs; Hansson 2014, 17 and refs.
- 14 Dempster 1723; Gori 1737.
- 15 For Stosch in Florence, see Borroni Salvadori 1978, Zazoff 1983a, 56–67; Hansson 2014.
- 16 Gori 1737, vol. 2, pl. 199; Valesio *et al.* 1750, pl. 38. For gems at the Accademia Etrusca, see Bruschetti 1986; D. Levi in Barocchi and Gallo 1985, 176–80.
- 17 A scarab gem is a gem with a curved back side carved in the shape of a scarab beetle and usually carrying an engraved miniature image on its flat underside.
- 18 *Prima notte coritana*, 18 Jan. 1755. Archives of the Accademia Etrusca, Cortona. For the *Gemma Stosch*, see Zazoff 1983a, 58–62; Micheli 1984; Hansson 2014, 23f.
- 19 Gori 1742.
- 20 Antonioli 1757; Winckelmann 1760. Discussions summarised in Micheli 1984. Winckelmann followed more or less closely the classification system used in an earlier manuscript catalogue compiled by Stosch himself with the help of his brother, Heinrich Sigismund. E.g. Hansson 2014, 24–9 and refs.
- 21 Winckelmann 1764; Guaracci 1767.
- 22 This engraving was also published in the illustrated luxury edition of Winckelmann 1760 (after p. 344), and on the title page of Winckelmann 1764.
- 23 Letter Stosch to Giovanni Bianchi, 18 Dec. 1756. Justi 1871, 30f. no. xvi.
- 24 Winckelmann 1760, 344–7, no. 172.
- 25 Zazoff 1983a, 62f.; Hansson 2014, 23f and fig. III:8.
- 26 Letter Stosch to Bianchi (see above n. 23).
- 27 Winckelmann 1760, 348–50 no. 174. Today, the figure is recognised as an athlete scraping off oil from his body with a strigil.
- 28 E.g. Zazoff 1983b, 223 nn. 37–8.
- 29 Caylus 1761–7, vols 1, pls 28, 30, 49, 3:16, 20–5, 4: 28–32, 34–5, 37, 5: 36, 38–40, 6: 25–6, 33, 36, 7: 12–15, 19–23. For the *aglobolo* technique in Etruscan and Italic gem-engraving, see Hansson 2005; 2013, 937–9. For the gem-cutting equipment in the British Museum used by James Ronca see Rudoe 2006, fig. 13. See also the illustration of engraving tools and the marks they make in Zwierlein-Diehl 1973, 20 fig. H. Thanks are due to Judy Rudoe, British Museum, for assisting with several references for this paper.
- 30 Winckelmann 1764, 108.
- 31 d'Hancarville 1766–7, vol. 3, 192f.
- 32 Hansson 2013, 937f.
- 33 d'Hancarville MS cat. of Hamilton's gem collection, 1778, British Museum, Dept of Greece and Rome. For Hamilton's gem collecting, see I. Jenkins in Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 93–105, 198–209.
- 34 Dehn made gem reproductions in various materials and colours. E.g. Stefanelli 1991; Kockel and Graepler 2006, 158–60.
- 35 C. Kerschner in Kockel and Graepler 2006, 60–8; Hansson 2010.
- 36 Lippert 1767.
- 37 Winckelmann 1954, vol. 2, 298 no. 543.
- 38 Raspe 1791.
- 39 E.g. Flecker in Kockel and Graepler 2006, 95–101.
- 40 Fossing 1929, 35–42, and 43–57 *passim*.
- 41 Vols 2, 1830, 49–62; 3, 1831, 104–12; 6, 1834, 113–28; and 11, 1869, 97. The gem-engraver Antonio Odelli was also involved in the project.
- 42 Mariette 1750, vol. 2, no. 132.

- 43 Dennis 1848, vol. 2, 375.
- 44 Hamilton Gray 1840, 257. Two of Hamilton Gray's Etruscan scarabs are now in the British Museum (Williams 2009, 13 and refs), two further found their way into Lord Southesk's collection (Carnegie 1908, nos A14, A24). Cf. also Krauskopf 1995, no. 1195; now lost scarab with Phalanthos/Taras riding on the dolphin.
- 45 For Castellani: *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 21, 1978, s.v. Castellani (G. Bordenache Battaglia, M.G. Gajo, G. Monsagrati); Munn 1984; Weber Soros and Walker 2004; Gere and Rudoe 2010, 398–420; Russo Tagliente and Caruso 2015.
- 46 Technical analyses of some of the jewellery sold as ancient by the Castellani workshop show that ancient components have been used in unaltered, restored and improved or modified form. E.g. Swaddling, Oddy and Meeks 1991; Platz-Horster and Tietz 1993.
- 47 For Etruscan scarabs in modern creations inspired by ancient jewellery, see e.g. Weber Soros and Walker 2004, figs 2:25, 2:82, 9:13, 9:62–3, 13:7.
- 48 The studio was divided into two sections, one for ancient and one for modern jewellery: see J. Rudoe in Gere and Rudoe 2010, 398ff.
- 49 Castellani 1826.
- 50 Anon. 1862, 18f.; Castellani 1862, 22f.
- 51 Anon. 1862, 15; Castellani 1862, 18.
- 52 Sarti 2001, for Campana's jewellery collection see pp. 72–6, and 172–6, and esp. Gaultier and Metzger 2006.
- 53 Castellani 1862, foreword. The total number of catalogue entries was 1,146. Sarti 2001, 172–5. Enrico and Pietro Penelli and Filippo Gnaccarini had previously worked on the collection and restored several pieces. See E. Simpson in Weber Soros and Walker 2004, 201–26, at p. 213.
- 54 Martha 1889, pl. I.
- 55 Platz-Horster and Tietz 1993, the Campana collier, esp. 25–35.
- 56 Platz-Horster and Tietz 1993, 18–24, 33f.
- 57 Anon. 1862, 15.
- 58 Scarabs acquired in Naples: letter quoted in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 21, 1978, s.v. Castellani, 590–605 (p. 600) (G. Bordenache Battaglia).
- 59 L.P.B. Stefanelli in Weber Soros and Walker 2004, 105 and 122 n. 21.
- 60 Castellani 1862, 66.
- 61 In the Castellani documents, now in the Archivio di Stato in Rome, excavated ancient originals are usually specified as 'Etruscan' or 'ancient', while modern works are recorded as just 'scarabs'. Stefanelli in Weber Soros and Walker 2004, 122, n. 25.
- 62 The anonymous, privately printed book in English on ancient jewellery and its revival (Anon. 1862), which according to its foreword is partly based on Alessandro Castellani's lecture at the Archaeological Institute in London 1861 and printed for circulation among the anonymous author's friends in England 'for the most kind and cordial reception he has experienced from them', is often assumed to be written, printed and circulated by Alessandro himself during his stay in London. It is in fact a translation of an Italian text published by Augusto Castellani that same year (1862). Cf. also Castellani 1870, 1872, 1878.
- 63 Burges 1863, 406.
- 64 *Punch or the London Charivari*, 16 July 1859, 30.
- 65 Anon 1862, 13; Castellani 1862, 15f.
- 66 For Giuliano, see Munn 1984, esp. 47–56.
- 67 A fellow apprentice from Naples, Pasquale Novissimo (d. 1914), joined Giuliano's London workshop, and several other members of the Giuliano family worked as jewellers.
- 68 For other revivalist jewellers, see Munn 1984, 158–92; D. Scarisbrick in Weber Soros and Walker 2004, 317–31; Gere and Rudoe 2010, 398–436.
- 69 Gerhard 1827.
- 70 Köhler 1852 [1828].
- 71 Furtwängler 1900, vol. 1, xv.
- 72 Schuchhardt 1956, 15.
- 73 Furtwängler 1888–9, 1896. Stosch's heir Wilhelm Muzel had initially wanted Winckelmann to compile a simple sales catalogue of the gem collection to attract potential buyers. But the project grew and resulted in a substantial publication (Winckelmann 1760). Frederick II purchased the gems in 1766 for 30,000 ducati or 10,000 thaler, part of the sum was paid as an annuity to Muzell who was also appointed Royal Librarian. E.g. Hansson 2014, 29 and refs.
- 74 Furtwängler 1900.
- 75 E.g. Curtius 1958 [1935], 217: 'Geschichteschreibung im großen Stil'.
- 76 Brendel 1979, 39.
- 77 Furtwängler 1900, vol. 1, x. The so-called *Collezione Cades* comprised 8,000 gem casts amassed by Tommaso Cades. It included all those in the mentioned *Impronte gemmari* and *Gemme etrusche*. E.g. Knüppel in Kockel and Graepel 2006, 23f.
- 78 Furtwängler 1900, vol. 3, 383.

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Chapter 8

'Non restando sopra il letto, che il segno di quanto avevo veduto': Etruscan Skeletons on Display in the Nineteenth Century¹

Laurent Haumesser

Abstract

The rediscovery of ancient Etruria represents a key moment in the development of archaeology as a scholarly discipline. Starting in the 1820s, excavation of the rich necropoleis of Tarquinia, Vulci, Cerveteri and Chiusi provided the decisive impetus for founding the Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica in Rome in 1829. It was the first major, modern institute of archaeology, very different from the learned academies of the 18th century. These discoveries also had a profound impact on the archaeological collections of large European museums, significantly adding to knowledge of the material and artistic culture of the ancient world. Indeed, the rediscovery of Etruria also helped to shape the modern, highly imaginative, concept of archaeology, which has exercised considerable influence on European cultural history right up to the present day – we are still largely children of the 19th century. This chapter will discuss a few features of this imaginative approach.

Discovery and destruction

One of the major themes in accounts of early archaeological discoveries in Etruria was the connection between discovery and destruction. The process is known, of course, to be intrinsically paradoxical: excavation must destroy in order to acquire the knowledge, which thereby preserves what it destroys. Yet the destruction mentioned in 19th-century accounts is different in that the result was not caused by human intervention but rather simply from the uncovered finds being exposed to the atmosphere. This idea is constantly repeated in contemporary articles on painted tombs, which at the time were one of the most exciting novelties discovered in Etruria. Even more than the cities buried by the eruption of Vesuvius, discovery of the frescoes at Tarquinia (and, to a lesser extent, at Chiusi) constituted a new chapter in the history of ancient painting, whose disappearance seemed to be highly emblematic of the overall loss of ancient art. Several articles described how, upon being uncovered, paintings faded and, indeed, progressively vanished. A comment by French architect Théodore Labrouste is significant in this respect. On publishing a view of one of the most famous graves in Tarquinia, the Tomb of the Bigae (Tomb of the Chariots), César Daly reported that ‘Monsieur T. Labrouste told us that he had returned to Corneto just two years after making these drawings, that is to say in 1831, and that already there was no longer any trace of paint, to the point where “the walls were as bare as though they had never been painted” – those were his very words.² Of course every visitor to the National Archaeological Museum of Tarquinia, where the frescoes removed from the tomb are on show, realises that this was an exaggeration; even if the colours and certain details have faded, the painted decoration remains visible. But Labrouste’s exaggeration is symptomatic of an idea that was fairly widespread at the time, which had the fortunate consequence of stimulating a desire to document paintings apparently doomed to disappear, and enabling the public to see them in museums in the form of facsimiles that have represented a key source of knowledge of Etruscan funerary painting down to this day (see Chapter 6 by Sarti in this volume).

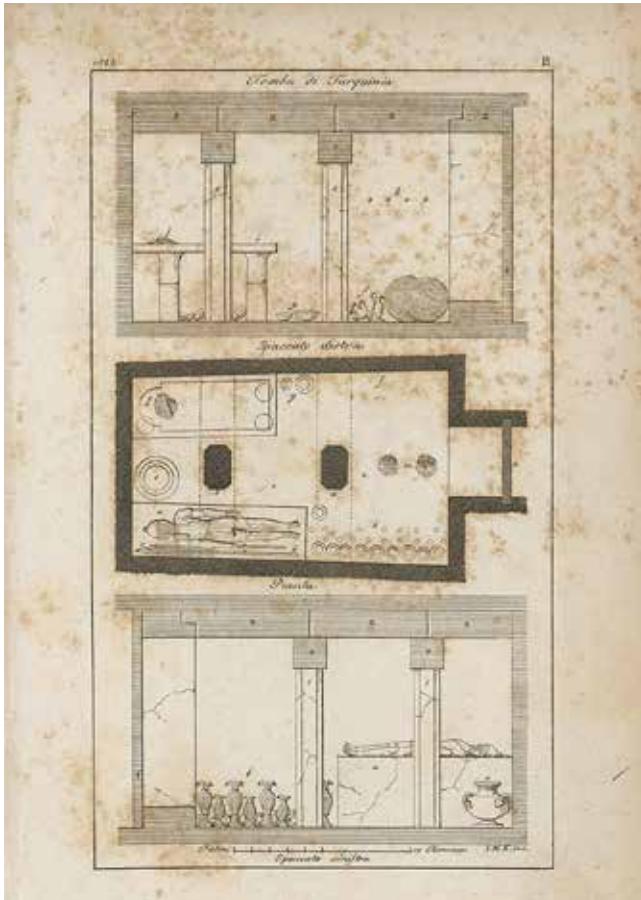


Figure 94 The Avvolta tomb at Tarquinia (after Avvolta 1829)

The idea of the inevitable disappearance of painted decoration subsequent to the discovery of a given monument was epitomised in a famous scene in Fellini's *Roma*, the film in which director Federico Fellini imagined the discovery of subterranean chambers during construction of the underground rail network, followed by the almost instantaneous vanishing of the wall-paintings. The fact that these fictional paintings were derived from highly diverse sources (paintings from late antiquity, Pompeian frescoes and pre-Roman paintings) reveals the emblematic nature of this scene and represents the cinematic translation – or legacy – of this romantic notion of the total disappearance of ancient painting. This theme was dear to Fellini, and ran throughout his adaptation of the *Satyricon*.

In the 19th-century imagination, paintings were not the only thing to vanish. So, too, did bodies. The finest account, by Carlo Avvolta, somewhat predates the first major discoveries of Etruscan necropoleis and Labrouste's Tarquinian sojourn. It is moreover significant that Avvolta's report was published in the first volume of the *Annali* issued by the Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica in 1829.³ A figure well known to scholars and travellers who visited the tombs of Tarquinia in the first half of the 19th century, Avvolta recounted a discovery made in 1823, which was subsequently named the Tomb of the Warrior or the Avvolta tomb. Through an opening made in a block of *nenfro* stone covering a grave that had just been discovered, he glimpsed a tomb bed on which lay the skeleton of a warrior in armour, as well as furnishings of weapons and vases. In a matter of minutes, as air entered the tomb, the skeleton and the



Figure 95 Tomb opened by Sir William Hamilton at Trebbia (after d'Hancarville 1766–7)

armour it wore decomposed before Avvolta's very eyes.⁴ He studied the tomb and the arrangement of the body sufficiently attentively to make a complete drawing of it, appended to his article (**Fig. 94**).⁵

This striking account was frequently cited and quoted, notably in popular books on Etruria by Hamilton Gray and George Dennis (for the latter see Chapter 1 by Rasmussen in this volume).⁶ It constituted the prototype of other accounts and even the 'staging' of similar discoveries.⁷ It is of course legitimate to question the reliability of Avvolta's account. True enough, the architecture of the tomb and the composition of the furnishings as described by Avvolta and above all his drawings, have points in common with the necropoleis of Tarquinia and Etruria more generally. But it is reasonable to think that Avvolta might, at the very least, have embellished his tale, which perfectly fits a written and pictorial tradition already well attested by that time, namely of tombs that still contained the skeletons of their original occupants at the time of their discovery, sometimes still decked in armour.

Discovering skeletons in southern Italy

This tradition did not, however, originate in Etruria, but rather in southern Italy where several tombs of this type were discovered in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They were swiftly popularised through published accounts, engravings and reconstructions. Several discoveries were associated with the excavating and collecting activities of Sir William Hamilton, and were illustrated through the descriptions and especially engravings found in Pierre-François Hugues d'Hancarville's publication of Hamilton's collection.⁸ The first such case was a tomb at Trebbia discovered around 1766 (**Fig. 95**), part of whose furnishings are now on display in the British Museum's handsome Enlightenment Gallery.⁹ An engraving shows the skeleton lying on the ground in the middle of the burial chamber, surrounded by vases and bronzes; other vases hang from nails in the walls of the tomb. Another famous engraving shows Sir William and Lady Hamilton attending the opening of a tomb at Nola, containing a skeleton and the vases found among the furnishings – the engraver stresses the interest aroused by the vases, some of which are already in the hands of the couple, who do not appear to be



Figure 96 Ang. Cléner, after Christoph Heinrich Kniep, tomb opened by Sir William Hamilton at Nola, 1790–1. British Museum, 2013,5007.2

particularly struck by the presence of the skeleton (**Fig. 96**).

The popularity of such scenes is attested by their reproduction and by the inclusion of similar images in various early 19th-century publications. Thus Millin's volume on antique vases includes the drawing of the two tombs, at Trebbia and Nola.¹⁰ The Nola tomb appears again in a plate in Gargiulo's book on Italot vases, a plate that stresses the presence of skeletons in each of the seven tombs illustrated (although sometimes only the skull, rib cage or feet are shown).¹¹ This improbable recurrence demonstrates that we are henceforth dealing with an archaeological *topos*. Gargiulo applied the same formula to tombs discovered after Hamilton's time, such as that discovered in Paestum in 1805 and the Monterisi-Rossignoli tomb found at Canosa in 1813 and published by Millin.¹² The same formula was used several decades later in the hypogeum of the Darius Vase, known from a drawing of 1854, that shows a skeleton in armour lying in the middle of the antechamber, surrounded by vases.¹³ The phenomenon is also recorded in the descriptions – once again accompanied by illustrations – of the Lagrasta hypogea at Canosa, in which Carlo Bonucci repeatedly stresses the state of preservation of the bodies, fabrics and other funerary offerings.¹⁴

The popularity of this archaeological imagery was further stimulated by the spread of cork reconstructions of the major tombs. These models were made in Naples and were aimed at travellers on the Grand Tour, varying in size to take into account the customers' financial resources.¹⁵



Figure 97 Cork model of a tomb at Paestum. British Museum, 1919,1018.1

Thus Empress Joséphine's collection at Malmaison included a large model of the Nola tomb,¹⁶ similar but smaller examples of which are attested in various other collections in Europe. Several models of the Paestum tomb exist, including one in the British Museum (**Fig. 97**): the skeleton still wears its bronze belt while other items of armour are set out nearby, the vases being aligned along the walls.¹⁷ The same is true of the Monterisi-Rossignoli tomb, the models showing a skeleton on the burial couch even though no skeleton appears in Millin's plates. A large-scale reconstruction was even part of Caroline Murat's collection in Naples, inside which were placed vases and bronzes from the tomb itself, with the addition of a skeleton taken from another tomb.¹⁸ In subsequent decades this type of spectacular reconstruction would become particularly popular in the Etruscan realm, notably in Giampietro Campana's collection.

Etruscan skeletons

The first discoveries of Etruscan tombs swiftly led to large-scale reconstructions which were most definitely indebted to their southern Italian predecessors, but some of which took on a more overtly commercial aspect. Indeed, the first re-creations of tomb scenes were the work of the Campanari family, archaeologist-dealers who made a big impression when they presented the London public with a set of reconstructions of Etruscan tombs at a venue on Pall Mall in 1837. The show was pivotal in inspiring a taste and desire for Etruscan antiquities and Etruscan-inspired

artefacts in the 19th century.¹⁹ The spectacular nature of the display, which sought to reconstruct the thrill of archaeological discovery, was due not only to the recreation of burial chambers – which were realistic if unscholarly – but also to the fact that they were seen by torchlight.²⁰ The tomb reconstructions reflected the influence of models in southern Italy, as shown by the arrangement of vases hanging on the walls of the tomb chamber (a practice indeed attested in Etruria, but which here seems more indebted to the engraving of the Trebbia tomb),²¹ as well as by the emphatic presence of bones. As indicated by various surviving descriptions and illustrations, in the second chamber the Campanari placed skulls bedecked with jewels in each of the two sarcophagi, left slightly open so that the public could see the burial arrangement; the first skull wore a ‘chaplet of gold myrtle leaves’, the second a gold wreath.²² The third room employed facsimiles of wall-paintings to reproduce the interior of the Tomb of the Bigae, at that time the most famous of the painted tombs which, as noted above, constituted a feature specific to the major Etruscan discoveries of the day, having no known equivalent in southern Italy. But the Campanari also placed an open sarcophagus in the middle of the room, in which visitors could see the skeleton of a warrior dressed in full kit, accompanied by various grave goods.²³ These displays of bones, golden wreaths and pieces of armour were probably inspired by the Campanari’s discovery of a sector of the Vulci necropolis with tombs packed with arms and armour (often bearing traces of combat) and bodies (some of which were still preserved) or at least skeletons whose skulls were almost always adorned with a gold wreath.²⁴ The Campanari employed the same approach to reconstruction in Italy itself, on the grounds of their home in Tuscany, where they installed an Etruscan tomb full of sarcophagi discovered in one of the city’s necropoleis – here again, according to contemporary accounts, one of the sarcophagi was placed, uncovered, in the middle, revealing a skeleton in armour flanked by grave furnishings.²⁵

This particular staging by the Campanari, while not devoid of commercial considerations, primarily reflected a taste for spectacle and for a more or less faithful reconstruction of an archaeological setting, as also found at Caroline Murat’s home.²⁶ The same was true of other contemporary efforts, starting with the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco in the Vatican, which opened in 1837 and represented the first museographic interpretation of the major archaeological discoveries made in southern Etruria. The following year, 1838, a reorganisation of the collection incorporated a new room devoted to the reconstruction of a Vulci tomb with rich furnishings (although apparently not a skeleton) along the lines of the Campanari’s London example; for that matter, the museum authorities benefited from the Campanari family’s expertise, as witnessed by a document sent by Secondiano Campanari to Pietro Ercole Visconti providing useful details for the creation of an Etruscan tomb.²⁷

The most striking reconstructions, where the funereal aspect was most heavily emphasised, were certainly the ones organised by Giampietro Campana, a worthy rival to the Campanari from this standpoint.²⁸ Campana skilfully



Figure 98 Campana tomb at Veii (detail of the antechamber, after Canina 1846–51)

displayed his vast collection at his various Roman properties; the collection had been assembled from his excavations, notably at Veii and Cerveteri, as well as from purchases on the antiquities market. Campana placed particular emphasis on the presentation of the archaeological settings, through which he commemorated and displayed the scope of his discoveries, which he did not hesitate to embellish or dramatise where necessary.

This conflict between archaeological documentation and deceptive reconstruction surfaces in what probably constitutes one of Campana’s earliest attempts at reconstruction, not in Rome but on the very site of the discovery at Veii. As reported by George Dennis,²⁹ the tomb opened by Campana in the 1840s, which now bears his name, presented visitors with a dramatic sight: not the skeleton which, as in the Avvolta tomb, disintegrated on contact with air, but the helmet it had been wearing (still marked by the fatal blow, like the armour in the Vulci tomb discovered by the Campanari),³⁰ plus rich grave furnishings. In fact, Campana had furnished it with items from different sources, which had not been discovered at this location,³¹ including notably the helmet, dated much later than the tomb. The desire to create drama by replaying the tale of the dead warrior is obviously reflected in the plates by Canina, published shortly after the discovery was made (Fig. 98).³² This reappearance of skeletons in the engravings should probably not be attributed to Canina, who certainly based his work on the original drawings by Campana, who also had facsimiles made perhaps with a view to reconstructing the tomb at his villa.³³ The recurring presence of a skeleton in various tomb drawings done by Campana shows that he was enamoured of this theme, through which he sought to show – to paraphrase Avvolta – the *segno* (or *sogno?*) of what he had seen at the moment of discovery. Indeed, the same type of skeleton appears in drawings of the Tomb of the Triclinium, discovered by Campana at Cerveteri and now lost. In the facsimile of the tomb and the drawings by Canina based on it,³⁴ two niches, each occupied by a skeleton, strangely disrupt the order of the scenes painted on the right wall and the entrance wall.



Figure 99 Sir J.G. Wilkinson, skeleton with weapons, from the Tomb of the Reliefs at Cerveteri. Bodleian Library

Skeletons were also present in the Tomb of the Reliefs, another key grave uncovered at Cerveteri by Campana in the 1840s. In his account of the discovery, Campana mentioned the presence of skeletons in armour in the niches.³⁵ Drawings done by Sir John Gardner Wilkinson in the late 1840s concur, for they include the detail of a skeleton wearing a helmet, breastplate and shin guards (Fig. 99).³⁶ A caption referring to ‘the Campana collection’ apparently confirms that the skeletons and armour were shipped to Rome. But Wilkinson also drew two shin guards in his depiction of the central niche of the back wall,³⁷ while in his article on the tomb he showed a skeleton in armour in that same niche.³⁸ It is possible that this reconstruction was influenced by a facsimile of the tomb, which Wilkinson could have seen in Campana’s Roman villa. It was perhaps those same facsimiles, which went to Paris with the rest of the Campana collection, that were used to reconstruct the tomb at the Musée Napoléon III, where the collection bought by the French State was presented to the Parisian public for the first time in 1862. The organisers adopted several of the display techniques employed by Campana in Rome, including the reconstruction of burial chambers. In addition to a reconstruction of the Tomb of the Sarcophagus of the Spouses, museum-goers were offered a view of the

Tomb of the Reliefs (Fig. 100), where the skeleton was clearly depicted in one of the niches on the side walls – we do not know whether the back wall was also displayed.

The tomb reconstruction housed several funerary monuments, two of which are visible in the engraving: the large sarcophagus from Chiusi and a bronze bed, constituting the most striking staged piece in the Campana collection. The French curators perhaps placed it there to echo the skeleton in the facsimile (unless this arrangement reflects the original display in Rome). It bears the remains of a warrior, which comprised just a skull still wearing its helmet and sundry arms and armour: a shield, pieces of a spear, greaves and belts (Fig. 101).³⁹ The bronze bed, which Dennis noted in the Campana collection and whose various features were recorded in the *Cataloghi* and precisely corresponded to an engraving in *L’Illustration*,⁴⁰ was a manifest forgery devised by Campana’s restorers from the famous model of the bronze bed in the Regolini-Galassi tomb.⁴¹ Yet until the forgery was revealed it enjoyed considerable popularity among visitors to the Musée Napoléon III, notably inspiring cartoonists in the satiric press, who repeatedly stressed the macabre nature of the staging by depicting the shade of the dead warrior, for example, contemplating his skull in a most Shakespearean pose (Fig. 102).



Figure 100 Reconstruction of the Tomb of the Reliefs in the Museum Napoléon III in 1862 (after *L’Univers illustré*, 15 May 1862)



Figure 101 Funerary bed, Campana collection (after *L'Illustration*, 1862)

This scene, which is just one of a series of drawings that depict the shades of former owners of objects in the collection visiting the Musée Napoléon III, is not without significance, for it reflects that period's special sensibility toward the staging of death and the evocation of the ancient dead. It is also pertinent that these were the very years that the craze for spiritualism and séances reached its height in Paris,⁴² creating a very direct and tangible relationship with the dead, which sometimes employed the latest technological advances. Several photographers of the day sought to take pictures of ectoplasm during spiritual séances, or to photograph apparitions in general, while other photographers were already parodying such efforts, for example using photomontage to make an ancient warrior appear with helmet and spear (**Fig. 103**).⁴³ Photography converged with archaeology (as practised by Campana) in this exploration of a new sensitivity, which was combined



Figure 102 'The shadow of the Greek warrior in front of his remains' (after *Le Journal amusant*, 2 August 1862)

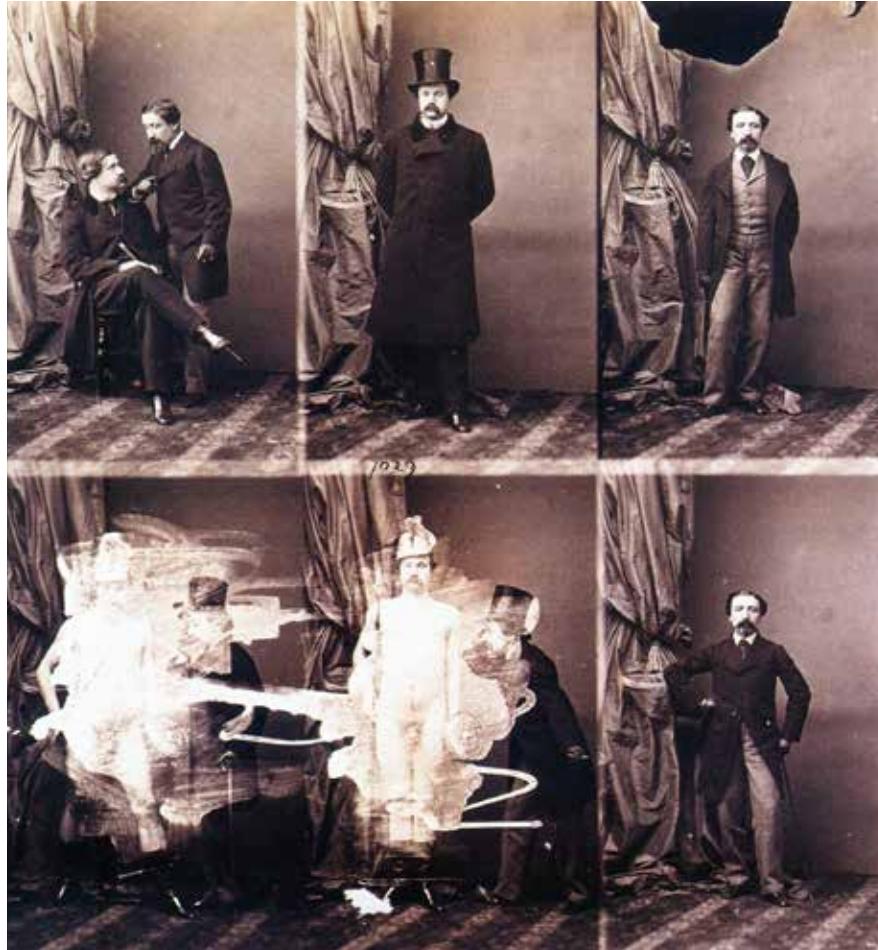


Figure 103 Elie Cabrol and the apparition of the Vicomte de Renneville, 1859 (after Chéroux et al. 2004)



Figure 104 Reconstruction of the 'tomb of Agamemnon' in the exhibition *Le Monde souterrain* in 1900 (after de Launay 1900)

with the use of new technology to create fakes (probably in good faith, on occasion). Campana embodied that same tension between new science and charlatanism, between scholarly approach and falsification. On one hand there was a new, promising way of presenting groups of architectural material, with a new focus on materials, fragments and typologies, and on the other hand old-fashioned Romanticism and absurd stagings that did not fool many.

Vanishing skeletons

French curators soon recognised their mistake, and when the Musée Napoléon III closed and the Campana collection went to the Louvre in 1863, the items of furnishings were separated and the bed was dismantled, retaining only its authentic strips of bronze. Significantly, the skull itself does not seem to have been kept. This drastic decision was not just a matter of increased scholarly scepticism but reflected a change in taste. The reconstructions of the Tomb of the Reliefs and the chamber of the Sarcophagus of the Spouses were not transferred to the Louvre either, and all trace of the facsimiles was lost. The museum display simply had to meet other requirements – times had changed.⁴⁴

Figure 105 A. Crispino, *L'Etrusco uccide ancora* (*The Dead are Alive*, literally 'The Etruscan still kills'), 1972



Of course, not all skeletons vanished from archaeological collections. Among numerous examples, one might mention a display case currently in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford which contains a Scythian grave deposit that includes a skull as well as a helmet – a label stresses the wound visible on the skull, which has been subjected to scientific analysis. While such examples are heirs, to a certain extent, of the displays by the Campanari and Campana, the true descendants of the spectacular, macabre stagings of Etruscan burials, so appreciated in the 19th century, are to be found in popular culture, where this imaginative notion – which emerged from archaeology – survived into the 20th century in more or less degenerate forms.

Various incarnations of Etruscan tombs and bodies on their funeral beds include a show at the Universal Exhibition hosted by Paris in 1900. Held in the basement of the Palais

Figure 106 Casts at Pompeii, 1863 (after a 19th-century postcard)





Figure 107 Roberto Rossellini, *Viaggio in Italia* (*Journey to Italy*), 1954

du Trocadéro, the show was devoted to the Subterranean World.⁴⁵ Once past the entrance – indicated by a dinosaur – visitors followed tunnels leading to various chambers, some of which were reconstructions of ancient hypogea. In addition to an Egyptian tomb, there was a replica of the tomb of the Volumnius family in Perugia and a Mycenaean grave inspired by the Treasury of Atreus. The floor of this latter tomb contained two funeral beds on which lay two dressed and shod bodies covered in jewellery and a gold mask, in a romanticised synthesis of Schliemann's discoveries (Fig. 104).⁴⁶ The old image of the intact Etruscan tomb with the bodies of the deceased still visible on their biers was also later exploited by the cinema. The protagonist of the movie *L'etrusco uccide ancora* (*The Dead are Alive*, literally 'The Etruscan still kills' or 'The Etruscan kills again') enters a tomb in the Cerveteri necropolis which combines features of the local Tomb of the Reliefs with those of painted tombs of Tarquinia.⁴⁷ The bodies of two deceased individuals still lie on two contiguous biers (Fig. 105); apparently decomposing, they are distant descendants of the warrior in the Avvolta tomb.

The disappearance of skeletons might also be explained by the appearance of another type of body, which replaced them in the archaeological imaginations. In 1863, the very year that Campana's bed was consigned to the storeroom of the Louvre, Giuseppe Fiorelli pioneered the casting of bodies preserved as imprints in the solidified ashes at Pompeii (Fig. 106).⁴⁸ These were no longer positive remains, but rather a kind of negative; no longer the miraculous preservation of the contents of the tomb and the body itself, but plaster-based recreations of the void left by the disintegration of the body within the ash. Here again, a technical innovation contributed to a new archaeological and cultural approach⁴⁹ and developed the traditional theme of 'suspended life' in Pompeii in a new way, which made the vanished city famous, especially in the 19th-century literature.⁵⁰ As we know, these casts quickly gained popularity and constituted a major part of the Pompeian



Figure 108 Roberto Rossellini, *Viaggio in Italia* (*Journey to Italy*), 1954

myth in modern culture, reflecting in part a morbid taste for macabre images in the late 19th century, as did the exhibition of skeletons.⁵¹ They also contributed to the creation of a new *topos* resulting from the archaeological discovery of dead bodies. The casts, often described by visitors and soon reproduced on postcards, were later also featured in museum exhibits and shows devoted to the archaeology of the Vesuvian cities – they notably appeared in the 2013 British Museum exhibition, *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum*.⁵²

It is therefore not surprising to see Pompeian bodies also appearing in the cinema:⁵³ a famous scene in Roberto Rossellini's *Viaggio in Italia* (*Journey to Italy*) has an English couple watching the excavation of two of these recreated bodies (Figs 107–8).⁵⁴ Nearly two centuries after the portrait of Sir William and Lady Hamilton before the Nola tomb (see Fig. 96), these other 'volcano lovers' confront the archaeological discovery of death, revealing the extraordinary fate of this new imaginative concept of archaeological bodies.

Notes

- 1 'Nothing remaining on the bed, except a trace of what I had seen.'
- 2 Daly 1862.
- 3 Avvolta 1829, 95–100.
- 4 Avvolta 1829, 95–6: 'Resa visibile la tomba per questa apertura, quasi estatico mi fermai a vedere tutto ciò che poteva vedersi in questa posizione, e particolarmente fissai lo sguardo sul guerriero giacente sopra il letto, che mi si presentava di contro, ed in pochi minuti lo vidi quasi sparire sotto i miei occhi; mentre più l'aria s'introduceva dentro la tomba, più l'ossidata armatura andava in minutissimi pezzi, non restando sopra il letto, che il segno di quanto avevo veduto.'
- 5 Avvolta 1829, pl. B.
- 6 Hamilton Gray 1840, 205–7; Dennis 1848, 353–4, 369–70; cf. Colonna 1978, 86.
- 7 Sannibile 2006. Hamilton Gray (1840, 206–7) insists on the authenticity of Avvolta's account, citing other similar discoveries of which she was aware.
- 8 Jenkins and Sloan 1996. It is also worth mentioning Susan Sontag's novel, *The Volcano Lover* (New York, 1992).
- 9 Jenkins and Sloane 1996, 141–4.
- 10 Millin 1808, 10.
- 11 Gargiulo 1831, pl. 1; Gargiulo 1843, pl. 1.
- 12 Millin 1816; Mazzei 1990.
- 13 Cassano 1992, 176–7; Corrente 2005, 105, no. 1.5 (M. Papini).
- 14 Cassano 1992, 206 for Bonucci's descriptions; Corrente 2005, especially 103 and 105–6, nos 1.6–1.7 (M. Papini).

- 15 On this output and various attested examples (with a list that requires updating), see Kockel 2004.
- 16 The model, part of the Durand collection, is now housed in the Musée du Louvre; I thank my colleague Christophe Piccinelli for information about this piece.
- 17 Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 145.
- 18 Le Bars 2012, 415; for the skeleton, see Le Bars forthcoming. I thank Florence Le Bars for information about Caroline Murat's museum.
- 19 See Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume.
- 20 Colonna 1978, 85.
- 21 Colonna 1999, 45. See also Swaddling this volume.
- 22 Colonna 1999, respectively 47–8 (quotation from *The Times*) and 49, fig. 2.
- 23 Colonna 1999, 53, pl. II:1.
- 24 Cherici 1994; Colonna 1999, 53; Sannibale 2006, 10–11; Colonna 2007, 65–6.
- 25 Colonna 1978, 83.
- 26 A room devoted to Vulci tomb furnishings could also be seen in Lucien Bonaparte's collection in Musignano. Colonna 1978, 92; Buranelli 1991, 40, n. 127.
- 27 Colonna 1978, 91–2; Buranelli 1991, 35–40, 328–9 (document 72); Colonna 1999, 43.
- 28 Colonna 2007, 68.
- 29 Dennis 1848, vol. I, 54.
- 30 See above and, for the general theme, Sannibale 2006, 11; Colonna 2007, 67–8.
- 31 Cristofani and Zevi 1965; Delpino 1985, 113–43.
- 32 Canina 1846–51, pl. XXXV (reprinted in Dennis 1848, 45).
- 33 *Cataloghi Campana, classe VI*, 2.
- 34 Canina 1846–51, pl. LXIII–LXIV. The facsimile (now lost) had been given by Campana to the Duke of Saxe-Altenburg and then to the archaeological museum of Jena (Nadalini 2006, 296; Geyer 2008).
- 35 *Cataloghi Campana, classe VI*, 3; Blanck and Proietti 1986, 12.
- 36 Blanck and Proietti 1986, 11–12, pl. IVb.
- 37 Blanck and Proietti 1986, 12, pl. IVc.
- 38 Wilkinson 1856, pl. I.
- 39 Haumesser forthcoming.
- 40 Dennis 1848, vol. I, 533–4; *Cataloghi Campana, classe II*, 4.
- 41 Reinach 1905, 105. On the bed in the Regolini-Galassi tomb and the traces of the deceased mentioned in certain accounts of the discovery of the tomb, see Colonna and Colonna di Paolo 1997, 154–5, nn. 53–4; Sannibale 2006.
- 42 Cuchet 2012.
- 43 Chéroux *et al.* 2004, 60.
- 44 On this point, see Colonna 1992, 337. The reconstruction of the Etruscan tomb in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco met the same fate in the 1920s; see Colonna 1978, 92, n. 24 and Buranelli 1991, 39. One may perhaps explain this change by the different status of the Louvre, which belonged more to a Beaux-arts tradition, even though some copies or mouldings were still on display in the late 19th century. Other French museums, such as the Musée des Antiquités Nationales in Saint-Germain-en-Laye or the Musée Guimet in Paris and Lyon preserved the display of facsimiles, mouldings, models or reconstructions much later into the 20th century.
- 45 de Launay 1900.
- 46 de Launay 1900, 22; Polychronopoulou 2014.
- 47 Borsi 1985, 182.
- 48 On Pompeii casts and their fortune, see Dwyer 2010, Pucci 2012 and Pucci 2015.
- 49 The reconstruction of the portrait of *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa*, on display in the Etruscan gallery at the British Museum, could be considered as a further and original development of the Fiorelli tradition: Swaddling and Prag 2002.
- 50 See for instance Villani 2015, with bibliography.
- 51 Hales 2011.
- 52 Roberts 2013, 296–300.
- 53 Pucci 2012, 80–2.
- 54 Fox 2011.
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Chapter 9

Nascent Modern Etruscology and its Roots in Roman Antiquarianism at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

Bruno Gialluca

To Mara

Abstract

News of the discovery of the Etruscan tomb of the Tite Vesi family, found intact in 1667 near Perugia, created a sensation. In Rome Pietro Santi Bartoli (1635–1700) commissioned drawings of the funerary urns that he reworked and engraved for *Gli antichi sepolcri* (Rome, 1697; 2nd edition 1699), and thereby shifted the focus of scholarly attention away from the Etruscan language to the scenes represented on the urns. Filippo Buonarroti (1671–1733) continued this approach, and in *Ad monumenta etrusca ... explicationes et conjecturae* (Florence, 1726) applied the same technique to the near 180 Etruscan monuments published in Thomas Dempster's *De Etruria regali*, providing for the first time a critical, dispassionate reconstruction of Etruscan civilisation founded on the visual evidence.

The first and second editions of *Gli antichi sepolcri*

Around 1690, in the wake of the growing interest aroused by the painted tombs discovered at Rome in the grounds of the Villa Corsini, Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–96) and Pietro Santi Bartoli¹ planned *Gli antichi sepolcri*, a book illustrating ancient Roman funerary monuments in and around Rome. It was to be supplied with plates designed and engraved by Bartoli, and texts and explanatory notes written by Bellori. Bellori was an antiquarian and art theorist, the most important art historian – not only in Rome, but throughout Italy and even Europe – in the 17th century. His friend and collaborator Pietro Santi Bartoli was the most celebrated and talented copyist of the antique of his time. Bellori, old and in a poor state of health, died in 1696 without having written the commentary and Bartoli, unable to write the texts, began to look around for a worthy replacement. Bartoli's first choice was Filippo Buonarroti² whom he knew well and who was held in the highest esteem for his great erudition and scholarship, but Buonarroti declined, being completely absorbed in the catalogue of Cardinal Carpegna's medallions, published in Rome soon thereafter.³ Buonarroti was the future editor of Thomas Dempster's *De Etruria regali*, and spent 16 years in Rome, from 1683 to 1699, as keeper of Cardinal Gaspare Carpegna's library and museum.⁴

Bartoli then hired another renowned, very learned scholar, the Dalmatian priest Ivan Paštrić (1636–1708), known in Italian as Giovanni Pastrizio, who was appointed *scriptor Hebraicus* at the Vatican Library in 1695. Although his name does not appear on the title page, Ivan Paštrić was effectively co-author of *Gli antichi sepolcri* since he supplied all the text and commentaries, as recent documentary evidence in Paštrić's notes and drafts⁶ has demonstrated.⁷ *Gli antichi sepolcri*, appeared in Rome in mid-1697⁸ and had an enduring success both in Italy, running through many editions, and in Europe, due to the inclusion of Alexander Duker's Latin translation of it in Jacob Gronow's *Thesaurus Graecarum antiquitatum*.⁹

An innovative feature of *Gli antichi sepolcri* was a section on 'Sepulchres with foreign inscriptions, mainly Etruscan', mostly devoted to recently discovered Etruscan funerary urns and grave goods and embellished with seven superbly



Figure 109 Pietro Santi Bartoli, Apulian red-figure bell-krater, front, pen and brown ink with brown wash on paper, 590 x 435mm. Holkham Hall, Ashby Album II, f. 1. By permission of Lord Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate

engraved plates: six (pls 91–6) illustrated cinerary urns with relief-decorated chests, all from the tomb of the Tite Vesi family, discovered in 1667 near Perugia, and one (pl. 97) an Etruscan bronze mirror case, also decorated with a scene in relief, from a tomb discovered in 1694 at Cipollara, about 16km or so as the crow flies northwest of Viterbo. The Etruscan plates were each supplied with a short description of the scene in relief, revealing to learned Europeans (and especially Italians) typologies of scenes that had never before been published, and widely expanding the panorama of Etruscan figurative language known at that time.

A second edition followed in 1699,¹⁰ adding 16 more plates, five of them Etruscan: two illustrated an urn and an Apulian bell-krater used as a cinerary vase (at this time Athenian and Apulian vases were considered Etruscan), both objects having been found in the Tite Vesi tomb; two more illustrated a bronze mirror and a bronze situla from Cipollara, and finally also one of the interior of a hypogeaum discovered in March 1698 near Badia a Isola, about 20km north west of Siena. The plates were grouped according to provenance: the cinerary containers from Perugia (pls 100–7); the grave goods from Cipollara (pls 108–10) and then the chamber tomb near Badia a Isola (pl. 111).¹¹

It is not surprising that the urns from Perugia, and to a lesser extent the grave goods from Cipollara, were given such prominence: their discovery aroused a strong interest among antiquarians, which *Gli antichi sepolcri* reflected. The Etruscan chamber tomb of the Tite Vesi (the family's name is recorded on the urns), found in 1667 at Gualtarella, 4km southwest of Perugia, caused a great sensation.¹² The news soon spread in Perugia and beyond, reaching Florence and



Figure 110 Pietro Santi Bartoli, Apulian red-figure bell-krater, back, pen and brown ink with brown wash on paper, 590 x 435mm. Holkham Hall, Ashby Album II, f. 2. By permission of Lord Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate

Rome, where Pietro Santi Bartoli wrote to Giacinto Boccanera, a minor painter living in Perugia, commissioning some drawings after the urns.¹³ These were afterwards in part reworked and engraved for *Gli antichi sepolcri*. The Etruscan chamber tomb at Cipollara also aroused great excitement. Though its systematic excavation is recorded as having officially begun on 8 March 1694, in the presence of the municipal government of Viterbo and of the municipal chancellor,¹⁴ the tomb was actually discovered in 1693 during agricultural works. The news immediately reached Pietro Santi Bartoli, who on 7 May moved to Viterbo,¹⁵ most likely in order to have the opportunity to examine the finds and to obtain drawings. Five drawings after cinerary urns from the Tite Vesi tomb – two by Bartoli (**Figs 109–10**) and three by Boccanera (**Figs 111–13**) – survive in the library at Holkham Hall, Norfolk; one (**Fig. 109**) was the preparatory illustration for plate 107, while the others were never engraved for *Gli antichi sepolcri*. Two more preparatory drawings by Bartoli, for the lid of the urn in plate 101 (**Fig. 117**)¹⁶ and for plate 110¹⁷ of *Gli antichi sepolcri*, also survive in the Lewis Walpole Library in Farmington, Connecticut. This was the first time that as many as 12 plates with an Etruscan subject were published in a single book, making the second edition of *Gli antichi sepolcri* the earliest archaeological publication to emphasise Etruscan artefacts so extensively. Even more importantly, the second edition supplied all the Etruscan plates representing urns with thorough descriptions and commentaries on the figured scenes,¹⁸ in far more detail than in the first edition (some examples of Paštrić's innovative descriptive technique are detailed below).

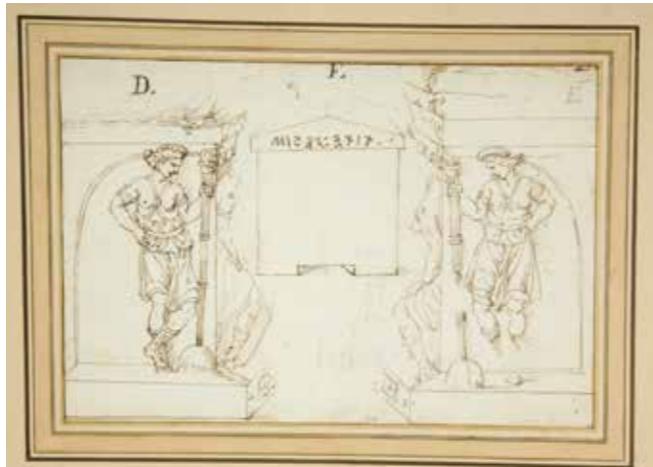


Figure 111 Giacinto Boccanera, Etruscan cinerary urns from Perugia, pen and brown ink on paper, 590 x 435mm. Holkham Hall, Ashby Album II, f. 37. By permission of Lord Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate



Figure 113 Giacinto Boccanera, Etruscan cinerary urn from Perugia, pen and brown ink on paper, 590 x 435mm. Holkham Hall, Ashby Album II, f. 63. By permission of Lord Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate

Bartoli's classicising style

As is well known, Bartoli's copies after the antique sometimes lack accuracy and this had been discussed and contested even by his contemporaries.¹⁹ As regards the Etruscan plates, a comparison with the surviving antiquities sometimes reveals considerable variation in detail from the originals, heightened by Bartoli's inclination to superimpose a standardised classicising style on the features of the Etruscan reliefs. In the case of plates 100 (Fig. 114), 102 (Fig. 115) and 104 (Fig. 118) of *Gli antichi sepolcri*, for example, a comparison with the actual urns²⁰ shows the way



Figure 112 Giacinto Boccanera, Etruscan cinerary urn from Perugia, pen and brown ink on paper, 590 x 435mm. Holkham Hall, Ashby Album II, f. 41. By permission of Lord Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate

Bartoli 'improved', so to speak, the actual urns, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia. In the plates Bartoli did not hesitate to tamper with the height of the scenes on the chests and the perspective in the very crowded scenes, altering the ratio of height to length, increasing the distance between the figures and allowing them more space, both to enhance the perspective and also to refine the delineation. Furthermore, the comparison shows three kinds of divergence from the original. In the first type, Bartoli deliberately transmuted the stocky, unequivocally male deceased on the lid of the urn, with a big, round face, a double chin and a fat belly, into the delicate, graceful young woman of plate 100 (Fig. 114). The second is formed of two peculiarities, as illustrated by plate 102 (Fig. 115); the subject of the relief carved on the chest (Fig. 116) is the sacrifice of Iphigenia, a very common theme in Perusine Etruscan urns. Bartoli, however, transferred the drawing of the urn onto the copper plate so that in the resulting plate 102 the image of the original urn is reversed, except for the inscription, which had been transferred in the negative to the copper plate and thus rendered correctly retrograde, right-to-left (Fig. 115).

The reason for the different treatment was due to the fact that, according to Bartoli, the reversal of the figured scene did not detract from the subject and its intelligibility whereas the reversal of the inscription would have betrayed the distinctive characteristic of Etruscan writing, characteristically written retrograde. The depiction in the plate of the sacrifice of a sheep instead of a young woman, on



Figure 114 P.S. Bartoli, *Gli antichi sepolcri*, Rome, 1699, plate 100

the front panel of the urn, was caused by the loss of the head of Iphigenia. As this head was missing, a crudely carved beheaded body appeared on the relief and it was probably depicted as such in the lost commissioned drawing: **Figure 111** shows that Giacinto Bocanera was very scrupulous and habitually recorded all losses without restoration. Bartoli, when reworking the commissioned drawing, identified the scene as sacrificial but, misinterpreting the beheaded body as that of a sheep, he incorporated the missing head accordingly, thus giving the relief a completely different subject. Little more than 20 years later a similar mistake occurred when Tommaso Redi, the Florentine painter despatched by Filippo Buonarroti to Perugia to draw Etruscan urns for inclusion in *De Etruria regali*, misinterpreted the beheaded body of Iphigenia as a large amphora full of water poured down over the fire burning on the altar.²¹ In the third and last divergence, a case of deliberate restoration occurs. A surviving drawing of the short ends of the urn (**Fig. 111**) shows that the Furies to either side of the scene on the front panel were lacking their heads, damage very likely sustained at the time of excavation, but plate 104 (**Fig. 118**) clearly shows that Bartoli restored the heads, drawing inspiration from the heads of the two female demons carved onto the short sides of the urn.

Paštrić's commentaries

Ivan Paštrić was the first to apply to Etruscan visual sources the approach progressively developed by antiquarians for ancient Roman visual sources, providing the first commentary on Etruscan monuments that stemmed from their visual evidence (to be precise, from their visual evidence as recorded in Bartoli's plates). Paštrić's focus was on Etruscan *mores* and *instituta* (customs and institutions), extrapolated from the Etruscan visual sources engraved in *Gli antichi sepolcri*. He put aside both the centuries old debate

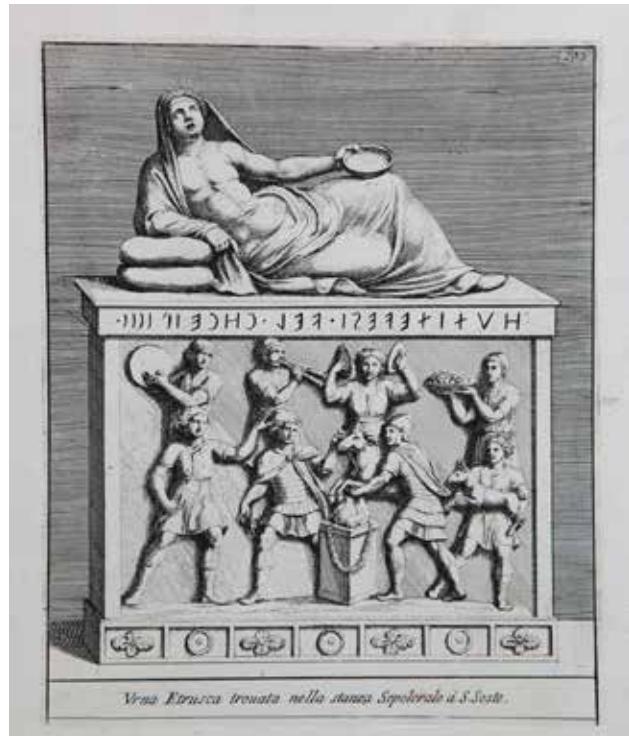


Figure 115 P.S. Bartoli, *Gli antichi sepolcri*, Rome, 1699, plate 102

on Etruscan language and origins, which he thought had been a fruitless waste of time and effort, and on Etruscan narratives, for which all evidence was taken from ancient Greek and Roman writers and not first-hand sources. The visual approach was an absolute innovation with reference to the Etruscans. The figured scenes on the artefacts, depicting clothing, footwear, armour, weapons, musical instruments and other objects of Etruscan material culture, had been completely ignored during the 16th and 17th centuries, when antiquarians were typically obsessed with Etruscan language and origins. The scenes provided information about Etruscan civilisation and culture, as Paštrić concisely stated in his commentary to plate 102 (**Fig. 115**): 'there, as well as in the previous and following [plates], we can learn about Etruscan ways'.²² Paštrić, a learned Orientalist well acquainted with Samuel Bochart's demonstration of the complete independence of Etruscan from semitic languages,²³ held the profound belief that Etruscan was a totally lost language and definitely a useless tool²⁴ (in pretty good company on this with two leading figures of late 17th-century Roman antiquarianism, Giovanni Giustino Ciampini²⁵ and Raffaele Fabretti²⁶), and so shifted scholarly attention to Etruscan visual imagery. This marked a decisive turning point, laying the foundations for Filippo Buonarroti's future achievements.

Paštrić's commentaries on the urns adopted a set pattern. For the lid, he gave a description of the recumbent/semi-recumbent figure of the deceased and of his/her dress. For the chest, he described the subject of the front panel scene and each figure: their dress, their action taken or in progress, and their relationship to other characters. Finally, he remarked on the overall 'symbolic meaning' of the figure on the lid and of those shown on the chest. This can be illustrated by plate 100 (**Fig. 114**), with Paštrić describing the engraved lid in an extremely accurate and detailed manner:

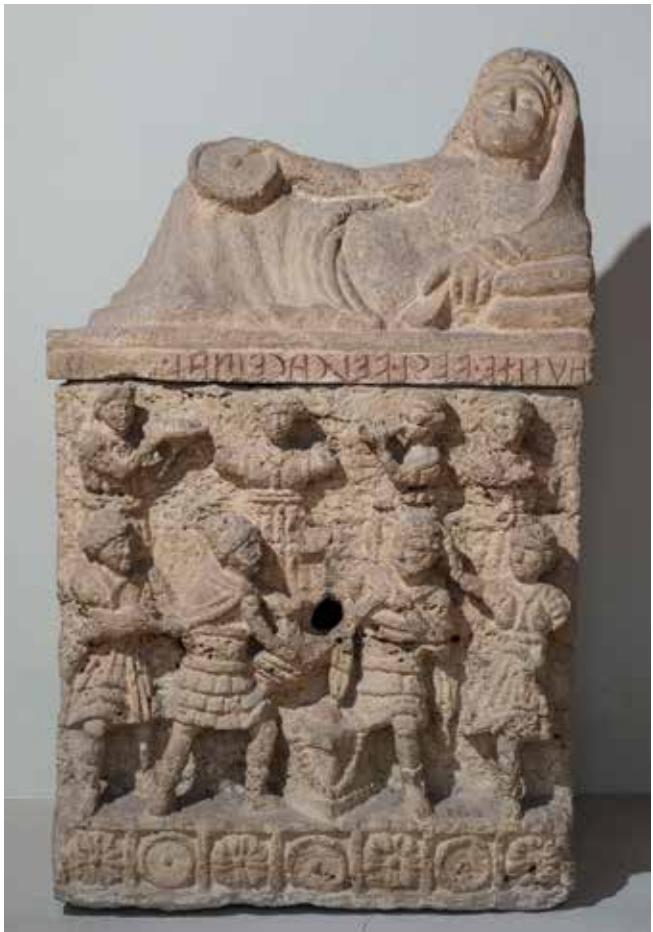


Figure 116 Cinerary urn from Perugia. Museo Archeologico Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia, inv. com. 344

You can see a reclining woman with a band forming a wreath round the head and falling in a double strand to the hand: the band must have been an adornment of aristocratic Etruscan women. She holds in her hand a little vessel containing one of the four sacred liquids [blood, wine, oil, water] offered by pagans for intercession in favour of dead people's souls, symbolically asking passers-by to pour a libation on her behalf. She rests on her arm on pillows and her lap is covered below the navel with a cloak.²⁷

Paštrić moved from the description to the interpretation, singling out the little vessel, an object of ancient material culture, and the gesture of the woman to reveal the hidden meaning of the sculpture.

Then Paštrić came to the chest, summarising the subject ('a bas relief carving illustrating a combat against the dog-headed monster') and describing analytically the various characters: the monster, captured and on the verge of being killed by the surviving warriors fighting against him; the warriors slain by the monster; the winged Fury. The description of dress, armour and weapons are described as meticulously as for the figure on the lid, and Paštrić put special emphasis on the attire of the bare-breasted, winged Fury holding up a sword behind the monster. According to Paštrić she wears typical Etruscan attire:

Behind the dog-headed monster, a winged goddess of victory [personifying the imminent triumph of the surviving warriors] stands, dressed in the Etruscan manner: she wears a necklace with the loose ends crossed and fastened in front between her naked breasts, and reaching down to the chiton belted around

the hips, exposing the whole upper torso and breasts, covering only the lower part of the body.²⁸

Paštrić concluded the commentary by noting the overall symbolic significance of the scenes on the lid and on the chest, which consisted of a ritual combat with bloodshed on behalf of the deceased, shown on the lid asking for a blood libation, that is for a blood sacrifice: 'Etruscans, like other pagans, believed that the blood of the people slain by the monster and the blood of the monster on the verge of being killed would have interceded on behalf of the soul of the dead woman on the lid.'²⁹ The exemplary accuracy of the descriptions, which would not have been in the least extraordinary for Roman relics, established a completely new descriptive standard for Etruscan artefacts, which had never before been so thoroughly described, with the attention focused on the scene, and the inscription entirely ignored.

Paštrić identified the same overall subject, the ritual combat with bloodshed on behalf of the deceased on the lid, on the urns of plates 101 and 104 (Figs 117–18), despite the very different scenes carved on their chests, making the first attempt to classify Etruscan urns by subject. In plate 101 (Fig. 117), Paštrić, not recognising the literary content of the figured scene, namely Eteokles and Polyneikes, the sons of Oedipos, in battle before the walls of Thebes, interpreted the scene on the chest simply as:

a combat between two warriors with helmets and round shields killing each other On either side are two goddesses of victory in the act of running, each holding a torch in one hand, showing that the combat took place at night, with the other hand pointing at the inscription, indicating that the shedding of blood was offered on behalf of the soul of the deceased woman, shown semi-recumbent on the lid, covered by a long chiton and a mantle. She places one hand with a ringed finger on the cushion, the other hand holds a patera, used for libations performed on behalf of the dead. Etruscan letters appear below, to be read from right to left ... If I may hazard a guess, I would suggest that [the first word] is *asfia*: anyway, as said in the Introduction, every attempt to read this extinct language is worthless.³⁰

According to Paštrić the patera in the hand of the deceased reclining on the lid served for receiving, not pouring, libations (a similar interpretation of the function of the pateras held by divinities occurs in Filippo Buonarroti's comment on the Etruscan bronze statuette reproduced in *De Etruria regali*, pl. LXXXIII).³¹ Much interested in the dress of actual Etruscan women, Paštrić used the direct archaeological evidence offered by the urn, for instance the attire of the Furies in the front panel: 'Look at the two goddesses of victory on either side of the combat wearing typical outfits of ancient Tuscan women, because they [Etruscans] used to clothe statues and figures as they clothed themselves'.³² The analysis of the attire of the female demons continued in even more detail than for the Fury in plate 100 (Fig. 114). In plate 104 (Fig. 118), Paštrić, at first uncertain about the sex of the semi-recumbent figure on the lid (in fact the remains of a man were in the urn), finally decided that it must be a woman and moved to the scene on the front, identifying the usual bloody, ritual combat: 'Two warriors,



Figure 117 P.S. Bartoli, *Gli antichi sepolcri*, Rome, 1699, plate 101

kneeling on an altar with round shields and short swords are engaged in a battle offered as a sacrifice to the deceased ... defending themselves against four armed enemies, two of them lying slain on the ground ... I already mentioned that combats with bloodshed were organised on behalf of the soul of the deceased.³³

Paštrić did not cite any author, either ancient or modern, for the two focal points of his commentary, female attire and funerary gladiatorial combats, but nevertheless the underlying relevant authors and texts are easily identifiable. Paštrić's detailed discussion of Etruscan female attire is solidly rooted in the studies of ancient Roman clothing which flourished during the 17th century, the most valuable and advanced results of which was the successful, often reprinted Ottavio Ferrari's *De re vestiaria*, which appeared in 1642.³⁴ As for funerary gladiatorial combats, Paštrić relied on Tertullian (*De Spectaculis*), who related that according to many ancient historians a group of colonists migrated from Lydia (a kingdom of western Anatolia) and settled in Tuscany, the ancestors of the Etruscans, where they set up public spectacles for religious purposes, among them funeral games which consisted of combats between captives or slaves, in the belief that the souls of the deceased were appeased by human blood. Another source used by Paštrić was the chapter *De Ludis Funebris, & Gladiatorijs in Antiquitatum Romanarum Corpus Absolutissimum* in the monumental study of Roman manners and customs by Johannes Rosinus and Thomas Dempster.³⁵

Buonarroti's contribution

De Etruria regali, the printed version of Thomas Dempster's³⁶ manuscript *Hetruria Regalis*, funded by Thomas Coke and



Figure 118 P.S. Bartoli, *Gli antichi sepolcri*, Rome, 1699, plate 104

edited by Filippo Buonarroti, was published in two volumes in Florence in 1726³⁷ and met with great acclaim. This was largely due not to Dempster's text, by now outdated and obsolete, dating back to 1618, but rather to the 93 additional engraved plates, which vastly expanded the repertoire of Etruscan figurative art known at the time, and also to Buonarroti's attached appendix, *Ad Monumenta Etrusca ... Explicationes et Conjecturae*,³⁸ a kind of *Corpus Antiquitatum Etruscarum*, a lively and concise analysis of Etruscan ways and institutions.

Buonarroti placed primary emphasis on the visual sources, the Etruscan artefacts reproduced in the plates, sharing Paštrić's belief that Etruscan was a totally lost language and Greek and Latin written sources on the Etruscans insufficient or untrustworthy. Buonarroti's approach, set out in the opening, dedicatory letter to Thomas Coke, is a clear and full exposition of the methodological premises underlying Paštrić's concise assertion that 'they [the Etruscans] used to clothe statues and figures as they clothed themselves' and firm belief that 'Pushed the evidence obtainable from ancient writers and historians aside, the authority alone of the Etruscan monuments or their mutual collation will reveal many more things about Etruscan ways and institutions than one could hope to find in the ancient writers.'³⁹ In 1608 Philip Rubens (1574–1611), a Flemish classical philologist and humanist, one of Justus Lipsius's favourite pupils and the elder brother of Peter Paul Rubens, clarified the underlying premise of this approach, attributing it to a study of the past which focused on ancient manners and customs: 'It is incredible how much the study of coins, epigraphy and other ancient monuments adds to the fuller understanding of antiquity. Indeed, I

would dare to assert that these things, scarcely able to be grasped from ancient writers, can be properly understood from these physical sources and indeed well explained.⁴⁰ Buonarroti's passage bears a striking resemblance to that of Rubens, and regardless of whether Buonarroti has paraphrased Rubens or not, Buonarroti's approach strongly connected his reconstruction of Etruscan civilisation to the mainstream antiquarian thinking of the 17th century.

Beyond the common methodological approach, a significant and substantial convergence links Paštrić's and Buonarroti's commentaries on some urns reproduced in both *Gli antichi sepolcri* and *De Etruria regali*, as has been observed.⁴¹ Hence the question arises whether some debate and exchange of ideas about Etruscan visual sources took place between Paštrić and Buonarroti. Despite the lack of direct evidence, a number of clues suggest that this could have been the case. In the first place, Buonarroti and Paštrić were very well acquainted with each other from 1685, when Buonarroti joined the Accademia dei Concili,⁴² founded in 1672 by Giovanni Giustino Ciampini, of which Paštrić was the secretary-*dominus*. They belonged to the same learned circles and academies (they joined the Academy of Arcadia⁴³ together in 1691⁴⁴) and shared a number of friends of outstanding antiquarian scholarship, including Giovanni Giustino Ciampini and Raffaele Fabretti.⁴⁵ Their links and intellectual exchanges, already very intense, were surely further strengthened in the years 1695–8 through Pietro Santi Bartoli, then working hard and very closely with both Paštrić, to complete *Gli antichi sepolcri*, and Filippo Buonarroti, by whom Bartoli was commissioned to engrave the frontispiece, headpieces and tailpieces for the catalogue of Cardinal Carpegna's medallions. In addition, documentary evidence shows Buonarroti's own interest in the Etruscans (also later attested by the Etruscan pieces in his own collection at the Casa Buonarroti, which were assembled after his return to Florence in 1699).⁴⁶ A contemporary manuscript note by Buonarroti attests that Bernardino Peroni, the municipal Chancellor of Viterbo and the keeper of the finds from Cipollara, supplied Buonarroti with drawings of finds and apographs of inscriptions. On a sheet recording six Etruscan inscriptions found at Cipollara in 1693–4 (published about 30 years later)⁴⁷ and a sketch of two finds also discovered at Cipollara in 1693, Buonarroti remarked: 'as transcribed by Perrone [viz. Bernardino Peroni]'.⁴⁸ Finally, it is very likely that it was Buonarroti who passed the drawing of the tomb of Badia a Isola to Bartoli.⁴⁹ Buonarroti therefore seems to have been somewhat more than a witness to the writing of *Gli antichi sepolcri*, to which perhaps he provided a personal contribution through the mutual exchange of ideas with Paštrić.

The relationship between Paštrić's and Buonarroti's methods and achievements concerning the Etruscans is quite remarkable and in no way coincidental. Paštrić grafted the Etruscan section of *Gli antichi sepolcri* directly into the stream of antiquarian research already investigating ancient life and practices through the lens of material culture, an approach developed in the second half of the 16th century by the Farnese circle engaged in Roman antiquarianism, and which became completely mainstream during the 17th

century.⁵⁰ Buonarroti went far beyond; the near 180 artefacts reproduced in *De Etruria regali* enabled him to reconstruct comprehensively Etruscan customs and practices and to classify them in the sophisticated system of antiquarian taxonomy (*res divinae*, *res umanae* and their various subcategories). Filippo Buonarroti is justifiably considered the pioneer of nascent, modern Etruscole. He shared the principal aim of 17th-century archaeology, to investigate customs and institutions, providing for the first time a critical reconstruction of Etruscan civilisation founded on dispassionate, 'experimental' forensic reasoning (insofar as based on the visual evidence). Buonarroti's methods were strongly rooted in his prolonged immersion in the already well-established Roman antiquarian tradition. This had taken place principally during his extended stay in Rome in the service of Cardinal Carpegna, under the direction and in the company of Giovanni Giustino Ciampini, Raffaele Fabretti and Ivan Paštrić.

Notes

- 1 On Giovan Pietro Bellori see Borea and Gasparri 2000 with an extensive bibliography and Bell and Willette 2000. On Pietro Santi Bartoli see Carpita 2006, with the bibliography, to be updated with Bochicchio 2009; Modolo 2010; Gialluca 2013; Modolo 2014; Whitehouse 2014; Gentile Ortona and Modolo 2016.
- 2 On Filippo Buonarroti see Cristofani 1983; Gallo 1986, updated by Gialluca 2014b.
- 3 Buonarroti 1698.
- 4 Archivio di Stato, Mediceo del Principato, Florence, 3963, letter by Cardinal Enrico Noris (Rome, 26 January 1697) to Apollonio Bassetti (Florence), Chief Secretary of the Grand Duke Cosimo III of Tuscany; Archivio Antinori, Florence, box 10, letter by Cardinal Enrico Noris (Rome, 6 June 1699) to Niccolò Francesco Antinori (Florence), one of Grand Duke Cosimo's III secretaries.
- 5 For Ivan Paštrić see the entry by Tomislav Mrkonjić in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 81 (2014).
- 6 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borgiano latino 750, ff. 310r–324v, f. 364rv, ff. 397r–409v, f. 441r, ff. 446r–447v; Borgiano latino 730, f. 87rv; Borgiano latino 94, f. 336r.
- 7 Gialluca 2013.
- 8 Bartoli 1697.
- 9 The Dutch philologist Jakob Gronov, latinised Gronovius (1645–1716), in the late 17th century published the monumental *Thesaurus graecarum antiquitatum*... (12 vols, Lugduni Batavorum, apud Petrum van der Aa, 1697–1702). The last volume included Alexander Duker's translation of *Gli antichi sepolcri* (Veterum sepulcra, seu Mausolea Romanorum et Etruscorum, ...). The translation enjoyed great popularity and was issued also as a separate monograph (Lugduni Batavorum, apud Petrum van der Aa, 1702) with successive reprints.
- 10 Bartoli 1699.
- 11 Henceforth I shall use the plate numbering of the second edition (quoted as Bartoli 1699).
- 12 Gialluca 2013, 75–7. For a thorough archaeological study of the tomb see Massa-Pairault 1994.
- 13 Biblioteca Augusta, Perugia, Ms 1703, f. 49r. See Gialluca 2013, 76–7.
- 14 Emiliozzi 1986, 41.
- 15 Montaignon 1887, 389–90.
- 16 P.S. Bartoli, *Scritti di varie cose antiche*, f. 103, Lewis Walpole Library, Yale (Farmington, CT), 49 2371. The drawing is available at <http://images.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/oneitem.asp?imageId=lwlpr18938> (last accessed 9 September 2015).
- 17 Ibid., f. 44, available online at <http://images.library.yale.edu/walpoleweb/fullzoom.asp?imageid=lwlpr18809> (last accessed 8 September 2015).
- 18 Bartoli 1699, 42–5.
- 19 Fabretti 1683, *Prooemium*, p. 2; Herklotz 2002, 139–40 and n. 46.
- 20 The corresponding urns are kept in Perugia at the Museo

- Archeologico Nazionale dell’Umbria, respectively inv. com. 341; 344; 342.
- 21 Dempster 1723, I, pl. XXXVII.1. The first volume of *De Etruria regali* is available online at <http://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/collection/4433-de-etruria-regali-tome-1/?n=20> (last accessed 12 September 2015).
- 22 Bartoli 1699, 43.
- 23 Bochart 1646, 645–7.
- 24 ‘While Ancient Greek … still survives, cultivated by scholars, Etruscan instead is totally extinct and no one can understand it.’ (Bartoli 1699, 21).
- 25 Letter from Ivan Paštrić to Giovanni Giustino Ciampini, dated 20 August 1685 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 12075, ff. 543r–549v). For Giovanni Giustino Ciampini see the entry by Silvia Grassi Fiorentino in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 25 (1981).
- 26 Letter from Raffaele Fabretti to Claude Nicaise, dated 20 February 1689 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 9362, f. 68r.v.). For Raffaele Fabretti see the entry by Massimo Ceresa in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 43 (1993).
- 27 Bartoli 1699, 42.
- 28 Bartoli 1699, 42.
- 29 Bartoli 1699, 42.
- 30 Bartoli 1699, 42–3.
- 31 Buonarroti 1726, 108–10 (on this topic see S. Bruni’s entry II.33 in Bruschetti et al. 2014, 335–6).
- 32 Bartoli 1699, 43.
- 33 Bartoli 1699, 44.
- 34 O. Ferrari, *De re vestiaria libri tres*, Patavii 1642 (enlarged editions published in 1654, 1670 and 1685).
- 35 Tertullianus, *De Spectaculis*, V and XII; Rosinus [Johann Rosfeld] and Dempster 1613, 377–8.
- 36 For an updated bibliography on Thomas Dempster (1579–1625) see Gialluca 2014a.
- 37 The book was not actually published until 1726, despite 1723 and 1724 appearing on the title pages.
- 38 Buonarroti 1726.
- 39 Buonarroti 1726, 4.
- 40 Rubens 1608, 20; see Herklotz 1999, 253. The English translation is taken from Miller 2012, 256.
- 41 Gialluca 2013, 93ff.
- 42 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borgiano latino 60, ff. 135r–138r.
- 43 The Academy of Arcadia was an Italian literary academy founded in Rome in 1690 to restore a more natural and simple poetic style based on the classics and particularly on Greek and Roman pastoral poetry. The Academy was inspired by Queen Christina of Sweden, who abdicated in 1654 and moved to Rome where she gathered a literary circle. After Christina’s death in 1689, her friends founded the Academy to give their meetings permanence and ‘to exterminate bad taste, and to see to it that it shall not rise again’. The Academy was named after Arcadia, a pastoral region of ancient Greece, and the academicians assumed Greek names.
- 44 Biblioteca Angelica, Rome, Arcadia, Archive, *Il Catalogo de’ Pastori Arcadi Per Ordine d’Annoverazione*, vol. 1, entries LIII (Buonarroti) and CXXXIII (Paštrić).
- 45 For the relationship between Ciampini and Buonarroti see Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 9063, ff. 107r–108v (letter by Buonarroti to Ciampini, 25 July 1690) and Vat. Lat. 12075, ff. 57r–132r (the report of an archaeological survey conducted by Ciampini and Buonarroti at Civita Castellana in May 1691). For Ciampini and Paštrić see above, n. 25. See also the warm words addressed by Fabretti to Buonarroti (‘eruditissimus Vir, mihique amicissimus Philippus Bonarrotus’) and Paštrić (‘Vir Clarissimus, Ioannes Pastritius Pastritum callentissimum’) in his most important work *Inscriptionum antiquarum quae in aedibus paternis asservantur explicatio....* (Rome 1699), p. 593 and p. 281, respectively.
- 46 See Corsi 1997.
- 47 Buonarroti 1726, 99.
- 48 ‘ut exscriptae a Perrone’, Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence, ms A XLIII, f. 395r.
- 49 Gialluca 2013, 96–7.
- 50 On the Farnese circle and its leading personalities and scholars see Herklotz 1999, 214–19.
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Chapter 10

The Curious Case of Castellina in Chianti and Evidence for the Reception of Etruscan Culture in Sixteenth-century Europe

Nancy T. de Grummond

Abstract

In 1508 a tomb (or portions thereof) was discovered at Castellina in the Chianti region that may have been the same as the famous tumulus of Montecalvario. The latter, dating to the late 7th century BC, featured four chambers oriented each towards the compass points. At one time or another various finds have been connected to the tomb such as inscriptions, ash urns, ceramic vases, precious items of gold and silver and an engraved mirror. It is claimed that Leonardo and Cellini were among those influenced by the discoveries. And yet there remain many inconsistencies in the accounts and almost everything allegedly discovered has vanished except for the Montecalvario tomb itself. This chapter reviews the problems, seeking to understand the importance of the discoveries during the Renaissance.

One of the most important ancient monuments of the Chianti area of Tuscany is the Etruscan tumulus of Montecalvario at Castellina (**Figs 119–20**). It has been claimed that the tomb may have already been discovered in the early 16th century¹ and it is precisely this question that is the focus of this essay. The investigation involves scrutiny of several documents and drawings of the 16th century (**Figs 126–7, 129–30**) that are not always consistent with the claim that they relate to the archaeological remains at Montecalvario. A fair amount of sleuthing is necessary, hence the title of this contribution, which is rather like a case for a detective.

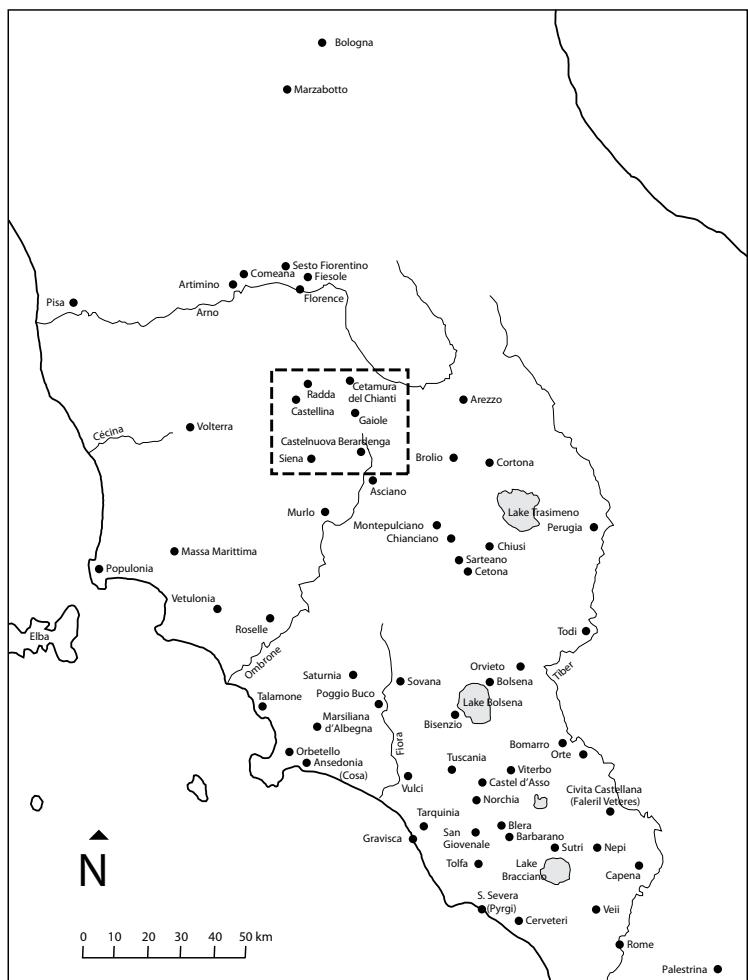


Figure 119 Map of Chianti drawn by the author



Figure 120 View of the tumulus of Montecalvario. Photo: author

Part I: Montecalvario

Before examining the documents and drawings it is appropriate to describe the tumulus of Montecalvario, located on a hill on the outskirts of Castellina in Chianti, in order to emphasise details that may be relevant for the argument. The excavations on the west side were carried out by Luigi Milani in 1904 and the other three sides were excavated by Luigi Pernier in 1915.² The plan shows four tombs, located on the compass points, within a round tumulus measuring 53m in diameter (Fig. 121). These four units will be referred to as hypogaea, though in fact they were probably built at what was ground level at that time and then covered over with earth (a *hypogaeum* typically refers to any ancient building constructed below ground). The hypogea were similar in plan, though not identical, featuring a dromos open to the sky, a vestibule corridor, side chambers and (in three cases) a main chamber at the end of the corridor. The hypogaeum on the south side will be the one of greatest interest to us: the tomb discovered in the 16th century was described as having an entrance on the south side. The one on the west had a similar plan with an elongated vestibule and the one on the north had a dromos and a small vestibule with no side chambers. The tomb on the east may never have been completed, but as it stands features a dromos and two vestibules, one with side chambers, and it has no main chamber. The vestibule

Figure 122 View of interior of corridor of west hypogaeum of the tumulus of Montecalvario. Photo: author

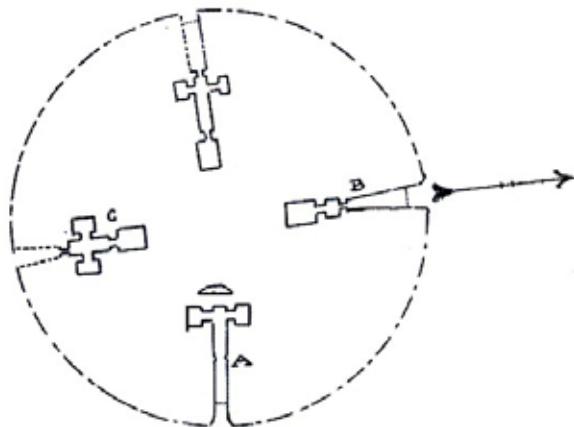
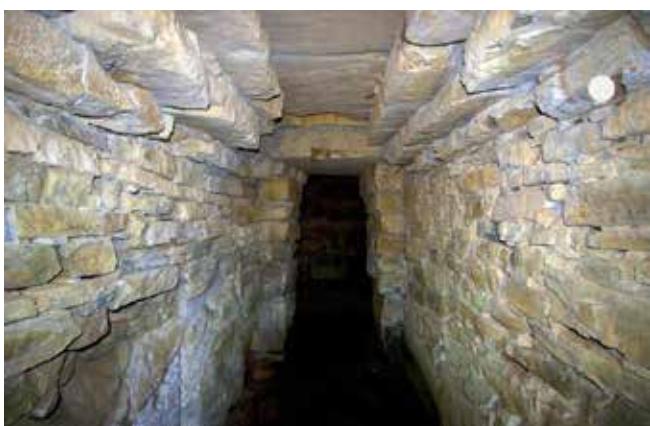


Illustrazione della disposizione degli ipogei.

Figure 121 Plan of the tumulus of Montecalvario (after Firmati 2014, 73)

corridor of the west hypogaeum (Fig. 122) reveals a roofing system used over and over in vestibules, side chambers and main chambers, called corbelling, using a whitish *albarese* stone not available around Castellina, but probably coming all the way from the coast of Tuscany. The corbelling always runs in a line continuous with or parallel to the corridor, so that upon entering the main chamber (Fig. 123) one looks at the back and sees a silhouette resembling a gabled roof with a triangular area at the top of the wall. The side chambers show a different relationship between corbelling and entrance. When one enters the door of a side chamber, the corbelling runs at a right angle to the entrance and so the wall directly before the visitor does not have a triangular top. Rather the ‘side’ walls of the chamber now show the triangular shape. A cross-section of the side chambers of the eastern hypogaeum (Fig. 124) demonstrates this point, which shall be shown to be very important for relating Montecalvario to Renaissance discoveries, as is discussed below.

One must always keep in mind that parts of these hypogea were reconstructed during the days of Pernier’s excavations.³ The south hypogaeum was the least well-preserved, having been subjected to plundering in antiquity and also later raiding by locals who took away stones evidently for building elsewhere. Pernier made the decision to rebuild portions of the walls, but not the vaulting, in order

Figure 123 View of interior of main chamber of north hypogaeum of the tumulus of Montecalvario. Photo: author



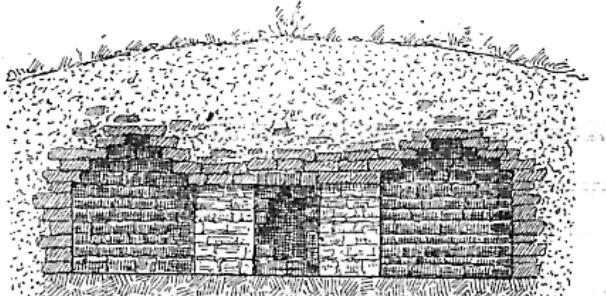


Figure 124 (above) Cross section of east hypogaeum of the tumulus of Montecalvario (after Pernier 1916)



Figure 125 (right) View of interior of south hypogaeum of the tumulus of Montecalvario. Photo: author

to consolidate the monument whilst giving a good idea of how the construction was carried out (Fig. 125). The measurements, which will be useful for comparison with Renaissance statistics, are generally secure: corridor 6.25 x 1.55m; side chambers, 2.65 x 2m and 2.40 x 2.05m; main chamber 3.90 x 2.90m.⁴

Numerous fragments were found in the various hypogaea, including bronze, iron, ivory, bone, blue glass and scraps of gold, indicating – along with the grand architecture – that this was once a very wealthy tomb of the Orientalising period, now dated c. 630 bc. Milani discovered the fittings of a chariot, which has now been reconstructed and is on display in the Museo Archeologico del Chianti Senese at Castellina.⁵ Very little pottery was found. Both Milani and Pernier reported fragments of a red impasto ware that would be consistent with the Orientalising period. Of particular interest in the south hypogaeum was a large stone head of a lion in *pietra serena* stone, clearly Orientalising in style, which was discovered in the south-west corner of the right hand niche of the southern hypogaeum.⁶

Part II: Renaissance documents and drawings

The fullest description of the discoveries occurs in a memorandum written in Italian between 1541 and 1548 by Santi Marmocchini (d. 1548), a Dominican abbot who was a scholar of diverse subjects, but especially of the Bible, language and translations and sciences such as astronomy.⁷ He hailed from San Casciano Val di Pesa, not far from Castellina. Marmocchini included a sketch of the ground plan of the tomb (Fig. 126). Here is a rendering from the Italian report:

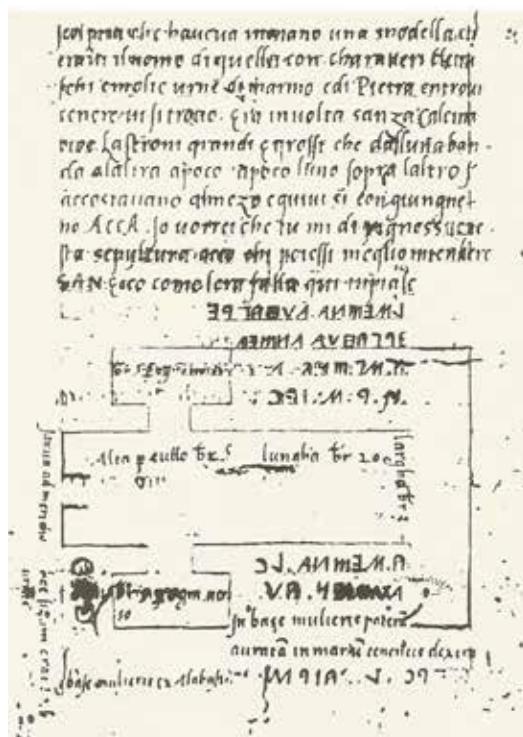
On a little hill (there), in the year of our Lord 1507 [Florentine time = 1508], January 29 at 6 PM, when a certain di Lando was creating a vineyard and making a pit with an iron shaft in order to plant a vine, the shaft fell into an ancient burial of the Etruscans, and there came out of the pit a stench of mould, and they found in the direction of the road an entrance, closed with slabs of *alberese* stone, and the room was in a cross plan. Along its length, which was 20 braccia, there was a corridor 3 braccia wide, and there was nothing there, and the height was 5 braccia. On the left hand side there was a *magazzino*, 5 braccia wide and 5 braccia long, where there were earthen vases full of ashes of the dead of low class, and certain vases where they burned the bodies, and on the right side were buried the nobles. There were a table, the ornaments of a queen, that is a silver mirror having the foot of a mule, a silver hair-parting

instrument, silver bracelets; in a vase of ashes there was a cicada of gold, and four cicadas of gold[sic], one of which was next to the vase; a lady made of alabaster preserved to bust length, with a strand of gold across her shoulders; a vase of copper with a lid in the shape of a barber's warming bowl, in which there were cassettes full of rings. They found precious stones and ever so many silver leaves in quantity, that they sold them at Siena, and I talked with the goldsmith who bought them. I saw a sculptured lady, who had a bowl in her hand...her name was there in Etruscan letters. And there were found there many urns of marble and stone with ashes inside. There was a vault without mortar, that is, great and large slabs, which from one side and the other little by little with one slab on top of another drew near to each other in the middle, and there they joined.⁸

The drawing accompanying the text records a number of the Etruscan inscriptions. These have been studied by Rix and others, and are typical Hellenistic funerary records, with names of members of the Semna family.⁹

From the drawing it is clear that the ground plan is somewhat similar to that of the south hypogaeum of

Figure 126 Marmocchini ms. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, fol. 42 r (after Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 2003, fig. 5)



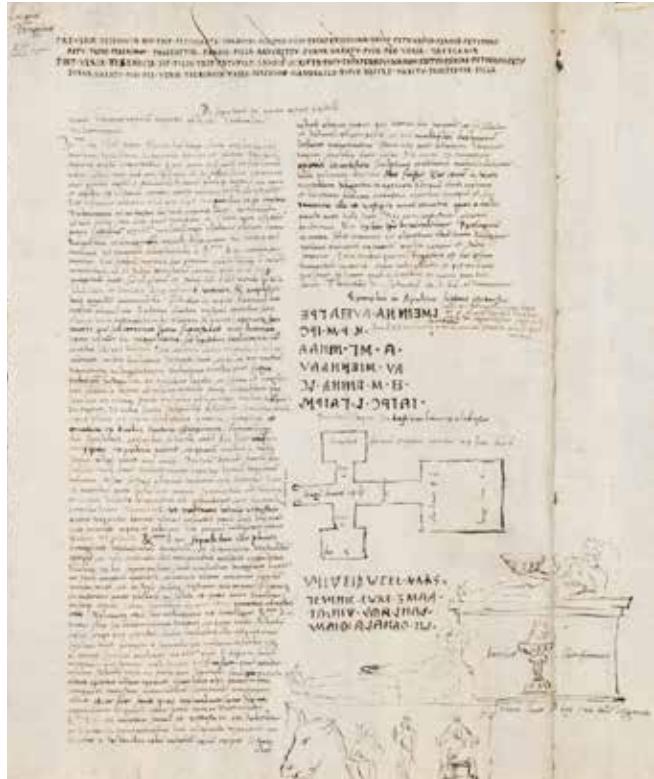


Figure 127 Ms with letter to the Cardinal of Volterra, 1508. Codex Pighianus Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Department, Ms. Lat. fol. 61", f. 55v

Montecalvario, with Marmocchini's note by the entrance, which inserts the Latin words *janua ad meridiem* (door on the south), leading us to make a comparison with the southern hypogaeum. In addition, while the Marmocchini drawing lacks a dromos, it is noteworthy that Pernier found no dromos in place in 1915. There is a problem in that the plan of Marmocchini includes only a shallow room as the main chamber, but this may simply be a matter of how the author chose to depict it. One may conjecture that Marmocchini heard no description of a main chamber and thus he felt it was not important and left this aspect of his plan vague. His diagram was the basis for the plan published by Gori in 1743, in which the main chamber was again minimised.¹⁰ As for the roof over the vestibule, it, too, had collapsed by Pernier's time, but Marmocchini's description fits well with the corbelled roofing that has survived in the other hypogaea.

Table 1 Measurements of tombs

	Montecalvario south hypogaeum	1508 letter	Marmocchini
corridor	6.25 x 1.55m	19½ x 3 braccia (11.36 x 1.74m)	20 x 3 braccia (11.66 x 1.74m)
main chamber	3.90 x 2.90m	6 braccia wide (3.49m)	
side chamber	2.65 x 2m	5 braccia wide (2.915m)	5 x 5 braccia (2.915 x 2.915m)
passage to side chamber		2-1/2 braccia (1.456m)	

The measurements given by Marmocchini for the tomb plan will be discussed below, as well as the remarkable urns and grave goods.

A somewhat under-appreciated document in the study of the Castellina tomb comes from a much earlier time, written only 12 days after the actual discovery in Castellina. This is a letter dated 10 February 1507 (Florentine time = 1508) recorded in the Codex Pighianus, c. 1550–5, and published in part by O. Jahn and in full by G.C. Conestabile.¹¹ Stephanus Winandus Pighius (1520–1604)¹² was a native of the Netherlands who went to Rome in 1548, where he assembled drawings of sculptures and made copies of inscriptions. The letter will have been of interest to him especially because it contained Etruscan inscriptions. It was addressed to the Cardinal of Volterra, who at that time was Francesco Soderini, of a noble and influential Florentine family (1453–1524). Caroline Hillard now demonstrates convincingly that the author of the letter should be identified as Marcello Virgilio Adriani, Chancellor of Florence during this period when the Medici were out of power.¹³ She also notes that Jahn had published a diagram of the ground plan of the Castellina tomb from the Codex Pighianus, and while he also stated that the drawings referenced in the letter were negligible and not worth communicating, in fact the page with the letter on it and the adjoining page contain several drawings of great interest (Fig. 127).

Let us look first at the ground plan in the Codex Pighianus. It is very similar to that in the Marmocchini notebook, except that it features a main chamber that is more recognisable as such. The dimensions given in the text (see Table 1 for a summation)¹⁴ are as follows: main chamber: 6 braccia wide; corridor + main chamber: 19½ braccia long; side chambers, each 5 braccia wide; entry to side chambers, 2½ braccia wide. These measurements reveal relatively minor discrepancies with those given by Marmocchini, except that the corridor there takes up proportionally much more of the 20 braccia. If we assume that the corridor measurement in these early accounts actually reaches from the entrance to the back wall of the main chamber, the numbers are close to Pernier's, but are not precisely equivalent: Pernier's 10.15m (i.e., 6.25 + 3.90) is still over a metre less than the early measurements of 11.36 or 11.66m. Further, absolutely none of the measurements from the 16th century correspond perfectly with Pernier's measurements, with the gap varying from 19 to 26 to 41cm. Nor are the proportions the same. Marmocchini's side niches measure 5 x 5 braccia (2.915 x 2.915m), as compared to 2.65 x 2.00m for Pernier.

The 1508 letter provides some details not included in the Marmocchini memo, and also omits a good many. The two accounts agree in referring to the presence of what we may recognise as the characteristic ash urn made of alabaster with a reclining female figure, known from the Volterra area in the Hellenistic period (3rd–2nd century BC).¹⁵ In addition to the details from Marmocchini's description given above, the 1508 letter is accompanied by images of two of the reclining figures described as female (Fig. 127). One held a 'golden patera' in her hand,¹⁶ and all over her body there are said to have been traces of gold, probably an applied leaf or

paint. The drawing also reveals some of the decoration on the ossuary, an upright incense burner that appears to show the fire within.¹⁷ Bronze was also added to the urns but there is no indication what form this took. Other than this, absolutely none of the tantalising artefacts described by Marmocchini as seen in Siena are mentioned in the 1508 letter. Further, the 1508 letter refers to sculptures, evidently in relief, decorating the burial chests, of ‘youths sporting and kissing one another’ (*lascivientium juvenum et se invicem deosculantium*), a strange image difficult to parallel. It is not shown in the drawing, even though Adriani specifically says the Cardinal will be able to see it. It must be noted that the characteristics of the tomb furnishings that can be identified are certainly not of the Orientalising period, but rather later, that is they do not correspond to the date of the tomb at Montecalvario but are of a much later date. The inscriptions noted both in the Pighianus and in Marmocchini are most likely of the Hellenistic period, along with the sculptures.

Even though the two reclining figures match with the description of the tomb in the letter, there is reason to believe that the other drawings on the page may be unrelated, perhaps having been added by the scribe who was copying the original manuscript. On the lower margin of the page is the image of a horse’s head, quite large in relation to the other drawings. It is almost certainly a drawing of the famed bronze horse’s head that had belonged to the Medici, which had been confiscated from them at the proclamation of the Republic in 1495, and was kept in the Palazzo Vecchio at the time of the writing of the letter (Fig. 128).¹⁸ The large size of the sculpture (81cm) and the assymetric ears fit well with this identification. If this piece is not from Castellina, maybe the other images are not either, but perhaps illustrate other items under the jurisdiction of the Republic. The small figure next to the horse’s head could be an Archaic Etruscan votive bronze of a nude youth, a very common votive type.¹⁹ The draped figure next to it (female?) might also be a votive figurine. The third image is particularly elusive. It may be a representation of an aediculum with a triangular pediment, inside of which is a circular element, perhaps a *patera*. Within the aediculum is a figure reclining or seated facing left.

It is impossible to do justice in this study to the hypothetical list of antiquities that may have been in the 1508 tomb as deduced from the study of the two documents. But even if we make little attempt here to identify parallels with these artefacts,²⁰ one thing is clear, and must be dealt with: the tomb at Montecalvario was of the Orientalising period (c. 630 BC), and the artefacts described in the documents, when recognisable, are of a much later, Hellenistic date (c. 3rd–2nd centuries BC). How can this discrepancy be explained? Martelli, followed by Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini, believed that a late Orientalising or Archaic tomb was re-used in the Hellenistic period, reflecting a practice attested at Etruscan Cortona.²¹ In fact a comparable situation has recently emerged not far from Castellina, at the site of Bosco le Pici near Castelnuovo Berardenga, where artefacts from as early as the 8th century BC appeared in the same tomb with materials of later date, including some from the 4th century BC and a Hellenistic



Figure 128 Bronze horse once belonging to the Medici family. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, New York. Photo George Tatge, 2000

inscription.²² There, unfortunately, the tumulus had been reworked and vandalised and it is not possible to make any comparison with the ground plan.²³ The greatest problem in the hypothesis of Martelli is that absolutely nothing Hellenistic has been found inside the chambers at Montecalvario, which would appear to be a very strange, not to say impossible, situation considering the abundance and variety of Hellenistic material in the reports. Further, none of the objects in the Renaissance reports bring to mind artefacts of Orientalising Etruscan culture that might be associated with the multitude of objects (admittedly scrappy) found at Montecalvario.²⁴ Carlotta Cianferoni, a current leading researcher at Castellina, long ago expressed her belief that the tomb referenced in Marmocchini was probably not at Montecalvario, but more likely on the Castellina hill of Casavico.²⁵ (This conclusion need not rule out the possibility that the *other* tomb could have been built in early times and re-used in the Hellenistic period.)

Adding further confusion to the case of Castellina is a drawing now in Paris brought into the discussion by Martelli, which she attributed to Leonardo da Vinci (Fig. 129).²⁶ In this she has been followed by some leading Leonardo experts.²⁷ It is argued that Leonardo, perhaps coming from Florence, saw the tumulus and the hypogaeum soon after its discovery (i.e. in 1508 or later) and that it inspired him to create a design for a mausoleum. In the drawing the shape of the hill and the surrounding landscape resemble somewhat the topography around Castellina, and the ground plan of the mausoleum features a repeated unit rather like the hypogaeum discovered in 1508, except that it includes a pillar in the middle of the main chamber ostensibly to support the roof. In addition to the anomaly of the pillar, which did not occur at Montecalvario, it is highly doubtful that the artist would have been influenced so greatly by that tomb to choose to repeat this unit six times, for in 1508 only *one* hypogaeum was known there.²⁸

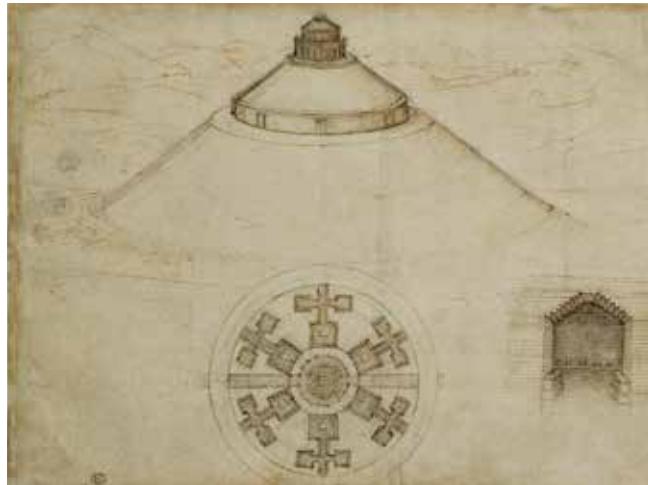


Figure 129 Pen and ink drawing of a plan for a mausoleum, attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 2386. Photo: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, New York

Further, for the crown of the hill the artist has devised a central round structure that resembles more than anything the interior of the Mausoleum of Augustus, with a central pillar/chamber surrounded by concentric circles.²⁹ It is hard to believe that there was anything comparable on the summit of rural Montecalvario in the early 16th century.³⁰ In addition, the mausoleum in the drawing features a drum around the base pierced by the doors to the individual chambers. Nothing of the kind occurred at Montecalvario. The exterior of the crowning building displays a colonnade appropriate for such a centralised plan, resembling Bramante's Tempietto at San Pietro in Montorio, a martyrium for St Peter, begun perhaps as early as 1502.³¹ The low stepped dome is very similar to that of the Pantheon, which also acquired a funerary character in the early 16th century, at least from the time of Raphael's burial there (d. 1520). Another important difference with Montecalvario is that there are colossal stairways leading up to the top on two sides of the hill. In short, if the drawing took any inspiration from Montecalvario, it was rather general, and should not be used as archaeological evidence for the appearance or identification of the Etruscan tomb. The artist has quite transformed the Etruscan-style ground plan and integrated it with design elements from Roman antiquity and the contemporary High Renaissance.

In a detail on the lower right of the Paris drawing, further dilemmas appear (Fig. 130). The artist shows a cutaway view into a room that at first glance looks as if it would go well with the chambers of the Montecalvario tomb (Fig. 124). The cell has a corbelled vault, the idea of which is quite consistent with both the Marmocchini manuscript and Montecalvario. But a closer look shows that it is inconsistent with the latter tomb. One may assume that the artist intended to depict the interior of one of the side niches described in the manuscripts, since Marmocchini referred to antiquities in the *magazzini* and there is no central pillar (which would be expected for a main chamber, according to the larger drawing). But this definitely cannot be a depiction of a side niche at Montecalvario, because those niches all had the corbelling running perpendicular to the entranceway and here the corbelling runs in the same

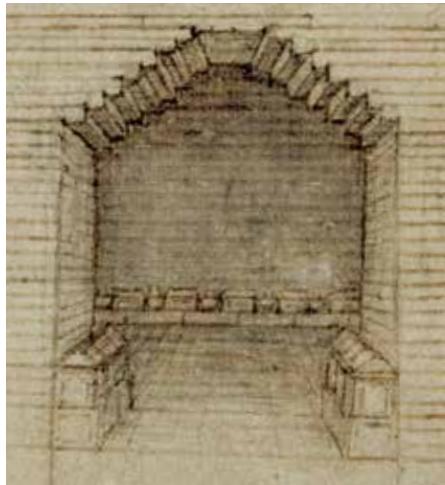


Figure 130 Detail of drawing in Figure 129

direction as the entranceway. In addition, the artist has made the masonry very neat, as if built with uniform courses of ashlar masonry, rather than the irregularly sized courses of Montecalvario. The floor seems to show squared paving, which is quite impossible in any Etruscan tomb of any period. It may be argued that these are artistic conventions, typical for Renaissance systems of perspective. Even so, the point is that they do not help, in fact rather hinder, the identification of the chamber with Montecalvario. Further, the room is encircled with stone benches or socles supporting chests that look like ash urns, but no stone benches have been found in any of the chambers at Montecalvario.

Finally we may note that the artefacts included in the Paris drawing are not particularly consistent with the descriptions. The most characteristic item, the reclining ladies on alabaster chests, are missing. It is true, Marmocchini describes two different chambers, one for nobles and one for a lower class, featuring 'clay vases' ('vasi di terra, pieni di cenere di morti di gente di bassa mano').³² But just how lowly are the urns depicted in the Paris drawing? There are a few ceramic vases indicated, but certainly the chests are made of stone, and seem to feature some carving. In the Pighianus description, urns with a gabled roof are referred to ('urnae erant duarum tegularum instar fastigii'), and the urns in the Paris drawing are consistent with these, but the letter indicates that they were in the same room with the reclining women and the Etruscan inscriptions, for which there is no trace in the Paris drawing.

The conclusions may be summed up as follows.

1. Architecture: Though Montecalvario featured corbelling, and the documents indicate corbelling, there are grave inconsistencies in the architectural documents. The corbelling described by Marmocchini must refer to the side niches, since he did not include a true main chamber. The Paris drawing, which includes a view of artefacts in place, must be of a side niche, but it cannot be a side niche at Montecalvario. There the corbelling runs perpendicular to the entranceway, but in the drawing the corbelling runs parallel to the entrance.
2. Grave goods: Descriptions and drawings related to the 1508 tomb may not be used to show a direct connection

with Montecalvario. Those documents relate to a tomb rich in Hellenistic artefacts. Modern excavations at Montecalvario found no trace of Hellenistic material left within it. All cultural material there is consistent with an Orientalising date. In addition, it is not possible to identify any Orientalising artefacts in the tomb described in the Renaissance documents.

Part III: Etruscan mirrors

Only one specific artefact has ever been claimed before to come from the tomb at Castellina (whether we are talking about the tomb of 1508 or the tomb at Montecalvario; as noted they are probably not the same). It is an Etruscan mirror, known only from a drawing, again in the Codex Pighianus (**Fig. 131**).³³ The actual mirror is not depicted, only a drawing thought (correctly) to have come from an Etruscan mirror. The inscriptions are certainly Etruscan, written from right to left, indicating that the scene depicts Uthste menacing Cerca, obviously an Etruscan version of Odysseus threatening Circe, with Velparun (= Elpenor), standing by. Among the distinctive features of the design are the pose of Cerca, with hands thrown up into the air, as Uthste seizes her by the hair and threatens her with his sword, presumably to make her restore the pig at her feet into a human. Uthste's hair stands on end as he experiences contact with the witch. Velparun holds a bow, as if the weapon might also be used to threaten Cerca. He wears an elaborate Phrygian-style helmet.

The whereabouts of the actual mirror are unknown, but three other representations of the same scene have been recognised, on mirrors in the Louvre and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (**Figs 132–3**) as well as in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.³⁴ Because of crucial



Figure 131 Drawing of mirror decoration with Uthste, Cerca and Velparun. Codex Pighianus Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Department, Ms. Lat. fol. 61", f. 57

differences with the Pighianus drawing, it is certain that none of these is identical with that piece. The example in the Louvre, found at Tarquinia, shows a scene that is very close to the Pighianus drawing except that the inscriptions are all in different places, and there are details such as the left leg and scabbard of Uthste and the helmet of Velparun that do not match. Part of the pig is missing in the drawing, while the mirror shows what appears to be a human leg indicating the transformation of the creature. The Louvre mirror features an ivy border not present on the drawing, about which more will be said shortly. A second mirror with an almost identical scene is said to come from the neighbourhood of Campiglia Marittima, presumed to be

Figure 132 Drawing of an Etruscan bronze mirror with image of Uthste, Cerca and Velparun. Musée du Louvre, Paris. After CSE France 1, 3, 4



Figure 133 Drawing of an Etruscan bronze mirror with image of Uthste, Cerca and Velparun. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. After CSE, U.S.A., 3, 15





Figure 134 Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus with the Head of Medusa*, 1545–54. Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence. Photo: Scala/Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali / Art Resource, NY

from a cemetery at Vetulonia, acquired in 1909 by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Here, too, the design is certainly not the same as in the Pighianus drawing, again with the inscriptions in very different locations, and with Velparun holding up an arrow to menace Cerca. This mirror too features an ivy border. Finally there is the third example of the subject in Cambridge, of unknown provenance, which has the same schema but with many key differences from the drawing and from the other mirror engravings.³⁵ There are no inscriptions, the pig is not present, Uthste holds the scabbard up high, his hair does not stand on end, and Velparun has no helmet. Though the poses are generally similar, stylistically the figures are rather different from those in the other two mirrors and those in the Pighianus drawing (as far as can be ascertained). The border here is a motif of palmettes held together by a running volute pattern. The three comparanda mirrors all date to around 300 BC, and they are all of the tang typology, with a handle made separately (it would have been of wood, bone or ivory) and attached by the insertion of a tang from the mirror. All are made of bronze.

How did the mirror drawing in the Codex Pighianus come to be associated with Castellina? First, it will be recalled that Marmocchini mentions a mirror, as ‘uno specchio d’argento, a uso di un piè d’asino’.³⁶ There are a couple of disquieting notes here. Etruscan mirrors made of

silver are extremely rare, and the few examples known are peculiar. In short, they have raised suspicions about authenticity. In a strange tomb group thought to be from Chiusi and acquired for the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1913, there were reported four silver mirrors together – two box mirrors with relief and two very thin and fragile silver mirrors with elongated handles.³⁷ These have been dated by De Puma to the Hellenistic period. Another significant example is known from the grave goods of the famous Hellenistic tomb of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa, published by Judith Swaddling and John Prag.³⁸ Unfortunately the grave goods of Hanunia are now missing and the silver mirror, known from photographs and a brief description, cannot be studied autoptically. It was unusual in appearance, with a quite elongated handle and a continuous relief border offset from the reflecting side (?), unlike any other Etruscan mirrors. These three mirrors are not useful comparanda except for one detail that could be relevant. All three seem to have a termination of the handle with a roughly shaped animal head, of a type that occurs frequently on authentic Etruscan mirrors. One more silver mirror, in the Ashmolean Museum, of dubious provenance but handsomely engraved in a manner that inspires confidence, also has the animal head on the end of the handle.³⁹ Such animal heads are sometimes thought to belong to a deer, at other times a mule. And here we return to Marmocchini’s description, which I have translated as ‘a silver mirror having the foot of a mule.’ Could it be that the mirror from the 1508 tomb had a handle that ended (‘the foot’) in the head of a mule?

In any case, the mirror mentioned by Marmocchini can in no way be connected with the Pighianus drawing. Evidently the only reason the Pighianus mirror was associated with the Castellina tomb was that it appeared in the same manuscript as the letter to the Cardinal of Volterra.⁴⁰ Jahn describes the mirror page as ‘vicino a questo rapporto’, but in fact it is not on an adjacent page. In between the letter and the mirror drawing occurs a page of text carefully copied from the Eubugine Tables (Table IV),⁴¹ written from right to left using Etruscan letters for the Umbrian language. All three documents – letter to the Cardinal, Eubugine Table and Etruscan mirror, no doubt would have been of interest to Pighius because of their inscriptions.

That the mirror has nothing to do with the letter is also demonstrated by the fact that no mirror is mentioned in the letter (unlike the Marmocchini memo). Further, there is a label on the mirror drawing, but the word Castellina does not occur. The text may be read as follows: ‘Corona hederacea in circuitu et scutellae aereae Maximiliani Walscapell’ (‘Ivy wreath on the border ... of the bronze bowl belonging to Maximilian Walscapell’). Here we see a reference to the ivy border that must have been on the mirror, as on the comparanda in New York and Paris, followed by a description of the item not as a mirror, but as a small bowl.⁴² It was made of bronze, *not* silver. The owner of the mirror, Waelscapple, was a cleric from Utrecht also known for his love of epigraphy, who travelled to Rome between 1551 and 1554. Thus the fellow countrymen antiquarians Pighius and Waelscapple will have been in Rome at the same time, around the middle of the 16th

century, and it is easy to imagine both men zealously acquiring and copying documents relevant to their interests. Such items would come from different collections and so from page to page in the Pighianus corpus, it would be normal to have objects side by side or near each other that were in fact unrelated.

In conclusion, there is not one piece of evidence that the mirror in the Codex Pighianus was from Castellina, but this in no way lessens the importance of this rare item in Renaissance Italy. It bids to be the earliest example of an Etruscan mirror recorded since antiquity,⁴³ and as has been noted in the past, among the admirers of its iconography was possibly Benvenuto Cellini. His design for Perseus with the head of Medusa adopts the jaunty pose of Uthste grasping the head of Cerca (Fig. 134), and indicates vividly how the rebirth of antiquity could be based upon the Etruscan past.⁴⁴

The case of Castellina is indeed curious and remains tantalising. It involves a fascinating cast of characters, from the scholars Marmocchini, Pighius and Waelscapple to the great artists Leonardo and Cellini. The 1508 Etruscan tomb (wherever it may have been) and the Etruscan mirror of Waelscapple, though probably unrelated to Castellina, are important evidence for the study of reception of the Etruscans. The overall topic of Castellina is by no means exhausted; it would be especially fruitful to attempt to find out more about the Hellenistic grave goods, and of course new evidence may appear. In recent years there has been an increase in archaeological activity in the Chianti area and new discoveries may occur.

In this chapter, I have attempted to parse the existing evidence and call for caution regarding beliefs and arguments that are insufficiently supported. At the same time, I hope I have shown that there are some points that are convincing and relevant as we investigate the discovery and reception of Etruscan culture in 16th-century Europe.

Notes

- 1 Caroline Hillard has recently noted that the date of 1507 used in all publications dealing with this discovery is actually erroneous for the modern calendar. The early notices say that the tomb was discovered on 29 January 1507, but that date was written using the Florentine calendar, which began the New Year on 25 March. Thus for the Florentines, the usage of the year 1508 would have begun only in March, but a date in January would actually belong to the year 1508 in the common calendar: Hillard forthcoming. I am very grateful to Dr Hillard for generously sharing with me her discoveries before she has published them herself. Her article has many refreshing observations about the Castellina discovery.
- 2 Milani 1905; Pernier 1916. On the tumulus see most recently Firmati 2014, *passim*.
- 3 Pernier 1916, 264, 270.
- 4 Pernier 1916, 271.
- 5 Firmati 2014, 78–81 (entry by G.C. Cianferoni).
- 6 Pernier 1916, 275–9. Firmati 2014, 76–7 (entry by G.C. Cianferoni and M. Firmati).
- 7 L. Saracco, *DBI* 70 (2008) s.v. ‘Marmochino, Santi’, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/santi-marmochino_\(Dizionario_Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/santi-marmochino_(Dizionario_Biografico)/) Bartoloni and Bocci 2003, 456, call him an astrologer.
- 8 Author’s translation, based on Martelli 1977, 59, quoting the Italian from the notebook in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, fondo Magliabecchiano, classe XXVIII, codex 20. This is the text of an unpublished work by Santi Marmocchini, *Dialogo in difensione della lingua Toschana*. The passage is repeated in Ph. Bonaroti, *Ad monumenta etrusca operi Dempsteriano addita explications et conjecturae*, in Thomas Dempster, *De Etruria regali*, II, Florence 1724, p. 96. Thus far only short selections from the passage have appeared translated into English (e.g. Firmati 2014, 74). A second major document about the tumulus, from the Codex Pighianus, will be discussed below. I omit from this chapter other humanists who knew of the discovery and who have been discussed by Martelli and others, who do not seem to relate to the arguments I will make: Pier Vettori, Sigismondo Tizio, Pierfrancesco Giambullari, Luigi Guicciardini, Guido Cavalcanti.
- 9 Rix and Meiser 2014 Vt 1.61–64, dated ‘rec.’, i.e. recent, no earlier than 480 BC, and definitely not of the Orientalising or Archaic period. These inscriptions are by no means problem free, but will not be considered in further detail here. Cf. n. 11.
- 10 Gori 1743, class. II, pl. II and p. 78.
- 11 Jahn 1852, 206–8; Conestabile 1863, 45–7. The letter occurs in Codex Pighianus, Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Ms. Lat. fol. 61^v. f. 56 (renumbered as f. 55v), and includes drawings and inscriptions very similar to those noted by Marmocchini (but regarded as separate by Rix Vt. 1. 1.63–4). It is entitled *De sepulcris in antro apud Castellinum Etriarum oppidum repertis epistola ad cardinalem Volaterranum*.
- 12 Van der Meulen 1996.
- 13 Hillard forthcoming. In general, her article is very rich in information about the archaeological and philological interests of scholars and artists in Florence in the 16th century.
- 14 The calculations are based on the determination of the length of a *braccio* in Florence = 2 *palmi* = .583m: Cardarelli 2003, 87 and 88. Goffen 2004, 386.
- 15 There are many female figures of the type; they usually carry a fan, mirror or pomegranate in the right hand. The *patera* or bowl is almost exclusively a male attribute. See numerous examples in Cateni 1986.
- 16 According to Conestabile 1863 47, the text there reads: ‘...mulieris ex alabastro pateram auream tenentis’. But the female carrying the *patera* is highly unusual. See n. 15 above.
- 17 Brunn and Körte 1870–96, vol. 3, pl. 57.9, shows an urn with a vertical candelabrum in the centre with flames rising from it, flanked by the spirits Charu and Vanth. The candelabrum itself is not particularly similar in design to the Castellina example.
- 18 Mediateca di Palazzo Medici Riccardi, 2007 (http://www.palazzo-medici.it/mediateca/en/schede.php?nome=Testa_di_cavallo).
- 19 Richardson 1983, vol. 1, 130 (nos 4 and 7, both in Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence, pls 76–7). Both show a pose with the two arms coming forward, elbows slightly projecting, and with plump thighs visible.
- 20 With one exception: see the discussion of the ‘silver mirror’ below.
- 21 Martelli 1977, 60 and 61 (n. 20). Bartolini and Bocci Pacini 2000, 149, with reference to a study by Bartoloni of re-use of Archaic tombs at Rome in the Hellenistic period) and Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 2003, 456.
- 22 Goggioli and Roncaglia 2006. Goggioli 2012. Goggioli and Roncaglia 2012, 137–43.
- 23 Goggioli and Roncaglia 2006, 37, for the plan in 2004.
- 24 Milani 1905 and Pernier 1916. I thank Mario Iozzo for informing me that a recent thorough search has been made by Carlotta Cianferoni for any and all objects from Montecalvario in the storerooms of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Florence and the archaeological section of the Complesso Museale of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena. Nothing Hellenistic was found.
- 25 Cianferoni 1991, 32–3.
- 26 Martelli 1977. See also Chapter 12 by Jolivet this volume, p. 139.
- 27 Françoise Viatte in Bambach 2003, 578–9, with bibliography. Hillard forthcoming.
- 28 Or perhaps he related the size of the southern tomb to the size of the tumulus and hypothesised that there must be others there.
- 29 It is worth mentioning that the great-nephew of the Cardinal of Volterra, also named Francesco Soderini, purchased the Mausoleum in 1546 (Riccomini 1995). Though this happened well after the time of the discovery of the Castellina tomb, it could relate to a long-standing family interest in real estate in Rome, since the Cardinal had been lodging in Rome off and on from the 1480s (Lowe 1991). Among his residences were the titular cardinal’s palace attached to SS Apostoli (from no later than 1509) and the palace of Torre Sanguigna (perhaps the same as Palazzo Altemps)

- both of which were within the immediate neighbourhood of the Mausoleum of Augustus. That the Mausoleum was known and studied before its purchase and conversion into a garden by the younger Soderini is indicated by the existing drawings of, for example, Baldassare Peruzzi (d. 1536).
- 30 Martelli notes (1977, 58) that according to local tradition at Castellina, there was on top of the mound a ‘piccola cappella’ related to the stations of the cross (hence the name Montecalvario), but surely that could have not been anything like the grand Renaissance building in the drawing.
- 31 Bramante was a friend of Francesco Soderini, Cardinal of Volterra, and thus the latter would have had a way to be acquainted personally with three elements in the Paris drawing: the ‘Tempietto’ on top, the Etruscan tomb plan as in the letter from Florence, and the Mausoleum of Augustus (cf. n. 27). It is worth noting here that J. Freiberg believes (2014, 115–20) that Bramante was aware of the relevance of Etruscan antiquity for his architectural messages and may even have thought of the round building type, the tholos, as being Etruscan. An attribution of the Paris drawing to Bramante is tantalising. I thank Jack Freiberg for pointing out to me that so little is known of Bramante’s drawing style that it is not possible to say one way or another if he could be the author of the drawing. See Günther 2008; Frommel 2008. Hillard forthcoming, cites scholarship from the past that noted exactly the monuments I found relevant – the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Tempietto of Bramante and the Pantheon, but remains steadfast in attributing the drawing to Leonardo.
- 32 Martelli 1977, 59.
- 33 Jahn 1852. Gerhard, *Etruskische Spiegel*, 4, 403, 2.
- 34 *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum* (hereafter referred to CSE), France 1, Paris, Musée du Louvre, III, 4; CSE U.S.A. 3, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 15; CSE, Great Britain 2, Cambridge, 11.
- 35 For the image, see the drawing in CSE Great Britain 2, 11.
- 36 Martelli 1977, 59.
- 37 CSE U.S.A. 2, Boston and Cambridge, 37–40, mirrors numbered 15–18. De Puma makes a full review of silver Etruscan mirrors and the problems with authenticity, p. 40.
- 38 Swaddling and Prag 2002, 11 and pl. 11.
- 39 CSE Great Britain 3, Oxford, 22. The mirror is pear shaped (Praenestine style) and if authentic, to be dated to the 4th century BC.
- 40 Jahn 1852, 208, seems to have been the chief purveyor of this connection, though E. Gerhard played a role as well. In *Etruskische Spiegel*, vol. 4, 62, citing Jahn and others, Gerhard states flatly that the mirror came from ‘Castellino di Chianti’ (*sic*) and cites the Codex Pighianus and the discovery of ‘1507’.
- 41 I thank Caroline Hillard for steering me to this identification.
- 42 I am grateful to Mario Iozzo for suggesting that *scutella* should be translated as ‘bowl’, rather than ‘little shield’ (diminutive of *scutum*, ‘shield’), as I had first assumed. Because of the concave shape of Etruscan bronze mirror discs, it was common in early accounts to refer to them with the word *patera*, ‘saucer’: de Grummond 1982, 2–3. In this case the writer referred to a bowl: *scutella* is thus the diminutive of Latin *scutra*, ‘platter’; its modern Italian equivalent is *scodella*, used of a small bowl.
- 43 De Grummond 1982, 1. Cf. de Grummond 1985, 27, for a possible earlier reference in the 14th century.
- 44 De Grummond 1986, 30–1 and 45 (n. 70).
- Bartoloni, G. and Bocci, P. 2003. ‘The importance of Etruscan antiquity in the Tuscan Renaissance’, in J. Feijer, T. Fischer-Hansen and A. Rathje (eds), *The Rediscovery of Antiquity, The Role of the Artist. Acta Hyperborea* 10, 449–78.
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Chapter 11

A Tuscan Forger, Cotton Mather and the Salem Witch Trials, 1693

Ingrid Rowland

Abstract

In November 1634, 19-year-old Curzio Inghirami discovered a cache of ceramic capsules near his villa outside Volterra, each containing a paper scroll written in Etruscan or Latin.¹ His published account of this extraordinary find, *Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, appeared in 1636. Although they enjoyed a brief season of notoriety, by 1640 the *Etruscan Antiquities* (as they will be referred to in this chapter) had been openly ridiculed as crude forgeries. Half a century later, in Boston, Massachusetts, Inghirami's Etruscan texts found an unlikely champion in the illustrious Puritan minister Cotton Mather, whose immense manuscript *Biblia Americana*, composed between 1693 and 1728, incorporates 'Inghiramius' and the Etruscans within a comprehensive vision of the world and its history. 1693 was no ordinary year in which to begin a great commentary on the Bible; it was the year after the Salem Witch Trials, which took place 20 miles from Boston, proceedings that would shape the young, ambitious Mather's career. In fact, Curzio Inghirami and Cotton Mather had many things in common, among them precocity, imagination, ambition and the limitations of a provincial background. Both of them challenged the limits imposed by religion on speculative thought, each in his own time and place.

Part 1: Curzio Inghirami and the promotion of the Etruscans in 17th-century Italy

The most exciting Etruscan finds of the 17th century came to light in November 1634, within sight of the ancient citadel of Volterra: a cache of ceramic capsules buried in the earth.² Their discoverer, 19-year-old Curzio Inghirami (**Fig. 135**),

Figure 135 Portrait of Curzio Inghirami, from *Serie di Ritratti di Uomini Illustri Toscani, Con gli Elogi Historici degli Medesimi*, vol. 3, Florence: Giuseppe Allegrini, 1770, 128



CURZIO D'INGHIRAMI INGHIRAMI PATRIZIO
E LETTERATO VOLTERRANO
INSIGNE E SOGGETTO
DELLA PATRIA ASSAI BENEMERITO.
nato il dì 29 Novembre MDCLXIV morto il dì 25 Novembre MDCLV
figlio da un Quadro in Terra appartenente l'Ufficio Sig. Niccolò Inghirami
Patrizio Volterrano, Cav. de S. Stefano 9^o e M.^o
Disegnato in linea retta del Sopraddetto.
Giuliano Dandini del. Baimonte Fausto inc. 1770.

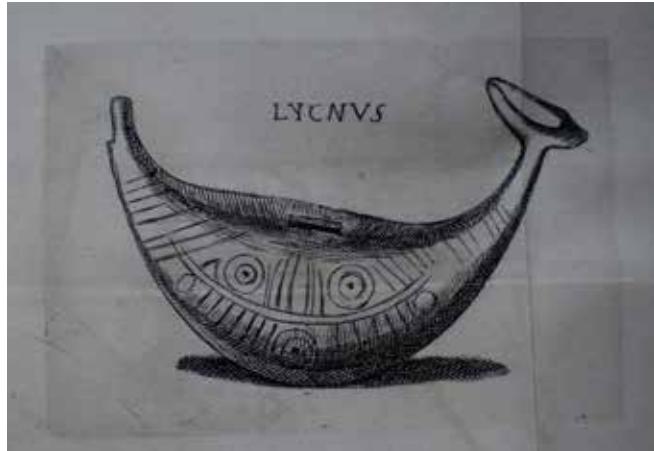


Figure 136 Iron age fibula from Scornello, from Curzio Inghirami, *Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, insert

belonged to a local aristocratic family, a stout, jovial youth with a quick intelligence. Curzio's parents had planned to send him to Florence to study law, but the discovery of the capsules changed his plans. Wrapped in a waterproof coating of human hair and pitch, they turned out to contain a series of rolled paper scrolls inscribed in Etruscan and Latin. Some of the Latin texts bore the name of a young Etruscan augur of the 1st century BC, Prospero of Fiesole, and a date that corresponds in our calendar to 63 BC, one of the more dramatic moments in Roman and Etruscan history. In the previous year, Cicero, as consul in Rome, had unmasked the traitorous conspiracy of his fellow consul Lucius Sergius Catilina, who escaped to Etruria and raised an army. Cicero had been swift to respond, unleashing Rome's legions against his adversary. Poor Prospero, it seemed, had been caught up as an inadvertent participant in the clash between the Roman consul and his perfidious opponent. As the Roman army scoured the countryside, rooting out Catilina's collaborators, Prospero had been stationed as an improvised guard at one of Volterra's

outlying forts – which just happened, 17 centuries later, to have become the site of Curzio Inghirami's family villa, Scornello. Volterra, it seemed from the buried texts, had already fallen, and now the troops were ready to attack Prospero's citadel. Surrounded, certain of defeat, he had written a poignant testament to his vanishing Etruscan culture:

When the Roman Army restored Fiesole and Volterra to Roman Dominion and laid siege to this Citadel, and I despaired of survival, I stored away my dear Household Gods and what money I had, together with the treasury of this Fort... and the Oracles written in Etruscan and Latin Letters. But because the Etruscan language has almost disappeared, I have summarised those [Oracles] that are in Etruscan letters... I committed them all to the earth, so that they would not fall into the hands of the enemy, but if the fates permit it, may they be seen one day in a better light; otherwise let them be guarded here in perpetual eternity.

Prospero of Fiesole, the Augur, the year after Catilina.³

Curzio also found a battered tin figure (one of the 'dear household gods'?) and a bronze 'lamp' among the capsules (**Fig. 136**; modern archaeologists would recognise the 'lamp' as an Iron Age leech fibula with a missing pin).⁴ Enlisting the help of the estate's gardeners, he subsequently managed to uncover a series of ancient walls on the crest of the hill next to his house. Little Scornello, deep in the Volterrana countryside, seemed to be disclosing an unexpectedly dramatic history, one that the contents of the capsules continued to reveal in increasing detail.

Prospero of Fiesole's biographical information and the texts preserved on the paper scrolls provided remarkable new insights into Etruscan religion, including foreknowledge of Christianity:

I, Prospero, was instructed in the art of divination by my Father, Vesulius, as is the custom among the Etruscans, so that from the records of the ancients I came to believe in the coming of the Great King, after whom the years shall be numbered.⁵

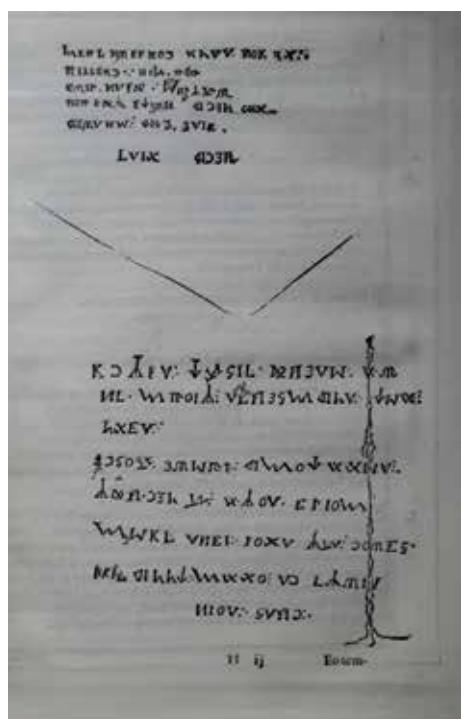


Figure 137 Scarith, from Curzio Inghirami, *Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*

To the literati of the time, this revelation established that the Etruscans were as steeped in the deepest secrets of ancient wisdom as the Egyptians, the Chaldaeans, the Magi, the Hebrew prophets and the Sibyls. Furthermore, they seemed to know all about the making of chronicles and calendars, a matter of intense interest in 17th-century Italy, where the new Gregorian calendar had been in use for just over half a century.

Over the course of the next few months, Inghirami presented his finds to learned audiences in Volterra, Florence and Pisa, stirring up an intense debate on every aspect of the matter except one: Curzio's listeners, without exception, found him an exceedingly engaging young man. The buried texts revealed that the Etruscan name for the capsules was *scarith* (the same word used for both singular and plural), but Inghirami liked to call his treasures 'the Etruscan Antiquities'. Volterrani made up a vernacular term for them, *scaritti*, and still talk about them as such to this day.⁶

The *Etruscan Antiquities* (Fig. 137) were always a good topic of conversation. Their discovery came along at a providential moment, providing Tuscan intellectuals with a much needed distraction from their usual focus of discussion in those days: the tragic fate of their most illustrious countryman, Galileo Galilei.⁷ Convicted of heresy by the Roman Inquisition in June 1633, the 70-year-old astronomer had been sentenced to house arrest in a cardinal's villa outside Siena, but that setting had eventually struck the Inquisitors as too idyllic for a real punishment. Since 1634, therefore, Galileo had been put under house arrest, imprisoned within his own more modest villa at Arcetri, just outside Florence, while he and his fellow Tuscans burned with resentment against Rome. As it happened, the 'Etruscan Antiquities' also provided Tuscans with new ammunition in the fight over Galileo's legacy, for Prospero of Fiesole, in grand Etruscan tradition, had been something of an astronomer in his own right. The young augur had buried his trove of scarith after seeing 'the stars Caris, Mor and Turg in conjunction' and 'lightning on the plain of Asgaria'. One of Galileo's students, Vincenzo Renieri, decided to make a special study of the astronomical lore preserved in the mysterious capsules.⁸

However, some scholars in Tuscany received the scarith more sceptically, the most vocal among them a Swiss-born professor at the University of Pisa, Paganino Gaudenzio.⁹ To quiet the controversy, the government of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany sent two police officers to investigate the site where Curzio had found the first capsules. The officers' doubts vanished on the day when each of them found his very own scarith, buried in the ground beneath a tangle of tree roots. From Pisa, an undaunted Paganino Gaudenzio continued to protest that Etruscan books had been written on linen cloth, not paper, and hence the scarith could not be real, while Curzio Inghirami, on the ground in Scornello, retorted that 'linen' had always meant linen rag paper like that made in the granducal paper works at Colle Val d'Elsa, near Volterra. The scarith, he was happy to note, afforded tangible proof of that fact. Eventually Gaudenzio was convinced to mute his attacks on the 'Etruscan Antiquities', for he owed his position at the University of Pisa to the good



Figure 138 Curzio Inghirami, *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, title page

graces of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Grand Duke, only four years older than Curzio, favoured the authenticity of the scarith. With an attentive eye to his career, Gaudenzio circulated his essay 'On Paper', in which he decried the scarith as fakes, only in manuscript, without daring to publish it in print.¹⁰

Curzio, meanwhile, began preparing his own account of the discoveries for publication. The resulting book, *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, was a magnificent folio volume of nearly 500 pages. Its title page bore a Frankfurt imprint, but no publisher's name, and a publication date of '1637 – Or, in Etruscan ('Etrusco vero'), 4495' – although the text was almost certainly printed in Florence in 1636 (Fig. 138). The extra 'h' in 'Ethruscarum' and 'Etrusco' would not have surprised readers; it occurred in many 17th-century publications as a hangover from the earliest printed editions of Livy's *History of Rome*. Nonetheless, as we shall see shortly, this spelling almost certainly had further significance in the way that Curzio used it.¹¹ The book's false German imprint lent it a certain cosmopolitan importance, and in fact news of the scarith had already penetrated beyond the bounds of Tuscany to the international Republic of Letters. Frankfurt was also a place where authors could publish without approval from ecclesiastical authorities – in effect, Curzio was avoiding, or at least pretending to avoid, the Tuscan censors.

In any case, the publisher, whether German or Florentine, had certainly spared no expense in making a



Figure 139 Domenico Vadorini,
engraving of Etruscan Volterra.
From Curzio Inghirami,
*Ethruscarum Antiquitatum
Fragmenta*, insert

convincing case for the scarith of Scornello. *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta* was a model of the printer's art, and of archaeological publication in the 17th century, with an impeccable typeface and a wealth of woodcut and engraved illustrations, including faithful reproductions of some of the ancient texts and some of the artefacts that Curzio had found along with the scarith. Foldout maps drawn by the local parish priest, Domenico Vadorini, showed Volterra as it had been in Prospero's day and as it was in Curzio's (Fig. 139), as well as a detailed map of the rural area around Scornello where Curzio had first come upon his momentous find.

The expensive format of the *Etruscan Antiquities* suggests that the book must have had a particularly well-heeled sponsor. Inghirami belonged to an extensive aristocratic family. His great uncle had been the illustrious Iacopo, Admiral of the Tuscan Fleet. An uncle, Giulio Inghirami, served the Grand Duchy of Tuscany as Postmaster, and it is through this connection that Curzio evidently managed to secure the protection, and the financial support, of Grand Duke Ferdinand II himself. The Grand Duke must also have provided Curzio with the behind-the-scenes services of an Umbrian typographer named Amadore Massi, soon to become the Grand Duchy's official printer – perhaps *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta* was his trial run.

Grand Duke Ferdinand had reason to support Inghirami's initiative. After the devastating plague of 1631, the debacle of Galileo's trial and conviction in 1633 and several years of economic depression, the 'Etruscan Antiquities' gave the Grand Duchy and its young ruler some cheer and some positive lustre, especially when jolly, witty Curzio was there to present them to the public in person.

Unfortunately, without Inghirami's spirited presence, the physical beauties of *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta* could not disguise the drawbacks of its Latin text, or the gaping holes in the arguments that text put forth. When the book

reached Rome, moreover, Curzio's new reading public included many of the same people who had brought Galileo literally to his knees in June 1633, to recant his declarations about a sun-centred universe in exchange for his life. These new readers included the Hungarian Jesuit Melchior Inchofer, who had filed a scathing report with the Holy Office on Galileo's *Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems*, and Inchofer's close friend Leone Allacci, a Greek-born scriptor for the Vatican Library. To general surprise, another prominent antiquarian, the German Jesuit Athanasius Kircher, widely regarded as the most knowledgeable man in Rome, kept quiet about the scarith. He was not about to risk his excellent connections in Tuscany when he was looking forward to spending a semester at the Jesuit college in Florence. Furthermore, Grand Duke Ferdinand had promised to give Kircher a first-rate Arabic type font to use in printing his endless stream of learned publications, far better than the one the Jesuit had been borrowing until then from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. Another member of this group of erudite friends, the Sienese prelate Monsignor Fabio Chigi, had shipped a copy of *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta* to his palace on the island of Malta, where he was serving as Inquisitor and Apostolic Delegate to the Knights of St John. Chigi made some notes from Curzio's remarks about Etruscan dating methods on the back of a piece of paper that is still preserved in the Vatican library, together with some of Inghirami's Etruscan characters. The recto of the same paper bears transcriptions (not in Chigi's hand) of Etruscan epitaphs from Chiusi. These are authentic, and their script looks nothing like the Etruscan letter forms used in the scarith texts, but it is not clear whether Chigi noticed the difference.¹²

With so various a cast of characters, the debate surrounding the 'Etruscan Antiquities' could never have been limited exclusively to the scarith and their authenticity. It was also a debate on the relative importance, to learning,

culture and religion, of Florence and Rome. Both cities had become increasingly vulnerable to the rising international importance of cities like Paris, Madrid, Prague, and, worse, Protestant capitals like London and – an unexpected new arrival on the European scene – Stockholm. In 1631, as plague raged in Italy, the Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus had begun a military sweep across northern Europe that swiftly turned Lutheran Sweden into one of the continent's great mercantile, military and territorial powers, second only to Spain and Russia in the sheer extent of its territories. In fighting over culture, from the cosmology of Galileo to the scarith of Scornello, Rome and Florence were fighting for their place in a much larger European theatre, and no one knew it better than two men of the Church, both Tuscans themselves and therefore men of conflicting loyalties: Pope Urban VIII and his young apostolic delegate to Malta, Fabio Chigi.

Rome released its first official opinion on the scarith in 1640, a medium-sized quarto book, *Animadversions against the Etruscan Antiquities*, penned by Leone Allacci, the Greek-born librarian of the powerful, learned papal nephew Cardinal Francesco Barberini. For his illustrious patron, Allacci pulled no punches. He attacked the clumsy style of the scarith's Latin texts and the scant reliability of their historical data with vitriolic glee. Like Paganino Gaudenzio, he asserted that no ancient Etruscan would ever have written on paper, and he also noted that Etruscan was written right to left, whereas the scarith texts were written left to right. By relentless suggestion, moreover, he made it clear that the author of Prospero's documents could be none other than Curzio Inghirami himself.

Curzio, ever the gentleman, responded by inviting his opponent to visit Volterra and engage in a debate at the local literary academy, the Accademia dei Sepolti (the 'Buried Men', as impervious as the dead to worldly temptations). Despite the ferocity of Allacci's printed critique, the debate itself seems to have been an enjoyable occasion for all concerned. Allacci was a seasoned courtier as well as Curzio's guest, and their shared sense of humour must have smoothed over their academic differences, at least for as long as the encounter lasted. A round of anonymous pamphlets followed the visit from both sides, and then Curzio drafted a lengthy response to Allacci, which he published in 1645. This *Discourse of Curzio Inghirami Regarding the Oppositions Made to the Tuscan Antiquities* (*Discorso di Curzio Inghirami sopra l'opposizioni fatte all'antichità toscane*) was once again entrusted to the press of Amadore Massi, now definitively employed as official printer to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The fact that Curzio wrote the squat 500-page book in Tuscan vernacular afforded tacit proof that Allacci's attacks on the quality of his Latin had hit home. In Italy, therefore, the matter of the *Etruscan Antiquities* was all but settled within 10 years of their discovery. Most scholars suspected that the scarith were forgeries and that Curzio Inghirami was their creator. On the other hand, Curzio made such an entertaining show as Defender of the *Etruscan Antiquities* that no one actively urged him to desist. Instead, he helped draft Volterra's contribution to the international *Acta Sanctorum* project guided by the French Jesuits of the Bollandist Society, and lived out the rest of his rather short life (he died in 1655 at the



Figure 140 Annius of Viterbo (Fra Giovanni Nanni, O. P.). Museo Civico, Viterbo. Photo: author

age of 44) as Volterra's resident antiquarian. He married the woman he loved, fathered several young Inghiramis, wrote two genuinely clever comedies and turned his talents as a forger to the Middle Ages, writing a history of Volterra largely based on documents from the city archives that never seem to have existed except in his fertile imagination.

In 1650, the great Athanasius Kircher, Arabic font in hand, weighed in at last on the *Etruscan Antiquities*. It took half of one devastating sentence: in his opinion, the scarith were the most egregious Etruscan forgeries since the 15th-century hoaxes of Friar Annius of Viterbo.¹³

As Father Kircher no doubt realised, Annius and his forgeries bore more than a casual connection to Curzio Inghirami's enterprise: Annius was the very model on which Curzio had moulded his history. A Dominican friar from Viterbo, just north of Rome, Annius (Fig. 140) claimed, in the early 1490s, to have discovered a series of hitherto lost ancient texts. In 1498, he published these, together with his own extensive explanatory notes, as *Commentaries on the Works of Various Authors who speak of Antiquities*. The most influential of the writings was a brief précis of universal history ascribed to 'Berosus the Chaldaean', librarian of Babylon, a real historical figure (although we spell his name Berossos). A chapter on 'Fifty Annian Questions' in Scholastic question-and-answer format discussed the local history of Viterbo, whose ancient name, Annius suggested, had been Volturna or Volturrena. Taken together, the cleverly intertwined texts and explanations collected in the *Commentaries* placed Viterbo and the Etruscans within a scheme of universal history, beginning with Adam, proceeding on through the

Egyptians and the Hebrew patriarchs, and eventually encompassing the known world from Spain to Mesopotamia.¹⁴

In his effort to combine local and universal history, Annius evidently followed the practice of medieval chroniclers, who were always eager to place their native land within some larger scheme of history. Thus when he proclaimed that Noah, the Hebrew patriarch, was the same figure as the ancient Italic god Janus, he was only passing on old news;¹⁵ Peter the Deacon had already said so in his 12th-century guidebook to Rome, the *Graphia Aureae Urbis Romae*.¹⁶ The 13th-century *Pantheon* of Godfrey of Viterbo traced the relationship somewhat differently, insisting that Noah had been the first king of the Etruscans, whereas Janus had been his son and successor.¹⁷ The *Commentaries* once again identified Noah as Janus, reporting that the patriarch came to Italy after the Flood, landed near Rome, taught the local population to make wine, and then established a royal city centred on four hills that would one day be called Viterbo. Noah/Janus, however, called his capital Etruria. The patriarch's larger realm extended, as Livy attested, across most of the Italian peninsula, from the Alps to the Straits of Messina. According to Annius, this great province was called 'Hetruria (the excerpt cited preserves the Dominican's carefully tendentious spelling)':

Hetruria. ETRURIA. What is of Greek origin, as Servius testifies, is written with an aspirated 'h' as Hetruria. This is a composite noun, from 'heteros', that is, 'other', and 'oros', that is, 'border' and 'boundary'. Thus Hetruria is, as it were, Heteroria, that is, bounded by another border: . . . Therefore if 'Hetruria' and 'hetrusci' are written in aspirated form, it signifies the whole province and its peoples. Whatever is of true Etruscan origin is written unaspirated as Etruria.¹⁸

The Etruscans at the centre of this greater Hetruria had been the most civilised inhabitants of the ancient world. Their ruler, Janus, as the god of entrances, doors and keys, associated with the Roman hill called Janiculum, had also been the first personage in human history to bear the title *pontifex maximus*, and was therefore the first precursor of the Pope.

In attempting to settle world chronology, the *Commentaries* of Annius of Viterbo compared the genealogy of Etruria's dynasts with the king lists of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia and the Holy Land, coordinating each of these chronicles with the biblical generations from Adam onwards, and also with the universal cataclysm of the Flood. Annius thereby supplied the whole ancient world, from the Spanish West to Babylonian East, with a new set of heroes and heroic exploits, amid laments about how much had been omitted from the record by the historians of 'lying Greece' ('Graecia mendax').¹⁹

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI Borgia appointed Annius to the position of Master of the Sacred Apostolic Palace; it was his job to approve all the sermons delivered to the pope and to certify every theological degree granted in Rome. For the next two decades, the forger and his legends captivated Rome, leaving tantalising traces in works of art (Annus himself died in 1504). When the Borgia pope asked the painter Pinturicchio to decorate a new suite of apartments in the Vatican, one room celebrated the Egyptian goddess Isis,

whose presence Annus had detected in Viterbo.²⁰ Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling begins its great narrative of Church history with the creation of the universe and ends with the landing of the Ark and the sacrifice of Noah, by now firmly identified, at least by Annus, as the first pope.²¹ Donato Bramante's chapel, the Tempietto, completed in 1502 for the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, involves an elaborate combination of Etruscan and Spanish themes, all of them traceable directly back to Annus of Viterbo.²²

It was only when Martin Luther began to use Annian arguments to back his positions that Italians began to regard the Dominican from Viterbo with a more sceptical eye.²³ In other parts of Europe, however, notably in France and Belgium, Annus continued to attract adherents well into the 16th century.²⁴ Ironically, what the friar had to say about the physical development of Viterbo was often accurate, insightful and based on careful archival research, but most readers, in Italy and the rest of Europe, scoured the *Commentaries* for their less reliable information about Noah, Hetruria and the universal history that had been suppressed by *Graecia mendax*.²⁵ Annus had discovered the charm of conspiracy theories. Four generations later, Curzio Inghirami was delighted to take up the Annian torch, with a few patriotic adjustments.

It was a simple matter for Curzio Inghirami to insist that the name 'Volturrhena', which recurs frequently in the *Commentaries*, referred to Volterra rather than Viterbo. He could then borrow as much as he liked from the Etruscan mythology of Annus of Viterbo and insist at the same time on his own critical distance from his source. Rather than distinguishing the city of Etruria from the province of Hetruria, he identifies Volterra as the original 'Etruria' at the centre of the 'Etruscan' empire.²⁶ Hence his *Etruscan Antiquities* are 'Etruscan' rather than 'Hetruscan', and for good measure, he writes the Latin word for Etruscans, *Tusci*, as 'Thusci'.²⁷ Leone Allacci took him to task for adding 'h' to Etruria, intoning 'Etruscans, not Etruscans; Etruria, not Ethruria', but as Curzio well knew, the Grand Duke of Tuscany signed diplomatic documents and appeared on inscriptions as the 'Magnus Dux Hetruriae', and did so precisely in order to convey Annus of Viterbo's idea of a territorially ambitious Tuscany.²⁸ The extra 'h' afforded a touch of class, at least in the eyes of self-styled latter-day Etruscans.

Most of the Annian texts are short and spare, which gave Curzio free rein to embroider the scath texts with further heroic deeds and a lavish sprinkling of 'real' Etruscan words, lending his own forged documents the air of superior authenticity. Leone Allacci, at least, found the Etruscan words ridiculous:

I've long since developed a callus on my stomach from prolonged contact, but certainly not to the point where I'd not prefer to drink bilge rather than to hear words at which I recoil just as I would from a snake. Are these portents of words, or monsters: Scarith, Caris, Mor, Turg, Asgaria, Vlerda, Dorchthes, Lartes, Saph, Roith, Ochincres, Brocon, Spugi, Barconictus, Ancironae, Schilia, Cronethia, Schesia, Procravia, Ocalia, Dantelia, Bentia, Porachal, Balth, Rebalth, Rurerebalth, Vosgaria, Onebrae, Enebrae, Inurnes.²⁹

For less sophisticated readers than Allacci, on the other hand, the *Etruscan Antiquities* dazzled by supplying such exciting material as the texts of sermons that Noah had delivered to his people, and fragments of Etruscan chronicles that referred in more specific detail to the individual cities of Etruria than the documents published by Annius of Viterbo. Prospero, moreover, provided a uniquely satisfactory, if tragic, insider's view of Etruscan life as it was lived just before the advent of the 'Great King after whom the years would be numbered'.

But like Annius before him, Curzio Inghirami could claim more than a fertile historical imagination and a talent for spinning out a compelling tale of past glory and secret wisdom malevolently suppressed (the suppressors of Curzio's *Etruscan Antiquities*, of course, came from overbearing Rome rather than lying Greece). He, too, had a genuine sense for his native landscape. One of the objects he unearthed with the scarith was that authentic Etruscan bronze fibula, misidentified as a lamp (see **Fig. 136**). There really had been Etruscans on the grounds of Scornello.³⁰

The irresistible pull of conspiracy theories and the championing of an oppressed culture may help to explain why both Annius of Viterbo's tales about Noah and Curzio Inghirami's *Etruscan Antiquities*, cut free from the reality of their native landscapes, enjoyed so vibrant an afterlife in the English-speaking world. In 1601, for example, a certain 'Richard Lynche, Gent.' published *An Historical Treatise of the Travels of Noah into Europe: Containing the first inhabitation and peopling thereof. As also a breefe recapitulation of the Kings, Governors, and Rulers commanding in the same, even untill the first building of Troy by Dardanus*, with the admonition, in Italian, that 'Time is the son of Truth'.³¹ Lynche, or Linche, was a poet in the circle of Robert Sidney, Earl of Essex, and the work is a streamlined synopsis of Annius, whose *Commentaries*, long ridiculed in Italy, were still being reprinted in northern Europe until as late as 1612. Linche certainly harbors no doubts about the reliability of 'Iohannes Annius of Viterbe, a most excellent writer & diligent Historiographer'.³²

Part 2: The legacy of Curzio Inghirami and the scarith in America

In 1655 another Englishman, the Oxford medical student Edmund Dickinson, invoked the scarith to bolster the arguments he had developed in a treatise called *Delphi Phoenicizantes* ('Delphi acting Phoenician') (**Fig. 141**). The book's lengthy subtitle anticipates its conclusions:

A Treatise, in which it is shown, by not inelegant arguments, that the Greeks made up whatever was famous at Delphi (whether you look at the story of Apollo and the Python, or the Paeanic contests and prizes, or the original form of the Temple and its inscription or the Tripod, the Oracle, etc.) from the story of Joshua and the Sacred Scriptures. And many things are recounted differently than they usually are, and will be delightful above all to scholars. To this is joined a STUDY of Noah's arrival in Italy, and the names of its nations, as well the Origin of the Druids. These are accompanied by a little discourse on the need to liberate Philosophy.³³

Both Dickinson's 'not inelegant arguments' and Curzio Inghirami's 'Etruscan Antiquities' rely fundamentally on Annius of Viterbo, but there is a great difference in the way



Figure 141 Dedication from Edmund Dickinson, *Delphi Phoenicizantes* (in text)

they use their material. The 'Etruscan Antiquities' parody the friar from Viterbo as well as borrowing his insights, but Dickinson, in distant Albion, takes a reverent attitude both to Annius and to his putative ancient texts. Oxford was a long way from Etruria.

Furthermore, in the embroidered story of Noah he received from Annius of Viterbo and Curzio Inghirami, Dickinson found material that truly engaged his interest. In a lengthy appendix to *Delphi Phoenicizantes*, he begins with a diatribe against the Greeks:

For the vanity and arrogance of the Greeks is such that they regard themselves not only as the inventors of philosophy and refined literature, but indeed of the whole human race. Listen to them speaking about antiquity from the mouth of Diogenes Laertius: "Some say that philosophy began among the barbarians..."

Can you contain your laughter, friends? If, like the *graeculi*, I might make a comment on the origin of humankind (what a ridiculous, absurd thing!), I contend, not without reason, that literature flowered among the Britons, Gauls, and Iberians at the same time that it did among the Greeks, if not before.³⁴

Dickinson then turns to the Druids, tracing their origins back to Abraham, suggesting that Noah himself was probably a Druid, and then noting that their important role in history has been obscured by lying Greeks:

What would they not dare? What stone would they not move in their effort to plunge the glories of Etruscan antiquity into darkness?³⁵

Etruria, in Dickinson's scheme, has become Britain, and Britain Etruria, with the oak groves of England playing the role that the settled terrain of Viterbo and Volterra had played for Annius of Viterbo and Curzio Inghirami. Far from the Mediterranean, Dickinson's interpretation of the Bible still finds an anchor in the details of local landscape, and his own people a special role in the long history of human salvation. By virtue of their biblical antiquity, the Druids admit England not only into the Republic of Letters, but also into the physical and cultural Republic of Antiquity.

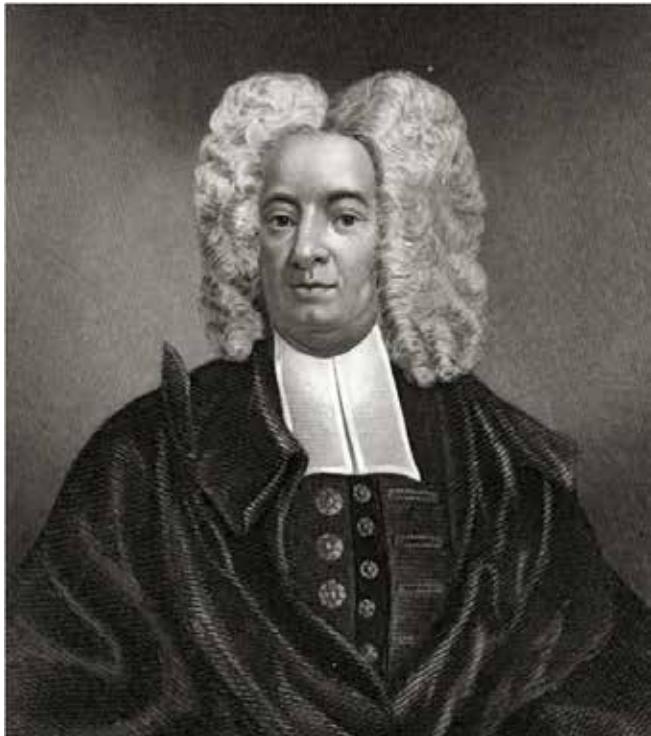


Figure 142 Mezzotint portrait of Cotton Mather, c. 1700. Wikimedia Commons

In this desire to assign his native land a place in classical history, Dickinson was entirely a man of his era. Hugo Grotius had published his *Liber de Antiquitate Republicae Batavorum* in 1610 in order to show that the Low Countries were every bit as ancient and sophisticated as their Mediterranean trading partners.³⁶ In the 16th century, the Swedish archbishop Johannes Magnus had already traced the line of Swedish kings back to Magog, son of Japheth (not without help from Annus of Viterbo); in the early 18th century, his fellow countryman Olof Rudbeck would daringly identify Uppsala as lost Atlantis.³⁷

Some of this passionate urge to belong was directly conditioned by religion. Israel in exile had already turned Jerusalem into a place of the imagination as well as a physical reality. Long before Christianity adapted biblical language to call its own congregations a royal priesthood, Judaism had adapted to the conditions of diaspora. From the very beginnings of Christianity, clergy and Scripture assured the community of the faithful that through their belief they *were* Israel, citing the words of the prophets, the Psalms, the Gospels and the letters of St Paul. Medieval chroniclers and early modern antiquarians simply enriched this figurative belonging by searching for literal ties to the past.

The yearning for a tangible connection to Mediterranean history, both classical and biblical, became all the more acute for those Europeans who crossed the Atlantic, never more so than in the case of the Puritans who settled in New England in the 17th century. Close readers of the Bible, the colonists of Massachusetts Bay harboured no doubts that they had been sent to the Atlantic seaboard by God's will. On American soil, therefore, Edmund Dickinson's efforts to glorify British and barbarian heritage assumed a new, inspiring significance for American readers, as New

England's 'royal priesthood' and 'community of saints' struggled to establish settlements, commerce, churches, and, as early as 1638, a university in their adopted land. The first Protestant emigrants to Massachusetts arrived in 1620, only 18 years before the foundation of Harvard College. The land, of course, was already inhabited. It was all too easy for the new arrivals to identify these indigenous residents as the true barbarians.³⁸

New Americans might feel a profound connection with the biblical past, but inserting their own history into the great Scriptural continuum was a challenging scholarly task for a community of settlers. Making a convincing case to the Republic of Letters required a scholar versed in the classical languages, and preferably in Hebrew as well, with an active network of correspondents in the mother country if not the whole Republic of Letters. In 1693, as a second generation of American-born Puritans came to maturity in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the young, ambitious Boston cleric Cotton Mather took up the challenge of inserting the New World into the history of the Old. A third-generation Puritan minister and a third-generation citizen of Massachusetts, Mather (Fig. 142) laboured under the shadow of a formidable heritage. His father, Increase, had studied at both Harvard and Trinity College, Dublin, before being appointed President of Harvard College. His mother, Maria Cotton, was the daughter of the Bay Colony's foremost theologian, John Cotton. Cotton Mather's name alone commanded him to excel. He would eventually write more than 450 books, from small, pointed pamphlets to tremendous tomes like his *Magnalia Christi Americana* (published in London in 1702), a history of the Puritan mission in the New World.³⁹ To his eternal frustration, Mather, however, was never able to find a publisher for his most ambitious work, a commentary on the Bible, the *Biblia Americana*, begun in 1693 and still underway when its author died in 1728 (Fig. 143). By then the manuscript ran to several thousand pages, in a few of which, thanks to Edmund Dickinson, 'Inghiramus' and the Etruscans figured in Mather's distinctly American vision of universal history and chronology.

1693 was no ordinary year in which to begin a great commentary on the Bible, especially for Cotton Mather. The notorious Salem Witch Trials, in which 19 people were executed, had taken place 20 miles from Boston the year before, proceedings about which both Increase and Cotton Mather had felt compelled, as two of the Colony's most prominent ministers, to make their opinions known.⁴⁰

Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World*, published in 1693, discusses the trials in light of the Puritans' mission in New England:

It was a Rowsing Alarm to the Devil, when a great Company of English Protestants and Puritans, came to Erect Evangelical Churches, in a corner of the World, where he had Reign'd without any Controll for many Ages; and it is a vexing Eye-sore, to the Devil, that our Lord Christ should be known, and own'd, and preached in this Howling Wilderness. Wherefore he has left no Stone Unturned, that so he might undermine his Plantation, and force us out of our Country.⁴¹

Wonders of the Invisible World presented a close analysis of several cases that came before the ad hoc court in Salem,

endorsing its decisions despite the court's use of 'spectral evidence': reports of evil works wrought at a distance, not by the accused themselves, but by devils who had assumed their form. As Mather wrote:

The Devil . . . has decoy'd a fearful Knot of Proud, Froward, Ignorant, Envious, and Malicious Creatures, to List themselves in his Horrid Service, by Entring their Names in a *Book* by him Tendred unto them. These Witches, whereof above a Score have now *Confessed, and shown their Deeds*, and some are now Tormented by the Devils, for Confessing, have met in Hellish *Rendezvous*, wherein the Confessors do say, they have had their Diabolical Sacraments, imitating the *Baptism* and the *Supper* of our Lord. In these Hellish Meetings, these Monsters have associated themselves to do no less a Thing than, *To Destroy the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in these parts of the World.*⁴²

It was this same zeal to shield 'the *Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ*' from its diabolical destroyers that inspired Mather to begin his commentary on the Bible from a distinctively American viewpoint, 'AN AMERICAN OFFER', as he would advertise it, 'to serve the great Interests of Learning and Religion in Europe'.⁴³

In order to fit convincingly into the scheme of universal salvation history, the Bay Colony needed both its Hebrew and its classical pedigree; its twofold connection to the great traditions of Old World wisdom. Through thousands of pages of line-by-line glosses on the Bible, the *Biblia Americana* endeavours, with prodigious displays of erudition, to fit the new continent and its people into a new, broadened conception of the world. For Mather, the first episode in this new dispensation began, necessarily, when Noah emerged from the Ark after the Flood, at the moment when God established his covenant with all humanity:

The *Renovation of the World* upon the Coming of *Noah* out of the *Ark*, is now to be considered. And it is Remarkable, That the first Thing done in this our World was an *Action of Piety*, the Offering of a Sacrifice unto GOD.⁴⁴

Shortly thereafter, of course, Noah got gloriously drunk, exposed his nakedness, and was mocked by his son Ham (also known as Canaan):

And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant (Genesis 9:24-27)

In his comments on the last of these lines, Genesis 9:27, Mather shows that the promise, 'God shall enlarge Japheth', portends mighty consequences for both geography and genealogy. Each of Noah's sons will receive a portion of the earth, but Japheth's portion is the one destined to expand:

In the Division of the World, Shem getts only a Part of Asia Major, Cham getts, with Africa, a very little Part of Asia. But Japheth shares all Europe; All Asia Minor; A very great Part of Asia Major; And probably, all America over and above.⁴⁵



Figure 143 Manuscript page, Cotton Mather papers, *Biblia Americana*, Vol 1: Genesis, Chap. I, p. 96 verso. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Ms. N-527 (Tall), Vol. 1

Mather's comments on Genesis 9:28 ('And Noah lived after the Flood three hundred and fifty years') include a series of questions and answers, beginning with:

Q. What became of Noah after the Flood? What Habitations did hee seek? And what Remembrances ha's hee left? v. 28

Noah, with Japhet, his oldest Son, travelled into Italy; where they forthwith founded a City, which they called Chethim, or Kittim. The Words used in those Antiquities of Hetruria, found by Inghiramius are very notable, to this Purpose.⁴⁶

Mather was greatly moved by the fact that Noah's first act on emerging from the Ark was to sacrifice to God, thus making piety the first human impulse of the new postdiluvian dispensation; the parallels with the Puritan enterprise in Massachusetts were easy to draw. To this section of the *Biblia Americana*, Mather therefore added his English translation of one of Noah's sermons to his people, helpfully transcribed by 'Inghiramius' from a scarith text and reproduced wholesale by Edmund Dickinson.

Mather, not surprisingly, shares Dickinson's antipathy to the lying ancients:

To lay aside all the Fabulous, and Egyptian, or Graecian Shams of Antiquity, the true Story of these things, is this:

Noah, finding his Posterity so increase[d], that Palestine, could not hold them, left Shem in Syria, hee sent Cham to Egypt, and went himself, with Japheth, into the Country that is now called

Italy; where hee built a City, called Chethim (afterwards Volterra) which proving the Metropolis of Tuscany, all Italy was afterwards from thence denominated.⁴⁷

But it was not the lying ancients who kept Cotton Mather's *Biblia Americana* from enshrinement in print. Ultimately, his work of a lifetime was too arcane and too densely erudite for an American readership, too American for English readers, and too immense for any publisher on either side of the Atlantic to contemplate printing it in its entirety. But its author's Messianic conviction that God might have reserved a special destiny for the Americas became firmly etched on the colonial consciousness all the same. A century after Cotton Mather's death, a New York visionary named Joseph Smith would once again follow the lead of the 'Etruscan Antiquities' in linking the story of Noah with foreknowledge of Christ. In February 1831, Smith recorded what his followers, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Mormons, would call the Book of Moses:

And it came to pass that Noah continued his preaching unto the people, saying: Hearken, and give heed unto my words;

Believe and repent of your sins and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our fathers, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, that ye may have all things made manifest; and if ye do not this, the floods will come in upon you; nevertheless they hearkened not. (Moses 8:23–4).⁴⁸

Smith explicitly credits neither the *Biblia Americana* nor *Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, and probably had access to neither, but his conviction that Noah prophetically foresaw both Christian revelation and the discovery of the Americas was widely held in the young United States, and that was partly Cotton Mather's doing.

Despite their equally vast differences, Curzio Inghirami and Cotton Mather had many qualities in common, among them precocity, imagination, ambition and a provincial background that proved both limiting and liberating. Their slightly off-centre positions in life allowed them both to challenge the restrictions imposed by religion on speculative thought, each in his own time and place. But rather than the vein of humour that runs through Curzio's life and work, Cotton Mather reveals a core of driving conviction. For that reason, as well as for his industry, his undeniable talents and for his prominent position in Boston, he has been by far the more influential of the two.

Notes

- 1 I owe this topic entirely to an email from Reiner Smolinski, who first alerted me to the connection between Cotton Mather and Curzio Inghirami.
- 2 Rowland 2004.
- 3 Rowland 2004, 18.
- 4 The British Museum has a number of similar fibulae: 1991,1218.21, 1976,0208.1, 1916,0601.7 and 1916,0601.8, the last two with similar damage.
- 5 Rowland 2004, 12.
- 6 Rowland 2004, 3–23.
- 7 Rowland 2004, 46–61.
- 8 Rowland 2004, 19–20.
- 9 Rowland 2004, 62–81.
- 10 Rowland 2004, 62–81.
- 11 The spelling of 'Tusci' and 'Etrusci' is fluid in incunabula of Livy: the *editio princeps*, edited by Johannes Andreas, Bishop of Aleria and printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz in Subiaco in 1469, has 'etrusci'. Marc'Antonio Sabelllico's edition, printed in Venice in 1492 by Johannes Rubeus Vercellensis, has 'hetrusci'. 'Ethrusci' appears in the 1495 Milan edition edited by Alexander Minutianus and printed by Uldericus Scinzenzeler.
- 12 These inscriptions are transcribed in Rowland 1989, but, like Chigi himself, I mistook the distinctive rounded 'h' of Chiusi for a theta. For Pope Fabio Chigi, see also Chapter 14 by van Kampen in this volume (pp. 155–60).
- 13 Rowland 2004, 106–7.
- 14 For Annius of Viterbo, see Stephens 2013; Stephens 1989; Stephens 2004; Grafton 1990.
- 15 Holland 1960.
- 16 Valentini and Zucchetti 1946, vol. III, 77–8: 'Postquam filii Noë aedificaverunt confusionis turrem, Noë cum filiis suis ratem ingressus, ut Hescodius scribit, venit Ytaliam, et non longe ab eo loco ubi nunc Roma est, civitatem nominis sui construxit, in qua et laboris et vitae terminum dedit. Ianus vero filius, una cum Iano, filio Iapheth, nepote suo, et Camese indigena, civitatem Ianiculum construens, regnum accepit.'
- 17 Godfrey of Viterbo 1853, col. 1019:
Catalogus regum Italicorum
Italus, primus rex Italiae, regnavit annis quadraginta et uno
Janus, rex Italiae, regnavit annis viginti septem
Saturnus, rex Italiae, regnavit annis triginta quattuor
Picus, rex Italiae, regnavit annis triginta et uno
Faunus, rex in Laurento, id est in Sabinia provincia, regnavit annis viginti novem.
- 18 Annius, *Commentaries*, cited, for the reader's convenience, from the paginated Paris edition of 1512, *Antiquitatum variorum volumina XVII*, Paris, 10 verso:
Hetruria, ETRVRIA, ut Graecae originis, teste Servio, scribitur cum .th. aspirato Hetruria: est nomen compositum ab heteros quod est alter: & oros quod est finis & limes. Hinc Hetruria quasi Heteroria: id est altero fine limitata: [. . .] Si ergo aspirate scribatur Hetruria & hetrusci: significat totam provinciam & populos eius. Ut vero est Etruscae originis: scribitur sine aspiratione Etruria.
- 19 Fubini 2003a and 2003b; Waswo 1996.
- 20 Mattiangeli 1981; Cieri Via 1991; Curran 1998–9; Curran 2007, 107–31; La Malfa 2009, 123–5; Freedman 2014–15, 226–9.
- 21 Rowland 2016, 443.
- 22 Freiberg 2014; Rowland 2006; Rowland 2008.
- 23 Whitford 2009, 43–76.
- 24 This later history features in Stephens 1989.
- 25 For Annius and topography, see Rowland 2013; Rowland 2016.
- 26 Inghirami, *Antiquitatum Etruscarum Fragmenta*, 12.
- 27 Allacci, 1640, 27.
- 28 Rowland 2004, 76. Characteristically, then, Francesco de' Medici signs the founding statutes for the Order of St Stephen, the knightly order connected with the Tuscan navy, as 'Franciscus Med. Magnus Dux Hetruriae Magnus Magister', *Statuti, e constitutioni dell'Ordine dei Cavalieri di Santo Stefano*, Florence: Nella Stamperia de' Giunti, 1575, 212.
- 29 Allacci 1640, 28–9.
- 30 Rowland 2004, 136–50.
- 31 Lynch 1601. For information about the author, see Massai 2004.
- 32 Lynch 1601, F recto.
- 33 Dickinson 1655.
- 34 Dickinson, *Diatriba de Noae in Italianam adventu, ejusque nominibus ethnicis, Appendix in quo multa, quae in Delph. Phoenic. Cap. 9 pag. 73 breviter admodum perstricta sunt, fusius et dilucidius enarrantur*, appendix to Dickinson 1655, 29–30.
- 35 Dickinson, *Diatriba de Noae in Italianam adventu*, in Dickinson 1655, 40.
- 36 Grotius 1610.
- 37 Magnus 1555; Rudbeck 1679.
- 38 See Norton 2003; see also the introduction to Smolinski 2010.
- 39 Silverman 1985; introduction in Smolinski 2010.
- 40 Starkey 1949; Norton 2003; Demos 2004. Original documents of the Salem trials are available at the Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Research Project (<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/home.html>, accessed 11 July 16).
- 41 Mather 1693. Cited from the annotated edition by R. Smolinski in Smolinski 2010, 37.

- 42 Mather 1693, 31.
 43 Smolinski 2010, 19.
 44 Smolinski 2010, 686.
 45 Smolinski 2010, 677.
 46 Smolinski 2010, 678.
 47 Smolinski 2010, 693.
 48 Joseph Smith, *The Book of Moses* (<https://www.lds.org/scriptures/pgp/moses/8?lang=eng>, accessed 10 July 2016).

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Chapter 12

Becoming Augustus or Porsenna?

The Ambiguities of Ferdinando de' Medici's Garden at Rome

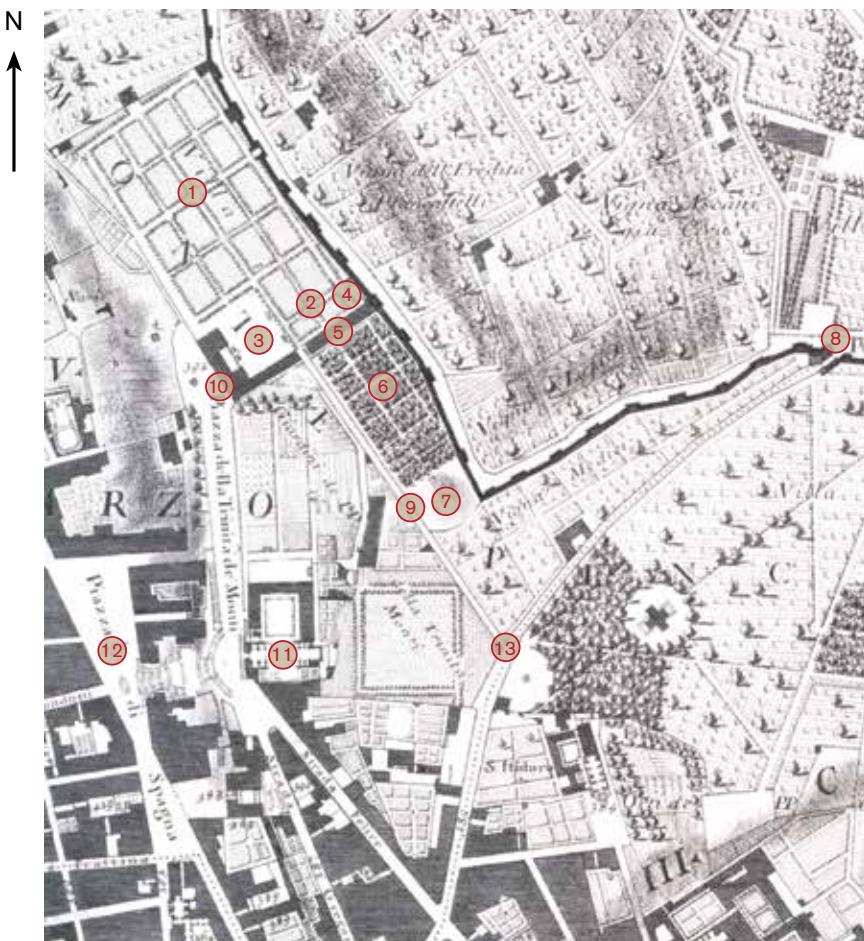
Vincent Jolivet

Abstract

For centuries, Etruscan features in the garden of Ferdinando de' Medici on the Pincian Hill in Rome remained curiously unobserved. Recently (1981–2005), archaeological excavations have shown that on a deeply ideological level they were a fundamental part of its conception. The intended programme was probably centred on the legendary figure of Lars Porsenna, king of Chiusi, glorified at the Medicean court during the reign of Cosimo I for his supposed conquest of Rome after the eviction of Tarquinius Superbus in c. 509 BC. The previous destruction of two *mirabilia*, huge ancient Roman temples, allowed Ferdinando to create a high terrace dominated by an artificial hill resembling an Etruscan tumulus. It was erected in front of the Mausoleum of Augustus, which lay below it in the Campus Martius, as if presenting a challenge to it, but it also suggested a logical dynastic succession, from the ruined Roman monument to the brand new Etruscan one. As the new Porsenna, the young cardinal proudly re-stated his Tuscan origins, asserting his full legitimacy to occupy the Throne of St Peter.

After the premature deaths of his two older brothers, the destiny of the last but one of the nine children of Cosimo I and Eleanor of Toledo, Ferdinando de' Medici, born in 1549, was sealed. Benefiting from the favour of Pope Pius IV, he was elevated to the purple in 1562,¹ renewing a tradition that had considerably favoured his family's advancement under the two earlier Medici popes, Leo X and Clement VII, who had occupied the papal throne almost without interruption between 1513 and 1534. In the early 1570s the young cardinal asked the Florentine architect Bartolomeo Ammanati to refurbish the palace of the Campus Martius, which had passed to the Medici in 1562 but was by now too small a residence to accommodate the family's needs or ambitions.² In 1574, the death of another Tuscan cardinal, Giovanni Ricci di Montepulciano, who was very close to Cosimo's family and was himself once a serious candidate for the papal throne, allowed him to acquire in 1576 the vast domain Ricci had possessed on the western slopes of the Pincian Hill (**Figs 144–5**). Ferdinando busied himself with its transformation until his accession to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in 1587. More than the palace itself, whose massive structure had been defined by the architects of Cardinal Ricci, it was the gardens of the villa, partially open to the public, that were called upon to illustrate the new *persona* of the young cardinal for the Roman people.³

Before Ferdinando's purchase of the estate, Cardinal Ricci had already undertaken the transformation of what had once been the site of an important villa, that of Marcello Crescenzi – another unfortunate pretender to the papal throne – who had become cardinal in 1542. However, that villa had never made much impact on the topography of the hill, which retained the shape fixed by the great terraces of the 1st century AD.⁴ Allowing for the dangers inherent in their interpretation, the bird's eye views of Mario Cartaro in 1576 and Étienne Dupérac of 1577 (**Fig. 146**)⁵ show that major works had already been carried out by Ricci on the whole of the northern part of the garden, lowering the ground level to the west and raising it between four and five



- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Jardin des Carrés | 6. Bosco | 11. Trinità dei Monti |
| 2. Parterre | 7. Monticellus | 12. Piazza di Spagna |
| 3. Piazzale | 8. Porta Pinciana | 13. Via di Porta Pinciana |
| 4. Colossal statue of goddess Roma | 9. Viale Lungo | |
| 5. Bosco terrace | 10. Villa Medici | |

Figure 144 Map of the western Pincian hill showing the key sites referred to in the text based on Nolli's plan of Rome (1746) and updated by Kate Morton, British Museum

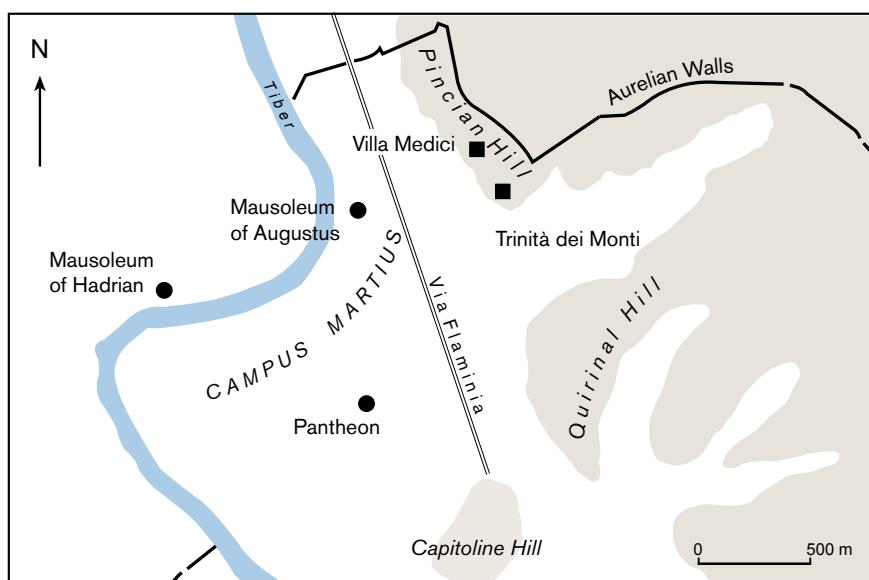


Figure 145 Map of the northern part of Rome showing some of the key sites referred to in the text (drawn by Kate Morton, British Museum)

metres to the east while using the Aurelian wall to retain it.⁶ All of the space thus levelled, covering around two hectares (120 x 70m), seems to have been organised by Ricci into those green squares that we know today, in a simplified form. In front of the villa, the *piazzale*, already dominated by a fountain, fits neatly into the same geometry, occupying the southwestern square. It was lengthened towards the east by Ferdinando as far as the *viale lungo* that divides the estate in

two for the whole of its length. In the space between the *viale* and the Aurelian wall a garden was created known as the *parterre*. But it is in the southern part of the garden, where Ferdinando had acquired new land, that his transformations seem the most considerable: the *silva* of Cardinal Ricci, still dominated to the south by an imposing ancient rotunda, visible throughout the city and joined to the north with a considerable hexaconvex of similar dimensions (**Fig. 147**).⁷



Figure 146 Étienne Dupérac, 1577, isometric view from the east, showing the garden of Cardinal Giovanni Ricci before the transformation carried out by Ferdinando de' Medici from 1576 onwards (drawn by Kate Morton, British Museum, after *Villa Médicis* 1, 37, fig. 14)

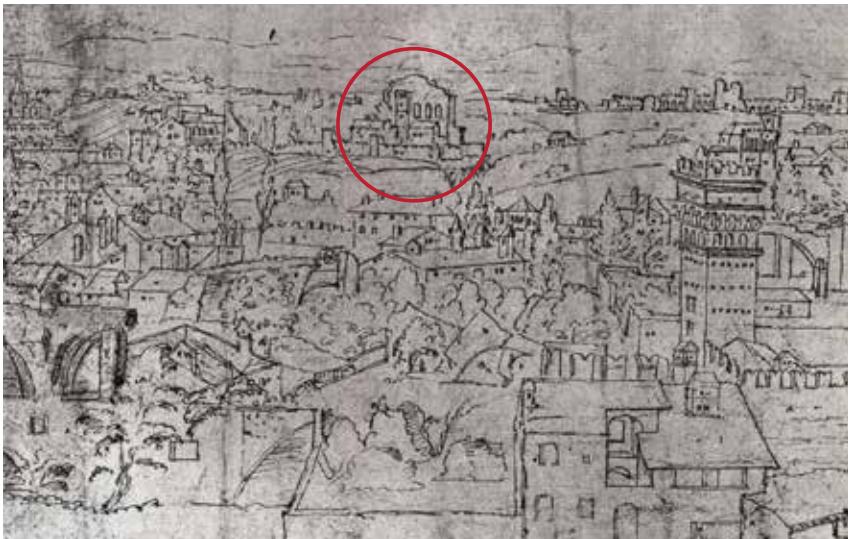


Figure 147 Antonio van den Wyngaerde, panoramic view from the baths of Constantine, c. 1540: the vestiges of the rotunda can be seen at the centre of the drawing (*Villa Médicis* 1, fig. 2)



Figure 148 Giovanni Battista Falda, 1676, isometric view from the west, showing the garden of Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici. It is very close to that drawn by Matteo Greuter in 1618 (*Villa Médicis* 1, fig. 22)

was buried beneath a terrace 5m deep and known as the *Bosco*. It covered almost a hectare (40–60 x 180m) and entailed the transport of some 45,000 cubic metres of rubble. At its southern extremity was erected a *monticellus*,⁸ 46m in diameter and 12m high.

Conceived as a unitary project, the main block of the villa and its garden each served a role in their patron's design, the first for its architectural luxury, its frescoes, its furniture and its collection of sculptures deployed throughout, and particularly in its south wing;⁹ the second (Fig. 148),



Figure 149 In contrast to the antiquities exhibited in the façade of the villa, the reliefs from the *Ara Pacis* were sealed in, isolated from each other by niches in the retaining wall of the *Bosco* (Hochmann 1999, 149)

through the choices made in its design and by the different markers that allowed the visitors, depending on their level of erudition, to grasp the personality of their patron and understand his power. In the heart of this garden, however, everything seems to indicate the presence and the fusion of two distinct and opposed references: one to the Emperor Augustus, the principal tutelary deity of men of power from the Renaissance to the Fascist period, while the other, to Lars Porsenna, evoked the Etruscan origins claimed by the Medici.

Ferdinando's father Cosimo, elevated to the dignity of Grand Duke in 1569, had already taken Augustus for a model, involving his presence by having a portrait of him nearby at his marriage to Eleanor of Toledo in 1539, and had continued to cite him throughout his reign.¹⁰ For an aspirant to the throne of St Peter, the first emperor of Rome had the additional advantage of being assimilated to the pope, while the senators were compared to cardinals.¹¹ This was doubtless the reason for the fictitious invention of a senator named Pincius, presumed to have given his name to the eponymous hill, even before the installation of Cardinal Crescenzi there.¹²

In the garden of the Pincian Hill the most obvious reference to the finest Roman achievements in art history, even if apparently not yet attributed to the Augustan period, is the series of reliefs from the *Ara Pacis*,¹³ discovered in 1569 and acquired by Cosimo I through the mediation of cardinal Ricci,¹⁴ of which four were inserted into the terrace wall of the *Bosco* (Fig. 149).¹⁵ Each relief is carefully positioned on its section of the wall, isolated between two niches, in contrast to the clutter of antiquities on the eastern façade of the villa. They are the most precious pieces in Ferdinando's collection, both for their enormous value and for their ideological content. At the southeast corner of the *parterre*, the colossal seated statue of the goddess Roma reinforced the connection between the iconographic programme and Roman history.¹⁶ But the monumental works carried out for the creation of the *Bosco*, together with the erection of the *monticellus*, mentioned for the first time in a document of 4 February 1580, show a more direct and personal relationship between the cardinal and the figure of Augustus:¹⁷ its place at the southern end of the artificial terrace, directly in front of the mausoleum of the first emperor, the ruins of which rise over the Campus Martius below, made it possible for him to restore the axial relationship between the mausoleum and the top of the Pincian Hill that dated to the beginning of the empire, probably conceived by the rich Gaulish senator from Vienne, Valerius Asiaticus.¹⁸ The connection between the

two monuments is also suggested by three other clues, of which the first two are found in a document dated before 1590:¹⁹ the name *mausoleo* was given to the artificial hill; the presence of an inscription in the pavilion on top of it, which established a parallel between Camillo Agrippa, the hydraulic engineer of the Cardinals Ricci and Medici, and Marcus Agrippa, suggesting a relationship between the patron of these works and Augustus;²⁰ finally, the planting of cypresses on the slopes of the hill. Attested from 1602, they echo directly those found on the images reconstructing the mausoleum of Augustus in the Renaissance (Fig. 150).²¹

In parallel with these Augustan associations, Federico's garden on the Pincian Hill presents a series of allusions to the Etruscan past of Tuscany, which had been illuminated by the Florentine historian Giovanni Villani from the beginning of the 14th century, particularly through the

Figure 150 Étienne Dupérac, 1575, restoration drawing of the mausoleum of Augustus: the three storeys of the monument are planted with cypresses (Riccomini 1996, 61)

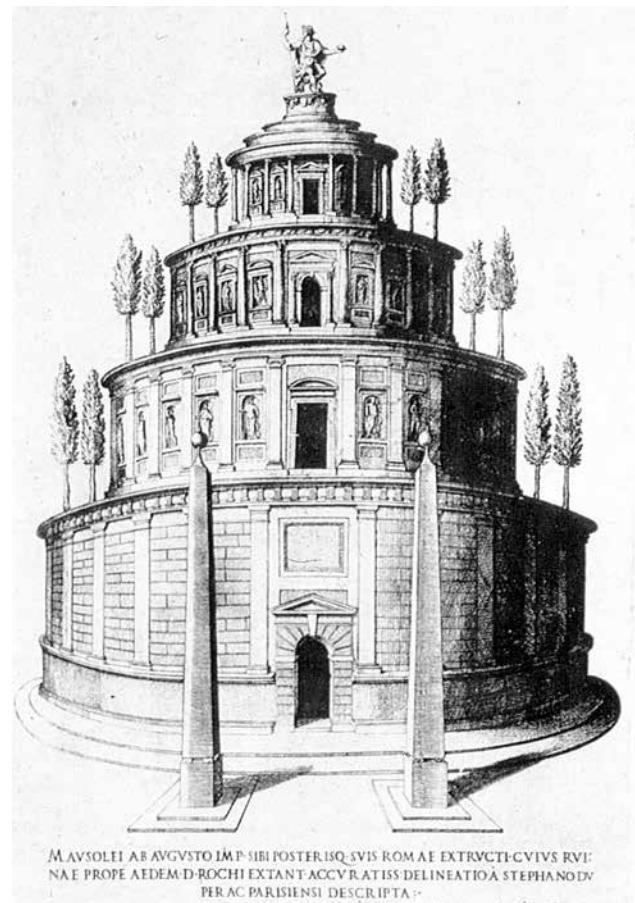




Figure 151 In 1589 the composition conceived by Jacopo Ligozzi for the marriage of Ferdinando to Christine of Lorraine underlines the continuity of the Etruscan monarchy of Porsenna with the Grand Duchy of Tuscany (Cipriani 1980, facing p. 182)

figure of Porsenna.²² While Cosimo I, as we have seen, invited Augustus to his wedding, the cycle of paintings conceived by Jacopo Ligozzi for that of Ferdinando to Christine of Lorraine in 1589 gave pride of place to the king of Chiusi, Porsenna, to whom was attributed the conquest of Rome after the forced departure of Tarquinius Superbus.²³ At the entry to the Palazzo Vecchio one could then observe Cosimo crowning Tuscany with the diadem of Porsenna (**Fig. 151**).²⁴

First, and apparently paradoxically, there is the obelisk erected over a fountain on the central axis of the *Bosco*, and thus linked to this sector of the garden despite its position lower down. It was the first obelisk erected in Rome in the Renaissance – a feat evidently facilitated by its modest size.²⁵

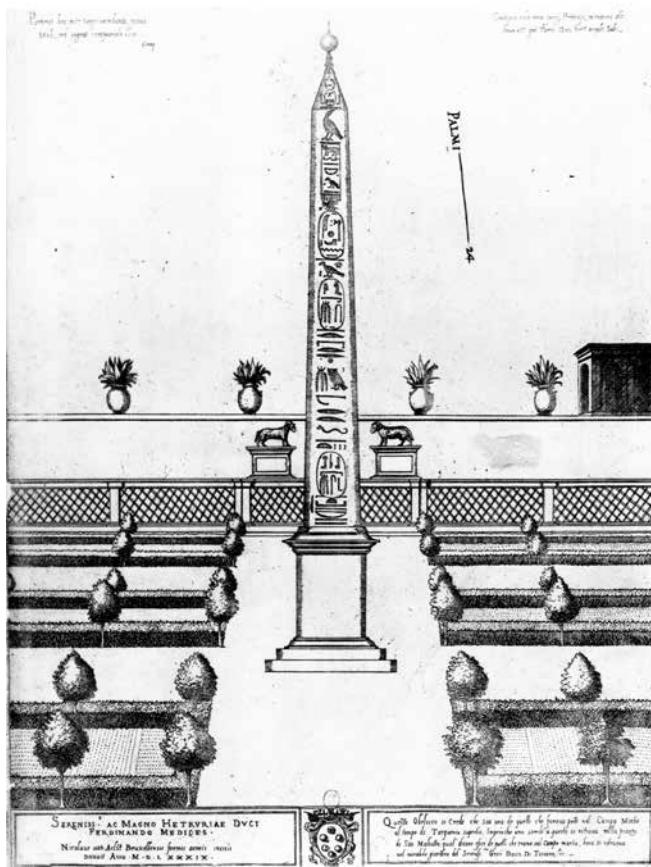


Figure 152 Before the interventions of Sixtus V, the first obelisk mounted in Rome, on the axis of the bedchamber of Ferdinando de' Medici, was attributed during the Renaissance to Tarquinius Superbus, as is shown on the caption of the drawing by Nicolaus Van Aelst, of 1589: 'Questo Obelisco si crede che sia uno di quelli che furono posti nel Campo Marzio al tempo di Tarquinio superbo' (Villa Médicis 1, fig. 238)

Even though the Egyptian origin of obelisks was hardly unknown in this period, this particular one, found in the Campus Martius in the area of the temple of Isis, had been attributed to Tarquinius Superbus (**Fig. 152**). This was not



Figure 153 Excavations carried out between 1997 and 2005 in the area of the *monte* of Ferdinando show that it was built over the ruins of two centrally planned Roman structures, a rotunda to the west and a hexaconch to the east (Broise and Jolivet 2009, fig. 35)

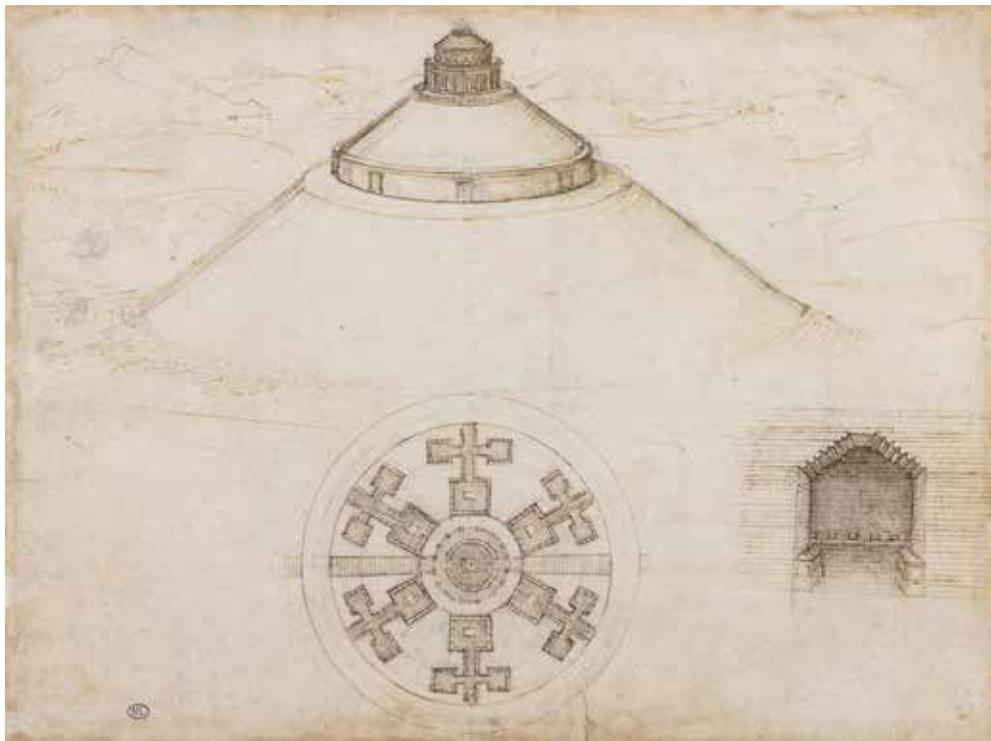


Figure 154 The drawing attributed to Leonardo da Vinci shows a fusion between an Archaic tumulus on the exterior and a Hellenistic tomb on the interior. The detail of its rooms may derive from an Etruscan monument found in 1508 at Castellina in Chianti. Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 2386-recto. Photo © Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Laurent Chastel

because its hieroglyphs were considered Etruscan, but because from the end of the 15th century the writings of Annius of Viterbo had proposed that the Etruscans, and thus the Tuscans, originated from a son of Osiris, who he claimed to be the Libyan Hercules.²⁶ Well before the history of Rome, the obelisk would have anchored Ferdinando's legitimacy in a mythical past that went back to the most ancient origins of humanity, in which the Etruscan civilisation was only a later link.²⁷ Connected topographically to the *Bosco* and on axis with the bedroom of Ferdinando, the obelisk introduced the sector of the garden to which he had devoted the major part of his efforts and his expenditure, the *Bosco* itself.

The 5m rise in the level of the land, not to mention the 12m of the *monticellus*, at this point the highest position in Rome and the same height as the dome of St Peter's Basilica opposite, was motivated not just by a desire to offer the visitor an open view over the Campus Martius.²⁸ In creating

this new vantage point Ferdinando achieved two aims at once: first, he got rid of the two adjoining ancient ruins, the rotunda on the west and the hexaconch on the east, both of which had been carefully preserved by Cardinal Ricci, and possibly even refurbished by him (Fig. 153).²⁹ Second, he managed thereby to dominate the ruins of Augustus' mausoleum. Now, if that structure was the model to which the *monticellus* probably referred, it also harks back to much older Etruscan tumuli which featured a mound on top of the tomb, a type of which Leonardo da Vinci had created at the beginning of the 16th century a drawing (now in Paris),³⁰ combining tomb features of two different periods (Fig. 154): on the exterior an Archaic tumulus, as could still be seen in the Etruscan countryside, and on the interior a Hellenistic tomb.³¹ In each case, the mound is surmounted, in accordance with modern taste, by a circular pavilion. The recent discovery of the rooms built into the upper part of the *monticellus*, just where they are found on the Paris drawing,

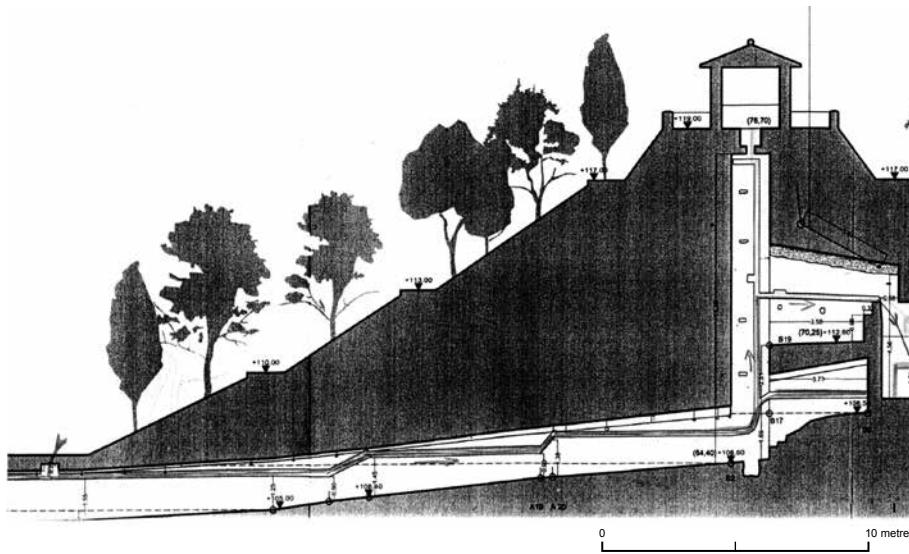


Figure 155 Partial east-west section of Ferdinando's *monte*. The water channels leading to the fountain on the summit of the hill were set in an underground service corridor before rising through the well at its centre. Other rooms at the top of the hill are probably dated to the Renaissance as well (Villa Medici, 27)

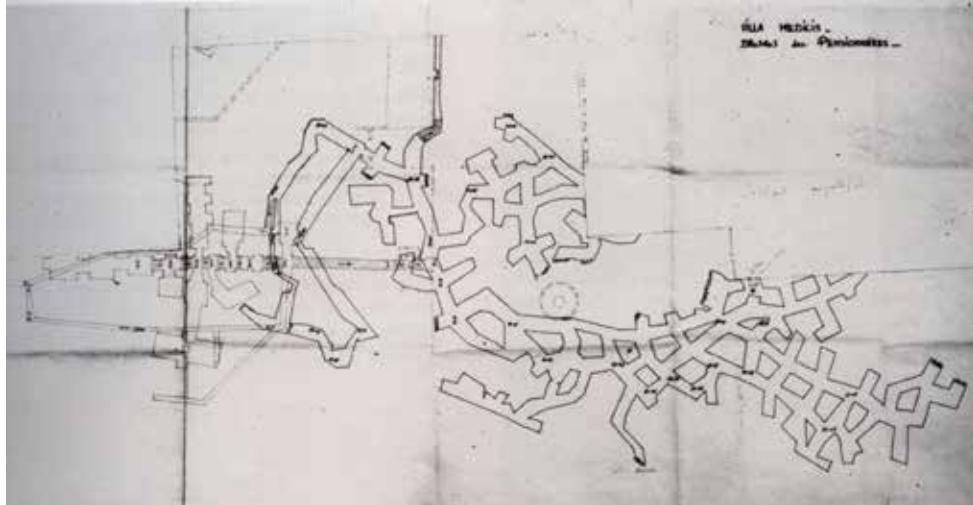


Figure 156 Under the middle of the garden of the Villa Medici lies a vast network of underground galleries, of which only a very few are shown on this plan of the 'dromos des Pensionnaires' made in 1975. They are accessible from different levels of the stairway that leads to the wine cellar of Ferdinando, on the left of the drawing. At the centre and on the right are shown quarries for pozzolana and tufo. Stretching over a large part of the hill, this network of tunnels may have suggested comparison with Pliny's description of the tomb of Porsenna at Chiusi (*Villa Médicis 1*, fig. 47)

which have a door with sloping sides like those of the Etruscan tombs, leads one to wonder if the drawing had also inspired the arrangement of the interior of the artificial hill (Fig. 155).³² It is not impossible that the whole structure had been conceived by Ferdinando as a family mausoleum, which would have dominated the Campus Martius, just like the mausoleum of the Domitii, the final resting place of Nero, in Suetonius' description (*Nero* 50).

Ferdinando's terrace for the *Bosco* also covers the area of the hill in which a dense network of underground galleries, linked to the water supply of the hill, is found. These are preserved on various levels: cisterns radiating from a common well from the end of the Republic, a network of straight hydraulic channels of the Augustan period and a branch of an aqueduct from the beginning of the empire. Below these features, the lower levels of the hill are crossed by a network of galleries which served for the extraction of tufo and pozzolana, certainly exploited during the Renaissance and probably also in antiquity (Fig. 156). The cisterns and the quarries are both part of an immense complex that covers a large part of the hill, cut during the Renaissance by the stair which gave access to Ferdinando de' Medici's wine cellar – which might in fact have been already excavated by Cardinal Ricci.³³ The subsoil of the villa, as Ferdinando found it, thus appears as a vast labyrinth, cut on at least four levels, which can be reached through the rectangular staircase that leads to the wine cellar under the *Bosco*. It is hardly likely that the Renaissance *letterati* did not immediately associate this complex with the *labyrinthus inextricabilis* that characterised the tomb of Porsenna, king of Chiusi – a city that passed to the duchy of Tuscany in 1556. Pliny has left us a description of that tomb as grandiose as it is improbable, based on a lost text of Varro (*NH* 36.91–3). His text was taken up and commented on by Leon Battista Alberti and by Filarete, and gave rise to numerous reconstructions as fantastical as they were unlikely.³⁴ Once within the monument it was said that the danger of getting lost in its galleries was so great that it was impossible to enter without a spool of thread, which would allow an adventurer to retrace his steps.³⁵ It is thus probable that the complex on the *Bosco* terrace refers to the tomb of this Etruscan king, with its mausoleum and its subterranean network of rooms, rather than to the dynasty of the

Tarquins, masters of Rome for a century. It was clearly impossible to reproduce directly the tomb of Porsenna in Ferdinando's garden – on the one hand because Pliny describes a monument that defies all the laws of architecture, antique or modern, and could never be built, while on the other hand Pliny's description is given as an example of *hybris*. In fact, he is denouncing the *vanitas* of the king of Chiusi, and concludes his description on a sombre note (36.93): 'insane folly as it was to have courted fame by spending for the benefit of one and to have exhausted furthermore the resources of a kingdom'.³⁶ In this sense it would have been counterproductive on the part of the Tuscan cardinal to cite the model more closely, but the elements united in this part of his garden – obelisk, tumulus and underground galleries – were sufficient to give an Etruscan aura to this, the most innovative part of his domain.³⁷

Between Augustus and Porsenna it is thus the latter that seems most clearly underlined in Ferdinando's garden, in line with the scientific and political interest in the Etruscans in the middle of the 16th century.³⁸ Conversely, the colossal statue of the goddess Rome, far from being properly exploited, was installed in a corner of the southeast part of the *parterre*, while the reliefs from the *Ara Pacis*, built into the retaining wall of the terrace as well as on the façade of the villa, and indeed all of the antiquities of the estate, can be interpreted as war *spolia*.³⁹ Indeed, everything seems to proclaim the superiority of Porsenna. Excavation has shown that the *monticellus*, shaped like an Etruscan tomb, had covered with its bulk two large Roman monuments which had been preserved up to the level of the dome before being razed to consolidate the slopes of the new mound, while it dominates from its lofty summit the miserable ruins of the mausoleum of Augustus in the Campus Martius. In the same way the inscription of the pavilion on the mound⁴⁰ suggests the superiority of Camillo Agrippa over Marcus Agrippa, and thus of Ferdinando over Augustus.

The end of the Renaissance seems thus to have suffered from a dilemma in some ways analogous to that of the Fascist period: should the Etruscans, with the Tarquins masters of Rome in the 6th century BC, be considered an integral part of Roman history, and thus appropriate for a political interpretation, or should they be rejected, as they

were by Greek and Latin authors, as a decadent people, given to voluptuousness and *tryphé*?⁴¹ Should they represent the republican ideal or the values of the monarchy? Destiny, perhaps at his request, went to the aid of Ferdinando for the resolution of these questions: in October 1587 the sudden death of his elder brother, the Grand Duke Francesco I, called him back to Florence, where he remained until his own death in 1609. He never became a new Augustus in Rome, but in turn, as the astrologer had predicted at his birth, took up the diadem and the sceptre that had fallen from the hands of Porsenna.⁴²

Notes

- 1 At that time, purple and not red was worn by cardinals as well as the pope. For example: 'Il [le cardinal de Retz] garde son équipage en faveur de sa pourpre ; je suis persuadée avec joie que sa vie n'est point finie' (Mme de Sévigné, 1679).
- 2 Butters 1991, 170.
- 3 As shown in particular by the *lex hortorum* placed at the principal entrance to the garden, on the modern via Porta Pinciana: *Villa Médicis* 1, 258–9; Hochmann 1999, 34; Broise and Jolivet 2009, 45.
- 4 On the initiative of the Gaulish senator Valerius Asiaticus : see Broise and Jolivet 1996, and 1999.
- 5 *Villa Médicis* 1, 36–8. On the difficulties in the interpretation of the plans of this sector of the villa see Broise and Jolivet 2001.
- 6 As the excavations carried out in this part of the garden between 1994 and 1995 have shown (Broise and Jolivet 2009, 355–6).
- 7 The *silva* is mentioned in the contract of sale of the villa Ricci to Ferdinando de' Medici, 9 January 1576: Butters 1991, 357; *Villa Médicis* 5, 181, doc. 422 (see Fig. 146). The rotunda appears clearly a little before the middle of the 16th century, preserved up to the springing of its cupola, in a view by Antonio van den Wyngaerde (*Villa Médicis* 1, 30–1). A drawing by Giovanni Sallustio Peruzzi dated from 1565 or 1566 shows that the monument was 'rovinato dal cardinal Riccio per accomodar la sua vigna' (*Villa Medici* 2, 42). Nevertheless, the plan of the octagonal structure represented does not correspond to either of the two buildings uncovered by the excavation under the *monticellus* (see the following note for this term), and appears to represent an ancient building from *Baiae*: moreover, this note belongs to an undated addition to the caption of the drawing, written by an anonymous hand, so the information it gives must be taken with a pinch of salt (Campbell and Nesselrath 1991). The two monuments were discovered respectively in 1996 and 2004: Broise and Jolivet 2009, 356–7.
- 8 *Monticellus* is the first term used, in 1580, to designate the artificial hill: one finds later that of *monte* (from 1588), *mausoleo* (before 1590) and *Parnaso* (from 1608).
- 9 See particularly *Villa Médicis* 3; Hochmann 1999, and *Villa Médicis* 4.
- 10 Cipriani 1980, 75–8: in the Porta a Prato a 'grande frontespizio' was erected showing Augustus seated, crowned with laurel and holding a sceptre in his right hand, underscored with the inscription *Augustus Caesar divum genus aurea condit saecula*, borrowed from Virgil. In 1513, after the election of Leo X to the papal throne, emphasis was placed in particular on the Etruscan heritage of Rome, and on the links between the city and Porsenna and Tarquinius Superbus (Cipriani 1980, 48–52; Callard 2011).
- 11 Clarke 2003, 6–7.
- 12 The first, and up to now the only, indication of the name of the Roman family of Pincius is found on an inscription, *CIL VI*, 1754, published for the first time by Johannes Matalius Metellus towards the middle of the 16th century, the discovery of which seems later than the invention of a 'senator Pincius' during the Renaissance. The transformation of Pomponio Leto's Pincius *a quodam cive (De Romanae urbis vetustate, 1515)* into a *Pincio senatore* seems due to Andrea Fulvio (*Antiquitates Urbis*, 1527): Keller 1991, 65. The excavations carried out in the *piazzale* of the villa Medici in 1999 showed that the modern occupation of this sector of the hill was not earlier than the beginning of the 16th century.
- 13 Even if the provenance of the reliefs from the *Ara Pacis* was only recognised by von Duhn in 1879, they could easily have been associated with Augustus during the Renaissance as they were originally considered part of the *arco del Portogallo*, which was also called *arcus triumphalis Octaviani* in many guides to the city of Rome datable from the 14th and 15th centuries and known in the 16th century: the *Mirabilia*, the *Aureae Urbis*, *Le Miracole di Roma* and the *De Mirabilibus Urbis Romae* – arguably because they were found in an area very closely associated with Augustus, due to the presence of the *mausoleum* (see e.g. Valentini and Zucchini 1946, 19, 81, 185, 131). If this assumption is correct, their provenance from an Augustan triumphal arch would obviously deeply reinforce the meaning of their re-use as *spolia* in the villa of the Tuscan cardinal. For the discovery of the marbles, see Guillaume-Coirier 2016.
- 14 In that same year the cardinal, then aged 70, announced that he was 'spogliato di tutta l'anticaria', on the advice of his spiritual counsellor: 'mi ha consigliato che io non armi la mia casa di simili cose, parendole che non convengono a cardinali della mia età' (*Villa Médicis* 5, doc. 266, p. 114).
- 15 The construction of the retaining wall seems to date to 1576; the composition includes two scenes of sacrifice as well: Hochmann 1999, 148–9 (view of the retaining wall of the terrace of the *Bosco*, drawn by Deodato Ray in 1778); *Villa Médicis* 4, 261–6.
- 16 Aut. Div. 1689, 90–2, n. 73 (view by Domenico Buti, 1602), which suggests a link to another important monument in this sector of the garden (see *infra*): 'la statue semble placée en oblique et regarde l'obélisque'; *Villa Médicis* 4, n. 370, 256–7.
- 17 *Villa Médicis* 5, doc. 550, pp. 233–4. The relationship between the terrace and the monte is well shown on the view of the terrace of the *Bosco* drawn by Charles Norry in 1817: *Villa Médicis* 1, 202–3, n. 212.
- 18 Riccomini 1996. For Valerius Asiaticus see above n. 4.
- 19 Lanciani 1883.
- 20 *Virginiam aquam duxit tantum Ma(vortis) in agrum/ Agrippa et opus dicitur egregium/ At collis in Pincii verticem Camillus Agrippa/ Extulit, ingenium cernitur eximium* (Butters 1991, 380). The reference is to the aqueduct, the *Aqua Virgo*.
- 21 *Villa Médicis* 1, 90–2, n. 73 (drawing of Domenico Buti). Strabo (5.3.8) reports only that the mausoleum was 'thickly covered with ever-green trees to the very summit' (translation H. L. Jones, Loeb edition, London, 1987), but the presence of cypresses is clear from the restoration drawings of Pirro Ligorio in 1561 (Frutaz 1962, pls 30, 677) and of Étienne Dupérac in 1575 (Riccomini 1996, 61). The latter is contemporary with the first operations of Ferdinando on the Pincio.
- 22 Cipriani 1980, 1–2.
- 23 According to Livy (2.9), 'never before had such fear seized the senate, so powerful was Clusium, in those days, and so great Porsenna's fame' (translation B.O. Foster, Loeb edition, London, 1919). On Porsenna see Ridley 2017.
- 24 Cipriani 1980, 178–86. The caption leaves no doubt as to the interpretation of the scene: *diadema Porsenae regis negligientia amissum/ Cosmi Medicis virtute ac vigilantia recuperatum*.
- 25 *Villa Médicis* 4, n. 384, pp. 270–1.
- 26 In the course of the 15th century, Flavio Biondo and Marsilio Ficino were considered the pioneers in the study of hieroglyphics (Cipriani 1993, 13–15). For the origin of the Etruscans see Cipriani 1993, 34–6.
- 27 On Dupérac's drawing of 1577, which seems to represent the site at the time of Cardinal Ricci, small obelisks are installed above the main entrance to the estate, on the modern via di Porta Pinciana (*Villa Médicis* 1, 36–8).
- 28 A more detailed study of this particular sector of the garden can be found in Jolivet 2016.
- 29 As the 2004–5 excavations have shown: Broise and Jolivet 2009, 357–8.
- 30 Leonardo was in Florence this year (Martelli 1977, 61).
- 31 It is not generally agreed that the drawing was modelled on the hypogeum of Castellina in Chianti, discovered in January 1508 (not 1507, as previously thought, according to recent research). See Chapter 10 by de Grummond in this volume.
- 32 The study of the rooms brought to light in the northern part of the *monticellus* remains to be done: summary notes in *Villa Médicis* and Lombardi 2011. We do not know if there were symmetrical rooms

- on the west side of the monument, taking into account the absence of all archaeological control during the major construction work on the hillside carried out in 2004.
- 33 In favour of this hypothesis should be noted the fact that the wine cellar already existed in 1577, and contained hundreds of vats of wine, little more than a year and a half after the acquisition of the villa by Ferdinando, as a letter he wrote to his friend Giovanfrancesco Leone shows: Butters 1991, 356–7. Furthermore, excavation brought to light an icehouse which probably dates back to Ricci next to the entrance to the cellar; that of the Medici is found in the centre of the squares (Broise and Jolivet 2009, 355).
- 34 Cipriani 1980, 23. Pliny describes the monument in a section consecrated to labyrinths (*N. H.* 36, 84–93).
- 35 *Mutatis mutandis*, in the second half of the 20th century the *pensionnaires* of the French Academy in Rome, who happily spent time exploring the subsoil of the villa Medici, then known as the ‘dromos des pensionnaires’ (*Villa Médicis* 1, 76–7, n. 47, in 1975), had installed coloured strings in the subterranean galleries so as not to get lost (see Fig. 156).
- 36 Translation D.E. Eichholz, Loeb edition, London, 1962.
- 37 Different, or simply complementary readings are naturally possible, notably that the hill could be presented as Olympus with a labyrinth surrounding it, as it appears on a fresco of Lucas Cornelisz (?) painted for the ducal palace at Mantua around 1530 (Broise and Jolivet 2009, fig. 211).
- 38 ‘Les années 1550 représentent à ce titre un moment de convergence entre l’exploration savante et archéologique du passé étrusque et le mythe politique que les Médicis cherchaient à incarner’ (Callard 2011, 4).
- 39 For the Renaissance, see most recently Koortbojian 2011.
- 40 See above, n. 20.
- 41 Jolivet 2011, 20–1.
- 42 Butters 1991, 195.
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Chapter 13

Piranesi's *Carceri* and Eighteenth-century Reflection in Venice on the Etruscans' Contribution to Architecture

Lola Kantor-Kazovsky

Abstract

In 1761 Piranesi published his polemical treatise *Della magnificenza ed Architettura de' Romani*, in which he argued that the art and architecture of ancient Rome derived its sound and powerful principles from the Etruscans, rather than from the Greeks. In the same year Piranesi reworked his *Prisons* series of prints (*Carceri d'Invenzione*) due not to the success of the first edition of 1749, but rather because it supported the thesis of his book with a vision of architecture that adhered to the 'Etruscan' principles. In this vision, Piranesi followed in particular the scientific approach to architectural construction of the architect Tommaso Temanza, with whom he collaborated in Venice in 1745, in which preference was given to arches over straight architraves built in stone (the latter which he thought to be characteristic of Greek architecture). This chapter therefore attempts to clarify the meaning of the architectural language of the *Carceri*, and demonstrates Piranesi's emphasis on the Etruscans as the indigenous source of Roman architecture and culture. It also seeks to identify the imaginative character of the Prisons through Piranesi's contact with the intellectual milieu to which Temanza belonged. The epistemological issues that first originated in Descartes' writings – particularly the crucial role of imagination in perception, resulting in the virtual impossibility of discriminating between reality and dreams and the perception of prints as the obvious example of how imagination works – were all topics of discussion in Venice at the time of Piranesi's stay there, in the period preceding the production of the first edition of Prisons, and they will be shown to have been of possible influence on his work.

Introduction

Giovanni Batista Piranesi was an artist, archaeologist and writer whose whole *oeuvre* was devoted to ancient and modern Rome and to various aspects of classical Roman architecture. A series of 14 prints that represent imaginary prisons, the famous *Carceri* (1749), seems to be the only exception to this rule, although some classical motifs and allusions to classical Roman history can be found there as well, for the most part in the second edition of 1761. These prints still puzzle students of Piranesi with visual paradoxes and elusive meanings.¹ The artist employed an unusually luminous and vibrant technique for representing the gloomy subject of a prison; incarceration is not constituted here by outer walls, but rather by the structure of space itself – which is conceived as a labyrinth-like, infinite interior with no exit. The viewer can never be sure if he is outside or inside the prison, because the forms characteristic of interior spaces and exterior façades are intermixed. In nearly every plate the artist deceives his viewer with a strange ambiguity of architectural forms whose meanings and positions cannot be defined with certainty (Fig. 157).² In 1761 Piranesi reworked the plates, intensifying the dramatic effect of the new version through the addition of dark shades (Fig. 158). Whether or not it was Piranesi's intention to represent dreamlike visions or a delirium caused by opium – as Romantic writers thought – in conceiving these irrational spaces, his work obviously represents an architectural concept.³ In what follows, the argument continues that of scholars who believe that Piranesi's



Figure 157 G.B. Piranesi, *Carceri*, title plate, etching, 1st edition. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (www.metmuseum.org)

Figure 158 G.B. Piranesi, *Carceri*, plate XVI, 2nd edition. Princeton University Art Museum, Gift of Frank Jewett Mather Jr. © Princeton University Art Museum



approach in this series was related in some way to his interests as a scholar of ancient Rome. Moreover, it shall become clear that Piranesi's interest in the role of the Etruscans as the teachers of the Romans in the matters of culture and art was already specifically an issue when Piranesi first conceived the series. He wrote extensively on this point later, in his treatise *Della magnificenza ed Architettura de'Romani* (1761) opposing those French antiquarians who tried to prove that the Romans borrowed everything from the Greeks and that the arts had no indigenous source in Italy. Among various sources, Piranesi quoted *De Etruria regali* by Thomas Dempster (1723–4) along with publications by the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in order to prove that the grandeur of Rome rose from the foundations set by the culture of the ancient Etruscans. However imprecise the contemporary concept of Etruscan culture and the Etruscan, as well as Greek, influence on the Romans was for Piranesi, the emphasis on the indigenous 'Etruscan' roots of Roman culture served as a weapon against the rising Philhellenism which he opposed in this so-called 'Graeco-Roman controversy'. It was in 1761, precisely the year in which he entered into the debate, that the second edition of *Carceri*, more emphatic and explicit in nature, was published.⁴

Tuscan architecture and Roman character

Every analysis of Piranesi's intentions inevitably starts from the clues he left the viewer in the second edition of *Carceri*.

This second version includes two entirely new plates (pls II and V of the second edition) and the introduction of a significant additional detail to the last print in the series (pl. XVI of the second edition (**Fig. 158**)). In particular, Piranesi's reworked version of this print attempted to evoke more associations with ancient Rome, as seen from the introduction of classical forms and quotations from Latin historians inscribed on a column and on a pier in the right part of the composition. On the basis of these inscriptions, which refer to the building of the first prison, the Tullianum in Rome, and to the cases of Horatius and Tullia, Maurizio Calvesi tried to locate the *Carceri* firmly within the period of the kings of Rome and claimed that all the prints in the series portrayed the Tullianum.⁵ However, the association with the Tullianum, and thus with the precise epoch of the origin of law in ancient Rome which Piranesi discussed at the same time in his *Della magnificenza*, is neither compelling nor consistent through the series: William MacDonald has shown that a number of other Roman structures of various later periods also served as visual sources for the *Carceri*.⁶ Andrew Robison reformulated the problem more broadly when he stated: 'Piranesi's reworked *Carceri* recall – in the fashion of magnificently composed structures which he believed always true to the Roman spirit – the solemn and severe architecture of the very early Romans, which corresponds to their awesome laws, strict punishment and severe virtue'.⁷

Robison thus interpreted the *Carceri* with more sophistication, reading them as an architectural rather than a pictorial narrative on the 'very early Romans' who lived before and during the rule of the Etruscan kings. However, the problem with both Robison's and Calvesi's interpretations is that the architecture of the *Carceri*, with all the classical associations it evokes, cannot actually be defined as entirely and definitely classical. It includes Gothic arches (plate XIV) and fortified towers (plate VII), as well as references to Renaissance architecture. For instance, plate III, which depicts a grilled window surrounded by a rusticated frame with steps on both sides, is reminiscent of Raphael's Vatican fresco *The Liberation of Saint Peter* (1513).⁸ Other elements that also refer unmistakably to 16th-century architecture are the rusticated portals in which the keystone fills the gable, as well as arches with quoins *a ventaglio*, reminiscent of the style of mannerist architects Giulio Romano and Bartolomeo Ammannati (plates X, XII, XIII).⁹ In addition there are a number of arches with especially large spans that evidently refer to the Rialto bridge (plates I, XI *et al.*; **Figs 157, 159**). A more acute problem is that all this discussion has been specifically based on the reworked *Carceri*, thus leaving open the question of the prints' original significance.

A closer look at the inscriptions and other details added to plate XVI in the 1761 edition (**Fig. 158**) will be helpful for understanding the nature of the relationship between the original and the reworked versions. A quotation from Livy, 'ad terrorem crescentis audaciae' ('to terrify (in the face of growing audacity'), which refers to the creation of the Tullianum by Ancus Marcius (1.33.8), appears on a column above the tomb, while the tomb itself bears the sarcastic epitaph 'impietati et malis artibus' ('to impiety and bad



Figure 159 G.B. Piranesi, *Carceri*, plate XI, etching, 1st edition. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (www.metmuseum.org)

culture'). Gavuzzo-Stewart has convincingly proposed that Piranesi symbolically 'buried' his personal enemies, Lord Charlemont and John Parker, in this imaginary prison-tomb because they treated him unjustly in the conflict that arose over the dedication of his earlier work, *Le Antichità Romane*, to Charlemont.¹⁰ A third inscription on a pier to the right of the tomb, 'infame scelus... / ri infelici suspe...' ('infamous wickedness/ hang from a barren...') is obscure, but at least the second part of it refers to Livy's account of Horatius' trial for the murder of his sister.¹¹ The bas-relief underneath depicts people wearing contemporary dress, one of whom extends his arm in a rhetorical gesture. Gavuzzo-Stewart writes that this figure represents Piranesi himself as he addresses the audience in the manner of Horatius' father, who invoked the Roman procedure of 'provocatio ad populum' ('appeal to the people') and called on the Roman people to serve as judge in his son's case.¹² In this print Piranesi calls on the public, as he had done a few years before, when he published a special brochure that contained his letters to Charlemont and Parker.¹³ Notably, in the plate he speaks of recent events but wants his case to be judged according to the Roman standard of justice that originated at the time of the kings.

Piranesi gave this early period a central place in his view of Roman history, believing it to represent the true source of Roman originality and magnificence (the latter being defined classically as the boldness of rulers in conceiving and executing major enterprises for the public good). Piranesi described the building of the Circus Maximus, the substructures of the Capitol and the sewers as an accomplishment of which only the Roman people, guided by its rulers, some of them Etruscan, had been capable. He claimed that the character of the Roman people was reflected in its severe justice, as well as in its severe architectural style – one that respected structural and functional needs at the expense of decoration, whereas the Greeks strived for elegance and decoration while ignoring structural logic.¹⁴ According to him the Romans enriched the building culture they had inherited from the Etruscans and improved it with the application of Greek inventions only later, when they conquered Greece. According to Piranesi 'the Tuscan manner [Etruscan architecture] was not displaced after the



Figure 160 Sebastiano Serlio, 'Rustic arch', first published in *Regole generali di architettura*, 1537. © Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem

conquest',¹⁵ but merged with the foreign (Greek) manner that infected Roman architecture with the 'vice' of effeminacy and excessive aestheticism. As he wrote, to follow the Greek fashion was a capricious, rather than reasonable step: 'the search for utility was not the motivation of the Romans [in substituting Greek architecture for the Tuscan manner], because in Tuscan architecture utility was not lacking; it was clearly the exterior ornaments of Greek architecture that attracted the Romans'.¹⁶

Piranesi's polemical comparison between the ancient Italian, or 'Tuscan', and Greek architecture is evident from the way in which he reworked the interior of the prison in plate XVI. Two columns stand in the centre – the Doric and the 'Palestinian' – with a capital composed of palm leaves. These two orders are the ones that Piranesi believed to have been in use prior to the formation of the Greek canon, thus allegedly proving that the Greeks had not invented architectural orders.¹⁷ Yet Piranesi's ideas are expressed even more strikingly by the position of these columns in the print: they are not connected to any construction and do not support anything. Such a concept illustrates Piranesi's claim that columns first appeared without any connection to the post-and-lintel structure. He argued that they had constituted freestanding piers in the Jerusalem Temple, with tops of complex floral decoration (the prototype of the capital) that were not intended to bear any weight; it was only once the Greeks borrowed columns from the Temple that they were made to support architraves, with heavy weight placed upon the delicate floral decorations. In Piranesi's interpretation



Figure 161 Antonio da Ponte and Zamaria dei Piombi, Palazzo dei Prigionieri, Venice, detail of the side façade. Photo: author

such a construction must be considered illogical, and its evident self-contradiction represented but one facet of the general structural imperfection of Greek post-and-lintel architecture.¹⁸ Piranesi describes arches as an alternative means of construction to the Greek building system. He chooses aqueducts as his prime example of architectural beauty, rather than temples. He further describes curvilinear architecture (which is the dominant type of construction throughout the *Carceri*) as stronger and sounder than architecture based on columns and as capable of spanning greater spaces as post-and-lintel structures.¹⁹ In plate XVI Piranesi states this clearly: the columns in the print bear no weight, as he believed appropriate, while it is the arch that serves the structural function.

The design of Piranesi's arches in the plate XVI also presents a visual hint, since to the informed eye they have a 'Tuscan' flavour. They are mostly of the *opera rustica* type, as Sebastiano Serlio so christened quoins arches employed together with a bossed wall surface in his architectural treatise, the first to formulate the canon of the five orders in print (Fig. 160). He applied the same definition to columns and piers with uneven bossed shafts (of the type that one sees on the left of Piranesi's plate XVI where it supports a wooden and not a heavy stone architrave). Significantly, Serlio discussed *opera rustica* in his treatise specifically in the section concerning the Tuscan order, stating that it 'suits and is fitting to Tuscan work rather than to any other'.²⁰ As I argue elsewhere, he perceived the technique as originating in times of archaic rusticity (hence the name that he invented for the purpose) and traceable in the earliest Forum structures that had been built before the elaborate Hellenistic orders were accepted into Roman architecture.²¹ Serlio thus introduced *opera rustica* ('rustic work', known as 'rustication' in English) into the canon as an element pertaining specifically to the presumably indigenous 'Tuscan' order (that was synonymous with 'Etruscan').²² Moreover, his formulation of new rules of architectural decorum stated that one appropriate use for Tuscan/Rustic work, which he defined as 'the solidest and less ornate' consisted precisely in the construction of prisons.²³ After him this rule would be followed, in particular in Venice, as demonstrated by the construction of the 16th-century building of the prison (Fig. 161).

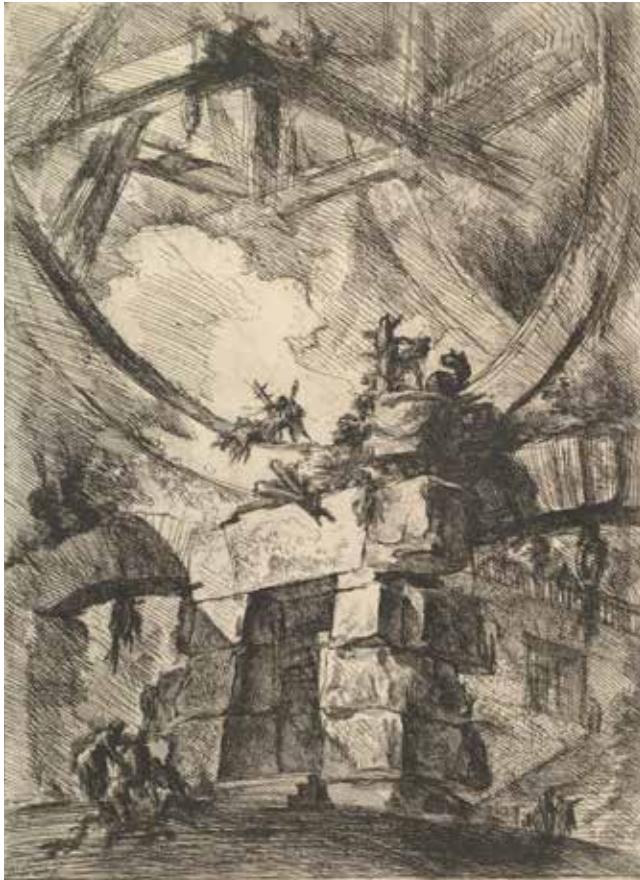


Figure 162 G.B. Piranesi, *Carceri*, plate IX, etching, 1st edition. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (www.metmuseum.org)

Rustication in its various classical or Renaissance forms, together with quoin arches, constitutes the basic element of Piranesi's architectural language throughout the series, thus making it possible to explain why he seemingly anchored the reworked *Carceri* with historical references to the most ancient times, whilst also utilising forms created in the long span from ancient to modern. The answer emerges if we understand Piranesi's intended meaning to be a presentation of the Tuscan/Rustic architecture of arches as an alternative to the Greek orders. The type of construction purportedly invented by the ancient 'Tuscans' was therefore embodied by Tuscan/Rustic architecture (quoin arches on massive walls), rather than in the authentic remains of ancient Tuscan buildings themselves – in the same manner that the concepts of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders refer to universal, persistent forms that supposedly originated in specific ancient buildings (according to the foundation stories in Vitruvius). Therefore, Serlio had illustrated his discourse on rustication with classical ruins, as well as with the forms of rustication taken from the architecture of Raphael and Giulio Romano and with his own new designs. In the *Carceri*, too, Tuscan/Rustic architecture is present in all its historical transformations: beginning with archaic forms similar to the presumably Etruscan gates of Cortona (plate IX; cf. Figs 162–3), traversing mannerist inventions reminiscent of Giulio Romano and Ammannati, and arriving finally at Piranesi's own grotesque architectural fantasies.

Evidently Piranesi had already formulated his architectural narrative on Tuscan/Rustic architecture in the first edition of the *Carceri*. His additions in the second



Figure 163 Porta Bifora gate in 4th-century bc Etruscan wall of Cortona. Photo: author

edition seek to re-enact this narrative in a more didactic way. If this is correct, then Piranesi's interest in early Roman architecture developing under Etruscan influence predated the writing of *Della magnificenza* and the Graeco-Roman controversy itself. In fact, his participation in the controversy had older roots. Discussion of the native manner of construction, characteristic of the ancient population of Italy, as different from Greek forms, had already taken place in Venice and the Veneto during Piranesi's youth. It was begun by Scipione Maffei, a writer and antiquarian from Verona, one of the pioneers of the 18th-century 'Etruscheria'.²⁴ While reflecting on the Etruscan contribution to architecture, Maffei wrote that the Etruscans had preceded the Greeks and that their architectural inventions, such as amphitheatres (which at the time were accepted as an Etruscan style of building), far surpassed Greek achievements. However, Maffei's investigation of the most conspicuous 'Tuscan' building, the amphitheatre of Verona, resulted in a polemical dispute. Maffei thought that he was the first to discover the architrave among the remains of the upper storey of the amphitheatre and he identified it as a prime model for the architrave of the Tuscan order.²⁵ His position was opposed by the Venetian architect Matteo Lucchesi, who also believed that Etruscan architecture was more ancient and venerable than that of the Greeks, in a book called *Reflections on the Pretended Finding of a Tuscan Architrave* (1730). Lucchesi happened to be Piranesi's uncle and first tutor in architecture.²⁶ There is considerable basis for believing that the *Reflections* were not entirely his own work; many of the ideas discussed in the book actually belonged to Lucchesi's friend and Venetian colleague Tommaso Temanza, who had not only expressed them earlier but also claimed to have taken part in writing the *Reflections*.²⁷ Temanza was closely connected with the family and with Piranesi and would eventually write the earliest biography of him.²⁸

The influence of Temanza on the *Carceri*

Temanza's inquiry into the architectural methods of the Etruscans has not yet been sufficiently explored by scholars, although it is extremely relevant for an analysis of the *Carceri*. While archaeological interest in the Etruscans had roots in



Figure 164 Rialto bridge, Antonio da Ponte, Venice, 1588–91. Photo: Vera Reider

medieval and Renaissance culture, in the genealogical pretensions of the Medici rulers and the foundation stories of the cities of Tuscany as they were re-written in the Renaissance.²⁹ Temanza's architectural interest in the topic involved modern scientific pursuits. He was not alone in his scientific interest in the masonry techniques of the ancient 'Tuscans': it figured as an important subject in the architectural debates held in Venice at the time. Such debates were characteristic of the city's intense intellectual life, in which the 'new science' played an important role. This centrality of the sciences owed much to the presence of Galileo's school in Padua (where both Temanza and Lucchesi carried out their studies) and to a certain freedom of thought that was acquainted with the ideas of Bacon, Galileo and Descartes and which attracted Muratori and Vico to Venice.³⁰ Given this intellectual atmosphere, reflections such as those of Temanza on the nature of architecture naturally tended to be deeper and more scientifically based than elsewhere. Considerations that started from Galileo's teaching on the resistance of beams inevitably led to a theoretical break with conventional Vitruvian approaches to architecture.³¹

In consequence, the very necessity of employing the architectural orders was called into question. The structural quality of Greek post-and-lintel construction was subjected to criticism in Venice already during Piranesi's childhood. In contrast to the Vitruvian tradition that saw perfection in architecture in terms of the Neo-Platonic theory of universal harmony embodied in the orders, Galileo's school placed its emphasis on architectural materials and their qualities. Carlo Lodoli, the most radical architectural thinker of the time, claimed that veneration of the Greek architectural orders had resulted from a poor knowledge of physics. He argued that the orders were based on the principle of representing wooden structure in stone – a flawed approach given that the structural qualities of different materials obviously varied, implying the necessity of varied types of construction.³² We have no documentary record of the young Piranesi's interest in Lodoli. However, we do have clear evidence of his connection to Temanza, who was also a follower of Galileo. Temanza formulated his own approach

in a number of works: in a pamphlet of 1729, written as a letter to Lucchesi; in the treatise *On Arches and Vaults* (1733), which for a long time remained in manuscript form and has not yet become well known even today; and in his work on the triumphal arch of Augustus and the bridge in Rimini (1741).³³ In all these writings Temanza anticipated Piranesi's position in the Graeco-Roman controversy with remarkable accuracy, as Piranesi himself acknowledged in his reference to him in *Della magnificenza*.³⁴ Their personal contact during Piranesi's stay in Venice in 1745–7 must have been of considerable relevance for the 'Tuscan' language of the *Carceri* as well.

By the end of his stay in Venice Piranesi shared Temanza's scientific interest in arches and vaults. Together they investigated a most conspicuous vault: the Rialto bridge (Fig. 164), which would soon feature in the *Carceri* as a recurrent motif. Built by Antonio da Ponte more than a century earlier, this bridge had been designed as a single multi-centred arch; in Piranesi's time it still aroused curiosity due to this audacious construction. From Temanza's letter to Piranesi after the latter's return to Rome, it follows that Piranesi must have made a detailed drawing of the bridge *in situ*. Temanza praised this drawing and wanted to publish it in his planned history of Venetian architecture. He provided Piranesi with a detailed account of the bridge's history and structure based on relevant documents.³⁵ These explained how the foundations had been built under water, which evidently stimulated Piranesi's interest as an archaeologist in the underwater foundations of Roman bridges.³⁶

The known collaboration between Temanza and Piranesi makes a close reading of Temanza's writings especially pertinent for understanding Piranesi's work. Temanza held the opinion that the *maniera rustica* of building in stone was Etruscan in origin, and that the Romans developed the Etruscan tradition and thereby invented the arch.³⁷ However, Temanza went beyond the conventional claim that the Tuscan/Rustic architecture of arches was both ancient and venerable. He combined this view with a scientific argument that this architecture represented the most advanced technique created in the ancient world and

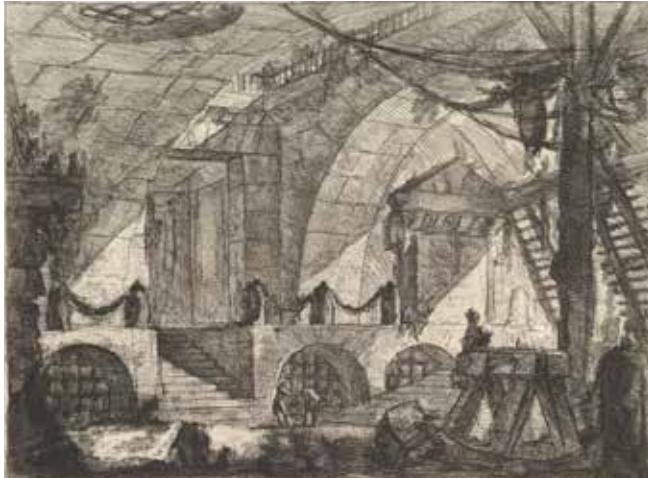


Figure 165 G.B. Piranesi, *Carceri*, plate XII, etching, 1st edition. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (www.metmuseum.org)

further developed in modern times. With his manuscript *On Arches and Vaults* Temanza entered into a field designated in early modern architectural literature as the discipline of ‘stereotomy’, or the geometry of stone-cutting. This discipline described the construction of complex stone vaults that depended on cutting relatively small stones into elaborate shapes.³⁸ Whereas Serlio based his patterns of Tuscan/Rustic architecture on the arch designs of classical Roman structures, stereotomy (of which his contemporary Philibert de l’Orme was one of the pioneers) was derived from the mastery of Gothic masons. Over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, stereotomy was developed mostly by French architects and mathematicians, and in Italy by Guarino Guarini, who may have learned of it during his time in France.³⁹

Temanza evidently knew and built on these precedents. Significantly, however, he developed his own approach rather than simply following the earlier literature in stereotomy. He explicitly denies that an analysis of arches can be exclusively geometrical, insisting on the key role of physics.⁴⁰ While stating this, he discusses the resistance of matter in atomistic terms, with an apparent awareness of the debate about the existence of void and the cohesion of particles.⁴¹ Temanza proceeds according to Galileo’s explanation of the impossibility of applying the post-and-lintel structure at a large scale, demonstrating the very problem that precipitated the Roman invention of the arch. Temanza further defines the arch as a stable composition of a number of stone quoins. He thus adopts a view that differs significantly from the accepted architectural discourse, according to which the arch was defined as a curvature, even claiming that an arch does not necessarily have to be curved at all. His explanation of the construction is based on an analysis of the equilibrium of forces holding the pieces together in a single configuration. In addition to this change of focus from the geometry to the physics of the arch, Temanza’s second innovation was to connect the advanced science of arches and vaults to classical Roman architecture again. His descriptions of Roman construction in the Verona amphitheatre and other structures in *opus quadratum* concentrate on the patterns of quoins used by the Romans and on Roman methods for lifting large blocks.

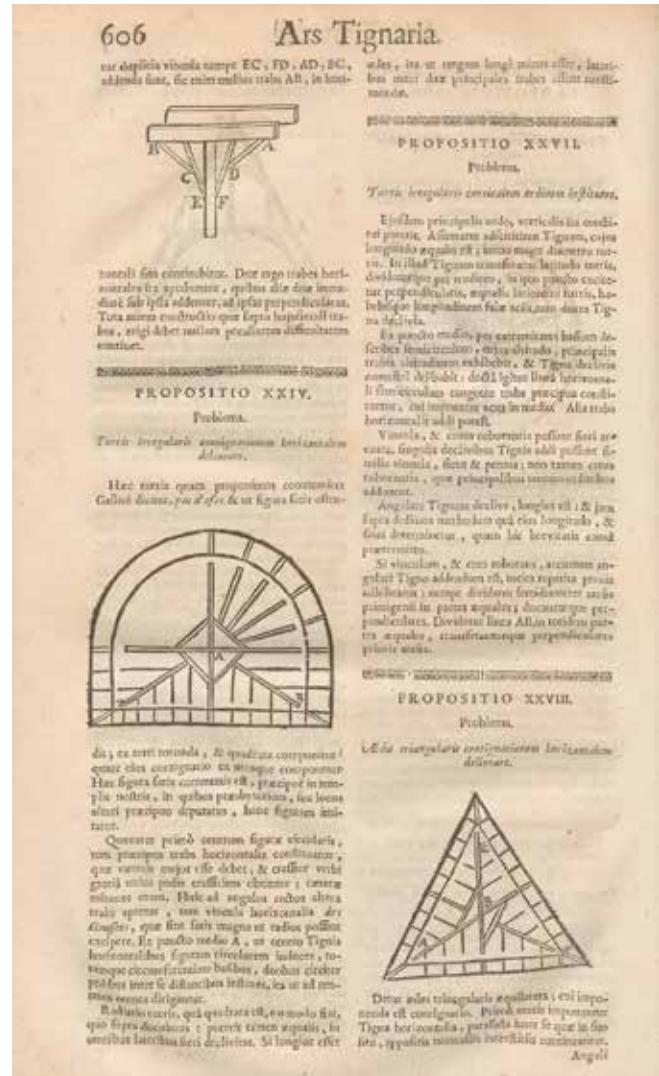


Figure 166 Milliet Dechales, page from *Ars tignaria*, vol. 2 of *Cursus seu Mundus mathematicus*, 2nd edition, 1690. ETH-Bibliothek Zürich. Digitised by e-rara

Due to his personal connection with Temanza, Piranesi could easily have been aware of these issues in stereotomy. Moreover, both of Temanza’s theoretical innovations are clearly reflected in the first *Carceri*, where the material physicality of structures figures as a highly prominent feature. While the spatial structure is often irrational, the arches that Piranesi positions as the central motif in most of the prints are always clear and convincing in their depictions of weight distributions and resultant structural stability. Along with stone and brick arches, Piranesi introduces a second architecture of wooden beams, stairs and ladders. The literature of stereotomy may well have induced this imagery. The architectural treatise by the French mathematician Milliet Dechales (1674) that formed a part of his course in mathematics, taught in Turin, was divided into two parts: *De lapidum sectione*, which, like Temanza’s book, treated ‘of arches and vaults’; and *Ars tignaria*, which dealt with structures made of wooden beams.⁴² The Gothic arches, ladders, spiral staircases, diagonal beam supports and even a saw-horse that appear in Piranesi’s *Carceri* are all reminiscent of the topics discussed in Dechales’ treatise – and, truth be told, even of the illustrations therein (**Figs 165–6**).

Temanza revisited the issue of arch construction in his book *Delle antichità di Rimini* (1741). This time he approached it not only from a scientific and archaeological point of view, but also from an aesthetic one. In his analysis of the ancient bridge of Augustus in Rimini, which consisted of five semi-circular arches spanning the river Marecchia, he created a precedent for laudatory descriptions of edifices in which the orders and decoration as such do not play any significant role. Temanza writes of the huge size and precise position of blocks and quoins, and of how they collectively form an absolutely even and truly polished surface. He praises the form of the quoins and the mastery with which they are connected to horizontal rows of stones. His description of the bridge was the germ out of which Piranesi would later develop his own praise of the technique in *Le antichità Romane*.

Temanza believed that the true and sound principles of architectural construction originated in Italy; to him through the lens of modern science, it represented the most perfect, vigorous and beautiful method of building to have been created in the classical world. For Piranesi, it therefore appeared capable of displacing the Vitruvian architecture of orders. This is precisely what Piranesi seems to have declared in the *Carceri*. Of course, this declaration comprises only one side of the multifaceted world of the prints; the other is represented by the fantastic character of this world and its strange spaces without clear limits, which seem to be both interior and exterior at the same time. This other side cannot be ignored, especially since in order to create this effect Piranesi altered his technique and consistently broke up the convincing architectural space of his early fantasies, creating a series of geometrical ambiguities that perplex the viewer and impede rational interpretation of space and of the artist's intentions (see Fig. 157).⁴³ I agree with the interpretation that this irrational character of the *Carceri* was also drawn from the artist's visit to Venice, where the genre of *capriccio* had gained wide popularity.⁴⁴ The following question therefore arises: if Piranesi's architectural narrative promoted a structural analysis that was grounded in the modern science of physics, why did he relate it in such a hallucinatory, dream-like form? The answer is that contemporary science, along with the new approach to the structure of matter, brought about a new epistemology that insisted on the role of the imagination as one of the basic cognitive forces.

In his manuscript Temanza mentioned only one epistemological issue, but an important one: the limitations imposed on the senses, among them the sense of vision, as a means of knowledge – which as he knew was an extension of the corpuscular theory of matter.⁴⁵ Modern science holding this view manifested inherent doubts about the trustworthiness of a simple naively empirical picture of the material world. Scientific pursuits therefore led to the idea that the world as we see it is a fiction of the brain and that perception has a complex relationship to reality. Perception itself came to be analysed as a process of interpretation of sensual data using imagination. The epistemological reflection of Descartes is especially explicit on the point. According to Descartes' argument in the *Optics*, the human sense of vision cannot perceive a given object directly or

exactly; rather, the brain uses the stimuli received by the nerves to construct a version of the object in fantasy. Geometrical perspective and various forms of illusion served him as proof that perception often cannot discriminate between similar stimuli, even if they arise from different causes. Consequently, to take this position to its logical extreme, true sensory perception can hardly be distinguished from a dream:

It is the soul that sees and not the eye; and it does not see directly, but only by means of the brain. That is why madmen and those who are asleep often see – or think they see – various objects which are nevertheless not before their eyes: namely, certain vapours disturb their brain and arrange those of its parts normally engaged in vision exactly as they would be [arranged] if these objects were [really] present.⁴⁶

In the same work Descartes chose to use engravings to illustrate that the soul perceives whatever fantasy suggests to it, rather than an objective reality: 'You can see this in the case of engravings: consisting simply of a little ink placed here and there on a piece of paper, they represent to us forests, towns, people and even battles and storms.'⁴⁷

In Venice in the first half of the 18th century the philosophical system of Descartes was especially popular and all this is of great relevance for understanding the *Carceri*. Whether or not Piranesi himself read the *Optics*, the alleged role played by mental images and true or false 'fantasies' in transmitting sensory perception to the soul was a familiar topic in the intellectual circles to which his friend Temanza belonged. A number of essays written or published in the 1730s–40s provide evidence of this fact and of the intersection of artistic and scientific discourses. In his *Trattato di fantasmi poetici* (1739) the Venetian writer, philosopher and mathematician Antonio Conti compared spectres, or phantasms that people believe to be real, to reflections in a concave mirror. Following the laws of geometry, the latter deceptively appear in front of the actual mirror surface.⁴⁸ For our purposes, the most relevant and interesting manifestation of this trend consists of works published shortly before and during Piranesi's trip to Venice that elaborated on the Cartesian so-called 'dream argument'. Tommaso Campailla in his treatise on dreams, trying to explain their persuasiveness, metaphorically describes the human mind as being locked in 'a prison' because it is locked up within its own subjectivity, which cannot be transgressed. According to Campailla, sensual experience is only relatively objective and can even persuade us of the reality of events that never took place in the exterior world (as happens in dreams). The paradox of human perception consists in the fact that:

the images transmitted to the mind by the external senses are the only means of knowing that outside its prison there exist other real bodies independently. Sometimes it happens that in a dream the mind receives impressions and ideas from some source other than the external senses. However, the mind does not know that these have been introduced indirectly and supposes that they arrived by the ordinary means of transmission from external sensors. It therefore cannot but trust them fully and believe that the objects whose images are seen and felt and enter into the common sense are indeed external to the body.⁴⁹

The paradox of the sensual persuasiveness of dreams was thus expressed here by means of a prison metaphor and as an unresolved ambiguity between interiority and/or exteriority. The ‘mind’ in Campailla’s discourse doesn’t know whether it perceives interior or exterior reality, and the viewer of Piranesi’s *Carceri* faces the same dilemma.

Lodovico Antonio Muratori quoted this passage in his treatise *Della forza della fantasia umana*, which was published in Venice in 1745 by Pasquali.⁵⁰ Temanza was closely associated with this publisher, whose press was a form of Venetian intellectual club, and Piranesi was present in Venice at the time of publication. We have thus arrived at a very particular historical and intellectual context that can explain with a high degree of probability the genesis of Piranesi’s most famous architectural fantasies. The contemporary intellectual culture had imbued the prison with a double connotation: firstly, as Tuscan/Rustic architecture embodying the severe character and justice of the Romans in its very forms; and secondly, as a metaphor for the Cartesian ‘dream paradox,’ or the statement that the experiences of dream and reality do not really differ. It is precisely these two elements that comprise the main features of Piranesi’s compositions in the *Carceri*.

Notes

- 1 The history of interpretations of the *Carceri* is extensive and cannot be reviewed here. The following represent the most important contributions: Vogt-Göknil 1958; Sekler 1962; Calvesi 1963; Calvesi 1983; MacDonald 1979; Robison 1986; Gavuzzo-Stewart 1999.
- 2 Vogt-Göknil 1958, 21, 30–6.
- 3 On Romantic interpretations see Keller 1966.
- 4 On the so-called ‘Graeco-Roman controversy’ and Piranesi’s objectives in defending the cause of the Romans, see Introduction by John Wilton Ely in Piranesi 2002.
- 5 Calvesi 1963, xii. The inscription referring to the building of the Tullianum was identified by Hermann Bauer in his review of Vogt-Göknil 1958 in Bauer 1959, 197. According to Livy (1.33), the Tullianum or prison on the north-eastern slope of the Capitoline Hill was built by Ancus Martius.
- 6 MacDonald 1979.
- 7 Robison 1986, 50.
- 8 Talvacchia 2007, ill. 68.
- 9 For the possible sources of these motifs in Italian mannerism, see Lotz 1995, figs 110–13, 264.
- 10 Gavuzzo-Stewart 1999, 106–32. According to this author, the inscription on the tomb is an ironic inversion of the Jesuit motto ‘Religioni et bonis artibus’: see Gavuzzo-Stewart 2016.
- 11 It is a fragment of Horatius’ father’s words, ‘arbore infelici suspende’ (‘hang him from a barren tree’), Livy, 1.26.11). Gavuzzo-Stewart 1999, 105, 126–7. Cf. Robison 1986, 49.
- 12 Gavuzzo-Stewart 1999, 127. Horatius, the only one of the three brothers to survive the battle with Curiatii, was met by his sister who had been engaged to marry one of the Curiatii. When he saw her crying, he killed her. The *duumviri* appointed by the king pronounced the death sentence. Horatius’s father addressed the people claiming that his daughter had been justifiably killed and begged the citizens not to take his last remaining child from him. Horatius was acquitted. Piranesi took his quotation from the father’s speech: ‘Go, lictor, bind the hands which but now, with sword and shield, brought imperial power to the Roman People! Go, veil the head of the liberator of this city! Bind him to a barren tree!’ (English translation Rev. Canon Roberts).
- 13 Piranesi 1757.
- 14 Piranesi 1761, clxxix, cxxix–cxlili.
- 15 Piranesi 1761, lxi.
- 16 Piranesi 1761, xciii.
- 17 On the Doric, see Piranesi 1761, lxvii, lxx. This order was said to have been known to the Egyptians and the Etruscans before the Greeks began to use it.
- 18 Piranesi 1761, cvii.
- 19 Piranesi 1761, cxvii.
- 20 Serlio 1619, 126v.
- 21 Serlio 1619, 136v. On the identification and dating of the Roman ‘rustic’ structures discussed by Serlio, as well as on the meaning of this element in Serlio’s theory of the five orders in general, see Kantor-Kazovsky 2011.
- 22 Tuscan order itself presents a complex problem: Etruscan architecture was a matter of a distant past already in Vitruvius’ times, so that as Ingrid D. Rowland has noted, his ‘tuscanicae dispositiones’ was a historical construct, or a ‘contemporary adaptation of an ancient type’: Vitruvius 1999, 229. On the Tuscan order in the classical times, on its use by the Etruscans and on its interpretation by Vitruvius, see also Boëthius *et al.* 1978, 50–1; Morolli 1985, 47–60. Serlio’s identification of rustication specifically with the Tuscan order was also a complex construct, first analysed in Ackerman 1983. Neither Vitruvius, nor 15th-century theoreticians of architecture, who saw rustication becoming fashionable, mostly in Florence, suggested a clear idea of it, so that its first conceptualisation, as well as that of its connection to the Tuscan order was Serlio’s. The very term *rustico* first appeared for this purpose in his treatise.
- 23 Serlio 1619, 126v.
- 24 See Cristofani 1978.
- 25 The lack of the classical model for each and every element of the Tuscan order was constantly discussed in Renaissance architectural treatises. See for instance, Barozzi da Vignola 1601, tav. 4.
- 26 For more on this polemic, see Kantor-Kazovsky 2006, 170–5.
- 27 Giovanni Bianchi, letter to Antonio Leprotti, 27 Aug. 1739. See Rimondino 1996, 40.
- 28 Temanza 1963, 50–1.
- 29 See for instance, Rubinstein 1942; Cipriani 1980; and Caporali 1981.
- 30 Ferrone 1995, 89–121.
- 31 Galilei 1914, 109–52.
- 32 For a discussion of Lodoli’s influence on Piranesi, see Rykwert 1981, 55.
- 33 Copies of Temanza’s *Degli archi e delle volte* (1811) are extremely rare because the publisher destroyed most of them. See Negri 1830, 45.
- 34 Piranesi 1761, cxvii–cxix.
- 35 Temanza, letter to G.B. Piranesi, 25 Nov. 1747. Biblioteca del Seminario Patriarcale, ms. 636.26, fol. 8r–9v. Partially quoted in Puppi 1983, 262.
- 36 Piranesi 1756–7, vol. 4, pls 10, 18, 19.
- 37 Temanza 1811, 26–36 and ‘Al Sig. Matteo Lucchesi, architetto Veneziano’, in Temanza 1811, 132. He was only partially right. In fact, arches had been used by the Greeks and, according to Boethius, the Roman and the Etruscan arches appeared simultaneously. See Boëthius *et al.* 1978, 123. Early Roman arches sometimes were reconstructions of earlier Etruscan structures, as in the case of the Ponte dell’Abbadia near Vulci.
- 38 See for instance, Derand 1643.
- 39 On the discipline of stereotomy, see Rykwert 1982; Pérez-Gómez 1983.
- 40 Temanza 1811, 85.
- 41 Temanza 1811, 18.
- 42 Milliet Dechales 1674, vol. 2. Milliet Dechales was highly esteemed by Guarini.
- 43 In the words of Robison, ‘The question “Why spatial ambiguities at all in the *Carceri*?” has as yet no convincing answer’. Robison 1986, 43.
- 44 Busch 1977.
- 45 Temanza 1811, 19.
- 46 Descartes 1998, 69–70.
- 47 Descartes 1998, 62.
- 48 Conti 1756, vol. 2, 126. This phenomenon of catoptrics was familiar to artists like Piranesi who dealt with architecture and perspective: Andrea Pozzo, the most famous of them, had actually painted such a mirror on the ceiling of Sant’Ignazio in Rome: Camerota 2010, 25.

- 49 ‘Come la mente umana ne’sogni e’ delusa a sentire, discorrere e giudicare pazzamente’, in Campailla 1738, 44.
- 50 Muratori 1745, 36–7.

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Chapter 14

Collecting Etruscan Antiquities in the Seventeenth Century: The Evidence and Legacy of the Chigi Collection in Formello

lefke van Kampen

Abstract

The subject of this chapter is the Museum of Curiosities of Cardinal Flavio Chigi (1631–93), the *Museo delle Curiosità naturali, peregrine e antiche*, originally housed in Formello (a town outside Rome) and whether Etruscan objects were included in this collection, in view of the fact that it originated with finds from the territory of ancient Veii and was the property of a family of Tuscan origin.¹ The collection has virtually no connection with the earlier assemblage of Agostino Chigi *Il Magnifico* (1466–1520), nor with the later Chigi Collection which contained the famous ‘Chigi vase’ discovered in 1882. Instead, Flavio Chigi created a museum of curiosities and antiquities comprising bronzes, glass, sculpture, Egyptian and Etruscan antiquities, in addition to natural and exotic curiosities. The museum is today lost but some of the objects can be identified. There is no proof that Flavio Chigi took particular pride in his Etruscan heritage, nor can we recognise any real interest in the Veientine roots of the territory in which he lived. However, some interesting suggestions can be made as to the identification of some of the Etruscan objects in his ownership, several of which can be traced to the British Museum.

The Chigi family (**Fig. 167**), today best known for its Roman branch, was a family of Sienese extraction that descended from the counts of Ardenghesca, who possessed castles in the Maremma region. The first prominent member was Mariano Chigi (1439–1504), a banker and ambassador for Siena to the papacy. He founded the Roman branch of the family, while the Sienese was represented by his brother, Benedetto. During the Renaissance Agostino Chigi (1465–1520) became the most prominent member of the family, acting as banker to Pope Julius II, who in return gave him the privilege of joining the Chigi coat of arms to those of the pope’s own family, the Della Rovere. Agostino Chigi, known as *Il Magnifico*, took an interest in antiquities, collecting mainly ancient sculptures. It is unlikely, however, that pieces from this collection were connected with the Chigi collection at Formello, given that in 1580 Agostino’s collection was in part bequeathed to the Farnese family, in part passed on to Ippolito II d’Este, and in part dispersed in France.² The continued importance of the family is measured by the elevation of Fabio Chigi to the papacy as Alexander VII (1655–67). His nephews also received prominent positions; another Agostino, son of the pope’s brother Augusto, was made *Reichsfürst* (prince of the Holy Roman Empire) by Leopold I, Holy Roman Emperor, in 1659 and two – Sigismondo Chigi and Flavio Chigi (1631–93; **Fig. 168**) – became cardinals. It was the latter cardinal-nephew Flavio who was one of the main art collectors of the family, and whose collection is the subject of this chapter.

During his cardinalship Flavio Chigi assembled a museum of curiosities and antiquities that included bronzes, gilded glassware, sculptures, Egyptian and Etruscan antiquities, not to mention natural phenomena and other curiosities classified as *peregrine* (foreign). The original museum has been lost,³ and so, too, are the painted illustrations of the museum’s curiosities for which we know Urbano Guidi paid ‘1,20 scudi given to the painter for 200

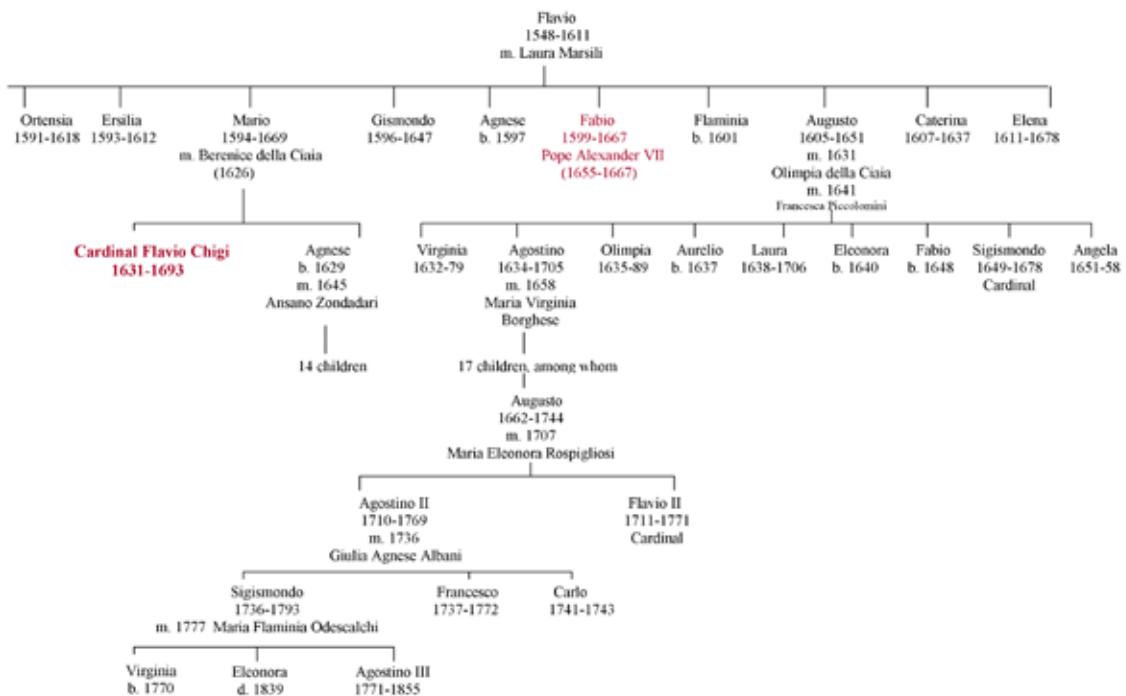


Figure 167 Chigi family tree (adapted from Cacciotti 2004)

pages illuminated by watercolours of various hues, each one palm long, to describe the curiosities of Formello'.⁴ However, using the documentary evidence supplied by descriptions of 837 objects listed in the inventory of 1698⁵ it has been possible to reconstruct the collection and identify some of its contents, which can now be found in the Capitoline Museums and the Luigi Pigorini National Museum of Prehistory and Ethnography in Rome, and other institutions, including the British Museum.

A description by Giovan Pietro Bellori in 1664 provides some details of the Formello museum.⁶ Under the heading

Figure 168 Cartoon of Flavio Chigi by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Gabinetto Nazionale Disegni e Stampe, Rome (after Angelini et al. 2000)



'Cardinale Flavio Chigi' he describes the 'Celebrated library of important authors, with numerous writings in all fields of letters & choice selection of the best impressions, in the palace at Santi Apostoli, decorated with paintings by chosen artists & ancient statues, and with a museum of naturalistic, foreign and ancient curiosities, in his castle in Formello'. Regarding the collection of Flavio's brother, Prince Agostino Chigi, Bellori writes of 'other precious statues, and paintings, which adorn the palace of his lordship, [and] preserved therein a study with ancient medals & medallions of great rarity' (Fig. 169).⁷ It seems that the library, as well as a collection of ancient statues (known from an inventory list to have been in Rome in 1666, later sold to Dresden in 1728),⁸ were housed in Flavio Chigi's apartment in Rome within the Santi Apostoli Palace⁹ – the primary residence of the cardinal-nephew from 1661 onwards¹⁰ – while the numismatic collection was housed at his brother's studio at Piazza Colonna (Fig. 170). Later both would be united in the palace at Piazza Colonna.¹¹ At a certain point the main part of the cabinet of curiosities was transferred from Formello to Rome, to the Casino in the garden at the Quattro Fontane, a location on the Viminal Hill, at least from 1683, when it is mentioned

Cardinale Flavio Chigi. Biblioteca celebre di ottimi autori in ogni studio di lettere numerosissima, & scelta delle mig'iori impressioni, nel palazzo a Santi Apostoli, con ornamenti di pitture di chiari Artefici, & di statue antiche, e col Museo delle curiosità naturali, peregrine, ed antiche nel suo castello di formello.
Principe D. Agostino Chigi. Con gli altri pregi di statue, e di pitture, che adornano il palazzo di questo Signore, conservati in esso, uno studio di medaglie, & medallioni antichi di gran rarità.

Figure 169 Description of the Chigi collections (after Anon. 1664)

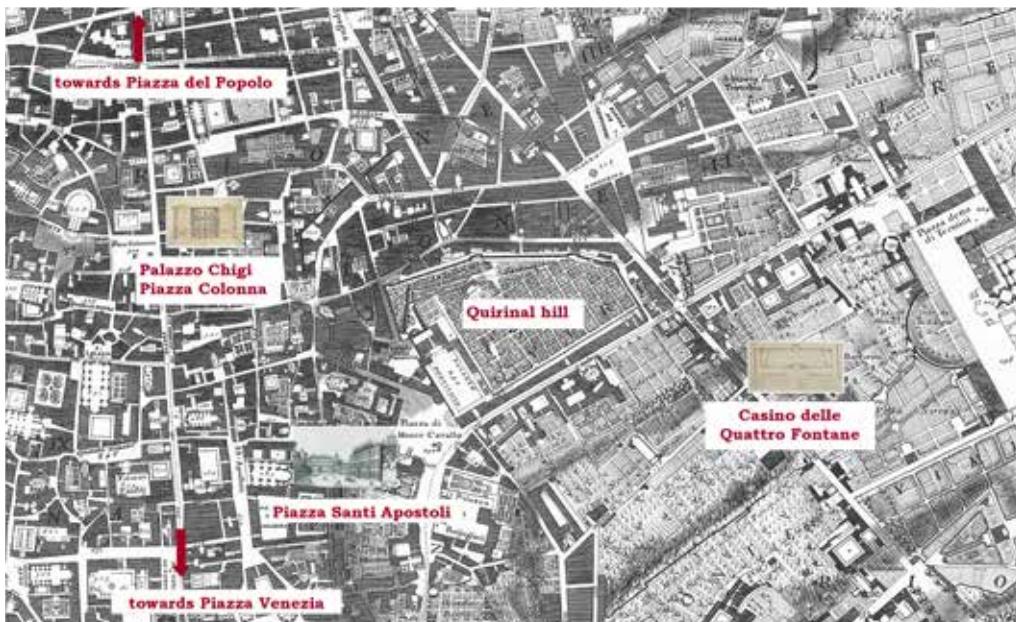


Figure 170 Possessions of the Chigi family during Flavio Chigi's time in Rome, adapted from the map of G.B. Nolli (1748)

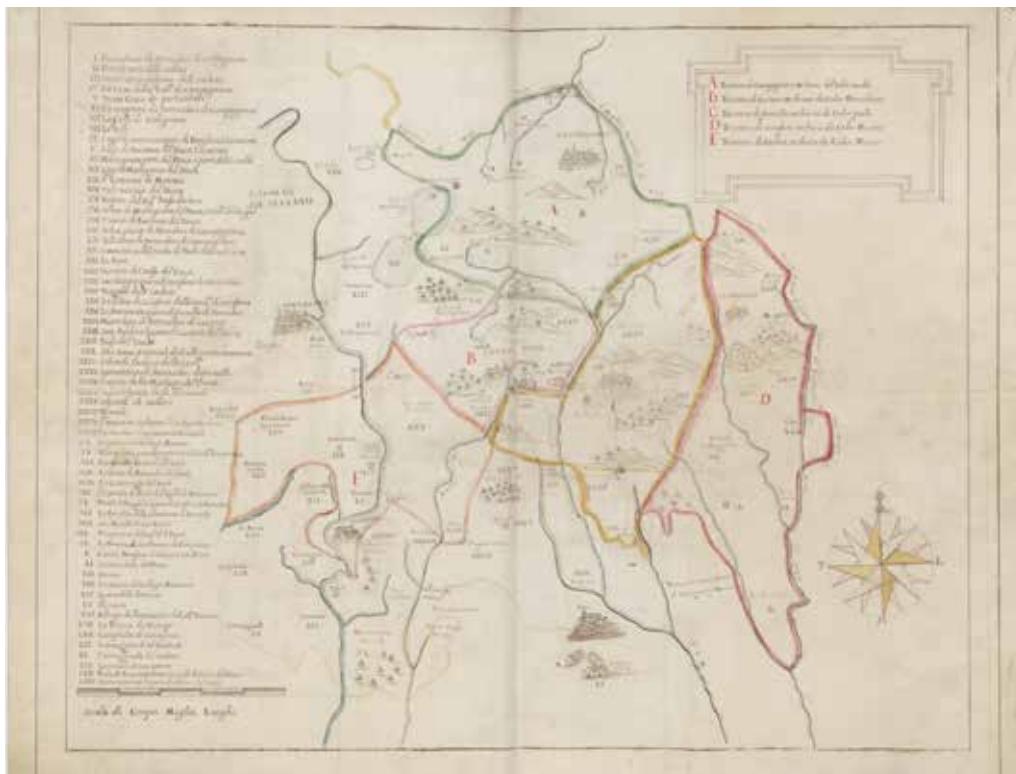


Figure 171 Possessions of the Chigi family north of Rome in Flavio Chigi's time, dated 1666. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chig.PVII 13, ff. 74v–75r

for the first time in a guide to Rome¹² as well as in an inventory dating to 1705.¹³

A complete inventory of the family's possessions, including the palaces in Rome (Santi Apostoli and Quattro Fontane), Formello (Palazzo Chigi and Villa Versaglia), Magliano Pecorareccio and Ariccia, had been drawn up earlier, in 1666 (Fig. 171).¹⁴ On that date, 10 December 1666, the museum of Formello is mentioned, comprising the *Camera del museo* (a type of anteroom) and an area referred to as *nel museo* (in the museum).¹⁵ A first analysis of the different categories¹⁶ shows how appropriate the description by Bellori was. The three categories are 29.2% natural history specimens,¹⁷ 51.4% *peregrine* curiosities and 19.4% antiquities. More than half were ethnographic objects, presenting a very different picture of the collection from that which emerges from a

transcription of the inventory carried out in 1880 by Fiorelli, where only the antiquities were mentioned.¹⁸ ‘Normal’ objects are not to be found. As Stelluti said, ‘the elements of nature are undoubtedly all marvellous, but more marvellous by far are those which it produces only rarely’.¹⁹ There is no trace of scientific research as such, or of an attempt to comprehensively represent the natural world. The huge group of *curiosità peregrine*, exotic objects of various kinds, increasingly present in this kind of collection from the middle of the 16th century onwards, includes many ‘Turkish’ pieces, in fact perhaps almost one out of three due to the importance of the Ottoman Empire during this period. The word *peregrine* usually indicates only those pieces with provenance from lands outside of Europe,²⁰ as for example in Athanasius Kircher’s Museum. This does not seem to be the case with



Figure 172 Painting by Pier Francesco Mola of Niccolò Simonelli in the museum at Formello. Private collection, Rome (after Petrucci 2012, with permission of the author)

the Chigi collection, where we also find pieces from France, England, Germany, Spain and Holland, probably including souvenirs from the cardinal's travels. The collection contains only a few ancient ceramics: 2.7% of the total collection. Among the antiquities this number is exceeded only by metal objects, mostly bronze statuettes (9.1%), with no other categories being well represented (marble: 0.7%; coins and medals, mostly from the Renaissance: 1.6%; figurative terracottas: 0.2%; oil lamps: 1.6%; glass: 0.9%; and weapons: 0.6%), demonstrating the low esteem in which non-metallic objects were held at the time.²¹

Research concerning Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588–1657) presents a picture of the networks operating in the world of curiosities.²² Cassiano and his brother Carlo Antonio assembled a vast collection of drawings of antiquities;²³ investigations have shown that they were used by a series of scholars, who compiled essays, based on the Cassiano illustrations, which were published before or during the formative years of Flavio Chigi's collecting activity. These studies included treatises on a variety of antiquities, from fibulas to ancient dress, from lamps to Egyptian remains.²⁴ Some were by the greatest antiquarians in Rome in the second half of the 17th century, Raffaello Fabretti (1619–1700) and Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–1696), both contemporaries of Flavio Chigi. The cardinal himself was part of a *Congregazione della moneta* (numismatic association), together with Virgilio Spada, his brother Bernardino and Cardinals Capponi and Sacchetti.²⁵

It is only recently that it has been possible to learn more about the nature of 'minor' antiquities included in cabinets of curiosity.²⁶ One example is the museum of Giovan Pietro Bellori, which was the focus of an important exhibition²⁷ entitled *L'idea del bello* in 2000. It has been possible to study the Museum Bellorianum due to the good fortune that it was not dispersed after Bellori's death in 1696, but instead sold to the Antikenkabinett in Berlin, where it remains. The collection had been formed in the same 'Roman' environment as that of Flavio Chigi in the second half of the 17th century. Bellori knew Chigi's collection well and was in fact the first contemporary writer to refer to it.²⁸ Bellori and Niccolò Simonelli (Flavio Chigi's 'conservator') (Fig. 172)²⁹ must have had a number of mutual acquaintances. There were, however, also many differences between the two men: Bellori was a scholar, an art historian, Keeper of the Library for Queen Christina of Sweden and *Commissario alle Antichità* in Rome,³⁰ thereby making him far more knowledgeable in this field. On the other hand, he had infinitely less money to purchase works of art than the incumbent cardinal-nephew. Furthermore Bellori collected only antiquities, drawings and paintings, and no *naturalia*. Ingo Herklotz has made a clear distinction between two principal kinds of collectors in the 17th century (in Rome): there were those who collected sculpture *per l'arte* (for art), and those who formed the curiosity cabinets kept *per l'eruditione* (essentially for study). Flavio Chigi had collections of both types.³¹ Bearing in mind these differences, it is nonetheless illuminating to examine the types of objects contained in both collections; some general 'rules' for collecting in this part of the century emerge, as well as a glimpse of the collector's taste and the nature of his choices. Directly relating to the theme of the current volume, we can now consider whether there was any general interest in Etruscan culture that guided the inclusion of the Etruscan objects in Flavio's collection.

Setting aside the cardinal's collection of marbles as a distinct group, let us first turn to the role played by small bronzes in both collections, which seems to have been quite similar. In Bellori's museum they account for almost a third of the entire collection,³² while nearly 10% of the cardinal's collection is made up of bronze objects, of which approximately 60 seem to be bronze statuettes – a considerable number. However, without images of the Chigi statuettes, it is impossible in almost all cases to tell the nature of these works. In Bellori's collection, as is typical for 17th-century collections, there is an interest in religious syncretism,³³ including many bronzes from the Roman period, among them those involved with the cult of Isis. Also evident, in the words of Heres, is a 'certain curiosity' concerning phallic, perhaps considered apotropaic, objects.³⁴

Regarding the origins of the objects in the collection, at least some relate to the Formello area. We have an important contemporary account by Pietro Santi Bartoli of the excavations conducted by Cardinal Chigi at Veii.³⁵ The votive deposit discovered there has been identified as that of Veii-Campetti by Filippo Delpino, and of Veii-Pian di Comunità by other writers.³⁶ It is important to note the presence of both votive terracottas – as they appear to be from their description – and 'metals' (presumably bronze

objects). In 1669 Cardinal Chigi donated some of the terracotta votives from his excavations to Ottavio Falconieri, head of the Cardinal's archaeological investigations, who in turn gave them to Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici.³⁷ We know Leopoldo de' Medici (1617–75) had a collection of antiquities, medals and sculpture, some of which he had purchased after consultation with the Marquis Cospi in Bologna and Falconieri in Rome, and others received as gifts, among them the terracotta votives donated by Cardinal Chigi. Gilda Bartoloni has connected a series of terracottas from the de' Medici collections, now in the Archaeological Museum of Florence, with the cardinal's excavations at Veii.³⁸

We also find objects previously belonging to the d'Este and Peretti Montalto families in the Chigi collections, as well as others from contemporary excavations in nearby areas.³⁹ Many of the sculptures were probably part of the statue collections in the Santi Apostoli palace. Two statues, however, preserved in the civic museum in Formello, now the Museo dell'Agro Veientano, can almost certainly be linked to an early Formellese nucleus;⁴⁰ the statue of a member of the imperial family from the Julio-Claudian age, called 'the emperor',⁴¹ and a Priapus, the so-called Maripara.⁴² We know that Pope Alexander VII (Fabio Chigi) played a special role in creating this museum's collection: the pontiff's diary reveals that during the early years of its formation, the cardinal's orders and purchases were controlled both by the pope and Bernini.⁴³

The inventory of the personal assets of Flavio Chigi that was drafted on his death in 1693 has the same contents as one from a few years later, dated to 1698.⁴⁴ This document reveals that already by 1698 the collection had been removed from Formello, as there is mention of a 'first room on the ground floor, where the museum used to be'.⁴⁵ The museum had been housed on the ground floor, to the left of an entrance in the courtyard, in a place of easy but not immediate access. The cardinal's apartment was located on the second floor, created especially for his private use after its acquisition from the Orsini family.⁴⁶ The collection's *floruit* must have occurred during the first years of Chigi's cardinalship, when Bellori wrote of it in his guide (1664), and during the years when Niccolò Simonelli served as curator of the museum. Several scholars have researched Simonelli (1611–71).⁴⁷ Defined as a *marchand-amateur*, he was a friend of important painters and the special attendant (*guardarobba*) of two cardinal-nephews, Flavio Chigi (1657–71) and Camillo Pamphilij (1644–54).⁴⁸ He was not descended from particularly high-ranking stock (his grandfather was a *carrettiero*), but his family was connected to the papal court, and Simonelli apparently managed to reach his lofty position thanks to his skills and his keen eye for the arts. Simonelli and Gian Lorenzo Bernini acted as main consultants to Pope Alexander VII.⁴⁹

The painting by Pier Francesco Mola, described by Pietro De' Sebastiani in 1683 as being in the first floor of the Casino alle Quattro Fontane (see Fig. 172), provides useful information: 'In [the first floor apartment] one may see the portrait of the late Niccolò Simonelli, a man of such good taste and knowledge of all things [made] by nature and in his ability to draw, that he had no equals in his time'.⁵⁰ This painting, previously attributed to Giovanni Maria

Morandi,⁵¹ is now thought to be the work of Mola, and probably portrays Niccolò Simonelli within the museum in Formello.⁵² It is probably the painting listed among Simonelli's assets on his death in 1671.⁵³ Some of the objects depicted in the painting have been identified in the inventory list (see below) and appear to have been placed near each other, suggesting that we are looking at a particular corner of the museum's interior. The likelihood that the painting represents the collection at Formello follows from the fact that Mola died in 1666, and we know the museum was not transferred to Rome until after 1667, the year which saw the death of Mario Chigi, the cardinal's father, a circumstance which provided the opportunity of a different use for the Casino delle Quattro Fontane.⁵⁴ Francesco Petrucci has argued that the museum was transferred only after 1675, on the basis of a series of receipts for payment for works carried out on the new premises.⁵⁵

The complete list of the objects assembled in the museum in the Giardino alle Quattro Fontane was published by Incisa della Rocchetta (15 January 1707).⁵⁶ The Quattro Fontane property had been purchased in 1660 by the cardinal's father Mario Chigi, and was expanded and made to accommodate new purchases in 1664 and 1669.⁵⁷ The Casino became famous for a party given by Carlo Fontana on the evening of 15 August (*Ferragosto*) 1668.⁵⁸ The combination of a museum and garden in order to house curiosities was typical of the period, as we see for example in the Villa Aldobrandini at Frascati.⁵⁹ The palace had two floors, with a collection of paintings, sculpture and miniatures on the first floor,⁶⁰ and the curiosity cabinet on the second floor.⁶¹ On the ground floor there were service rooms. It is, of course, understandable that various publications of the time all refer to collections in Rome and exclude Formello, which was not so easy to include in a visit. The creation of the collection seems originally to have been intended for the cardinal's personal pleasure, but transferring the museum to Rome elevated its status and meant that it could share the fame of others in the city. Reading the inventory list and studying the order of the objects with reference to windows, facing walls, etc., one can reconstruct the arrangement of the pieces at the Casino. Assuming a certain tendency to adhere to the original layout in these kinds of collections, we may hypothesise that these lists reflect the original arrangement in Formello, where the first nucleus of the museum was housed. It is therefore important to have a better understanding of the nature of this kind of collection.

Laura Larencich-Minelli has reconstructed an arrangement called 'Bologna style' for the Giganti and Aldrovandi collections in the second half of the 16th century, where we find 'alternated micro-symmetry' (*microsimmetria alternata*), to be found both horizontally and vertically, in combination with a 'repeated macro-symmetry' (*macrosimmetria ripetuta*). In this way relationships were created between the objects on display that were presumably conveyed during the personal guided tours we see being undertaken in contemporary engravings. In this way, particular objects, such as portraits of people or fossils of fish, were displayed alternating with other types of exhibits ('micro-symmetry'), while entire categories, such as, for example, the exotica, were displayed together on walls and



Figure 173 (left) *Bulla aurea* (after Bartoli s.d.)
Courtesy American Academy of Rome-Library

Figure 174 (right) *Priapus gallinaceus*, engraving by
Pietro Santi Bartoli (after Fileri 2012)

therefore placed into a relationship with one another ('macro-symmetry').⁶² For the Chigi collection the situation is more difficult given the fact that we lack the exact arrangement of the objects on the various walls: we know for example that the objects numbered 24–73 on the list were in Corner A (Angolo A), but we do not know their exact order.⁶³ However, if we analyse the list of items, grouped per wall, it is clear that the arrangement of this Roman collection was similar to that employed at Bologna. We can both recognise a 'rhythm' in the arrangement of different categories of objects, and perceive that sometimes the list of objects on one wall relates to the list for the wall on the opposite side of the room.⁶⁴

Figure 175 *Priapus gallinaceus*, bronze statue, h. 20.2cm. British Museum, 1814,0704.415



The first mention of the removal of the collection to the palace in Piazza Colonna is in 1744, when Francesco de' Ficoroni (1664–1747) refers to it as being near the library. With this 'Palazzo Chigi al Corso' the Palazzo Chigi par excellence is understood, the actual seat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic. This was the collection's last venue before it was dispersed, following its division in 1745 between Agostino Chigi and a second Cardinal Flavio Chigi. In 1756 some of the antiquities were purchased by Pope Benedict XIV⁶⁵ for the Capitoline and Vatican collections,⁶⁶ while others remained with the family.

Some pieces from the Chigi collection reached Britain. The first Townley collection, comprising mainly terracottas

Figure 176 Bronze head once in the Chigi collection, h. 21.5cm. British Museum, 1824,0427.1



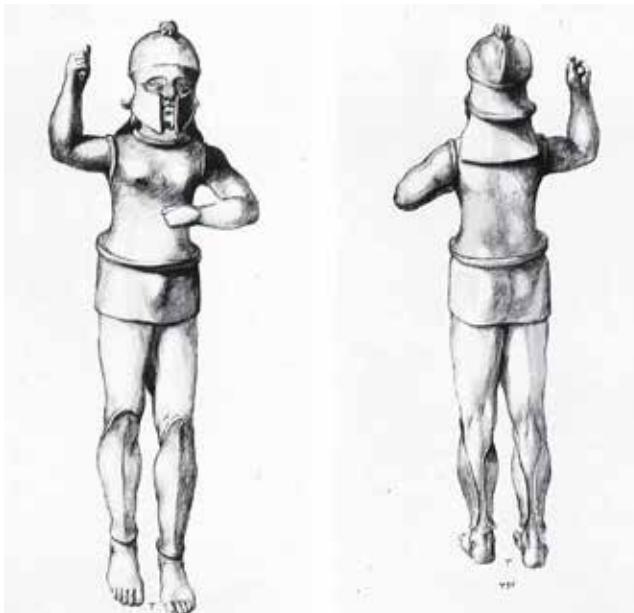


Figure 177 Etruscan warrior: drawing BM New Series fol. 42-44 (after Haskell et al. 1993) (see also Fig. 66)

and bronzes of larger dimensions, was purchased by the British Museum in 1805 and transferred in 1808.⁶⁷ The second Townley collection was added in 1814, consisting mainly of smaller objects. Charles Townley is known to have collected in the years 1768–73 and 1782–6. Pieces were purchased through William Hamilton and Thomas Jenkins and came from various excavations and collections in Rome (see Chapter 5 by Booms in this volume).⁶⁸ An engraving by P.S. Bartoli, representing Salus or Hygieia, in the British Museum, with the inscription *apud E. card. Chigium*, as noted by Lanciani, has a note in the margin ‘nunc in museo Caroli Townley’.⁶⁹ Other engravings by Bartoli⁷⁰ show objects now in the Capitoline Museums and those of which the whereabouts are unknown, such as a triple Diana,⁷¹ a canopic vase,⁷² a golden bulla pendant (Fig. 173)⁷³ and a golden tripod.⁷⁴ Together with the *Priapus gallinaceus* (Fig. 174),⁷⁵ which Simonelli holds, occupying a central position in Mola’s painting (Fig. 172), these pieces must have been considered at the time as the highlights of the cardinal’s collection. The *Priapus* is now in the British Museum’s collection, part of the Townley 1814 acquisition (Fig. 175).⁷⁶ Eliana Filieri has researched this bronze and traced the documents confirming the transactions between Thomas Jenkins and Charles Townley which led to the arrival of the statuette in London.⁷⁷

Together with the *Priapus* statuette a bronze male life-sized head, said to be Etruscan, was offered for sale. Ultimately Townley did not acquire the second piece, but nonetheless it arrived in the British Museum in 1824, among the objects bequeathed by Richard Payne Knight (Fig. 176).⁷⁸ The piece has been identified by some as a priest of the Salii, of late Republican or early Imperial age, by others as Etruscan.⁷⁹ According to Filieri, it was part of the Chigi collection but was acquired later than the time of Cardinal Flavio. I think, however, we may identify this piece as the one described in the inventory as the ‘Head of an ancient statue, life-sized, in bronze, with its helmet’.⁸⁰ Indeed it seems very unlikely that such a remarkable piece could have been added to the collection *after* the lifetime of its principal



Figure 178 Etruscan warrior, bronze statuette, h. 25cm. British Museum, 1814,0704.973

and probably sole architect. In the light of the identification of the deceased found in Casale del Fosso tomb 1036 at Veii as a priest, possibly of a cult such as that of the Salii in Rome, if the bronze head could also be proved to have been found in the territory of Veii, it would indicate the interesting continuity of the cult in the town of Municipium Augustum Veiens, forming a parallel with religion in Rome.

Finally, a third piece in the collection of the British Museum can probably also be identified as having come from Flavio Chigi’s collection (Fig. 177). It is the ‘Etruscan warrior’ or Laran, the Etruscan god of war.⁸¹ Like the *Priapus*, this was also acquired by the British Museum in 1814 as part of the second Townley Collection, and it can be identified with the ‘Soldier, ancient bronze, on a pedestal one palm and a quarter high, with its helmet’ (Fig. 178). The identification has been proposed by Beatrice Cacciotti⁸² and even if it cannot be proved conclusively it is a very attractive suggestion. One proposal, impossible to prove at this stage without further research and the identification of the single pieces involved, suggests that a nucleus of pieces, principally bronzes, was acquired by Charles Townley from the Chigi heirs, probably from Sigismondo Chigi (1736–93). The years in which Townley’s agents were present in Rome and the years in which we know the collection was dispersed



Figure 179 Sardinian bronze figure, drawing, Fondo Corsini. BCors 47–8 (after Fileri 1991)

(see below) appear to correspond.⁸³ We assume that Flavio Chigi started collecting at the earliest from 1650 onwards. He was made cardinal in 1656 and cardinal-nephew of Pope Alexander VII in 1657. However, we know that in 1650, at the age of 19, he travelled to Germany and the Low Countries to stay with Fabio Chigi, who at the time was acting as a delegate for Innocent X in Münster.⁸⁴ As we find more than one ‘curiosity’ coming from those countries in the later museum,⁸⁵ we may assume that he had commenced collecting foreign pieces by that time.

In 1728 Augusto Chigi (1662–1744) disposed of the bulk of the sculpture collection that he had inherited from his uncle, selling it to King August II of Poland (Dresden). This sale comprised a large portion of the sculptures in the Santi Apostoli palace,⁸⁶ together with the curiosity cabinet’s famous mummy.⁸⁷ In the second half of the 18th century the collection was much reduced, as we can gather from the list of the possessions in the Palazzo Chigi dated February 1770, on the death of Agostino Chigi.⁸⁸ At the end of the century, probably at the death of Sigismondo, a second list was made, dated to June 1793.⁸⁹ Some objects from the Chigi collection found their way to the collection of Thomas Hope (1769–1831), but this, too, was later dispersed, and the pieces are so far unidentified. Thomas Hope collected ancient sculptures during his extended travels in Europe; in Rome he bought pieces from the Villa Aldobrandini, and from the Altieri, Chigi and Antoni families, as well as conducting his own excavations. The Hope collection was dispersed in 1917, enriching museums in Toronto, Los Angeles, Malibu, Baltimore, Oxford, Newcastle, Athens and Rome.⁹⁰

How probable therefore is the presence of Etruscan objects in Flavio Chigi’s collection?⁹¹ A comparison with other contemporary collections may be helpful.⁹² In Bellori’s museum we find, among other objects, a terracotta antefix of Juno Sospita (which could very well have come from archaic Rome), a *Schnabelkanne* and a ‘patera’ (literally a shallow dish, but in reality an Etruscan mirror, according to the contemporary misinterpretation).⁹³ There are very

interesting parallels in the collection of ancient bronzes attributed by Eliana Fileri to Leonardo Agostini (1594–1676),⁹⁴ depicted in a series of drawings now in the Fondo Corsini of the Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe and in the Corsini Library of the Accademia dei Lincei.⁹⁵ The drawings depict a group of bronzes, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence, sold to Leopoldo de’ Medici in 1673 thanks to the intervention of Ottaviano Falconieri and Domenico Maria Corsi.⁹⁶ The collection contained a *Schnabelkanne*⁹⁷ and other Etruscan metal vessels,⁹⁸ bronze statuettes⁹⁹ and bronze instruments.¹⁰⁰ It also included a winged axe (BCors 111)¹⁰¹ and part of an Orientalising period chariot (BCors 112), in addition to a very interesting Sardinian bronze statuette (**Fig. 179**, BCors 47–8).¹⁰²

Turning our attention now to the possible Etruscan objects in Flavio Chigi’s collection, let us start with the pieces that are explicitly described as such.

[32] Un vaso grande etrusco antico, a due manichi, figurato di giallo e negro.

[138] Un vaso etrusco, antico, figurato di giallo e negro, come l’altro, alto palmi 2.¹⁰³

[520] Idoletto antico, etrusco, di bronzo, sopra piedistallo.

[578] Vaso, d’un palmo e un quarto, a due manichi, etrusco antico, con 4 figure gialle sopra il nero.

[744] Vaso etrusco antico co’l piede.

Thus, only five objects out of 837 are said to be Etruscan, less than one per cent. They comprise four ceramic vases and a bronze statuette.

In the second half of the 17th century it had not yet been realised that most ‘Etruscan vases’ found in Etruscan tombs were in fact Greek. Nigel Spivey has described how at least until the time of the production of Wedgwood ‘Etruria’ ware (1769), the huge quantities of Greek vases found in Etruscan and South Italian graves were thought to be of Etruscan production (see Chapter 17 by Ramage in this volume).¹⁰⁴ We can imagine that among the Chigi objects there were pieces like the Apulian red-figured krater kept in Bellori’s collection, depicted in the *Museum Cartaceum* of Cassiano dal Pozzo.¹⁰⁵ Lucilla De Lachenal stresses the fact that such vases must have been relatively rare in the 17th century (and especially in Rome), far more so than in the following century.¹⁰⁶

There is an important point to bear in mind with regard to the interpretation of objects as Etruscan prior to the 18th century, the period of Italian and in particular Tuscan ‘Etruscomania’, when the great esteem for Etruscan culture in many cases led to the over-estimation of the Etruscan inheritance (see Chapter 15 by Della Fina in this volume).¹⁰⁷ In the 17th century the situation had been rather different.¹⁰⁸ The development in understanding is illustrated perfectly by the contributions to the recent exhibition catalogue *Seduzione etrusca*, examining the writing of *Hetruria regalis* by Thomas Dempster and its later publication as *De Etruria regali* by Filippo Buonarroti.¹⁰⁹ These are the years that mark the birth of Etruscology and it is important to note that only in the printed edition in 1723–4 do we find Etruscan objects identified as such, together with a series of remarks on the



Figure 180 ‘Buccaro’ vase with silver filigree setting, Mexican and Florentine 17th-century manufacture, h. 28 cm. Tesoro dei Granduchi, Florence, Inv. Bg. 1917 (II) n. 24 (su concessione del Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo)

nature of Etruscan artefacts, in the *Explicationes et Conjecturae* added by Buonarroti.

With regard to the Chigi collection’s bronze statuettes, only one¹¹⁰ is called Etruscan, but there were numerous other small bronze figures, many of which may have been Etruscan. When the excavations for Flavio Chigi were carried out in Veii Ottavio Falconieri’s description noted that, together with the well-known rich deposit of terracotta votives, there were also ‘bronze figures, pateras, and other objects which, since they were precious, were more easily lost; because I came across an excavator who cut to pieces on purpose even important bronzes, because he wanted to melt them down in order to make knife handles out of them, which in fact he actually did.’¹¹¹ Therefore some *bronzetti* in our museum might have come from the same votive deposit as the many terracottas. It is striking that the cardinal’s collection does not seem to contain any ‘pateras’, as Etruscan mirrors were usually called, given their popularity among contemporary collectors.

Another small group of vases is said to be of *terra samia* or *terra samiata*. In one case this seems to refer to a Greek or Apulian vase.¹¹² Another has been recognised as Arretine pottery with a stamped inscription,¹¹³ still another a Hellenistic lamp.¹¹⁴ Julian Raby in a paper on the exotica of the Islamic world states that the so-called *vasi samii* should in some cases be interpreted as Hispano-Moresque lustreware.¹¹⁵ It seems therefore that this term could indicate various wares of refined clay with a slip, like *argilla depurata* in Italian, of which the surface would be treated in different ways.¹¹⁶ In fact this indicates good observation, distinguishing between the core and the surface treatment of the ceramics.

One might certainly expect to find in the collection some examples of bucchero ware, the ‘national’ ceramic ware of the Etruscans. There are two vases of *buccaro*, which might be bucchero ware,¹¹⁷ but could also, especially in the second



Figure 181 Ivory spille, first half 17th century, h. 30cm. Koelliker Collection, Milan, inv. LKTRN0058

case, be vases similar to one in the Medici collection, a Guadalajara ‘bucchero’ vase with silver filigree setting, of Mexican and 17th-century Florentine manufacture (**Fig. 180**).¹¹⁸ Other possible Etruscan pieces are [No. 201] ‘Due diverse spille antiche d’osso bianco’ (‘two different ancient (hair)pins of white bone’), which could be from an Etruscan burial in the neighbourhood, uncovered during the time of Flavio Chigi. On the other hand, ‘lectio difficilior potior, spille’ could refer to games or toys, as in German, and therefore possibly indicating the very popular turned pieces, mainly of ivory present in almost every curiosity cabinet of the time: see for example that in **Figure 181**.¹¹⁹ The collection of the cardinal might even have contained an Etruscan iron double-axe, like the ones discovered in Caere and Vetulonia, for there is a reference to ‘Bipenne antica, di ferro’ [No. 348]. There are also two records of ‘ancient fibulas’.¹²⁰ These could have come from an Etruscan burial in the vicinity, but we have no way of knowing. One object, ‘Navicella antica di bronzo, con due anelli dentro per appendere’, has been convincingly identified by Filippo Delpino as a Sardinian bronze model boat.¹²¹ The presence

of a Nuragic piece can be related to the bronze figure in the Corsini drawing (**Fig. 179**)¹²² and can perhaps be linked to the interests of the Chigi family in the Tolfia district, or to their ownership of the salt mines near Ostia, from the time of Agostino il Magnifico.¹²³

By the time Flavio Chigi started to collect, the exact position and identification of the Etruscan town of Veii was known, thanks to the investigations carried out by Famiano Nardini (1647) and Lukas Holstenius (1666).¹²⁴ There is no proof however that Flavio Chigi, descendant of a Sienese family, showed any degree of pride in his Etruscan heritage, nor can we detect any real interest in the Veientine roots of the region in which he lived.¹²⁵ We should bear in mind that the model for the Etruscan ‘nation’, the Dodekapolis of the Etruscan League, had been recognised since the time of Flavio Biondo (1392–1463) but this concentrated on an Etruscan world which centred in Northern Etruria.¹²⁶ Our inventory list suggests that ‘Etruscan’ was considered equivalent to ‘from Tuscany’, since we find, under heading 582, ‘Another vase of Toscana, similar, but without figures’, following immediately after the ‘Etruscan’ vase, no. 578.¹²⁷

Further research may prove or disprove some of the proposals for identification of Cardinal Chigi’s pieces suggested in this chapter. Fortune would indeed be smiling on us if some set of drawings or watercolours of the collection were to come to light!

Notes

- 1 The collection was the subject of my dissertation for the School of Specialization in Rome (van Kampen 2003); see also van Kampen 2007. I am grateful for the careful reading and advice given to me by Gilda Bartoloni, Filippo Delpino and Francesco Petrucci. Alessandro La Porta supported my research in many ways. Bouwien Postma and Ryan Audino helped to smooth out the English of my text. Alfonso Mongiu supported me in my search for the map of Rome by G.B. Nolli (1748). I thank Judith Swaddling for her patience and encouragement. Any errors remain my own.
- 2 Bober and Rubinstein 1986, 472–3. For the collection of *Il Magnifico* see Barbieri 2014, especially 53, 83–8 and 168–81.
- 3 In May 2005 a virtual reconstruction of the *Museo delle Curiosità naturali, peregrine e antiche* of Cardinal Flavio Chigi was presented at the Palazzo Chigi in Formello, the palace that once housed this cabinet of curiosities and which is now the seat of the Museo dell’Agro Veientano.
- 4 ‘Dato al pittore per dugento cartelle colorite di acquarella di varii colori lunghe un palmo l’uno per scrivere le curiosità di Formello, scudi 1,20’ (28 June 1663) (Golzio 1939, 158).
- 5 Archivio Chigi no. 700. This inventory is ultimately the same as another version dated 1705, which is preserved in two copies: one in the State Archives (Archivio di Stato) and the other one in the Archivio Chigi of the Vatican Library (Incisa della Rocchetta 1966; cf. Cacciotti 2004; Petrucci 2005; and van Kampen 2003). We may presume that other inventories existed before the cardinal’s death in 1693, though none so far have been found.
- 6 Anon. 1664.
- 7 Translation by the author.
- 8 Archivio Chigi no. 702, ff. 54v–58v. See also Stumpo 1980, 750–1. For the reconstruction of Flavio Chigi’s sculpture collection see Cacciotti 2004.
- 9 From 31 August 1660 (Lanciani 1989, 198).
- 10 Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 24. The cardinal-nephew is a cardinal elevated by a pope who is that cardinal’s uncle, or, more generally, simply a relative. The practice of creating cardinal-nephews originated in the Middle Ages, and reached its apex during the 16th and 17th centuries. The word *nepotism* originally referred specifically to this practice.
- 11 Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 25.

- 12 De Sebastiani 1683.
- 13 The Quattro Fontane Gardens comprised a villa known as the Casino alle Quattro Fontane, located where Via Nazionale intersects with Via Agostino Depretis, in front of the church of San Paolo Eremita. It was destroyed in the period after the unification of Italy and the creation of Rome as the capital (1870) for the creation of Via Nazionale (Incisa della Rocchetta 1925, 539).
- 14 Archivio Chigi no. 702. The inventory of Palazzo Chigi in Formello is published in van Kampen 2009b.
- 15 Archivio Chigi no. 702, ff. 101r–v.
- 16 See van Kampen 2003. A similar survey with percentages for the various components has been carried out for the Kunstkammer of Elector Augustus (1553–1586) in Dresden (Menzhausen 1985, 96).
- 17 For comparison it is worth pointing out that in 90% of the c. 150 contemporary Roman collections *naturalia* were completely excluded (Olmi 1985, 11).
- 18 Fiorelli 1878–80, vol. 2, 175–81, 408, 413ff, vol. 4, 399–417.
- 19 Stelluti 1637.
- 20 Cardelli Antinori 2001, 79.
- 21 Observation by Michael Vickers (Vickers 1985, 310 and 315); see also Vickers 1985–6. This latter contribution contains many brilliant observations, though defining (painted) ceramics as ‘saleable ballast’ is perhaps a step too far (Vickers 1985–6, n. 66).
- 22 Sparti 1992; Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 1996, 440 and 445 n. 49; Herklotz 1999, esp. 151–8; Claridge 2004, 39–40.
- 23 Herklotz 1999, 184–5. Almost 20 scholars of the 17th century, in different areas of study, used the documentation of the Museum Cartaceum.
- 24 A study is in preparation on the library of Cardinal Chigi, in order to reconstruct the resources available to him. Cf. ASR Not. A.C., vol. 3248, cc. 682r–841r (*Inventario della libreria dell’Em.mo Sig.r Cardinal Flavio Chigi*); Sparti 1998, 70–1 and Cacciotti 2004, 3–4.
- 25 Finocchiaro 1999, 28 and 163.
- 26 Donald Bailey, in the context of studies on Cassiano dal Pozzo’s *Paper Museum*, stated that such ‘Kleinkunst’ has been the most neglected part so far (Bailey 1992, 3).
- 27 Borea and Gasparri 2000, in particular the contributions by Lucilla De Lachenal, Gerald Heres, Maria Grazia Marzi and Maria Grazia Picozzi.
- 28 Anon. 1664.
- 29 For Simonelli, see below.
- 30 Heres 2000, 499; for the role of *Commissario alle Antichità*, instituted in 1534, see Ridley 1992; see also Claridge 2004, 33–5.
- 31 Herklotz 2004, 55; the parallel is made in Michael Vickers’s description of the British collections of that time (Vickers 1985).
- 32 Heres 2000, 507 (49 bronzes).
- 33 A good example are the bronze votive hands with various small objects on the fingers, the so-called ‘Hands of Sabazius’: these are votive objects of Anatolian origin used in the worship of a god venerated in the middle imperial age. They were popular objects in these kinds of collections, and we know of various specimens, like the one belonging to Bellori now in the *Antikensammlung* in Berlin (R. Bosso in Borea and Gasparri 2000, 512–13, inv. Fr. 1333). Another one in the British Museum once belonged to the Barberini Collection, and a third one in the Museo Nazionale Romano was once in the Museum Kircherianum, inv. 66039 (R. Paris in Borea and Gasparri, 332). As the last piece is said to have been found ‘during agricultural activities near Isola Farnese’ (Bonanni 1709, 71; Paris 2001, 332), we may assume that there was a temple or shrine dedicated to the god in Imperial Age Veii and that it was Cardinal Chigi who passed this piece to Kircher.
- 34 Cf. in Chigi’s collection, besides the famous object in the centre of Simonelli’s painting (see **Figs 172, 174**), there are 10 other statues of Priapus, in various materials. Formello’s ‘Maripara’, a marble, over-life-sized statue of Priapus that was part of the cardinal’s collections (but not in the museum), might also be connected with this interest. See van Kampen 2015.
- 35 Delpino 1985, 20–1, fig. 3.
- 36 Van Kampen 2015; cf. also van Kampen 2009d and n. 33. Another option would be Veii-Macchia Grande (Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 1996, 456, but see also Bartoloni 2005, 172 and Bartoloni and Benedettini 2011, where the identification is again in favour of Veii-Pian di Comunità).

- 37 Between 1780 and 1787 the bulk of the sculpture collection in Villa Medici was transported from Rome to Florence, with the most important elements being displayed in the gallery and others in the Boboli Gardens and other villas. After 1880, with the foundation of the Museo Archeologico and the other state museums, the collections were further divided (Gasparri 1994, 214). For the subdivision of votive terracottas from the same deposit at Comunità among various Italian and foreign museums, brought to light by Rodolfo Lanciani in 1889, see Bartoloni 2005, 171–2.
- 38 Bartoloni 1970.
- 39 Golzio 1939; see also Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 27–8.
- 40 For both statues see van Kampen 2015; van Kampen 2009d.
- 41 Museo dell'Agro Veientano, inv. MAV 5.
- 42 Museo dell'Agro Veientano, inv. MAV 1.
- 43 Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 26. For the diary of Fabio Chigi see Krautheimer and Jones 1975 for the years as a pope and Petrucci 2000 for those during his cardinalship.
- 44 Incisa della Rocchetta 1925, 539.
- 45 'Prima stanza a Pian terreno, dove era il museo' (Ms. f. 205r).
- 46 For all other rooms in the palace and for the various denominations in the two different inventory documents (dating 1666 and 1698), see van Kampen 2009b.
- 47 Haskell 1980, 200–2; Spezzaferro 1990, 43–9; Mignosi Tantillo 2001, 29 and Capitelli 2004.
- 48 On the role of 'Guardarobba' see Gozzano 2004, 155–62.
- 49 Petrucci 2012, 81.
- 50 De Sebastiani 1683, 57; Incisa della Rocchetta 1966, 143 with n. 6.
- 51 See especially Petrucci 2012, 139, 238–9, fig. 92.
- 52 Van Kampen 2009c, 129. The museum is known to have been in Formello until at least 1663–4 (Bellori), while Mola died in 1666. The Casino alle Quattro Fontane returned to use by the family in July 1664, after having been at the disposition of Abbey Domenico Salvetti for some years.
- 53 Capitelli 2004, n. 85: 'Una tela da testa con un Ritratto del Mola'. Attributing the painting erroneously to Morandi, and without any other names of painters in the list, Capitelli deduces (logically) that the painting must have been a portrait of Mola, not painted by Mola; if, however, this is in fact a painting by Mola depicting Simonelli, it is plausible that Simonelli kept it in a place of honour among his possessions. After his death the painting must have then been donated to Flavio Chigi in memory of his loyal servant and placed inside the museum that he had helped to create. The only, but possibly important, argument against this hypothesis are its dimensions: the 'tela di testa' was a painting with dimensions ranging between 50/70 x 40/60cm, while the painting of Simonelli measures 130 x 95cm, corresponding to a 'tela dimperatore' (standard measurements ranging from 120/130 x 90/100cm).
- 54 Van Kampen 2009c, 129.
- 55 Petrucci 2005, 191; Petrucci 2012, 238. Cf. Golzio 1939, 197–201.
- 56 Incisa della Rocchetta 1966. The document in Notai A.C. 3248. Francesco Franceschini (State Archives of Rome) has been compared to the copy of the inventory preserved in the Chigi Archives, Ms. Chigi no. 700.
- 57 Incisa della Rocchetta 1955, 210; Delpino 1985, 23; cf. now also Benocci 2005.
- 58 Incisa della Rocchetta 1955; Incisa della Rocchetta 1966, 142, n. 3; Lidia Cangemi in Angelini *et al.*, 318–21, no. 204; Benocci 2005.
- 59 Hooper Greenhill 1992, 126–30.
- 60 See Petrucci 2005 for all other possessions at the Quattro Fontane Casino, where the collections on the first floor are said to have been a veritable 'Bernini museum' (Petrucci 2005, 195).
- 61 Lidia Cangemi in Angelini *et al.* 2000, 321 (BAV Arch. Chigi, vol. 1482); cf. also Petrucci 2005, 191.
- 62 Laurencich Minelli 1985, 22–3, n. 28.
- 63 Cf. Incisa della Rocchetta 1966.
- 64 There is not space within the remit of this essay to detail the complete list of items and provide an analysis of the many relationships between them.
- 65 Prospero Lambertini (1675–1758); see Tega 2001, 125.
- 66 Among these purchases we find six gilded glass works, still in the Christian Museum of the Vatican Library (Incisa della Rocchetta 1966, 144 and n. 13bis). The pope donated an ancient *stadera*, a triple bronze Hecate and a bronze folding tripod to the Capitoline collections. (Incisa della Rocchetta 1966, 144–5; van Kampen 2009c, 129–30). For the Christian Museum, founded by Benedict XIV, see Morello 1981, esp. 74–7, and n. 72.
- 67 For the history of the British Museum's collections see Swaddling 2014.
- 68 Gasparri 1994.
- 69 Lanciani 1899, 197. British Museum, 1814,0704,759. Cf. Walters 1899, Bronze 1431, 235, pl. XXVII; the engraving shows the figure reversed.
- 70 Bartoli s.d.; these plates were used by De La Chausse (De La Chausse 1707) and de Montfaucon (de Montfaucon 1722); for correspondences see Cacciotti 2004, II, n. 116.
- 71 No. 755 in the inventory list; Musei Capitolini inv. MC2173. Cf. van Kampen 2009c, 130.
- 72 No. 726 in the inventory list; its present location is unknown.
- 73 No. 332 in the inventory list; its present location is unknown.
- 74 No. 83 in the inventory list; Musei Capitolini, inv. AntCom 2178/2178bis. Cf. van Kampen 2009c, 129.
- 75 Cacciotti 2004, 12, fig. 9.
- 76 British Museum, 1814,0704,415.
- 77 Filieri 2012; cf. also Bignamini and Hornsby 2010.
- 78 British Museum, 1824, 0427.1; Haynes 1985, 317 no. 187.
- 79 Thomas Jenkins in 1788 writes to Townley, quoting the opinion of (Ennio Quirino) Visconti: 'The Bronzes mentioned in my last are a most Curious Head the Size of life with a Helmet behind the Portrait of Young Hero, different from all Bronzes I ever Saw, has the delicacy of Marble, and is supposed to be the Very Highest time of the Art. The Other is a Lucerna di Bronzo, i.e. a figure of Priapus (...) He describe the Head in the following words. "Testa di Bronzo conservatissima di Marte Opera Tuscanica di Somma Antichità e di Molta Maestria. Ha sul capo un Elmo Senza Cerniero; (...) Sig. Visconti by Supposing this Singular Monument to be Etruscan Work thinks it Proves that the Etruscans were a Colony of Greeks, reconciling thereby the Similitude between what is called Etruscans and Greek Productions/leaving this to be decided by the litterate I can answer for the opinion given me of its excellency' (Filieri 2012, 644–5).
- 80 No. 312 in the 17th-century inventory list.
- 81 Walters 1899, no. 457; Haynes 1985, 257, no. 33.
- 82 Cacciotti 2004, 18.
- 83 Nicholas Turner has identified a group of drawings as being by the hand of Vincenzo Leonardi (*fl.* 1612–46), including, in addition to a number of drawings of natural history phenomena, nos 43–4, 53, 59–60 and 62, and, tentatively, the bronze Laran (no. 30) as well as no. 1 of the catalogue of archaeological, topographical and architectural drawings edited in the fourth volume of *Quaderni Puteani* (Haskell *et al.* 1993, 74). As the list includes both the triple-bodied Hekate already in Flavio Chigi's possession and the bronze warrior statuette (Fig. 178), it is tempting to identify these as a group of drawings made of the bronzes in the Chigi collection, but the dates given for Vincenzo Leonardi's years of activity do not correspond.
- 84 BAV Ms. Fondo Chigi 2558, *Libro di città vedute da me Flavio Chigi nel viaggio di Germania, Fiandra e alter parti*, dated May 1650.
- 85 See nos 7, 11, 427, 667, 737 of the inventory list.
- 86 Later in 1745 it was yielded to the Odescalchi family.
- 87 It stood in the centre of the museum at the Quattro Fontane (Incisa della Rocchetta 1966, 145). The mummy is mentioned in almost all the descriptions of the museum. Cf. the 1693 edition of *Mercurio Errante: la più rara cosa, che si veda, è la mummia d'Egitto intiera, la quale fece venir il signor cardinale da Egitto, e li costò quattromila scudi*. The case of the mummy was repainted in 1681–4. A possible mediator for the collection's Egyptian antiquities must have been Pietro della Valle, whom we know to have been the source for Giovan Pietro Bellori's mummy (Vaiani 2002, 102–3) and who must have had several encounters with Flavio Chigi, also dedicating to him his book *L'India col ritorno alla patria* (Cacciotti 2004, 2).
- 88 Fiorelli 1878–80, vols 3–4.
- 89 Fiorelli 1878–80, vol. 4. This second list includes the properties of both Agostino (already listed in 1770) and Sigismondo.
- 90 Gasparri 1994, 224.
- 91 It was only at an advanced stage of this research that I became aware that this question had already been posed some years earlier

- by my supervisor, Professor Gilda Bartoloni, for whose guidance I am deeply grateful (Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 1996, 445).
- ⁹² See also especially for such *antiquaria*, De Lachenal and Marzi 2000; Lo Sardo 2001, with contributions by Rita Paris and Silvia Bruni.
- ⁹³ Heres 2000, 500 and 511–12, no. 20; 513–14, no. 25; 520 no. 49 (R. Bosso). This account is based only on the pieces chosen for display in the exhibition on Bellori in Rome where they are said to ‘represent’ Etruscan art in the collection. Beger’s 1701 edition also includes an Etrusco-Corinthian alabaster for the Brandenburg Museum which came from another 17th-century collection (De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 531, fig. 5). Szilágyi has included the piece, now apparently lost, in the *Ciclo dei Galli Affrontati*, with a distribution between the Rivers Arno and Sele (Szilágyi 1998, 633); a provenance from a Veientine excavation would certainly be possible, but there seems to be no possible reference in the inventory list to identify the piece.
- ⁹⁴ Commissario delle Antichità in the years of Pope Alexander VII (1655–70); during the life of Cardinal Flavio Chigi the Commissario was Giovan Pietro Bellori (1670–94) (Ridley 1992, 130–3).
- ⁹⁵ Fileri 1991. Fondo Corsini 158 H16; Biblioteca Corsiniana 158 I 17 (34 k 18).
- ⁹⁶ Fileri 1991, III.
- ⁹⁷ GDS 26 (BCors 83).
- ⁹⁸ GDS 24, GDS 25, BCors 6 (?), appliqué: cf. De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 538–9, nos 15 and 16, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Florence.
- ⁹⁹ BCors 4 (?), BCors 25 (?), BCors 28, BCors 49, BCors 50, BCors 73.
- ¹⁰⁰ BCors 111 (?), BCors 112 (?), BCors 113 (?), BCors 118, BCors 123.
- ¹⁰¹ Identified with the piece now in Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence, inv. 1064, see De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 538, no. 14.
- ¹⁰² See below n. 122.
- ¹⁰³ A *palmo* was an Italian measurement in use before the introduction of the metric system. We know a *Palmo romano di passetto* (0.222m) and a *Palmo romano di canna* (0.247m). This vase thus measured between less than 45 and 50cm in height. Beatrice Cacciotti in her study on Flavio Chigi’s collections takes 22.2cm as the reference for the *palma* (Cacciotti 2004, VIII).
- ¹⁰⁴ Spivey 1991; see also Camporeale 1993 and Cristofani 1983. Vickers 1985–6 perhaps makes the most interesting contribution regarding the various ways of looking at ‘Imaginary Etruscans’, drawing a parallel between Rousseau’s ideas favouring simplicity in art and life and the change in taste which made it possible to recognise Etruscan and Greek vases as such (Vickers 1985–6, 161).
- ¹⁰⁵ De Lachenal 2005. The same vase is depicted on a drawing belonging to Fortunio Liceti, dated around 1624: Franzoni 2008, *Miscellanea Liceti*, f. 11 (Biblioteca Panizzi, Reggio Emilia).
- ¹⁰⁶ De Lachenal 2005, 866–7; for an overview of ceramics in 17th (and 16th) century collections see De Lachenal and Marzi 2000. A certain interest can be detected in studies of measurements and dimensions of vases (Gasparotto 1996).
- ¹⁰⁷ Cipriani 1980; Cristofani 1983; De Angelis 2013.
- ¹⁰⁸ Herklotz 1999.
- ¹⁰⁹ Bruschetti *et al.* 2014, with the contributions of B. Gialluca and S. Reynolds.
- ¹¹⁰ No. 520 in the inventory list.
- ¹¹¹ ‘Figure di metallo, patere, ed altro, che come più preziose furono le più facili ad essere guaste; perché conobbi un cavatore, il quale messe in pezzi cose insigni, con pensiero, come fece, di farle fondere ad uso di manichi di coltellî.’
- ¹¹² No. 37 in the inventory list.
- ¹¹³ No. 274 in the inventory list; see also De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 530 n. 14; Cacciotti 2004, 15.
- ¹¹⁴ No. 780 in the inventory list.
- ¹¹⁵ Raby 1985, 348.
- ¹¹⁶ For the identification see also De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 532 n. 53, confirming Pliny the Elder as the source for the term (*Naturalis Historia* XXXV, 160–1, *Samia Vasa*) and testifying the use of the term by de Montfaucon for a certain type of production in Italy, originating ‘not far from Rome’ (De Montfaucon 1719–24, III, 139). Nowadays in Italy the term *terra sigillata* is used, while in the Anglo-Saxon world ‘Samian ware’ is still used.
- ¹¹⁷ A ‘vaso di terra d’odore’ is referred to by Lorenzo Magalotti in his *Lettere odorose* (1693–1705); e.g. in his letter to Marchese Ottavia Strozzi, dated 5 July 1695 (Falqui 1945). Of course it would be difficult to trace down ‘a bucchero vase’ in Tuscany, where thousands have been found, but the letter indicates that the term began to be used in this period. We think the term ‘bucchero’ derives from the Spanish *bucaro*, a word used for certain vases coming from South America, made with a fragrant and red-coloured clay, used to hold water and keep it fresh. The vases were imitated in Portugal and came into fashion in the same period as the first discoveries of Etruscan bucchero ware.
- ¹¹⁸ Museo degli Argenti, Florence, inv. no. Bg, 1879 (II) *Oreficerie Civili* no. 24, Mosco 2003, 58, no. 51.
- ¹¹⁹ In Flavio’s collection see nos 197, 209, 304, 489, positioned close to the *Spille* (no. 201).
- ¹²⁰ ‘Fibula, antica, di bronzo’ (ancient bronze fibula, no. 396 inventory list) and ‘Fibula, antica, con la sua spina’ (ancient fibula with its pin, no. 646 inventory list).
- ¹²¹ ‘Navicella antica di bronzo, con due anelli dentro per appendere’ (‘ancient small bronze boat, with two rings for suspension’). Delpino 1985, 21–2, n. 15.
- ¹²² Fileri 1991, BCors 47 and BCors 48.
- ¹²³ Stumpo 1980. Cf. nos 57, 166, 207 and 233 of the inventory list. In Porto another boat has been found, while the Tolfa district has not yielded any such piece so far.
- ¹²⁴ Delpino 1999, 73 with n. 4.
- ¹²⁵ The description made by a contemporary ‘Ambassador’ from Venice, P. Basadonna, is quite pitiless and shows a man who was more interested in hunting games and banqueting than in anything else (Delpino 1985, 21 n. 15).
- ¹²⁶ Cf. Bartoloni and Bocci Pacini 2003, 459; the article raises the question of how many Etruscan antiquities would have been known to Renaissance artists.
- ¹²⁷ M.G. Marzi also states Bellori used ‘vai toscani’ for ‘Etruscan vases’ *tout court*, maybe also with the meaning of black-figure ware (De Lachenal and Marzi 2000, 352).

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Chapter 15

The Ideal of the Etruscans in the Italian Risorgimento: The Evidence of the Collection of the Counts Faina

Giuseppe M. Della Fina

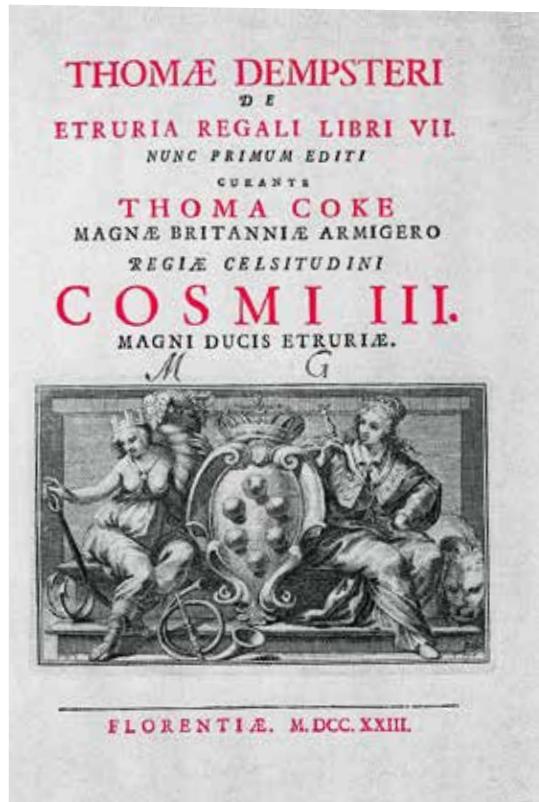
Abstract

Establishing a link between the Etruscans and the events of the Italian Risorgimento, which culminated in the unification of Italy, may today seem somewhat forced. But there were definitely similarities before Rome became the capital of the new Kingdom of Italy in 1870. The Etruscans were seen as the first Italians, as those who had both unified and civilised the Italian peninsula. In this cultural climate of unification, a ruling class was formed which looked to antiquity and became interested in collecting archaeological artefacts. Prime examples of this group were Counts Mauro and Eugenio Faina, who in the 1860s and 1880s (the decades following the unification) assembled a notable collection.

It may seem surprising for us to find an association between the Etruscans and the Risorgimento which brought about the unification of Italy, but in the decades of riots and demonstrations which led to the success of the Risorgimento and the establishment of Rome as the capital of the new state, the Etruscans were seen as the first Italians, who had unified the Italian peninsula and irradiated culture through its territory.¹ This laudatory judgement was derived from an interpretation of ancient historical sources, especially Latin ones, and from a cultural movement, called *Etruscheria* by historians, which attributed all kinds of achievements to the Etruscans.

This phenomenon traditionally began with the publication *De Etruria regali* by Thomas Dempster in 1726 (**Fig. 182**), on the initiative of the English aristocrat Sir Thomas Coke and the collaboration of the antiquarian Filippo Buonarroti. Intellectuals from various regions of

Figure 182 Title page of Thomas Dempster's *De Etruria regali*, Florence, 1723 [1726]



Italy and with different specialisations became involved in the progress of *Etruscheria*, and eventually it found its way into the emerging world of cultural journalism.² The Etruscans therefore became familiar to large sectors of the intellectual world of the time and were given a leading role in the reconstruction of the history of Italy, leaving in the background other peoples who had also played an important part, such as the Latins, Umbrians and Samnites. One instance is particularly significant: Girolamo Tiraboschi in his acclaimed *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Rome 1782) begins his narration with the Etruscans: ‘della letteratura adunque degli Etruschi ci convien qui favellare, e da essi dare cominciamento alla storia della italiana letteratura’ ('concerning the literature of the Etruscans it is appropriate to remark that it was with them that Italian literature began').³

A similar regard for the Etruscan world can be found among political philosophers, some of whom tried, from the middle of the 18th century, to envisage a different future for Italy and its unification, such as Giovanni Maria Lampredi, in his *Saggio sopra la filosofia degli antichi Etruschi* (Florence 1756), and Carlo Denina in *Rivoluzioni d'Italia* (Turin 1769).⁴ Both authors stress the federal structure of Etruscan civilisation, manipulating the data supplied by classical sources and playing down the tensions that the organisation into city-states had caused. The ‘federalism’ inspired by the Etruscan model appeared to many reformers to be an appropriate system of government (or, at least, the most suitable) with which to fulfil their vision of Italy’s destiny. At that time, the way that unification was ultimately to take place would not have seemed possible and was perhaps not even conceivable. Beginning with the exaltation of their ‘federalism’, the reputation of the Etruscans grew in the decades of the national Risorgimento (1815–70). This sentiment is related to another in contemporary European political thought of the time: the need to find a precedent for action in a past considered glorious. This was the motivation for the Roman-Republican rhetoric present in the early years of the French Revolution and in its institutions.

In shaping their future scenarios, Italian ideologues – who were facing many obstacles and dangers – could not reconnect to the Roman Republican period since the pre-unification Italian States had no institutional arrangements of a republican kind, and to do so would have run a real risk of seeming too subversive. Imperial Rome could not provide a useful historical precedent, since its legacy had long since been claimed and appropriated by the Papal States and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which controlled a large area of the Italian peninsula) and therefore could not be claimed by others. The global dimension of imperial Rome probably also discouraged such a claim, for this would have caused concern to the European superpowers of the time who were to collaborate in (or at least not hinder) the process of federalisation in the plans of the Italian reformers.

There was therefore an opportunity to look towards the Etruscans who seemed to exhibit no significant contraindications. Gradually other peoples on the peninsula also began to be included, as discussed in the volume *L’Italia avanti il dominio dei Romani* (Florence 1810) by Giuseppe

Micali. Contemporary antiquarians did not grasp the ideological aspect of this work, which was however fully appreciated by an educated public, ensuring its success.⁵ In scholarly reconstructions in the years and decades immediately following, federalism became the institutional structure supposed to have been preferred by most of the Italic peoples before their Romanisation, even though this stretched the facts. Nevertheless consideration of other peoples did not diminish the interest in the Etruscan world, which became better known and romantically idealised following lucky discoveries such as that of the necropolis of Vulci by the prince and archaeologist Lucien Bonaparte (**Figs 183–4**).⁶

It is interesting for our purposes to follow the *querelle* or controversy as to whether or not the vases found in the excavations were of Greek manufacture. The debate had been going on for some time and had been initiated by Johann Joachim Winckelmann who, in his successful attempt to limit the influence of *Etruscheria*, had speculated that the vases found in Etruria could be of Greek manufacture. A similar argument, albeit in a more tentative manner, had been presented by Luigi Lanzi, the founder of the scientific study of the Etruscans, in the essay *De’ vasi antichi dipinti volgarmente chiamati etruschi* (1806). The discussion was effectively closed with the firm Greek identification of the vases by Eduard Gerhard in his *Rapporto Volcente*, which appeared in *Annali dell’Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* in 1831.⁷

Lucien Bonaparte on the other hand continued energetically to support the Etruscan character of vases found in his excavations and of others discovered in the Italian peninsula. He did this by questioning the veracity of the discoveries made in Greece, but above all by maintaining that such intense exchange between two geographical areas was impossible. Aside from this learned dispute, Lucien Bonaparte also more than once insisted on the fact that Italy was the cradle of civilisation:

l’anteriorità delle belle arti nel mondo antico appartiene all’Italia nostra come glie ne appartiene il primato nell’Europa moderna.

(The primacy of the fine arts in the ancient world belonged to our Italy just as it does in modern Europe.)

Questa sola scoperta dell’Italia antica indica che non solamente le belle arti e l’immaginazione che le crea, ma le scienze e la meditazione dalle quali derivano furono proprietà della nostra Penisola quando la Grecia era Barbara ed il resto dell’Occidente nelle tenebre

(This single observation about ancient Italy indicates that not only the fine arts and the imagination that created them, but the disciplines and the reasoning behind them, were the achievements of the Italian peninsula, when Greece was barbarian and the rest of the West was in darkness.)

È tempo che gli eruditi italiani non più discordi fra loro, ma riuniti dall’evidenza dei nostri monumenti nella sostanza della opinione difesa dall’illustre senatore Bonaroti, Passeri, Guarnacci, e tanti altri, pongano fuor di dubbio la primazia della loro patria troppo tempo oscurata dalla Grecomani

(It is time that learned Italians ended their disagreements, and were united by the evidence of our monuments and the unarguable stance adopted by the distinguished scholars, Senators Bonaroti, Passeri, Guarnacci, and many others,

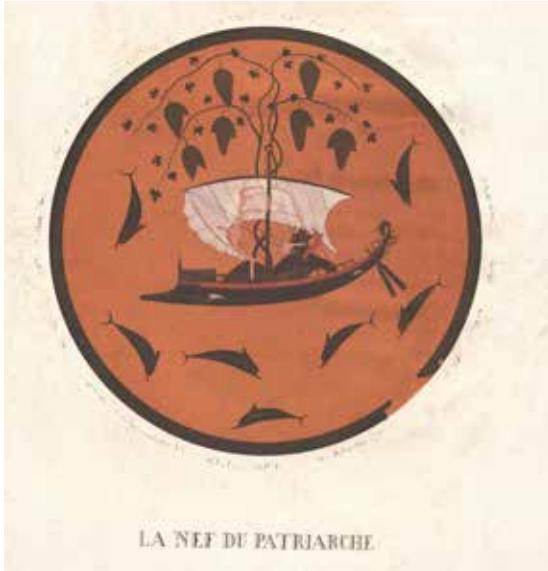


Figure 183 Lithograph by Luigi Maria Valadier. Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

posing no doubt as to the primacy of their homeland, too long overshadowed by Grecomania.)⁸

This was also the position of Father Maurizio Brescia, a versatile intellectual with sentiments very close to those of the prince.⁹ He was an interesting figure who attracted the attention of Marie-Henri Beyle (Stendhal), while he was the French consul in Civitavecchia:

Pour être admis dans le corps d'ailleurs si respectable des archéologues, il faut savoir par cœur Diodore de Sicile, Pline et une douzaine d'autres historiens; de plus, il faut avoir abjuré tout respect pour la logique. Cet art importun est l'ennemi acharné de tous les systèmes; or comment un livre d'archéologie peut-il attirer l'attention du monde, même légèrement, sans le secours d'un système un peu singulier? Je connais onze systèmes sur l'origine des vases peints et des tombeaux étrusques cachés sous terre. Le plus absurde est, ce me semble, celui qui suppose que tout cela a été fait sous Constantin et ses successeurs. Le système que j'adopterais volontiers et que je proposerais au lecteur, tout en convenant qu'il est malheureusement dénué de preuves suffisantes, est celui qui m'a été enseigné par le vénérable père Maurice, lequel, pendant dix ans, a dirigé de nombreuses et importantes fouilles. Cet homme vénérable, d'une amabilité parfait et qui connaît tous les historiens de l'antiquité, comme nous Français nous connaissons Voltaire, pense que les tombeaux que nous déterrons appartiennent à un peuple fort antérieur aux Étrusques, peut-être contemporain des premiers Égyptiens.

(To be admitted into the body of the most respectable archaeologists, one must know by heart Diodorus of Sicily, Pliny and a dozen other historians; in addition, one must have renounced any respect for logic. This unwelcome art is the bitter enemy of all systems of thought; besides how could an archaeology book attract the world's attention, even minimally, without the aid of some singular theory? I know eleven theories concerning the origin of painted vases and Etruscan tombs hidden underground. The most absurd is, I think, one that assumes that all this was done under Constantine and his successors. The theory that I would happily adopt and I would suggest to the reader, while agreeing that it is unfortunately devoid of sufficient evidence, is that taught me by the venerable Father Maurice, who, for ten years, has led many important



Figure 184 Lithograph by Luigi Maria Valadier. Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

excavations. This venerable and very kind man, who knows all the historians of antiquity, as we French know Voltaire, believes that the graves we unearth belong to a people who lived a long time before the Etruscans, perhaps contemporary with the first Egyptians.)¹⁰

One may wonder whether Lucien Bonaparte, in supporting these ideas, thought about the political implications of his views and whether indeed his politics coloured his opinions. I believe it was highly likely. I think they were dictated by his need for approval by the Papal authorities and, more generally, and perhaps most importantly, his wish to be in line with the emerging public concept of the Italian peninsula: Italy was not just a 'geographical expression' as Metternich so famously put it, but the cradle of civilisation.

We must not forget that Lucien Bonaparte was a man of numerous cultural interests, in particular poetry, theatre, astronomy and archaeology. His deepest concerns, however, were with European politics, from which he had no intention of being excluded, and the fate of the family of which he continued to be a prominent representative. This is not to say that the prince considered the *filoitaliche* view (seeing the Etruscans as the originators of everything) out-dated, and that he only supported it for strategic reasons, rather that he was well aware of the hidden ideal and its political values, and saw in them the ideological basis for a forthcoming liberation of Italy.¹¹

Two minor episodes, recently brought to the fore by Giovanni Colonna, throw light on the strong bond that had been created between the Etruscans and new Italy in its formative phase. In Trento in 1813 much was made of the discovery of an Etruscan inscription, later recognised to be false, created to both provide historical confirmation of the Etruscan origin of the Raeti, a confederation of Italic tribes, and to claim politically the Italian character of the area at a time when it was feared that the Austrians might return after the defeats suffered by Napoleon in Russia and Spain. A similar episode occurred later in 1872 in the hinterland of Nice: a forger created four Etruscan inscriptions to assert



Figure 185 Portrait of Count Mauro Faina. Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

the Italian character of the area that in March 1860 had been ceded to France by the House of Savoy, in the context of complex geopolitical manoeuvres, in the face of strong opposition by Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi.¹² Once again the Etruscans were equated with the Italians.

A better known parallel is the purchase of the Casuccini Collection from Chiusi for the Archaeological Museum of Palermo during the 1860s, that is to say in the early years of unified Italy, for which the *Commissione per le Antichità e Belle Arti della Sicilia* had earmarked almost all its available funds for 1864 and 1865. The Sicilian historian and then Minister of Education, Michele Amari, had energetically campaigned for its acquisition, not to win votes but for the motive identified by G. Colonna, to seek for a kind of ‘definitive confirmation of the Italian identity of Sicily on a cultural level, that had already been established on the political-institutional side and at the price of two bloody revolutions in 1848 and 1860’ (*di una sorta di definitiva ratifica, sul piano culturale, della propria italianità, già ottenuta, e a prezzo di due sanguinose rivolte (nel 1848 e nel 1860), sul versante politico-istituzionale*).¹³

The conquest of Rome in 1870 and its becoming the capital of the new state changed the situation considerably: it was no longer necessary to idealise the Etruscans and consider them the first Italians (or even as prestigious ancestors). The Kingdom of Italy started to look to the greatness of Republican and Imperial Rome – an interest that culminated in the Fascist period – and the Etruscans slid rapidly into the background. The Etruscans’ supposed and idealised ‘federalism’, to which so much attention had been paid, could have represented an obstacle to the political



Figure 186 Portrait of Count Eugenio Faina. Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

trends of the first decades after unification towards strong political and administrative centralisation.

Widespread interest in the Etruscan world, however, did not diminish, and some members of the new Italy who had participated directly in, or approved of, the Risorgimento, became avid collectors of Etruscan antiquities. This was the case, for example, with Counts Mauro and Eugenio Faina who assembled an important archaeological collection in the 1860s and 1880s. In 1954, in accordance with the bequest of Claudio, Eugenio’s son, the collection became public.

From his youth Count Mauro (Fig. 185) had sided with the Risorgimento. A file of the Papal States police lists him as being: ‘Pessimo soggetto. Fanatico repubblicano. Già trovasi soggetto a sorveglianza sin dal 1831. Parti volontario nelle ultime vicende per la Lombardia, né più fece ritorno’ (*A very bad character. A fanatical Republican. Already under surveillance since 1831. Left voluntarily during the latest events in Lombardy and has not returned*). Later we are informed that he emigrated to America from where he eventually returned to live in Perugia. Still later in the years 1859–60, decisive for the fate of Italy, he served in the Piemontese Army.¹⁴ After the unification, his political commitment seems to have waned. His nephew Eugenio belonged to the next generation and, after serving as a soldier in Garibaldi’s army in 1866 at the time of the Third War of Independence, he became a leading figure in Umbrian liberalism between the decades of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, first as a Member of Parliament and then as a Senator of the Kingdom by royal appointment. He turned his energies toward the modernisation of agriculture and the problems of literacy

among the peasant masses, again attending to the subject of cultural heritage.

The collecting interests of Count Mauro, who was responsible for initiating the collection in 1864 soon after the unification of the country, increased during his frequent visits to the Villa of Laviano, near Chiusi, owned by Princess Maria Bonaparte Valentini, daughter of Lucien Bonaparte. Many elements led to the birth of his passion for archaeology, including the ambiance of Chiusi, his acquaintance with the princess, contacts with antiquarian scholars in Perugia and his relationship with the Paolozzi family, themselves important collectors. In December 1864 he began excavating, investigating the territories of Chiusi, Perugia, Todi, Orvieto and Bolsena. He was looking above all for tombs that he considered to be 'containers' for finds of great artistic value which could enrich his collection. The results were not up to his expectation: as Mauro noted: 'ho chiuso la seconda campagna di scavi, ho speso molto e trovato poco; ma mi sono devastato ed il museo cresce per la roba comprata' ('I finished the second season of excavation, having spent much and found little; but I have ruined myself and the museum grows through the objects I have bought').

In his acquisitions, preference went to material brought to light in the territories of Chiusi, Perugia, Orvieto, Todi, San Venanzo, Florence and, generally, in the Maremma. Among the sellers expressly mentioned we find Maria Bonaparte Valentini and some collectors of Chiusi: Paolozzi, Fanelli and Giulietti.

In January 1865 Count Mauro wrote to Ariodante Fabretti, eminent historian and archaeologist who had worked hard for the construction of the new Italy, that he had assembled 'un grazioso piccolo museo con 300 pezzi, alcuni dei quali considerevoli' ('a charming small museum with 300 objects, some of considerable importance'). The collection was progressively enriched in the following years: in June–July of 1868, the Count drew up the first inventory listing 2,106 finds (excluding the coin cabinet).

Count Mauro's main interest was in ancient numismatics. In May 1867 his coin cabinet consisted of '1,800 monete classate, senza contare i duplicate' ('1,800 classified coins, without counting duplicates'), and it had grown to 3,000 by July of the following year. The special attention devoted to the coin cabinet is evident from the separate entry for the acquisition of coins in the expense accounts, preserved in the archives of the Faina Foundation. From 1 December 1864 to 15 May 1867 Mauro estimated that he had spent L. 1400 for the coin cabinet against a total expenditure of L. 8288. From May 1867 to September 1868 he invested L. 2835 in coins, while the total expenditure was L. 7665. The origin of the coins, purchased on the antiquities market, is unfortunately unknown. Excavations were evidently neglected as the amount listed for archaeological finds was only L. 15.

The antiquities, housed in the family palace in Perugia, were subdivided into four rooms: *dei buccari*, *dei bronzi*, *dei vasi dipinti* and *degli Idoli* (of bucchero, of bronzes, of painted vases and of figurines). Browsing the inventory we realise that the rooms *dei buccari* and *degli Idoli* were fairly homogeneous, while the other two contained materials that differed in type, chronology and area of production.¹⁵



Figure 187 Drawing by Adolfo Cozza from *Tomba Golini I*. Archives of the Opera Del Duomo di Orvieto

When Count Mauro died in 1868, his nephew Eugenio (Fig. 186) inherited the collection and considerably transformed the approach to collecting, thanks to his superior educational background and a greater awareness of methods of archaeological research. The first change was indicated by the transfer of the collection from Perugia to Orvieto. A second change – and the most significant – was his decision to buy materials exclusively from Orvieto, since he was well aware of the importance of keeping objects in their historical context. This included respect for the funerary goods from each tomb, as he hoped to place 'in ogni singola scanzia gli oggetti tutti rinvenuti in ogni singola tomba' ('on each individual shelf all the objects found in a particular tomb') (1881).¹⁶ These ideas probably came to him from Gian Francesco Gamurrini, one of the most important Italian archaeologists of the time, and from Adolfo Cozza, the archaeologist, painter, sculptor and inventor, who played a significant role in the management of the Italian cultural heritage in the final decades of the 19th century (Fig. 187). In 1886 Eugenio and Cozza had fought together and had remained close friends.

The number of antiquities collected in 1881 is recorded in an inventory listing about 3,156 items. The figure can be compared with the inventory of 1868 where 2,106 objects were recorded. Count Eugenio, because of his political



Figure 188 View of room VII at the Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto



Figure 189 View of room VIII at the Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

commitments and the fact that he had become *Ispettore Onorario ai Monumenti e agli Scavi*, stopped buying antiquities for his collection and became one of the sponsors of the Museo Civico Archeologico of Orvieto.¹⁷

We have three interesting descriptions of the collection in the 1870s and 1880s: one is by the well-known archaeologist Gustav Körte in 1877; another by George Dennis, author of *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* (3rd edition, London 1883; see Chapter 1 by Rasmussen in this volume), and the third by Domenico Cardella, *professore nelle scuole secondarie di Orvieto*, in 1888.¹⁸ G. Körte in his essay, *Sulla necropoli di Orvieto*, published in the *Annali dell’Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, suggested critically examining the important discoveries made in the area of Crocifisso del Tufo. We learn that a significant part of the finds had been bought by Eugenio Faina for the family collection: ‘oltre un centinaio di vasi dipinti’ (‘over 100 painted vases’); ‘pochi vasi di una tecnica molto più rozza e che fuori dubbio provengono da

una fabbrica locale etrusca’ (‘a few vases of a much cruder technique and which no doubt came from a local Etruscan workshop’); 83 pieces of bucchero; several ‘oggetti di bronzo’ (bronze objects); and some ‘oggetti di oro, argento e pietre preziose’ (‘objects of gold, silver and precious stones’). Thus he succeeded in putting together ‘un museo locale della più alta importanza’ (‘a local museum of the highest importance’), where ‘ognuno vi può fare uno studio complessivo di tali monumenti formanti un insieme per il luogo del loro ritrovamento, studio che diventa impossibile allorquando, come al solito, gli oggetti vanno qua e là dispersi per commercio’ (‘everyone can make a comprehensive study of these monuments, forming a set characteristic of their place of discovery, a study which becomes impossible as soon as the objects become dispersed far and wide by the antiquities market, as usually happens’).¹⁹ The Count, in other words, tried to stem the tide of dispersion of the local archaeological heritage in the absence

of any action by the government, which was unable to issue a law regulating the protection of antiquities before the early 20th century.

Even though the public ownership of ancient artefacts had been asserted with the Pacca Edict issued by the Papal States as early as 1820, the legislation was not consistently applied either in the case of chance discovery or of a planned excavation. After unification the public ownership of ancient artefacts appeared to be an unsustainable limitation of property rights and a concept alien to the ideology of the new liberal Italy. Among those who more profoundly denounced the lack of legislation in the columns of the prestigious review *Nuova Antologia* was the archaeologist Gian Francesco Gamurrini who was in contact – as we have seen – with Eugenio Faina.²⁰

George Dennis confirmed that a large portion of the finds made in the necropolis of the Crocifisso del Tufo had found their way to the collection of the Count, defined as ‘a gentleman whose patriotism and good taste have urged him at a great expense to make a collection of the antiquities discovered in the vicinity of his native town, and whose courtesy leaves it at all times accessible to strangers’. For the British archaeologist and diplomat it was ‘patriotism’, in addition to good taste, that motivated the collecting activities of the Count. In Dennis’s description, the museum that was not limited to the *roba* (in Italian in his text, signifying ‘stuff’ or ‘material’) from Orvieto, and was divided into six rooms.²¹

Domenico Cardella was the author of the first guide to the collection: his little book is valuable because it describes the museum in detail and provides indications of the origin and location of the material on exhibit which otherwise would have been lost. The publication informs us that the museum had found a home on the second floor of Palazzo Faina, located opposite the Cathedral of Orvieto, and was distributed in six rooms (**Figs 188–9**). In the entrance room were placed some heterogeneous finds: *canopi*, *cippi*, terracotta cinerary urns, general pottery, silvered and black-glazed, and much more. Then the rich coin cabinet of about 3,000 specimens.

The third room, called *dei bronzi*, presented the mass of the Etruscan and Roman bronzes collected. The prehistoric finds, such as stone arrow-heads, were also displayed here. In the fourth room, called *delle tazze* (of cups), were primarily *kylikes* of Attic production. In the next, called *dei buccheri*, there was the particularly rich series of bucchero ware largely from Chiusi where Count Mauro – as we may recall – had undertaken his first excavations and purchases. The exhibition ended with the room *dei grandi vasi dipinti* (of large painted vases), where the masterpieces of the collection including the three Exekias amphorae found in the necropolis of the Crocifisso del Tufo were exhibited.²²

In conclusion, it is evident that the passage of collecting moved from a private pursuit to the assembly of public civic collections. In his renouncing of private purchases and his commitment to the creation of a Museo Civico Archeologico (**Fig. 190**), Count Eugenio can be considered a forerunner in the field. There was a form of historical symmetry that saw the early attempts to create an Italian nation, inspired by the Etruscans, now reflected by Italian public institutions



Figure 190 View of the Museo Civico Archeologico. In the background is a stone head of a warrior from the necropolis of Crocifisso del Tufo. Claudio Faina Museum, Orvieto

displaying Etruscan artefacts for the benefit of the Italian people.

The history of the Faina Collection does not constitute an unicum in the decades that led to the unification of Italy and its consolidation. To give a comprehensive survey of comparanda would be beyond the scope of this chapter, but a few outstanding instances should be noted: the purchase of the Casuccini Collection for the Archaeological Museum of Palermo, already mentioned, and the ultimate destination of the impressive archaeological collection gathered by Giovanni Barracco. Born in Capo Rizzuto in Calabria in 1829, Baracco was a conspicuous member of one of the most renowned families of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. After moving to Naples in 1849, he assumed liberal ideals and chose to stand for the unification of Italy. Once this was established he became Member of Parliament (from 1861) and then Senator (from 1886) of the Kingdom of Italy. His collecting interests, nurtured by his long friendship with the archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli, led him to assemble an important collection containing notable Etruscan works. The collection was donated by Barracco to the Comune of Rome in 1902 and was opened to the public in 1905, some years before his death in 1914.²³

Notes

- 1 Della Fina 2011; Bruni 2011; Capaldi *et al.* 2014.
- 2 Cristofani 1983; Haynes 1992; Bruschetti *et al.* 2014.
- 3 Tiraboschi 1772, 1–23.
- 4 Cristofani 1983, 137–42.
- 5 Desideri 2011, 7–21.
- 6 Pietromarchi 1981; Liverani 1995; Buranelli 1995; Costantini 1995; Nardi 1996; Costantini and Hausmann 2003; Della Fina 2004; Della Fina 2005; Cavoli 2007; Simonetta and Arikha 2011; Marroni 2012; Della Fina 2014.
- 7 Gerhard 1831; Costantini 1995; Costantini 1997; Costantini 1998.
- 8 Bonaparte 1829, 174–6.
- 9 Marroni 2012, 211–49; Zanardini 2014; www.padremauriziobrescia.it.
- 10 Stendhal 1853, esp. 1003–4); Nardi 1996.
- 11 Della Fina 2005, 633–7.
- 12 Colonna 2011.
- 13 Colonna 2011, 35–6; *La collezione Casuccini* 1993, 1–36; Colonna 2005, 2397–424.
- 14 Sandri 1961, 73ff.
- 15 Klakowicz 1970; Della Fina 1989a, 77–85; Della Fina 1989b, 22–6.
- 16 Klakowicz 1972, 19.
- 17 Klakowicz 1970; Della Fina 1989a, 27–85; Della Fina 1989b, 26–31; Della Fina 1989c; Della Fina 1990.
- 18 Körte 1877, 98–9; Dennis 1878, vol. 2, 46–8; Cardella 1888.
- 19 Körte 1877, 98–9.
- 20 Gamurrini 1868.
- 21 Dennis 1883, vol. 2, 46–8.
- 22 Cardella 1888.
- 23 Cima 2010.

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Chapter 16

James Byres: A Note on Catholicism, Jacobitism and the Etruscans

Peter Davidson

Abstract

This chapter considers the evidence that survives for the book on Etruscan tombs written by the *virtuoso* antiquarian James Byres of Tonley (1734–1817), and attempts to set the project in the twin contexts of Grand Tour archaeology and of Recusant Catholic analogical history. It adds to the ideas already advanced by David Ridgway concerning some proposals about Byres's cultural background and his use of historical analogy, political and personal, and also suggests that Byres's own homosexuality played a part in shaping his view of the Etruscans and the representations of Etruscan art that he commissioned. This discussion advocates that a little more can be reconstructed of this lost book than is suggested by Ridgway. The original sepia drawings by Franciszek Smuglewicz (1745–1807) all survive at Würzburg, although the engraved plates are lost; extensive manuscript notes are in the National Library of Scotland (NLS), and it would also seem possible that Byres lent his notes to Winckelmann who drew on them for the Etruscan section of his landmark publication, *The History of Ancient Art*.

James Byres was born in Tonley, Aberdeenshire, in 1734, to a Catholic family with Jacobite leanings. With his family having fled Scotland after the Jacobite uprising of 1745, by the early 1760s he became a *cicerone* (tour-guide) to the Grand Tourists of Rome. Thereon, he became an antiquarian, designer and art-dealer. His circle included Giovanni Battista Piranesi and the antiquarians Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Sir William Hamilton, as well as the historian Edward Gibbon, whom Byres guided around Rome. In the 1760s, Byres was gathering subscribers for an illustrated volume on Etruscan tombs. The project never came to fruition, and its plates (engraved by Byres's partner Christopher Norton) were published without commentary after his death. This chapter focuses on an aspect of his life and work that is little explored: the fact that he was a member of a culturally significant minority, and that his work on the Etruscans was to some degree formed by his heritage. Like Thomas Dempster of Muiresk (1579–1625) before him, also an antiquarian, scholar and Etruscophile, he was a member of one of the many Aberdeenshire gentry families who had remained Roman Catholic at the reformation. In a prosperous region, remote from central government and under the patronage of the powerful families of Gordon and Seton,¹ the sufferings of the Aberdeenshire Catholics were much mitigated by local toleration and accommodation. They were not the objects of any sustained political coercion or penalty until the Jacobite campaigns and risings that followed the 1688 flight from England of King James VII of Scotland and the II of England and Ireland, the last Roman Catholic monarch to reign over all three kingdoms. Although military and professional careers in Britain remained theoretically closed to them, many Aberdeenshire Catholics prospered on the continent, in the wine trade and, most notably, as mercenary soldiers.² It was through such networks, partly based on kinship, that the parents of James Byres made their escape after the catastrophic defeat at the battle of Culloden of the Jacobite rising of 1745–6, and arrived eventually in Rome,

where Byres was to make his career as antiquarian, *cicerone* and art dealer.³

The passing of the Penal Laws against those practising the Catholic faith and the Jacobites (supporters of James VII and II and his heirs) had both direct and indirect effects. The aspect that Byres would have absorbed axiomatically and unconsciously from his background (just as he acquired the northern-Scottish habits of speech still identifiably present in his adult orthography) would have been the habit of looking at the past, including the remote past, in a particularly intense relationship to the present. This could take the form of looking to antiquity for precedent and authority: the (beautiful and almost forgotten) Jacobite Latin epic, *The Grameid* of James Philip (1691) advanced the claim of James VII and II to his throne as unquestionable through one word – ‘Fergusius’ – ‘descendent of Fergus’, King of Scotland in unbroken succession from the mythical founder of the realm, King Fergus.⁴ This work sets up a parallel with an indigenous king of ancient descent defending his kingdom against an aggressive invader: James VII and II had been replaced by his daughter Mary and her husband, the Dutch Prince William of Orange; in Philip’s work William III is simply and inevitably referred to as ‘Batavus’, ‘the Dutchman’. This Jacobite epic, too incendiary for print, circulated widely in manuscript form through an efficient system of scribal copies, and was exactly the kind of reading to commend itself to James Byres’ father. Similarly, there was a deep-seated tendency throughout early modern Britain to read history analogically: ancient events presented in direct parallel with the present.⁵ This is particularly found in the Catholic community in the plays of the exiled Jesuit Colleges on the continent: the present persecution of the British Catholics being analogous to the pagan persecution of early British Christians or to the Byzantine iconoclast persecution of those who still honoured sacred images.⁶ Christopher Highley formulates a particularly clear form of words to describe these confessional and political apprehensions of the past:

We should remember that antiquarian works are as much about the present as the past, and that like all text, their meanings are not fixed but contingent: as the cultural circumstances surrounding the production and reception of texts change, so texts accrue new meanings.⁷

No early modern history is free of contemporary allusion or implication, and there is no antiquarian discipline which is immune from reading the past allegorically as a reflection on the present. This is perhaps particularly true of Scotland, the country from which Byres originated. This assertion is supported by the comparatively late date of foundation of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, in 1780.⁸ The Society of Antiquaries of London had been founded in 1707, but the anxieties surrounding the study of antiquities can be inferred from William Smellie’s note on that foundation in the first volume of *Archaeologica Scotica*, as late as 1792.⁹ In this, he implies that only the death in 1766 of the last credible Stuart pretender to the thrones of England and Scotland, James Francis Edward Stuart, had cleared the way for licit antiquarian activity in Scotland:

Till we were cordially united with England, not in government only, but in loyalty and affection to a common sovereign, it was

not perhaps altogether consistent with political wisdom to call the attention of the Scots to the ancient honours and constitution of their ancient monarchy.¹⁰

Byres’s own position on the Etruscans was inevitably informed by Catholic and Jacobite historiography,¹¹ and attracted him to continuities that began in the remote past. In Dempster’s *De Etruria regali* (completed in MS 1619, published by Thomas Coke, as edited and annotated by Filippo Buonarroti, in Florence in 1723–4; see chapters by Bruschetti, Sarti, Della Fina and Gialluca in this volume) Dempster asserts that the ancient monarchy of Etruria has been revived in the rule of the Medici Grand Dukes:

Etruriam bello juxta, paceque olim florentem, ac bis mille annis Regibus parentem, variasque humanae vicissitudinis vices expertam, nunc tandem sub Serenissimis principibus Monarchio imperio restitutam... a nomine exordium duco¹²

I derive its origin from its name Etruria, once flourishing equally in war and peace, and, for two thousand years, nurturer of kings, and tested in the various alterations of human misfortune, yet, now, restored under the most serene princes to monarchical empire.

In fact, local historical traditions attributed other origins to Florence, chiefly that it was a Roman colony, founded either by Julius Caesar, or by Roman veterans who had served with Sulla.¹³

Byres’s own observations, in his 1766 manuscript *Journal of a Tour to Sicily*, recording a visit to the collection of the princes of Biscari, makes it clear that the relations between the cultures of Greece and Etruria in antiquity were only beginning to come into focus for his generation of antiquarians, a process in which his own work was to play a small but not unimportant part:

He has an excellent collection of Etruscan Vases some very ancient found at Comarina some with Etrusken, some Egyptian, and some with Greek figures on them, and with Greek and Etrusken inscriptions which I think shows that the Nations had great communication together and borrowed their arts from one another.¹⁴

The subterranean Etruscan tombs at Corneto, now Tarquinia, had been known since the early 18th century, but interest in them was revived by etchings of their wall-paintings published by Byres’s associate Piranesi in 1765 (it seems probable that Byres either accompanied him on the visit on which he made the drawings, or visited the tombs independently in the early 1760s). It seems likely that he made his manuscript drafts for a history of the Etruscans, now in the National Library of Scotland,¹⁵ beginning around this time. These fragmentary drafts were possibly made over a considerable period: they contain a note referring to Guarnacci’s first volume of 1762, and by 1767 Byres was certainly canvassing for subscribers.¹⁶ All the notes now in the National Library of Scotland are presumably drafts of text to accompany Byres’s visual recording of the wall-paintings from Corneto/Tarquinia, which survive as the sepia by Smuglewicz in the von Wagner collection at Würzburg, and the engraved plates by Christopher Norton, which were to wait so long for publication.¹⁷ Byres had gathered subscribers for the publication of his work by the end of the 1760s, but the etched copperplates were left

behind when he returned to Scotland permanently in 1790, and were detained for the duration of the Napoleonic wars at Livorno in packing cases with other effects belonging to Byres's nephew, Patrick Moir, until 1817. They were finally printed posthumously in London in 1842, in the folio entitled *Hypogaei or Sepulchral Caverns of Tarquinia*, but with minimal text, and essentially as a pendant to Mrs Hamilton Gray's *A Tour to the Sepulchres of Etruria in 1839*, published in London in 1843.

Byres was fascinated by the achievements of this 'first people of Italy' and regarded their subjugation by the Romans as barbaric. Within the historiographic tradition which Byres inherited it would have been very easy to think of them as comparable with the Jacobite northern Scots, menaced and defeated by an invasive southern neighbour. From the fragmentary drafts and notes in Byres's manuscript remains, it is clear that some parallel of this kind was at the centre of his thinking. He dwells on the Romans as uncivilised, destructive conquerors in the draft headed 'History of the Etruscans/Section 1st/The antient state of Italy':¹⁸

Nothing can be more incertin then the accounts left us by the antients of the first inhabitants. This is principally owing in the first place to the Roman Conquestes and their ignorant Vanity in the arley time of the Republic when ignorant of letters they dispisde al artes and sciences except that of Ware living principally on the spoils fo their nibours in subduing the Etruscans and other nations... befor they had aquaired a teast for nolege themselves they put a stope to the Prograce of Scitence and the Vanity of apering the onely great nation probably indared them to destroy the Etruscan records which perhaps showed the meanes of ther origin which [they] probably wanted to Conceal.

He also begins to try to argue a closeness between the Gaels of Britain and Ireland and the ancient inhabitants of Italy. This is part of a speculation about all of Europe being peopled from the same stock, scattered by the deluge, but also shows an undercurrent of hope that affinities will emerge between Etruscan and Gael. Most of the argument is based on very speculative guesses about language, a wild hope that Gaelic or Welsh will prove the key to Etruscan:

Ti or Ty in the Celtic signifies a House and Tan or Taen fire Titan the house of fire...

Celtic Alp or Alb white being generally coverd with snow. The Celtes in the asiatick provinces especially was verey earley called Titans which in Celtic signifies sons of the Earth and answers to Aborigines a neam assumed by the Umbriens a tribe of the same nation in Italy... to endeavour to... write down all the antient neams of Men and Pleses in Italy particularly Tuscany to get them explained by the Erse (Irish) or Welsh. To write down the Etruscan inscriptions in the Roman Character from the different Etruscan alfabets and see if they can be explained by the same language.¹⁹

It is to a British tradition of historical analogy amongst those living under penalty and in eclipse that Byres' Etruscans form an epilogue – civilised, skilled in the arts, indigenous to their territories, in correspondence with the most cultivated peoples of the known world, yet silenced, defeated and written out of history by their aggressive and victorious neighbours to the south. The Catholic and Jacobite Scots of the north were particularly aware of the

mythical origins of the Romans from their own endless appropriations of, and allusions to, the epic of the exiled hero, the *Aeneid*. In parallel with this, it is not difficult to see how the Etruscans might have come to resonate with their own mysterious ancestors who had left the north-eastern half of Scotland rich in stone monuments, mostly pictorial representations without text.²⁰

Byres had particular reason to champion Etruscan against Roman: for the enemies who had driven his family into exile, for the lowland Calvinist, the Presbyterian Whig, the whole story of Scotland's past is one of fragmentation and subjugation. Most important of all to those who negotiated the 1707 Union with England, and who subsequently fought off what they perceived as the Jacobite threat in 1715 and 1745, was a notion of their own *difference* from the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders from the north-west of the kingdom, and the Catholic and Episcopalian Jacobites of the north-east. According to such an authority as John Clerk of Penicuik, the lowland Scots are derived from the English tribe of the Brigantes and were therefore a people distinct from the inhabitants of the north not only by origin, but also by inclusion within the pale of Roman civilisation, within the frontier of Empire which nascent archaeology was recognising in the structure now known as the Antonine Wall, although there were optimistic Whig attempts throughout the 18th century to set the *limes* of the Roman Empire as far north as Ross and Cromarty. Three possibilities are advanced in General William Roy's 1793 *Military Antiquities of the Romans in North-Britain* for the northernmost Roman penetration: Burghead 'the Ultima Ptoroton or furthest station'; Nigg, where a stone was found allegedly with an inscription expressing 'Romani Imperii Limes'; and Tarbatness in Ross and Cromarty where he reads two cairns as (the forged) Richard of Cirencester's 'altars which were built up to mark the furthest bounds of the Roman Empire in Britain'. The territory even conjecturally brought within the control of the Empire thus extended far into those regions subdued after Culloden.²¹

There is another parallel which is worth consideration: James Byres was one of the first Scots to identify himself as gay in a modern sense, conscious of a lifelong orientation in himself and in others, and a member of a cultivated group of like-minded virtuosi in Rome. A reading of the lives gathered in Ingamells' prosopography of the Grand Tour indicates the existence of homosexual communities in 18th-century Rome and Florence, relatively discreet, but rarely troubled. Byres was a friend and colleague of the art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68), who writes in all his work from an explicitly gay perspective, and may well have shared Etruscan research material with him. In the conversation piece of Byres with his household by Franciszek Smuglewicz (who made the sepia drawings for Byres's projected Etruscan volume), both Byres and his partner (in the modern sense) Christopher Norton (1738–99) are in the picture along with his parents and sister.²² What is unmistakable is the subject of the large oval bas relief hanging on the wall behind the figures, it is Ganymede with the eagle drinking from the shallow dish in his hands, a clear declaration of an affinity. Byres' will (in the same manuscript collection in the National Library of Scotland as his notes on



Figure 191 Two antiquarians shown drawing a pilaster painting of a near-naked youth in the Tomba dei Ceisine, one of the earliest of the sequence of both Smuglewicz's sepia and Christopher Norton's engravings. Martin von Wagner Museum, der Universität Würzburg, Inv. Nr. Hz 10154

Etruscan history) makes the closeness of the relationship between Byres and Norton explicit. Christopher Norton is a major beneficiary, having been (a venerable means of facilitating such a transfer of family capital) married to one of Byres's cousins.

This leads us to a re-consideration of the two antiquarians shown drawing a pilaster-painting of a near-naked youth in a tomb in one of the earliest of the sequence of both Smuglewicz's sepia and Christopher Norton's engravings (Fig. 191).²³

While the figures may be scene-setting generic antiquaries, it is possible also to read them as Byres and Norton in the act of making their own records of the tombs, a gay couple making modern drawings of an ancient depiction of a near-naked youth. The drapery in the illustration is uncharacteristic of Etruscan art and appears to be an addition, or an interpretation of an original now lost. It would seem wholly possible to read it as a deliberately erotic addition or conjectural restoration. The *Hypogaei* drawings reproduce many wall-paintings of naked male figures – the impression given by what survives of the project is of a discovery of a homosocial society delighting in homoerotic depictions.

I would advance the strong possibility that some of the research notes which governed the choice and sequence of illustrations for Byres' project (possibly made by Byres in the early 1760s when Piranesi was making the drawings for his own Etruscan plates, although the drawings by Smuglewicz may well have been made later) were made available to Johann Joachim Winckelmann when the latter was preparing

his *History of Ancient Art* (1764).²⁴ In this work he alludes to 'a later discovery' of Etruscan tomb-paintings than Buonarroti's with 'more important pictures'; he goes on to list these, and they coincide almost exactly with the material drawn and engraved for Byres's Etruscan project, to the degree that it is possible to consider these pages of Winckelmann, with their emphasis on the male nude, as closely related to the dispersed fragments of the text of Byres's *Hypogaei*.²⁵

In summary, this chapter has argued that James Byres's thinking about the past, both in its fascination with origins and remotest antiquity and in a kind of analogical sympathy with the Etruscans (and disparagement of the Romans), conforms to strong patterns of Scottish historiography with its emphasis on the (wholly fictional) integrity of an ancient Scottish kingdom ruled by an unbroken line of kings. Further he shows signs of the kinds of analogical reading common in the Catholic and Jacobite communities, with a tendency to identify Lowland Scotland and England with the Romans (although sometimes, confusingly, the Stuarts and their adherents in the north were identified with the Trojans of the *Aeneid*) and the Etruscans by implication with the northern Stuart-loyalist Scots. So, in this implied identification, Byres claims the Etruscans as ancestors. Given that he considered a number of what we now know to have been Greek vases to have been Etruscan,²⁶ and that these vases frequently depicted the male nude, as did the homoerotic paintings in Etruscan tombs, he may also have been claiming the Etruscans as ancestors in a more imaginative and personal sense, by identifying them as a society inclusive of gay sensibility and practice.

Notes

- 1 Davidson 2015.
- 2 A detailed prosopography is to be found in McInally 2012; see also Worthington 2004. Byres's uncle by marriage, Robert Gordon of Hallhead (d. 1737) was a wine merchant in Bordeaux and may well have acted as a banker for exiled Jacobites after the rising of 1715.
- 3 The most important paper in the context of this article is Ridgway 2009. See also Ford 1974 and Ingamells 1997 (the biography of Byres is on pp. 169–72; Ingamells 1997 also provides biographies of Byres's friends and associates: Andrew Lumisden is on pp. 616–17; Colin Morison, pp. 679–82; Christopher Norton, pp. 715–16); Slade 1991; Prown 2001. For Byres as antiquarian, see especially Ridgway 2015. Ridgway identified the tombs illustrated by Byres as the otherwise unknown 'Biclinio', 'Ceisinie' and 'Tapezzeria' as well as the surviving, if damaged, 'Mercareccia' and 'Cardinale'.
- 4 Cf Philip 1888. The legendary line of kings was widely believed to have been real. Hector Boece's *Historia Scotorum* (1527) gave the legend an apparently unquenchable vitality. The 'Room of Kings' or Gallery at Holyrood Palace, finished in 1684 for Charles II, with its sequence of (mostly fictional) kings of Scotland painted by Jacob de Witt, was a wholly serious expression of the historical beliefs of Stuart-loyalist Scots (see Gifford *et al.* 1991, 145–6).
- 5 Judith Swaddling has pointed out to me the prevalence of this mode of thought in antiquity: most familiar in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, although, ironically, the practice seems to go back several centuries earlier to the Etruscans themselves, who placed characters who suffered similar fates or carried out similar deeds in juxtaposition on the backs of their bronze mirrors. See the pairing of Achilles and the lesser Ajax in Swaddling and Woodford 2014; also Ajax and Amphiarao in Swaddling 2002, no. 28.
- 6 This subject is expertly handled in Shell 1999.
- 7 Highley 2008, 110.
- 8 The Society received its Charter in May 1783; see Cant 1981, 16.
- 9 Vol. I, iv, cited in Bell, p. 28
- 10 Bell 1981, 10.
- 11 Davidson 2010.
- 12 See Gialluca in Bruschetti *et al.* 2014, 286. This translation by Professor Jane Stevenson.
- 13 See Lamers 2015, 181.
- 14 National Library of Scotland, MS 10339, f. 54r. His conclusions are to a degree in accord with those of Mario Guarnacci, in his *Origini Italiche* (Guarnacci 1767) which Byres notes in NLS MS Inv Dep 184B that he has read and epitomised. At the time when Byres was making his notes a standard spelling for English was still emerging: Byres's distinctly northern Scots spelling would appear to testify to his preservation in adult life of the variety of English which he had learned as a child in Aberdeenshire.
- 15 NLS MS Inv Dep 184B.
- 16 As witness the signed and dated receipt for a deposit for the subscription to Byres's work in Aberdeen University Library, 'vouchers and receipts' file. The set of drawings by Byres for a re-facing of King's College, in the MS 'K' series in Aberdeen, presumably date from the same visit to Scotland.
- 17 Ridgway 2009, 4.
- 18 The folder of manuscripts which relates to Byres's Etruscan project is not foliated, and consists of loose sheets as well as three stitched gatherings with different attempts at a discursive treatment of the subject. It seems counter-productive to invent a foliation which does not apply to visibly foliated leaves.
- 19 This passage seems to offer valuable confirmation that Byres did indeed transcribe Etruscan inscriptions.
- 20 Henderson and Henderson 2011.
- 21 See especially Roy 1793, 137–8. The *limes* of the empire were often set at the Antonine Wall in Stirlingshire: Whig antiquarians tended to ignore Hadrian's Wall, or ascribe it to later builders. Aspiring apologists for Roman Scotland hoped to find Roman traces further north, interpreting indigenous earthworks and excavated artefacts in Angus and the Black Isle as Roman. See Clerk of Penicuik 1750. The classic account of the assertion of the *Romanitas* of Scotland, by Sibbald as well as Clerk is Piggott 1976, especially pp. 133–59. A recent overview of the subject is Davidson and Maccannell 2009.
- 22 The portrait dates from c. 1775–8. It is one of two versions, with variant backgrounds, this one in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, inv. no. PG2601.
- 23 The sepia are in the Martin von Wagner Museum, Würzburg; the engravings were finally published by Frank Howard in Byres 1842.
- 24 Winckelmann's knowledge of Etruscan tombs from descriptions is noted in Arbeid *et al.* 2016, 154.
- 25 Winckelmann 1856, 357–9. It would be rash to claim that Byres is the only possible source of this information, but he remains a very likely one.
- 26 See Chapter 15 by Della Fina and Chapter 17 by Ramage in this volume.

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Chapter 17

The ‘Etruscan’ Impact on Wedgwood: A Misattribution

Nancy Hirschland Ramage

Abstract

When Josiah Wedgwood began to make his pottery in the mid-18th century, he turned primarily to ancient ceramics as his source for classical subject matter. At the time, it was widely assumed that those pots, the majority of which had been found in Etruscan tombs, were Etruscan, even though in fact they were mostly Greek. This essay examines the ways in which Wedgwood enthusiastically used the term ‘Etruscan’, thus promoting his wares with the supposed imprimatur of Etruscan authenticity. Wedgwood’s productions are examined with an eye to understanding the importance of his contributions to the neoclassical era’s passion for antiquity. One of his chief partners in this pursuit was Sir William Hamilton, British envoy to the Court of Naples. It was pages from Hamilton’s publications of his formidable Greek pottery collection that furnished many of the engravings from which Wedgwood’s artists took their subject matter and imagery. This partnership was essential for Wedgwood’s success.

When, in the 1760s, the potter Josiah Wedgwood (**Fig. 192**) wished to make pottery in the spirit of classical antiquity, he turned to the best source available: engravings that copied the paintings on ancient pottery. At that time everyone called the vases on which such images could be found ‘Etruscan’, so it is no wonder that he did too. It made perfect sense, since most of the ancient vases that had been found came from Etruscan tombs. Even though only one item made by Josiah Wedgwood actually copied an Etruscan object,¹ and all the engravings of pottery that he used as his sources were actually copying Greek vases, the misunderstanding persisted, and the use of the term ‘Etruscan’ for Greek vases remained in use long after Wedgwood’s death.²

In his enthusiasm for things Etruscan, Wedgwood named his new pottery factory ‘Etruria’ (although at first he referred to it as *Hetruria* in his letters, in keeping with the early usage of this term).³ As one scholar has written, ‘Nothing demonstrates more clearly than this choice of name the firm’s commitment to the new taste for domestic articles in the classical manner.’⁴ Wedgwood also named his family home ‘Etruria Hall’, the area where he built houses for his workmen ‘Etruria Village’, and his children’s school in his house, the ‘Etruscan School’. Even his children themselves were referred to as Etruscans: Wedgwood reported to his business partner, Thomas Bentley, that his wife, Sally, upon the birth of their second daughter, asked that Bentley might ‘spare a day sometime when you are not better employ’d, and do her little Etruscan the honour of standing ... God-father to her’.⁵

Among the industrialists of the 18th century, none had more influence on the neoclassical movement in the decorative arts than Josiah Wedgwood. Nor did any other potter come close to his success in pushing the popularity of classical ‘Etruscan’ motifs.⁶ He was the equivalent in the pottery trade of Robert Adam and James ‘Athenian’ Stuart in architecture and architectural decoration. In fact, Adam in particular paved the way for the public’s appreciation of Wedgwood’s motifs, since his upper class clientele was

already being exposed to the delicacy of Roman decoration in the homes that he designed, such as Osterley Park, west of London. The Etruscan Room there had been filled with mouldings and painted images modelled on the *grotteschi* of Nero's palace in Rome and the houses of Herculaneum.⁷

One might say that it was no surprise that Wedgwood, descended from a family of potters and growing up in the clay- and coal-rich area of Staffordshire,⁸ went into the business of his forefathers and elder brother Thomas. However, the remarkable achievements he made are attributable more to the ingenuity, perseverance and intelligence of a self-educated man than to the accident of his birth. Furthermore, he accomplished his unparalleled success despite having suffered a serious bout of smallpox as a young teenager that left him with a weakened right knee that never properly recovered. That injured leg would eventually have to be amputated. For a potter, who needed to use a kickwheel, this might have been an insurmountable handicap, but Josiah used his time of convalescence to read and study, far beyond what a boy in his circumstances might be expected to have accomplished; and he went on to experiment with chemistry, glazes, clays and many other aspects of the potter's trade.

Over time, Wedgwood organised his pottery manufactory into two branches for the making of 'useful' and 'ornamental' wares. For the latter, he persuaded a highly educated Liverpool merchant, Thomas Bentley (whom Wedgwood's wife later asked to be godfather to his daughter), to join him in a partnership that was advantageous to both, and which also led to a deep friendship between the two. Bentley moved to London to oversee the painting studio at Chelsea, as well as the showroom on Greek Street, Soho, that Wedgwood opened in 1774, having previously used several other sites to display his wares.⁹ No illustration of that showroom survives, but Ackermann's 1809 aquatint of the Wedgwood showroom in St James's (Fig. 193) gives an idea of what it might have been like. Bentley undoubtedly played a major role in encouraging Wedgwood to adopt the artistic language of the putative Etruscans and their output as his models.¹⁰

As Wedgwood began to promote the classical motifs for his 'ornamental' wares, his initial *modus operandi* was to follow



Figure 192 Portrait medallion of Josiah Wedgwood in black basalt in a gilt metal frame, modelled by William Hackwood, 1782. Marked Wedgwood and Bentley, h. 12.7cm. British Museum, 1887,0307,1.91

some of the ancient vase shapes, and to decorate them with images from antiquity. Later he would add shapes, like teacups, that were specifically tailored to his clients' needs. To put figural and decorative schemes on those pots, he devised a new technique that he called encaustic painting, named after an ancient technique that went back to the Egyptians, where wax was used to make painted colours adhere. Wedgwood's technique did not use wax, but his red, made of a combination of enamel and slip, appeared similar to the ancient Greek pottery technique of red figure, known at that time as Etruscan ware. In Greek red figure, the red areas were reserved during the firing process.



Figure 193 The Wedgwood and Byerley showroom, hand-coloured aquatint in *The Repository of Arts* by Rudolph Ackermann, London, 1809. Photo © Wedgwood Museum/WWRD



Figure 194 Black basalt half-length figure in relief of Sir William Hamilton, 1772–80. Wedgwood and Bentley, h. 15.8cm. British Museum, 1909,1201.127

Wedgwood called his own vases Etruscan as well as the models he was copying. Soon after he began making such pots, he advised William Cox, manager of his London showroom, to be sure to refer to them as ‘Etruscan’, and wrote to Thomas Bentley, ‘Mr Cox is mad as a March Hare for Etruscan Vases.¹¹

Always working as a scientist,¹² Josiah began to experiment with clay bodies already as a young man, and soon he had perfected a stoneware covered with a dark glaze that he at first called ‘Etruscan’, but changed the name to ‘black basalt’ in 1773. It is possible that he had seen the black Etruscan pottery called ‘bucchero’ in the collection of one of his friends, although there is no mention of it in his vast and detailed correspondence. Etruscan bucchero was made by the technique of removing all the oxygen in the kiln, and the clay became black (or grey or brown) through the entire wall of the pot.¹³

In Wedgwood’s catalogues, several editions of which were printed between 1773 and 1788, he reported that he and Bentley ‘carefully inspected some original Etruscan Vases (shown to them by his Grace the Duke of Northumberland) with a View of imitating them....¹⁴ Whether he might have seen any bucchero there is not known, but he might have known about some in the collections of Sir William Hamilton or of Sir Hans Sloane in the British Museum,¹⁵ and certainly he looked at examples of red figure pottery, which he set about to copy in his ‘encaustic’ painting technique.

Wedgwood developed a technique of polishing stoneware with a black stain, and turning it into a much refined hard surface.¹⁶ One of the rare surviving letters from Thomas Bentley, written to Sir William Hamilton, describes part of the process:

We have varnished some Etruscan Vases in the manner you was pleased to advise, which gives them a more cheerful look; & may probably promote their sale.¹⁷

This bore no technical similarity to bucchero, nor to the ancient Greek and south Italian vases that were his models, as their surface too had been turned black by exhausting all the oxygen in the kiln, and thus turning red clay black; but effectively they looked quite similar. Wedgwood used his black basalt technique not only for vases, but also for cameos and intaglios decorated with classical scenes or portraits of well-known persons, past or contemporary. They were listed in his catalogue of 1773 and all his subsequent catalogues.

Despite his skill at throwing pots, the actual making of commercial vases was not done by Wedgwood himself. He did the experiments, devised the methods of production, ran the business, and carried on the correspondence (wonderfully preserved in his own letters to Thomas Bentley); and he supervised the potters. He was heavily reliant on such artists as James Tassie, William Hackwood, John Flaxman, Camillo Pacetti, Lady Templetown and many others whose talents were essential to the quality of Wedgwood’s wares.

His artists were not only making and decorating vases, but also copying gems in black basalt or in his jasper technique, a stoneware produced in a number of different colours, of which the best known is pale blue. This invention of Wedgwood was used for pottery, tablets and portrait medallions. The imitations of gems of the Greeks and Romans were made mostly after objects that Wedgwood saw in the collections of his patrons, while the vases and tablets (in both black basalt and jasper) were mostly copied from engravings of Hamilton’s vases.

In order to fulfil his aim of making vases that looked like what he thought were Etruscan vases, Wedgwood needed images from ancient pots for his painters to copy. Around that time, several books were being published on the so-called Etruscan pottery by authors such as Caylus, Gori and Passeri,¹⁸ but most important for Wedgwood was the set of four sumptuous volumes being produced by the illustrious collector and antiquarian Sir William Hamilton. Among the first of Wedgwood’s ‘Etruscan portraits’ was one of Hamilton (Fig. 194), around the time that he sold his collection to the British Museum in 1772.¹⁹ He commissioned Pierre-François Hugues, better known by his self-promoting and spurious aristocratic title, ‘Baron d’Hancarville’, to write the text of the volumes, although the preface was written by Hamilton himself. These books illustrated the vases in Hamilton’s first collection of antiquities, when the assumption was that most of them were Etruscan.²⁰

Wedgwood had an inkling that they might have been Greek, although he fell back into the usual assumption that they were Etruscan, as seen in this quotation from one of his catalogues:

And as it is evident the finer Sort of Etruscan Vases, found in Magna Graecia, are truly Greek Workmanship, and ornamented chiefly with Grecian Subjects, drawn from the purest Fountain of the Arts...so that few Monuments of Antiquity better deserve the Attention of the Antiquary, of the Connoisseur, and the Artist, than the painted Etruscan Vases.²¹

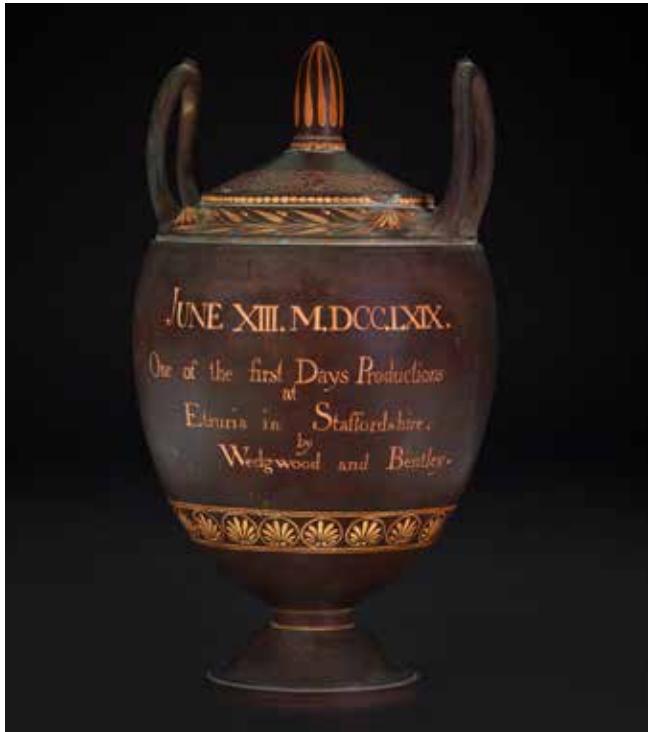


Figure 195 First Day's Vase, with inscription recording the date of the throwing of the vase and the opening of the Etruria Factory on 13 June 1769. British Museum, on loan from Lady Alexandra Wedgwood

It was actually Sir William who first definitively recorded his observation that the inscriptions on many of the vases were written in Greek, and must therefore be of Greek origin:

...and many Sepulchres have been discovered containing Earthen Vases of Beautifull forms, with Elegant figures, either drawn, or painted on them, of the sort that have been usually called Etruscan Vases, altho there now seems to be little doubt of such monuments of Antiquity being truly Grecian [emphasis mine].²²

But this realisation is written in Hamilton's publication of his second collection, published about 25 years later and long after Wedgwood's use of Etruria and Etruscans had become embedded in his advertising and in the public's mind.

In the late 1760s, by great good fortune, Wedgwood had been able to turn to the pages of the first of Hamilton's volumes, thanks to the intervention and support of the collector himself.²³ Even before the first volume of Hamilton's four magnificent books was published,²⁴ Charles, Lord Cathcart, a former naval officer and British envoy to the court of Catherine of Russia in St Petersburg, and husband of Hamilton's sister Jane, arranged for Hamilton to send engravings that had been prepared for the first volume to Wedgwood, and when it was actually published Wedgwood received a full copy from one of his patrons, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn.²⁵ Thus, Wedgwood's earliest works are based on images from Volume I of *Collection of Etruscan, Greek, and Roman Antiquities...* (actually published in 1767 despite the date of 1766 on the title page).²⁶ As the other volumes were published, Wedgwood made use of those as well.

He wrote frequently to his patron Sir William Hamilton on the subject of the Etruscan vases. Hamilton was the British envoy to the court of Naples from 1764 to 1800, during which time he not only carried out his diplomatic



Figure 196 First Day's Vase with painted inscription, 'ARTES ETRURIAE RENASCUNTUR', below three figures after a vase in Sir William Hamilton's collection. Black basalt with encaustic decoration, h. 25.4cm. British Museum, on loan from Lady Alexandra Wedgwood

obligations, but also regularly reported on his observations on the frequent eruptions of Mount Vesuvius and became a major collector of Greek vases, which he would later sell to the British Museum.²⁷ Wedgwood looked to Hamilton not only for models for his shapes and decorated pots copied from Hamilton's books, but also for his approval and advice on how best to capture the spirit of the ancient vases:

We shall be very glad for your own Ease, as well as for the Advantage of the fine Arts, to see your Etruscan Antiquities compleat [i.e. the 4 vols]; & we hope the Publication of the remaining Volumes will give new Spirit & Zeal to those who are most capable of promoting Improvements, that at the same Time gratify the Eye of Taste, & contribute to the comfortable Support of Multitudes of industrious families....[we] shall follow your Advice in making Works of the greatest possible Simplicity; & shall reserve the higher finish'd Peices [sic], & especially the finer Etruscan Painting for those who are sensible of their merit & difficulty; & will go to the Price of them.²⁸

Thus, he is saving the best 'Etruscan' vases for people who are willing to pay high prices for them.

Upon the opening of the Etruria factory, Wedgwood himself threw six pots (of which only four survived the firing) while Bentley turned the wheel for him. One side of the vases recorded the date of the opening, 13 June 1769, by Wedgwood and Bentley (Fig. 195). On the other side of each vase, which he called 'First Day's Vases', were painted the words ARTES ETRURIAE RENASCUNTUR, or 'The Arts of Etruria are reborn' (Fig. 196). As the scholar Alison Kelly has written, 'no one but Wedgwood would have had the idea of calling his factory "Etruria", ...[and] no other Staffordshire potter, for that matter, would have thought of using a Latin quotation or would have got it right.'²⁹ The inscription was painted beneath three figures taken from



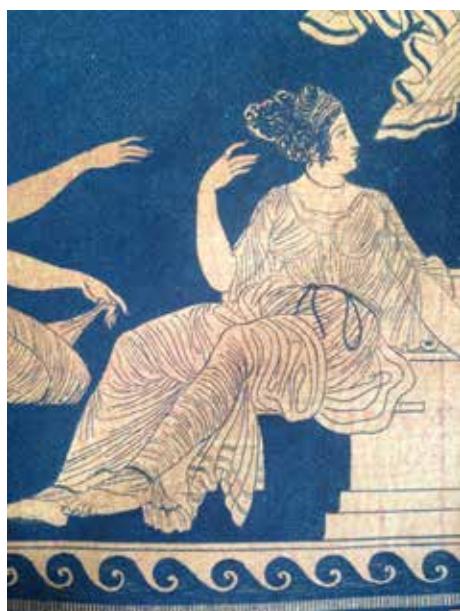
Figure 197 Illustration from d'Hancarville, *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman Antiquities in the Cabinet of Sir William Hamilton*, 1767, vol. I, pl. 129, after a red-figured hydria by the Meidias Painter, detail of Side B showing three figures

one of the engravings in Sir William's first volume, itself copied from Side B of a hydria (water jar) by the Meidias Painter (Fig. 197).³⁰ Hamilton's hydria, from which the figures were copied, was sold to the British Museum three years later, in 1772.

Another of the great two-page spreads in Hamilton's first volume shows the main scene on the same hydria.³¹ In a detail of the upper part of the vase depicting the Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus (Fig. 198), Aphrodite sits near an altar. This figure, extracted and isolated from a large and complicated scene, was copied several times by the painters working for Wedgwood in his studio in Chelsea (Fig. 199).³²

Figure 198 (below) Detail of the hydria by the Meidias Painter with the image of the seated Aphrodite, as illustrated in d'Hancarville vol. I, pl. 130

Figure 199 (right) Wedgwood creamware plate with a copy of a detail of the hydria by the Meidias Painter: seated Aphrodite, c. 1790, diam. 21.1cm. British Museum, 1909,1201.460



As was typical in such copies, the border decoration would be inspired by typical classical motifs, but not necessarily derived from the vase in question. Even after this hydria and the others of Hamilton's vases were bought by the British Museum, Wedgwood's artists, working in Chelsea, did not copy the images from the vases themselves in the museum, but rather from the engravings in Hamilton's volumes. This can be proven by comparing where Wedgwood's copy closely follows Hamilton's copyist's embellishments in small details that were not present on the original Greek pot.³³ Wedgwood was well aware that his painters would commonly improve upon their classical models, making their paintings prettier and ignoring damage or faded images. He wrote to Bentley:

She [Mrs. Willcox, one of Wedgwood's painters] will paint much better figures, especially from printed outlines, than any I have seen upon *real Etruscan Vases*. Mr. Hambleton's prints are another thing you know he has flattered the old Pott painters very much, & has, no doubt, taken his designs from the very best Vases extant.³⁴

One of Wedgwood's widely admired subjects, made in both a tablet and vase form, is known as the 'Apotheosis of Homer' (Fig. 200), although the title, invented by d'Hancarville, is probably erroneous.³⁵ It was copied after a calyx-crater in the British Museum that had formerly been in Hamilton's collection. Wedgwood first referred to it in a letter to Bentley listing a number of subjects that were being made into tablets. He called it 'Etruscan, with Homer &c.'³⁶ The tablet was made after a design that was not copied directly from the engraving in d'Hancarville vol. III, pl. 31, of which Wedgwood apparently did not yet have a copy in 1778, but was modelled by John Flaxman after a drawing of



Figure 200 Tablet of the Apotheosis of Homer in jasper, modelled by John Flaxman in 1778, l. 37.8cm. British Museum, 1909,1201.186

the vase. This is known because of a letter from Bentley to Hamilton in which he explains that the work was done from an unpublished drawing loaned by d'Hancarville to Wedgwood and Bentley.³⁷

The one item made by Josiah Wedgwood that was copied from a truly Etruscan work was a stoneware (black basalt) vase closely related to a bronze head-vase now in the Louvre. This latter, said to have been found at Gabii by Prince

Aldobrandini, has been convincingly shown to be related to other bronzes made in Orvieto in the second quarter of the 4th century BC.³⁸ A copy of the Louvre Etruscan head was cast in bronze from moulds, of which trace lines can be seen on this piece in the British Museum (Fig. 201). A plaster copy was probably made from the Louvre bronze head while it was in the possession of Camillo Borghese, from whom the bronze was later bought by Napoleon. Eventually, in 1824,



Figure 201 (left) Bronze copy of the Louvre head vase, 18th century, given by Richard Payne Knight, h. 25.4cm. British Museum, 1824,0489.87

Figure 202 (right) Wedgwood copy of the Louvre head vase in black basalt, 1785–90, h. 29cm. British Museum, 1909,1201.106

the bronze copy was bequeathed to the British Museum³⁹ by Richard Payne Knight, who probably thought it was an ancient original. Wedgwood made at least two copies in black basalt,⁴⁰ undoubtedly using as his model either the bronze copy in the British Museum or perhaps the plaster copy that must have been taken from the Louvre head-vase before the bronze copy was made.⁴¹ A mould for the black basalt head vase survives in the Wedgwood Museum in Barlaston. Remaining traces of gold show that Wedgwood's copies (Fig. 202) were once gilded, indicating that he realised that the original was in bronze.

With the exception of that particular Etruscan head that served as his model, and with the possible exception of the influence of Etruscan bucchero, Wedgwood actually used examples of ancient Greek pottery as his models, believing, like his contemporaries, that they were all Etruscan. His wildly popular and influential use of classical motifs from 'Etruscan sources' on pottery and gems was one of the most effective means anyone devised of promoting the popularity and endurance of ancient imagery in the neoclassical period.

Notes

- 1 Haynes 1995; see also Dawson and Swaddling 2014.
- 2 Even today, some of the labels in museums, such as the Lady Lever Gallery in Port Sunlight, use the term 'Etruscan' for Greek vases. On the misunderstanding of Greek pottery as Etruscan, see Pieraccini 2009; Burn 1997; Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 51–2; Ramage 2011, 191; and Ramage and Crome 2013, 169.
- 3 Reilly 1992, 67. See Chapter 11 by Rowland in this volume, pp. 125, 128.
- 4 Dawson 1984, 26.
- 5 Reilly 1992, 170.
- 6 However, other potters, such as James Neale and Humphrey Palmer, imitated Wedgwood's 'Etruscan' motifs. See Edwards 1987, pl. 8 and Edwards 1994, pls 3–4.
- 7 Kelly 1965, 19–20.
- 8 For a picturesque description of the landscape, resources and origin of the name, see Warrillow 1952, 12–17.
- 9 Mackendrick 1961, 32; Reilly and Savage 1980, 314–15.
- 10 Uglow 2002, 324. The letter was written in November 1768.
- 11 Kelly 1959, 140; Reilly 1992, 79.
- 12 Uglow 2002, 52–3.
- 13 On bucchero, see Rasmussen 1979, passim. See also Perkins 2007, passim.
- 14 Wedgwood 1779, 55.
- 15 For Hamilton's collection see Perkins 2007, nos 7, 13, 23, 131, 135, 137, 140–1, 172, 199, 203, 254, 260, 289. For Sloane's collection see Perkins 2007, nos 38, 40, 67, 85, 163, 173, 191, 226.
- 16 Dawson 1984, 38; Reilly 1992, 78–9; Edwards 1994, passim.
- 17 Scheidemantel 1969, 72. The letter is dated 26 February 1779.
- 18 Caylus 1752–7; Gori 1737–43; Passeri 1767–75.
- 19 Another like it in the British Museum (1887,0307,I.68) was made in fired white biscuit.
- 20 d'Hancarville 1767–76. His second collection was published by Wilhelm Tischbein between 1791 and 1795.
- 21 Wedgwood 1779, 54.
- 22 Tischbein 1791, vol. I, 2.
- 23 Fothergill 1969, 68.
- 24 d'Hancarville 1767–76.
- 25 Wedgwood 1779, 55.
- 26 Heringman 2013; Ramage 1991, 35.
- 27 Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 81–9; Fothergill 1969, passim.
- 28 The letter was written on 4 November 1773 (*Proceedings of the Wedgwood Society London* vol. 1 (1956), 22–3).
- 29 Kelly 1965, 19.
- 30 The vase is British Museum, 1772,0320.30; Smith 1896, E 224; Burn 1987, figs 9a and 9b; this image was in Hamilton's vol. I (d'Hancarville 1767), pl. 129.
- 31 Burn 1987, fig. 3.
- 32 See also Ramage 2011, pl. 9.
- 33 Ramage 1989, 9.
- 34 Wedgwood archives letter E 18301–25, dated 19 May 1770. I am grateful to the Wedgwood Museum for permission to quote from its letters. Wedgwood often misspelled Hamilton's name.
- 35 Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 184.
- 36 Wedgwood archives, letter Er8845–25; Scheidemantel 1969, 69.
- 37 Jenkins and Sloan 1996, 184–5; Scheidemantel 1969. The manuscript letter is in the Chellis Collection in the Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama.
- 38 Haynes 1995, 177–81.
- 39 British Museum, 1824,0489.87.
- 40 A second copy is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. no. 32.95.14.
- 41 Haynes 1995, 181.

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Chapter 18

An Egyptian Tomb, an Etruscan Inscription and the Funerary Monument of an American Civil War Officer

Lisa C. Pieraccini

Abstract

What was known of the Etruscans in the United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries? Evidently, enough was known to inspire an American Civil War officer, Egbert Ludovicus Viele, to have his tomb at West Point inscribed with a pseudo-Etruscan inscription in 1900.¹ Moreover, he and his wife were entombed in two (broadly) Etruscan-style stone sarcophagi with recumbent images of themselves on the lids. All of this combines to indicate strongly that Viele had some knowledge of the Etruscans. The curious blending of Egyptian and Etruscan features of this tomb tells us much about Egyptian revival art as well as the perceptions of the Etruscans in the United States at the dawn of the 20th century.

Thanks to the growing interest in reception studies there has been an ever-increasing number of articles regarding the rediscovery of the Etruscans.² Much is known, for example about how this Italic culture was understood (or misunderstood) in Europe from the 18th century onwards. But what is not entirely clear is how the Etruscans became known in the United States in the mid to late 1800s – a time when travel to Europe was not easy and English publications on the Etruscans were limited. The Grand Tour, of course, represented a way for wealthy men to come into direct contact with ‘antiquity’, but this was traditionally a journey through France and Italy, specifically to see the ruins of ancient Rome; it was also largely experienced by Europeans, with the exception of a few Americans like Mark Twain. At this time, Etruscan artefacts were just starting to be acquired or donated to prominent museums in the United States, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which received its first Etruscan vases in 1875.³ The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology also acquired a group of Etruscan artefacts in the late 1800s,⁴ and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts began collecting Etruscan artefacts as early as 1900.⁵ On the west coast, Phoebe A. Hearst donated the largest Etruscan collection to a public university just after 1900. She did this with the help of her art advisor Alfred Emmerson – the objects number well over 3,000 and are housed at the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley.⁶ Thus, Etruscan collections slowly took shape across America during the last century, from the Pacific North West (Washington State) to the South (Arkansas and Florida). But even with these early collections at some of the most prominent museums in America at the turn of the 20th century, not all the objects acquired by museums were displayed and certainly not all were entirely understood.

As far as publications are concerned, only a handful of libraries in the United States would have obtained some of the Italian and German excavation reports and journals dating to the 1800s. There was a minor assortment of books in English available to Americans (if they were not fluent in German or Italian), such as Mrs Hamilton Gray’s *Tour to the Sepulchres of Etruria in 1839*, published in 1840, which was followed by George Dennis’s *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* in 1848 (see Chapter 1 by Rasmussen in this volume). In



Figure 203 The tomb monument of Egbert Ludovicus Viele, West Point Cemetery, New York. Photo courtesy of Colleen McArdelle, Office of Memorial Affairs, West Point

addition, there were a few English articles available to the very devoted and curious. Excavation reports of Etruscan finds were published even as early as 1886 in the *American Journal of Archaeology*,⁷ but presumably very little was made easily accessible to the general public. The subjects of the day were ancient Greece and Rome and the United States had already prided itself on modelling its government and values on those of Rome, specifically the Roman Republic.⁸ In fact, during the American Revolutionary War (1775–83), also known as the American War of Independence, ancient Rome was appropriated as an American symbol of civic virtue and moral prowess. The Founding Fathers of the United States prided themselves on their Republican values; even George Washington requested that the play *Cato* (written by Joseph Addison in 1713) should be performed to American soldiers in 1778 at Valley Forge.⁹ Thus, the message was quite clear: Republican ideals versus rule by Monarchy (the Roman Republic versus Julius Caesar) – this was the war cry as the early colonies battled to rid themselves of English rule.¹⁰ Ironically, if Etruscan literature had survived, perhaps the American founding fathers would have been citing Etruscan verses against the oppressive and colonising Romans.

It therefore comes as a surprise that a Civil War lieutenant commissioned a highly unusual hybrid tomb in 1900 at the prestigious West Point Cemetery in New York in the form of an Egyptian pyramid distinguished by an Etruscan inscription (Fig. 203).¹¹ Egbert Ludovicus Viele, a descendant of Dutch burghers, was born in Waterford, New York, in 1825.¹² He graduated from West Point in 1847 and served as a brevet second lieutenant in the Mexican-American War (Fig. 204). In the opening months of the Civil War he was a Captain of New York's 7th Militia Regiment and led an expedition by water from New York to Washington.¹³ During President Lincoln's first year of office, Viele published an important handbook for active military service with useful instructions for volunteers – ironically, it fell into the wrong hands and was used in training the

Confederates.¹⁴ Viele accompanied President Lincoln in May of 1862 down the Potomac River (along with the Secretary of War Stanton and the Secretary of the Treasury Chase) – he detailed this memorable event in a booklet published in 1878.¹⁵ He eventually resigned from the army with the rank of first lieutenant and became a prominent civil engineer in New York. As chief topographical engineer for the state of New Jersey and chief planner of New York's Central Park,¹⁶ Viele created one of the most famous maps of New York, known as the 'Viele Map' – which is still used today. In 1885 he was elected to Congress as a Democrat.¹⁷

As a member of the American Geographical Society, Viele was a regular contributor writing reports on military

Figure 204 Egbert Ludovicus Viele in uniform. Courtesy of the Library of Congress





Figure 205 Detail of one of the sphinxes outside the Viele tomb, West Point Cemetery, New York. Photo courtesy of Colleen McArdelle, Office of Memorial Affairs, West Point

duties as well as articles dedicated to the topography and sanitation of New York. He even wrote an article entitled, ‘The geography and architectural monuments of medieval Europe’.¹⁸ This article is not so much about medieval Europe as an intricately crafted commentary on the shaping of Western civilisation. It demonstrates Viele’s interest in history, politics and the excesses of power. While commenting on the Roman Empire he writes:

The colonisation of the shores of the Mediterranean gave birth to a new race through whose active energies a higher plane of physical, mental and spiritual development was to be reached. How grand! How magnificent, how heroic was that development! How marvelous the story, so familiar to all and yet of never-ending interest!¹⁹

He writes with a certain command of ancient Greece and Italy, suggesting that he had visited both these countries at some point in his life. He most certainly was in London in 1896, as recorded by an invitation from the British House of the Lords to speak on the subject of ‘Municipal improvements in the United States’.²⁰ In 1898 he delivered the closing address at the Hague Congress in Holland.²¹ In his aforementioned article, he makes no mention of the Etruscans, but rather instead exalts Rome:

It was nature’s fiat that the supremacy of the world should pass from Rome – hunger was stronger than her walls, and greed more powerful than her armies. Rome fell! But not in a day or a year, or a century. Her fall was as much the result of centuries of disaster as her rise had been that of centuries of progress.²²

The article documents Viele’s understanding of a complicated history from the time of the great Eastern civilisation to the empires of the west. Of special interest, particularly in lieu of his Egyptianising tomb, is a comment he wrote about the great eastern civilisations falling to western powers, as at one point he writes: ‘The spell of orientalism was broken!’²³ What, if anything, he had seen of the Etruscan civilisation is not known today, but it is clear that he chose the design, decor and the Etruscan inscription on his mausoleum in 1900, two years prior to his own death

and immediately after the death of his second wife, Juliette, in 1899. As an official of West Point and the engineer who enlarged the cemetery, Viele chose the spot on the western end of the graveyard where there was a slight plateau and a view of the Hudson River.²⁴ His funerary monument would not only gain symbolic capital as a unique memorial, but it would become his greatest insurance policy against oblivion. In fact, Viele’s tomb has been described as ‘one of the most distinctive and unusual military tombs in America’.²⁵ Like the late 1st-century BC tomb built by Gaius Cestius in Rome, Viele’s tomb was fashioned as an Egyptian pyramid, a choice sparked, no doubt, by the Egyptian revival of the early 19th century seen in American decorative arts and architecture. Similar to Cestius, Viele obviously felt some connection to Egypt’s great past. The sheer size of Viele’s tomb is also impressive, measuring 25 x 31 feet at the base and 31 feet high at the apex.²⁶ Records are still on file at West Point of the correspondence of the Harrison Granite Company writing to the Superintendent of the cemetery requesting ‘reliable’ contractors for the building of the foundation of the granite pyramid.²⁷ In fact, at the time that Viele started the construction of his tomb, there were no restrictions at the cemetery on the size or cost of funerary monuments,²⁸ a far cry from the standards imposed shortly after his death (and not much different from those mandated during the Roman Republic for large ostentatious tombs).

Two Egyptian sphinxes face one another at the entrance of the tomb where stairs lead up to the façade of the pyramid (**Fig. 205**). Egyptian-style columns face the viewer along with an imposing bronze door, above which an architrave features the Etruscan-inspired inscription: ‘EGBERT LUDOVICUS VIELE – KIZI ZILACHNKEI MEANI – MUNIKLETH JULIETTE – NUPPHZI KANTHKE’ (**Fig. 206**). For many years visitors to the cemetery thought the inscription was unintelligible, just another enigmatic feature of this eclectic tomb. But at some point it was recognised as Etruscan and guides at the cemetery began



Figure 206 Etruscan inscription outside the Viele tomb, West Point Cemetery, New York. Photo courtesy of Colleen McArdelle, Office of Memorial Affairs, West Point



Figure 207 The inner chamber of the Viele tomb with two sarcophagi of Egbert Ludovicus Viele and Juliette Viele, West Point Cemetery, New York. Photo courtesy of Colleen McArdelle, Office of Memorial Affairs, West Point

generally translating it as: ‘Egbert Ludovicus Viele his body occupies this sepulchre with Juliette his wife and beloved companion.’²⁹

Once the visitor enters the tomb the inner chamber delivers even more features connected to the Etruscan world: as Viele is buried on the left and his wife on the right (we see the same left (male) and right (female) arrangement in the large chamber tombs at ancient Caere) (Fig. 207). Both Ludovicus and Juliette are depicted as if they are sleeping on their backs on top of the marble sarcophagi lids (similar to the Etruscan ‘sleeper’ sarcophagi). The images of the deceased on their respective sarcophagi, lying as if they are asleep, combined with the arrangement of the male on the left and the female on the right, give the inner chamber of this mausoleum a strong Etruscan veneer. It is interesting to note that the Etruscan sarcophagi with figures lying on the

lids, more often than not, are in the nude, with a thin blanket covering the deceased (compare the sarcophagus lid with Larth Tetties and Thanchvil Tarnai from the Ponte Rotto necropolis at Vulci). In the case of Viele and his wife Juliette, they are both portrayed fully clothed within the strict social context of Victorian era standards – albeit with a thin blanket covering them. Although the rendering of the figures seems straightforwardly neoclassical, the mausoleum is, in and of itself, a unique pastiche of Egyptianising and neoclassical architecture topped off, quite literally, with the Etruscan inscription above the door.

Where did Viele get the inspiration for this unusual script on his Egyptian style mausoleum? Where would he have seen Etruscan writing? And more importantly, what does this inscription mean? The newly founded Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (1870) had received 21 Etruscan

vases from Luigi Palma di Cesnola in 1875 (Cesnola served as Director of the museum from 1879–1902),³⁰ but these vases were not the inspiration for the inscription on Viele's tomb, even if Viele, as a New Yorker, had seen them in the museum. The most likely source was the 1872 publication, *Etruscan Inscriptions*, by Alexander William Crawford, which contained a similar inscription from Tarquinia, namely that of the Ceisine Tomb, discovered in 1735.³¹ It is possible that Viele travelled to Italy during his European visit and had seen the inscription in person. The tomb was certainly familiar to guides to Tarquinia as early as the 18th century. The *cicerone* and antiquarian James Byres who operated in Italy in the 1760s to 1780s had the artist Franciszek Smuglewicz illustrate it for his book on Etruscan tombs (see Chapter 16 by Davidson in this volume, p. 178, **Fig. 191**). Although the Ceisine Tomb no longer preserves the inscriptions at its entrance today, they are recorded in Crawford's book as follows:

LARTH KEISINIS VELUS KLAN KIZI ZILACHNKE
MEANI MUNIKLETH METHLM NUPPHZI
KANTHKE
KALUS LUPU³²

Crawford translated the inscription as 'Lars Ceisina [eldest] son of Velius, owns (has right of property and protection in, or tenants) this sepulchre, in common with Metella his wife, his companion in the sorrows of life'; or 'in common with Metella his wife, his sorrowing relict'.³³ But this translation does not hold up today, as we know much more about the Etruscan language, grammar and vocabulary. In fact, the Ceisine inscription has been recently studied by Meiser (2014) and reads as follows in Etruscan:

larj. ceisinis. velus. clan. cizi. zilajnce
mcjum. nur zi. canjce. calusim lupu
meani. municlej³⁴

An updated translation of this inscription would read: 'Larth Ceisinis, son of Vel, three times served as zilath (= praetor), nine times served the community as CANTH (= some sort of administrative position (?)), and he died CALUSI, MEANI, MUNICLETH'.³⁵ Upon close examination, it becomes clear that Viele's inscription is a pastiche of the Ceisine inscription, as Viele uses seven of the original 13 words. Rex Wallace translates the Viele inscription as:

Egbert Ludovicas Viele served as Zilath three times MEANI (?), MUNICLETH (?) Juliette nine times CANTHKE'd (?)³⁶

Viele appears to have been attracted to the name *Velus* (Etruscan for the Roman *Velius*) seeing it as a direct ancestor of his own name and thus a means by which to connect himself to a mysterious people and a great past, which might be the reason he chose this particular inscription out of the many published in Crawford's book.³⁷ But, more importantly, Viele was a man of superstition and a firm believer in the afterlife – his decision to incorporate both Egyptian and Etruscan elements in his tomb speaks to this – they are truly fascinating features of his funerary

monument.³⁸ Even Viele's own nephew, Chase Viele, who published many articles on historical topics last century, claimed that his great granduncle believed he might wake from the dead.³⁹ For this reason, it was reported that he installed a 'buzzer' directly into his sarcophagus, so that if he woke after death, he could ring the caretaker's house on the West Point grounds.⁴⁰ No one was sure how the caretaker would respond to such a call. But to add to Viele's preoccupation with waking from death, an 'eternal' electric light burned day and night inside his tomb from 1902 until Pearl Harbor was bombed in December of 1941; after wartime electrical blackouts were imposed in the United States it was never turned on again,⁴¹ and thus, Viele and Juliette remain in the dark.

What Viele might have known of the Etruscan view of the afterlife in the late 1800s is not entirely clear, as scholars themselves were just embarking on such studies. But we can argue that Viele would have known *something* about Etruscan tombs and their concern with the afterlife. Surely Viele was aware that the Etruscan language was viewed in 20th century America as mysterious and secretive. By choosing an inscription that was incomprehensible to the general public (let's not forget that the writing is clearly visible on the outside of the tomb in large bronze letters) Viele sent a very public message that was both inexplicable and puzzling – he did this on purpose. In fact, it must have seemed odd then, as it might now, that Egyptian architecture and Etruscan wording co-mingle on this American funerary monument. But if we look back at some of the 19th-century English writers, such as Mrs Hamilton Gray, we see that these two cultures were often viewed in the same light, most certainly for their burial practices, views of the afterlife and the often so-called 'eastern' veneer of Etruscan art.⁴² The inclination to lump the 'mysterious' Etruscans with the 'exotic' Egyptians made sense on many levels in 19th-century Europe – it must have made perfect sense to Egbert Viele.

It is a curious irony that we have come to know so much about the Etruscans by the way they chose to bury themselves, and alas, here too, we seek to understand a Civil War lieutenant, a city engineer of New York, one of the creators of New York's Central Park, and Democratic Congressman, by his final resting place – an extraordinary funerary monument. In the 1994 publication, *The Revival Styles in American Memorial Art*, McDowell and Meyer expressed this best when they wrote:

Tombs, monuments and markers created to commemorate the dead have always been sources of inspiration for the arts of western cultures. Many civilisations have, in fact, been analysed and evaluated primarily through examination of their funerary arts. Tomb decorations and furnishings reveal, amongst other things, deep-seated religious beliefs, ontological theories and cultural self-esteem. Funerary arts, which often have been preserved when all else has decayed, not only disclose religious and other cultural preoccupations but also reveal a stubborn resistance of humankind to sink into oblivion. However humble or grand, these monuments emphatically insist, 'I existed' in the face of an otherwise evolving, changing world.⁴³

The context of this mausoleum speaks to a moment in time (1900) when an American war officer and civil engineer

chose to define himself by his interest in ancient civilisations, the afterlife, and, what was at the time, a wholly mysterious language. But we have to remember that Viele was an architect, and also the re-organiser of the West Point Cemetery. His tomb is a *tour de force* of historical reference and architectural knowledge. It most certainly was expensive and no doubt Viele must have seen it as his masterpiece by which he wanted to be remembered, as an architect, creative thinker and, one could argue, believer in the afterlife. The architecture of his tomb is wholeheartedly Egyptian – after all, the Egyptians are perhaps the most celebrated creators of monumental tombs in world history. And at this time, Egyptian revival art was popular, in fact, the second wave of Egyptian revival started right after the Civil War and often combined exoticism with more traditional western forms of art, like classical. But the fact that Viele chose an Etruscan inscription for his tomb and that he and his wife are buried side by side in specially carved sarcophagi topped with their life-size portraits on the lids, speaks to the fact that, although Egyptian in style, this is an Etruscan burial. How can this be explained?

Viele started the construction of the tomb right after his beloved wife Juliette died. In fact, as noted, she is buried in her own sarcophagus placed on the right side of the inner chamber of the tomb. He could have easily seen sarcophagi fashioned for great Etruscan ladies when he was in Europe, like that of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa in the British Museum (acquired in 1887).⁴⁴ Viele designed his tomb for both of them – a celebration of a couple (a quintessential component of Etruscan art) – so that they could be joined in eternity and commemorated in equal partnership. Perhaps he had seen the famous ‘wedding sarcophagus’ from Cerveteri with husband and wife reclining together as equals. Viele must have thought of their tomb in that spirit – husband and wife, together in an Etruscan-inspired burial. For some men, this would have been enough. But Viele’s message might have been missed by visitors to the cemetery had he not made the reference absolutely explicit. It is in this light that we must see the Etruscan inscription. He chose an inscription (most likely from Crawford’s book) based on his belief that it was a joint-husband-and-wife epitaph from Etruria (let’s not forget that the name *Velus* would have been appealing to Viele). Even if today we are able to see that his inscription did not quite say what he wanted it to, the gesture was historically informed and prominently displayed. The tomb therefore remains a moving testament to Viele’s interest in the past, the afterlife and his great love and respect for his wife. Over the years many modern visitors to Etruria have probably been impressed by the celebration of the ‘couple’ in Etruscan funerary art.⁴⁵ But unlike most, Viele left behind a powerful demonstration of his admiration for Etruscan values; and he did so in a most unusual place – the West Point military cemetery in New York. His tribute, a blending of Egyptian and Etruscan components, is surely no less touching even today and certainly no less noteworthy for its commemoration of Etruscan views of the afterlife.

Notes

¹ I would like to thank Mr David Mack, who attended my lecture, ‘The English, Etruscans and ‘Etouria’: The Grand Tour’ in 2012 at

the Archaeological Institute of America’s local Westchester Society at Manhattenville College, New York. After my lecture Mr Mack kindly approached me and discussed a curious civil war tomb at West Point with an Etruscan inscription encouraging me to pursue the topic. I am glad I took his advice. Colleen McArdelle, from the West Point Cemetery, was extremely helpful with information and the wonderful images reproduced in this chapter. I would also like to express my gratitude to several colleagues who lent their wise advice in the shaping of this chapter: C. Hallett, A. Carpino, R. Wallace, L. Bonfante, N. de Grummond and C. Hernandez.

- ² De Grummond 1986; Haynes 2000; Izzet 2007; Pieraccini 2009; Ridgway 2009, De Angelis 2013; Bruschetti *et.al* 2014.
- ³ De Puma 2013; for more on Americans collecting antiquities see De Puma 2015.
- ⁴ Turfa 2005, 3.
- ⁵ Nagy 2008 101–5.
- ⁶ Nagy 1988; Nagy 2008, 101–5.
- ⁷ *American Journal of Archaeology* 2 (1886), 218; see also Nagy 2008.
- ⁸ Malamud 2009, 9–33.
- ⁹ Malamud 2009, 9.
- ¹⁰ Malamud 2009, 10.
- ¹¹ Viele 1973; Logel 2002.
- ¹² Viele 1973, 22.
- ¹³ Viele 1973, 23.
- ¹⁴ Viele 1973, 23.
- ¹⁵ For details of this event, see Viele 1878. Viele describes President Lincoln as ‘guileless and single-hearted as a child’ (Viele 1878, 813–14). For more on this event see Viele 1973.
- ¹⁶ Segovia 2010. For more on the ‘Viele Map’ and the creation of Central Park, see Logel 2002.
- ¹⁷ Viele 1973, 23.
- ¹⁸ Viele 1893.
- ¹⁹ Viele 1893, 378.
- ²⁰ Segovia 2010.
- ²¹ Segovia 2010.
- ²² Viele 1893, 382.
- ²³ Viele 1893, 378.
- ²⁴ The choice to place his tomb where there was a view of the Hudson River was perhaps both aesthetic and superstitious. See Viele 1973.
- ²⁵ Viele 1973, 20.
- ²⁶ Viele 1973, 20.
- ²⁷ Official correspondence provided by Colleen McArdelle, Office of Memorial Affairs, West Point Cemetery, NY.
- ²⁸ Viele 1973, 21.
- ²⁹ Viele 1973, 21.
- ³⁰ De Puma 2013, 6.
- ³¹ See Viele 1973, 35; Crawford 1872, 102. For more on the Ceisimie tomb see Steingräber 1986 no. 56; Steingräber 2006, 20, 187, 210, 212.
- ³² Crawford 1872, 102.
- ³³ Crawford 1872, 104.
- ³⁴ Crawford 1872, 102; Meiser 2014.
- ³⁵ Special thanks to Professor Rex Wallace for his translation of this text.
- ³⁶ Personally communicated by Rex Wallace.
- ³⁷ Viele 1973, 35.
- ³⁸ Viele 1973, 21.
- ³⁹ Viele 1973, 21.
- ⁴⁰ Viele 1973, 21.
- ⁴¹ Viele 1973, 21.
- ⁴² Hamilton Gray 1843, 4f; Pieraccini 2009, 6.
- ⁴³ McDowell and Meyer 1994, 4.
- ⁴⁴ Swaddling and Prag 2002. Viele may perhaps also have seen some of the Etruscan sarcophagi from the 1837 Pall Mall exhibition by then on display at the British Museum: see Chapter 4 by Swaddling in this volume.
- ⁴⁵ Bonfante 1981; Bonfante 2006.

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