



Beneath the Veil: Symbolic Iconography of Etruscan Sarcophagi

by Amy Knapp

This research was conducted to explore the visual communication, via symbolism, iconography, and gestures, used on the sarcophagi of the Etruscan noblewomen, *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa* and *Larithia Seianti*. These elaborate sarcophagi were found in family tombs in Chiusi; an Etruscan establishment located in north central Italy. Both of these figures were crafted in full-body, reclining on the lid of their sarcophagus, pulling their veil out and away from their face. The objective was to understand the inclusion of this gesture and determine if it is an *anakalypsis*, or ‘unveiling gesture,’ and ultimately, what that gesture may suggest or imply about the deceased.

As with nearly all ancient art, it is rare that there is not a deliberate purpose for its creation and ornamentation. To understand how these artifacts functioned in antiquity, the research strategy included: identifying and examining certain communicative elements used on these sarcophagi; verifying the origins, purpose, and functionality of the applied symbols and icons; and determining the communicative value of the applied imagery. The objective was to interpret the message being conveyed, identify the intended audience, and thus reveal if and how these images may have signified an anticipated and exclusive connection between the deceased and the divine.

These artifacts represented Etruscan aspirations for life and the afterlife. The imagery on the sarcophagi is the product of the Etruscan’s origins, foreign influences, and social structure. To appreciate the implied communication, it is necessary to understand the communicative elements that were employed:

- The Etruscans; a Brief Introduction of Origins, Influence, and Social Status;
- The Etruscan Banquet;
- Etruscan Sarcophagi;
- The Function of Symbolic Iconography;
- The Sarcophagi Vessel; and
- Conclusion.

THE ETRUSCANS

A Brief Introduction of Origins, Influence, and Social Status

The Etruscans were the first known culture to inhabit the Italian peninsula; scholars, however, still dispute their geographic origins. In his *Histories*, Herodotus wrote that the Etruscans had migrated from Lydia in Asia Minor. As the Bronze Age came to a close, the people of Lydia suffered from starvation due to an eighteen-year drought. With the drought having no end in sight, Lydian King Atys, decided to divide his population; half of the people would remain in Lydia. The rest of the populace, chosen by lot, would follow the king's son, Tyrrhenus, in search of a new land. In approximately the 900 BCE, it is believed that they migrated from Asia Minor to the Italian peninsula. Finally settling in central Italy, the followers of Tyrrhenus changed their name to the *Tyrrhenians*, in honor of their leader.¹ Referred to by the Romans as 'Tusci' or 'Etrusci,' the Etruscans settled in the region now known as Tuscany, giving the area its name.²

The primary alternative argument as to the Lydian migration is based on archeological evidence which indicates that Etruria has been inhabited for approximately 750,000 years. This theory notes that the Etruscans were indigenous to central Italy, and followed the traditional course of human development, evolving technically and socially. Originally hunters and gatherers, the inhabitants of Copper Age Etruria became farmers and herdsman, eventually learning to exploit animals for their secondary products, such as milk and wool.³

*Referred to by the Romans
as 'Tusci' or 'Etrusci,' the
Etruscans settled in the region
now known as Tuscany,
giving the area its name.*

As the inhabitants of Etruria moved from the Bronze Age and into the Iron Age, they created settlements. Because of Giovanni Gozzadini's 1853 discovery of an Iron Age Etrurian cemetery near Villanova, early Etruscans became commonly known as 'Villanovans'.⁴

The Etruscans established fortified towns on hilltops in central Italy beginning around the ninth century BCE. As they developed and advanced, systems of exchange prompted the Etruscans to absorb influences from other Mediterranean cultures. The presence of multiple artifacts from Greece, Phoenicia, and Asia Minor⁵ in Etruria suggests that commerce was frequent.⁶ Most notable was the impact from the Greeks.⁷ By the 6th century BCE, archeological evidence shows that Greek artists were prospering in Etruria, most notably the Ionians living along the southwestern coast in Graviscae, the Etruscan settlement of Tarquinia. Greek influence was popular amongst the Etruscans, impacting much of their everyday life from their style of clothing and jewelry, to pottery.⁸

Like most societies of the archaic age, the Etruscans, including those identified as Villanovans, did not consider all members of their society as equal.⁸ Meticulously rendered funerary artifacts in select tombs, sometimes in great abundance, suggest that by the eighth century BCE, the Etruscans had a well-defined social hierarchy.¹⁰ Social status, where individuals were identified by both clan and wealth, had a significant impact on both their life and death. It was during this period that some individuals were buried with a large quantity of valuable grave goods, indicating an elevated social status.¹¹



Figure 1: *Sarcophagus of the Spouses*. 540 BCE



Figure 2: *Sarcophagus of the Spouses* (detail)

In ancient Etruria, high social status was not solely for males. In an era where men ruled both the public and private realm, a quality that was rather unique to the Etruscans was their treatment of women. Etruscan women were afforded rights, respect, and a level of social prestige that was typically unheard of in contemporary cultures; they could own property, intermix in society, and were in many cases, literate.¹² Most women of the ancient world did not receive such freedom and recognition. This was one of the reasons that expanding Greek culture, known for male dominance and subjective treatment of women, considered the Etruscans scandalous.¹³ The newly developing Roman civilization would adopt many Etruscan ideals as a foundational model for much of their governmental and societal structure,¹³ but like the Greeks, would never adopt the high regard for females.

THE ETRUSCAN BANQUET

Most of what we understand about the Etruscans, including their respect for women, comes from the excavations of hilltop settlements and necropoli throughout east central Italy. Tombs in locations such as Cerveteri and Tarquinia are particularly known for yielding grave goods and artwork that shed light on Etruscan life, death, and religious practice.

Most notable of Etruscan activities was the banquet. At these events, the members of the dinner party feasted in a reclined position, while being serviced by household slaves. Eating in this manner, outstretched on a banqueting couch, or *kline*, was actually a Near Eastern tradition that appears to have migrated westward. So popular was this method of dining that by 600 BCE, the banqueting couch was a common artistic motif on Corinthian pottery.¹⁴

It was at these banquets that the Etruscans demonstrated their high regard for females; men and women dined in a celebratory atmosphere—together. These festive events were colorfully illustrated in multiple Etruscan tombs. In example, on the back wall of the Claudio Bettini Tomb in Tarquinia (**Fig. 3**), fairskinned females enjoy the banquet alongside their darker skinned husbands. Similarly, multiple sarcophagi, such as the *Sarcophagus of the Spouses* (**Fig. 1**), shows a couple lounging happily together on a banqueting couch. The size of the figures correspond naturally, lacking hierarchical proportion, which suggests mutual respect between the genders. Each figure appears to have been holding a small object, likely a bottle of perfume, in their



Figure 3: back wall of the Claudio Bettini tomb (detail). 5th c. BCE

right hand. The husband opens his left hand to receive the ointment as a type of libation (**Fig. 2**). It is possible that this was part of an erotic act.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the inclusion of this action suggests both the belief in an afterlife, along with the perpetuation of their happy union after death. Simply put, couple-hood would continue posthumously.

ETRUSCAN SARCOPHAGI

Along with depictions of couples lying in happy repose together, there are Etruscan sarcophagi of individuals. The figures of both genders are depicted 'full body' on the banqueting *kline*, with rosettes, temple elements, mythological, or battle scenes embellishing the sarcophagus vessel. The inclusion of the entire body on the sarcophagus lid appears to have been imperative for the afterlife celebration banquet, and perhaps, the afterlife itself. Multiple sarcophagi are far less than life-size; commonly under four feet in length, and often little more than the length of a shoebox. Size, quality, artistry, along with the accompanying artifacts were indicators of not only a person's wealth and social status, but also their clan and societal role.¹⁶ An attempt was made by the artists to maintain the natural size of the head, which consequently in many cases, necessitated the distortion or dwarfing of the figure's body (**Fig. 4**). The figures are, however, nearly always alert, and accompanied by banqueting paraphernalia. Placed in family tombs, these sarcophagi were arranged facing the center as though waiting for the feast to begin.



Figure 4: Etruscan Sarcophagus. 3rd c. BCE

Sarcophagus, a Greek term meaning "flesh eater," is a bit misleading in the case of the Etruscans. Though there were cases of inhumation by the Etruscans, the typical Etruscan sarcophagus held an urn which stored the ashes of the cremated deceased. In most cases, the



Figure 5: Sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa 2nd c. BCE

sarcophagus lids were fashioned in terracotta or stone, to represent a *kline*, which held an effigy of the “owner” reclining at a banquet. Males and females alike were presented formally dressed and propped on their left arms.

THE FUNCTION OF SYMBOLIC ICONOGRAPHY

Symbols and icons are very closely related, both are images intended for visual communication; this was particularly important from antiquity through the Renaissance when the majority of the population was illiterate.

A symbol is an image which holds a specific meaning for an exclusive audience; it can communicate an immeasurable amount of information almost instantaneously. An icon is a more complex article. It can be the image of a subject or an idea, which is often venerated by a specified audience. Icons may also propose a story, lesson, or moral.

Singularly, a visual element can be used to convey a specific idea. Combined, one visual element can modify the meaning of another, altering the interpretation or creating a more complex expression.¹⁷ Symbolic iconography is the intentional use of meaningful visual elements, symbols and/or icons, to convey a message. This communication is intended for an identified audience who could recognize and appreciate the message. Hence, it is imperative to understand the meaning and significance of the images, less the intended communicative value of the work be lessened, misinterpreted, or altogether lost.

Female Etruscan Sarcophagi; Symbolic Identification

Extraordinary examples are the sarcophagi of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa (**Fig. 5**) and Larithia Sienti (**Fig. 6**). Though Etruscan females were recurrently portrayed reclining on the lids of their sarcophagi, in the cases of these two high-status women, their sarcophagi are masterful works, both artistically and symbolically.

The sarcophagi of both Etruscan males and females typically held several common elements of visual communication that expressed the deceased person's position in life, and anticipated their status in the afterlife. Such is the case with Figures 5 and 6. The size and artistic quality of both artifacts implies both the wealth and high social status of their families. Along with the traditional use of symbolism, the most prominent element to examine is the veil and the veil gesture. Other elements of the funerary figure, along with the imagery on the sarcophagus vessel, will be examined for individual symbolic meaning and communicative value.

The Veil and the *Anakalyptis*

With few exceptions,¹⁸ when an Etruscan female was portrayed on her sarcophagus, it was typically in the traditional banqueting position; poised and attentive, reclining with a stylish pillow beneath her left elbow. Dressed in fine formal attire, some females are shown holding a fan, bottle of perfume,¹⁹ or simply resting their right arms along their body. Several females, however, are shown in the act of grasping their veils and exposing their faces. This act is known as an *anakalyptis*, or 'unveiling gesture.'

If Etruscan females were indeed 'unveiling,' for whom was this gesture intended? To understand this curious and meaningful gesture, we must look to contemporary cultures, primarily the Greeks due to their previously noted contact with, and influence upon, the Etruscans. By exploring the use of the veil in ancient Greece, we may gain insight to these figures, and understand their intended message.

It was not uncommon for a man or a woman living in the Mediterranean area during the archaic and classical age to be veiled; but for women, it appears to have been a social norm, particularly in the presence of unrelated males. In ancient Greece, the unveiling gesture

In ancient Greece, the unveiling gesture was typically associated with the marriage ceremony, or it may signify that she was in the company of family.

was typically associated with the marriage ceremony, or it may signify that the woman was in the company of family.²⁰ Acting as a form of protective barrier, the veil served as a layer between the wearer's personal and private existence, and that of the outside, social, non-familial, or supernatural world. To 'unveil' an individual who was typically covered, presented the wearer as exposed and vulnerable. Greek art and literature illustrate how it was commonplace for a woman, mortal or divine, to wear veils such as the *pharos*, *himation*, or *kaluptre*, which could convey a wide variety of emotions, such as modesty, shame, grief, or anger.²¹ The veil served not only as a physical shield, but an article that offered social protection, demonstrating the woman's respectability and family



Figure 6: *Larithia Seianti*, 2nd c. BCE

honor, and connecting her to a male authority.²² In example, in Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope, faithful wife of Odysseus, is noted to have veiled herself in the presence of suitors, as they were strangers and non-familial.²³ It would have been dishonorable for Penelope to have appeared before them without the modesty and protection of her veil. Likewise, goddesses including: Aphrodite and Athena were frequently shown with veils as it shielded their perpetual virginity. Furthermore, the Egyptian goddess, Isis, had a cult following that spanned throughout the Egyptian and Greco-Roman world. The ultimate wife, mother, and protector, Isis emphasized her virginity in a quote:

*"I am all that has been, and is, and shall be, and my veil no mortal man has yet lifted."*²⁴

The veil was, and in modern day *is*, a concealing object; offering visual protection to its wearer. Because it concealed the woman, and thus her sexuality,²⁵ it imposed a sense of modesty and suppression. The discretion that the veil provided, along with its connection to virgin goddesses, would bring the veil in strong association with the bride and the marriage ceremony; masking the wife-to-be until the completion of the marriage rites. A bride's most prized possession was her virginity.²⁶ On the day of her wedding, the veil communicated that her purity had been maintained.

The institute of marriage in antiquity was fundamentally the bringing together of two houses and the procreation of legitimate heirs, more than a fairytale romance. The *anakalyptis*, or more properly, the *anakalyptēria*, which is a specific reference to the removal of the bridal veil,²⁷ signified the woman's union to her new husband and family; it would have been the apex of the nuptial ceremony. The term 'nuptial' is derived from the Latin term, *nuptus*, which means to marry, cover, or veil.



Figure 7: Sarcophagus of Larithia Seianti (detail)

Visual examination and interpretation of Figures 5 and 6, proposes that the *anakalypsis* gesture is taking place. The grasp and angle of the hand, the positioning of the fingers, along with the pleats from extending the fabric indicate that the veils of both figures are being pulled back and away. This act suggests that they are willingly revealing their faces to their intended audience or viewer.

Knotted Belt

Knots have an immense history in human culture. They were feared, revered, and as they had the ability to bind and control, knots were thought to be magical.²⁸ A knot frequently represented in Greek and Roman art was the Hercules Knot. Known in modern day as a ‘square knot,’ the Hercules Knot was believed to hold benevolent power;

even Pliny the Elder believed that the Hercules Knot held special healing power. Ceremonially, Greek and Roman brides wore a cord about their waist tied in a Hercules Knot. The Hercules Knot’s ability to bind helped to emphasize her chastity, and as it was untied by the new husband on their wedding night, it served as a positive omen of fertility.²⁹

Both Figures 5 and 6 have a corded belt around their waist, tied carefully in a Hercules Knot. The presence of this particular knot heightens the formality of their attire and possibly that of the “banquet” by indicating an afterlife nuptial event.

Mirrors

Mirrors would have been used on a regular basis to check an elite Etruscan’s appearance; but mirrors were also found in their tombs. In antiquity, mirrors were made of highly polished bronze, offering a soft, sepia-toned reflection to the holder. Fashioned also by means of sculpture, mirrors served in art, as well as in life, as powerful symbols of status. The reflection one received from a mirror was considered other-worldly—it was an opposing reproduction of the real world. Depicted with divinities and heroes, mirrors came to be deeply connected with the supernatural world and prophecy.³⁰ The Etruscans may have believed that a mirror could hold one’s soul, and thus may have served as a protective apotropaic device.³¹

In Etruria, mirrors were given to women by men, and to men by women as cherished gifts, and they were also presented as wedding gifts to new elite couples.³² In the left hand of both Figures 5 and 6 is an elaborately decorated, circular mirror, which was given extraordinary attention by the artisan. The mirror of Fig. 5 was painted in expensive blue and green paint; reflecting the socio-economic status of the family, and heightening the importance of the item.

Color

Color plays an important role in communicating significant information about an artifact or work of art. Both Figs. 5 and 6 are polychrome sarcophagi; figures dressed in white, while their robes, pillows, and sarcophagi vessels are trimmed with gold, red, green, blue, and purple. This study will consider the most functional signifiers: white, gold, and purple.

Modern science tells us that white consists of all colors, but to the ancient eye, it would have been considered without color— pure and free of imperfection; hence its association with virginity. During the classical age, white was also worn by mourners. Reconciling all aspects of mortality, white symbolized life and love, along with death and burial. “In marriage it [white] symbolizes death to the old life and birth to the new life beyond” (Cooper, 41), suggesting the purity of birth, or rebirth, in the afterlife.

Gold and purple both reflect a high or regal status. The color gold, suggests the actual metal which has a history going back several millennia. Along with jewelry belonging the wealthy, gold was used to create crowns, scepters, and a variety of regal accouterments, creating a permanent connection to royalty and persons of high economic status.

Purple was a dye acquired by the Phoenicians from the murex snail in the Mediterranean. It took the harvesting of thousands of murex snails to obtain enough dye for a single robe; this made the dye extraordinarily expensive and available only to the very rich, who were typically royal.³³ The mass harvesting of the snails eventually impacted their population, making the snails more difficult to acquire, greatly increasing the price. Thus, the color came to be associated with royalty and the divine.

THE SARCOPHAGUS VESSEL

The vessel which contains the ashes of the deceased, is typically decorated. Common themes used on the front, sides, and often the back include: mythological stories, battle scenes, architectural elements, or a pattern of rosettes.

Mythological Stories and Battle Scenes

Many Etruscan sarcophagi vessels hold episodes from the compelling heroic conquests and mythological stories that were prevalent in the Mediterranean region during the first millennium BCE. Though not represented on Figures 5 and 6, the stories, commonly from Greek mythology, are valuable to consider as they support the cultural exchange that was taking place.

A popular myth incorporated into the decorative motif of many Etruscan sarcophagi vessels, is the murder of Eriphyle. In the story, *Seven Against Thebes*.³⁴ Eriphyle, wife of Amphiarus, accepted the bribery of a renowned necklace; her act knowingly led to the death of her husband. After her death, the necklace³⁵ was dedicated to the goddess, Aphrodite. Though this particular story is not incorporated into the overall theme of Figures 5 and 6, the use of this myth on multiple Etruscan sarcophagi, validates the importance of Greek influence upon the Etruscans, and that of the virgin goddess, Aphrodite.

Architectural Elements

The vessels of both Figures 5 and 6 hold a pattern of architectural elements and rosettes. The vessel decorations of Fig. 6 are beautifully complex and graceful. Larithia Seianti's banqueting couch appears to top a temple-like structure. Completed in low relief sculpture, four sizable rosettes alternate with five fluted columns; the capitals of each column curl to support an egg-and-dart patterned abacus. This arrangement is reminiscent of both a columned temple front, and a tri-glyph and metope frieze pattern.

The sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa, Fig. 5, is another example of the advanced skill of Etruscan artisans. Four fluted columns alternate with three identical roses. Similar to Fig. 6, the *kline* functions as a lid, or perhaps a 'roof' for the architectural structure below.

The size, artistry, and exquisite craftsmanship are good indicators of both Larithia Seianti and Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa's high social status. The figures being placed atop temple-like elements may suggest that there was an anticipation for both of these women to ascend to an afterlife in the divine realm.

Rose/Rosettes and Oak Leaves

The Rose/Rosette is frequently depicted on various artifacts and artworks. As with Figures 5 and 6, the sides of many Etruscan sarcophagi are decorated with a pattern of roses or rosettes. The rose generally takes the appearance of a completely opened bloom with four, five, six or eight petals. There are occasions, however, as in the case of Fig. 6, where the rose takes the form of an ornate wheel or shield. For thousands of years, the rose has been a profound symbol revered by multiple cultures. Typically a positive and feminine element, the rose flower was associated with the virgin goddesses Isis and Aphrodite/Venus. Because of a strong association between Romans and early Christianity, the rose came to represent the Virgin Mary. In Greco-Roman traditions, due to the long history of divine association, roses became connected with the afterlife, and thus, roses were planted in cemeteries as symbols of resurrection and rose petals were scattered on graves.³⁶

Eriphyle, wife of Amphiaraus, accepted the bribery of a renowned necklace; her act knowingly led to the death of her husband.

With the rose/rosette having such symbolic significance in Egyptian, Greek, and Roman tradition, it can be surmised that the rose held the same, or very similar, reference for the Etruscans; afterlife, the divine, and resurrection. This assumption is further reinforced in the cases of Figs. 5 and 6, as in the 2nd and 3rd centuries BCE, Roman influence upon the Etruscans was quite significant.

Figure 6 holds a complex and elegant design. On Larithia Seianti's sarcophagus vessel are two distinct roses, and two circular 'shield-shaped' rosettes. The rose flower at the far left, beneath her feet, has distinctive qualities. In the midst of the flower, are four oak leaves; in the center is an inverted acorn. Throughout the Greco-Roman and Etruscan cultures, the oak tree has been

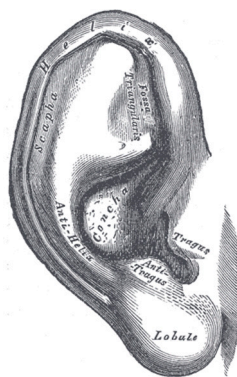
used as a powerful communicative element. Symbolizing both Zeus/Jupiter and Hera/Juno, the oak implied positive properties such as strength and fertility. Because the oak has a strong divine association with Zeus and Hera,³⁷ it represented “conjugal devotion and happiness.”³⁸

CONCLUSION / ARGUMENT

Saienti Hanunia Tlesnasa and Larithia Saienti are portrayed as youthful, physically renewed, and spiritually refreshed. The wealth and social status of each woman is signified with gold jewelry, fine clothing, a headpiece, and an elegantly fashioned sarcophagus. These elements definitely show their social rank, but may also allude to their elevated role or status in the afterlife.

Multiple elements found on these sarcophagi are strongly connected with bridal/wedding traditions of the classical age. In addition, numerous symbols are strong indicators of the divine, or divine events. By uniting the many symbolic components, it is possible to interpret the more complex message. Both figures wear formal attire associated with bridal rituals. That they are adorned in this manner suggests that it is a celebratory event. Both are idealized; regardless of their age at the time of their deaths, they are presented as youthful maidens. Each woman reaches back, grasps her veil, and holds it out from her face—the *anakalypsis*; revealing themselves as pristine and proper mates to their invisible viewer—a divine presence.

Sealed in a family tomb, these sarcophagi would have been visible when the tomb was reopened to lay a relative to rest. But, tucked away in the tomb, the sarcophagi themselves were like a woman behind a veil; hidden and protected, to be seen by only a few select viewers— family members and the divine. The sarcophagi were not made for mortal eyes. When these elite women passed beyond the realm of life, they became brides for the gods.



Veil Terminology

Anakalyptēria—the removal of the bridal veil.

Anakaptis—the gesture of removing a veil from one's face.

Himation—a large cloak which could be pulled over the head to create a veil.³⁹

Kaluptrē, kredemnon, kalumma—veil or head covering.⁴⁰

Nuptus, nupta, nuptiae (Latin)—cover; veil; marry.⁴¹

Pharos—a mantle which could be pulled over the head.⁴²

End Notes

¹ Herodotus (440 BCE) Pg. 62

² Bonfante (*Reading the Past*, 1990) Pg. 6

³ Barker (1998) Pg. 50

⁴ Bartoloni, G. (1989) p. 60

⁵ Bonfante (1986) pg. 67

⁶ Bonfante (1975) pg. 14

⁷ Durant (1939) In discussion of the expansion of Greek influence and the founding of Greek cities on the Italian peninsula, Durant notes, "From these colonies Greek ideas as well as goods passed into the crude young city of Rome, and northward to Etruria." (p. 169)

⁸ Bonfante (1986) pg. 253 "It seems clear that the Etruscans adopted the new styles directly from the Ionians who, as now know, were in Graviscae [Etruscan port of Tarquinia] as early as 600 B.C., or from their colonies in south Italy.

⁹ Barker (1998) pg. 59 The author notes that there were "differences in the burial arrangements and associated grave goods." Archeological evidence, tomb artifacts and larger residences, suggests an identification of social status, the development of hierarchies, and chiefdoms during the Late Bronze Age in Etruria.

¹⁰ Warden (N.D.) "When imagery is this rampant and diachronically robust, it is fair to conclude that it is an important indicator of identity; the overarching theme is of the perpetuation of the rank and status of the elite Etruscan..."

¹¹ Barker (1998) pgs. 77-80

¹² Bonfante (1986) Pgs. 233-237

¹³ Durant (1939) p. 169

¹⁴ Barker (1998) pgs. 294-296

¹⁵ Barker (1998) pg. 248 The Greek term *kline*, is the root word of the contemporary English term, *recline*.

¹⁶ Spivey (1997) pgs. 92- 93

¹⁷ Barker (1998) pgs.72-73

¹⁸ A visual element (symbols/icons) can complement, enhance, alter, or change the interpretation of another visual element. Collectively, two or more elements may produce a differing or conflicting interpretation.

¹⁹ In example, the two 4th c. BCE “Couple’s Sarcophagi” from the tomb of the Tetrines family in Vulci (Boston Museum of Fine Arts); the couples are depicted in low relief, laying face-to-face on the sarcophagus lid.

²⁰ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg. 3

²¹ Panovsky (1992) pg. 21 “...the portrayals of women adorning or unveiling themselves, the scenes of leave-taking

²² “(suggestive of a union beyond the limitations of space and time)...”

²³ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg.156

²⁴ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pgs. 130, 174

²⁵ Cooper (1978) pg. 185

²⁶ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg. 317 “...a woman could use her veil to highlight her sexuality, and the very act of veiling a girl who reaches puberty acknowledges that what is contained beneath the veil is inherently sexual.”

²⁷ Hersch (2010) pg. 11

²⁸ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg.228 “...the ritual of the *anakalyptēria* was the moment when the bride lifted, or— more probably—had removed for her, the veil that covered her head and face and for the first time the groom was able to view his new wife who had demonstrated by her participation in the unveiling...”

²⁹ Day (1950) pg. 230-231

³⁰ Day (1950) pgs. 141-142

³¹ Cooper (1978) pg.106

³² Carpino (2011) pg. 4

³³ Carpino (2011) pg. 3

³⁴ Van Der Grabben (2010)

³⁵ Dixon-Kennedy (1998) pg. 28 *Seven Against Thebes*, by 4th BCE author, Aeschylus.

³⁶ Though not present on figures 5 or 6, many female figures on Etruscan sarcophagi are presented wearing a necklace of shells, which may possibly allude both to the necklace presented to Aphrodite in the story of Eriphyle, and to the mythological event of the birth of Aphrodite, who was born of the sea and brought to land on a shell.

³⁷ Cooper (1978) pgs. 141-142

³⁸ Cooper (1978) pg. 177 “

³⁹ Cooper (1978) pg. 121

⁴⁰ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg. 8

⁴¹ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg. 28 Derived “from the verb *kaluptō*, ‘to cover’, while *krēdemnon* is constructed from *karē*, ‘head’, and *deō*, ‘to bind’.

⁴² Levine (100) “...the Latin word *nubere* “to marry” literally means “to veil oneself,” it is probably derived from the term *nubes*, “cloud”. Varro, the second century B.C.E Roman scholar derives *nuptiae* (wedding) and *nuptus* (wedlock) from, which he describes as *opertio* (act of covering) and associates with the word *nubes* (cloud). ⁴³ Llewellynn-Jones (2003) pg. 26

Bibliography

- Barker, Graeme and Tom Rasmussen. 1998. *The Etruscans*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bartoloni, G. 1989. *La Cultura Villanoviana*. Rome: Nouva Italia Scientifica.
- Bonfante, Larissa. 1975. *Etruscan Dress*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Bonfante, Larissa, et al. 1986. *Etruscan Life and Afterlife; A Handbook of Etruscan Studies*. Edited by Larissa Bonfante. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Bonfante, Larissa. 1990. *Reading the Past: Etruscan*. Berkeley: California University Press.
- Cairns, D.L. 2001. *Greece & Rome; Anger and the Veil in Ancient Greek Culture*. Vol. 48. Boston: Cambridge University Press.
- Carpino, Alexandra. 2011. "Killing Klytaimnestra: Matricide on Etruscan Mirrors." *Journal of Etruscan Studies* 3-37.
- Day, Cyrus L. 1950. "Knots and Lore." *Western Folklore* (Western States Folklore Society) 9 (3): 229-256.
- Dixon-Kennedy, Mike. 1998. *Encyclopedia of Greco-Roman Mythology*. Santa Barbara: ABCCLIO.
- Durant, Will. 1939. *The Life of Greece*. New York: MJF Books.
- Herodotus. 440 BCE. *The Histories*. III. Translated by Isaac Littlebury 1737. Vol. I.
- Levine, Molly Myerowitz. 1995. "Off With Her Head: The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture." In *The Gendered Grammar of Ancient Mediterranean Hair*, by Molly Myerowitz Levine, edited by Howard and Wendy Doniger EilbergSwartz. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Llewellynn-Jones, Lloyd. 2003. *Aphrodite's Tortoise*. Swansea: The Classic Press of Wales.
- Panovsky, Erwin. 1992. *Tomb Sculpture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
- Spivey, Nigel. 1997. *Etruscan Art*. NY: Thames and Hudson.
2010. *The Roman Wedding: Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity* Hersch, Karen K. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Der Grabben, Jan. 2010. "Tyrian Purple." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*.
<http://www.ancient.eu/article/196/>.
- Warden, P. Gregory. N.D. *The Importance of Being Elite*.